

TESTIMONY

STORY

I love online shopping. I mean, in this day and age who isn't browsing the internet for the best deal or the highest quality or the fastest shipping? When I find a product I like, before I buy it, I like to read the reviews to see what others think and normally that influences if I purchase the item or not. If I read praise after praise after praise report over an item I will probably purchase it no questions asked ha! There is power in other's experiences, thoughts and responses. They make us think, they help us picture our life with that item and they affect our perception whether we are aware of it or not.

Sharing our testimony is like writing a review. We are letting others know what we have experienced or how we have responded to a move of God in our lives and how possibly God can work in their lives. Testimony is a powerful tool to influence and to encourage those around us. It is our personal faith story. It is so simple yet extremely powerful. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:2, our lives are like "living letters", telling the story of God.

"Everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven." - Matthew 10:32 (NLT)

Before we dive in...

Reflect: Can you remember someone who shared their personal testimony with you? Or maybe a way that God has shown up in their lives? How did it impact you?

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Most people who grew up in the church learned how to write or recite their personal testimony or the way they came to follow Jesus. I believe that is a very important story to know, it's when your whole life changed! If you haven't written out your "come to Jesus" story I highly recommend it! It doesn't have to be a novel or even a page turner. It doesn't matter how long or how short it is, it's your story and because it involves Jesus' saving power it is profound and beautiful within itself. The fact that you came to Jesus is a testimony. You never know how your story of surrender can minister to others and oftentimes when we write it out or share our story it serves as a reminder to our hearts of God's faithfulness and goodness.

"Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.' And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him." - Luke 8:39 (ESV)

Share: Take a moment and either write out your personal testimony and/or take a few minutes and share it with a friend. You may find it helpful to break it down into sections - before you knew Christ, how you came to faith in Christ, and how Christ has affected your life now.

Stories are what makes the world go round. We live in a culture of story. What we read, watch on TV, movies, music, even our casual scroll through Instagram, it is all based on story. There is a reason for that, it's POWERFUL. Stories move us, encourage us, inspire us, create curiosity, and teach us. So when we share our "God Stories" or our Testimonies we can create opportunities to first and foremost give glory to God and also inspire and encourage others!

"Let no unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building up the one in need and bringing grace to those who listen." - Ephesians 4:29 (BSB)

"Perhaps you think we're saying these things just to defend ourselves. No, we tell you this as Christ's servants, and with God as our witness. Everything we do, dear friends, is to strengthen you." - 2 Corinthians 12:19 (NLT)

Reflect: When was the last time you were encouraged by hearing someone's story?

The root word for Testimony means "witness" and that is exactly who we are when we share our stories. Everyday we are witnesses to God's grace, power, healing, and love. It doesn't matter if we have been walking with God for 5 days or 50 years we have something to testify about His goodness. Our experiences with God are so special and they are meant to be shared. Our Testimony isn't just about us or for us it is about God and fulfilling His purposes here on the earth.

Maybe you are feeling really challenged by this push to share your story, it can be extremely vulnerable to share. Dr. Brené Brown who has spent two decades studying courage, vulnerability, shame, and empathy writes "Vulnerability is not weakness. And that myth is profoundly dangerous.... Vulnerability is the birthplace of connection and the path to the feeling of worthiness. If it doesn't feel vulnerable, the sharing is probably not constructive." In other words; it is good to get vulnerable especially when it comes to sharing your experiences with Jesus. Now please don't go and share your deepest darkest secrets with the whole world. This is not a time to air out all your dirty laundry in front of a crowd. Seek wisdom and use discernment in deciding when and what to share let the Holy Spirit guide you. Be courageous and lean into God given opportunities to share your testimony or praise report or miracle. Last thing, remember no matter what anyone says or however they respond to your story it is YOUR experience with God and no one can take that away from you. Do not be discouraged for He is with you.

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect," - 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

"I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings And shall not be ashamed." - Psalm 119:46 (NASB)

Reflect: Do you feel any resistance in sharing your story? Do you feel vulnerable? Was there ever a time you felt like you didn't take an opportunity to share because you were afraid? How can you be more prepared to give an answer when someone asks or when an opportunity arises?

TAKE ACTION

Take the opportunity to share your story with someone this week!
