

UNASHAMED TO GIVE YOUR TESTIMONY

Intro

- *Testimony- a 5 minute mini-speech?*
- In the NT, Testimony= Witness
- Our goal- to build a biblical picture of giving testimony

How do different Christians give their testimony?

5 models to get us thinking...

1. SARAH'S WORDLESS TESTIMONY- INCARNATES CHRIST TO OTHERS

DIY: In light of verses what are the positives and negatives with Sarah's testimony?

1 John 4:12 No-one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

John 1:7-8 He [John the Baptist] came as a witness to testify concerning that light... ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

Positives

- Stresses love!
- Stresses union with Christ (Eph 5:23; 1 Cor 12)

Negatives

- NT witness is **spoken** not wordless
- Downplays the **uniqueness of God's revelation of himself in Christ** the real human- so hides the true God.

John 1:18 No-one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

- Introduces a **mediator**- back to OT religion

2. LUCY'S PASSIVE TESTIMONY- ONLY SPEAKS WHEN SPOKEN TO

DIY: Positives and negatives?

1 Peter 3:15 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,

John 20:21 Jesus says, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

Positives

- **Humility**

Negatives

- NT witness is **centripetal** (Act 13:47) – we are **sent** by God to go out unlike OT witness which was **centrifugal** (Isa 35: 1-10)

*But what should we say in our testimony...?
What is your gospel...?*

3. EMMA'S TESTIMONY: A GOSPEL ABOUT CHRIST'S BETTER WORLD

DIY: Positives and negatives?

Acts 3:25-26 God... said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' When God raised up his servant [Jesus], he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Positives

- **Self-less** Christianity
- Shares God's **compassion** for the needy
- Puts Christ in the **big picture**
- So sees **JESUS AS LORD** of the wider world

Negatives

- Danger of **leaving Christ out**, but without Christ it is a **false gospel**
- Can only have a better world if Christ turns us from our **wicked ways**.
- Need to witness to JESUS AS SAVIOUR as well AS LORD

4. RACHEL'S TESTIMONY: A GOSPEL ABOUT CHRIST'S HELP IN HER LIFE

DIY: Positives and negatives?

1 John 4:14-17 ¹⁴And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world... ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. ¹⁷In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment.

Positives

- Christianity is a **relationship**
- Christ is a real **person**
- So sees **JESUS AS LORD** of our personal lives

Negatives

- Forgetting about the **Saviour of the WORLD**
- Forgetting we are **saved from the wrath of God**
- Need to witness to JESUS AS SAVIOUR as well AS LORD

5. CAROLINE'S TESTIMONY: A GOSPEL ABOUT CHRIST IN HISTORY

DIY: Positives and negatives?

Galatians 4:6 *Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."*

Positives

- The NT understands Christian testimony to focus on the **historical person and work of Christ**
- The NT focus of testimony is on the **SON** not the FATHER or the SPIRIT
- So sees **JESUS AS SAVIOUR** of sinners

Negatives

- Underplays her **relationship with Jesus** and the work of the **Spirit**

Testimony/Witness Word References in the NT:

Matt. 8:4; 10:18; 18:16; 23:31; 24:14; 26:65;
Mk. 1:44; 6:11; 13:9; 14:55f, 59, 63;
Lk. 5:14; 9:5; 11:48; 21:13; 22:71; 24:48;
Jn. 1:7f, 15, 19; 2:25; 3:11, 28, 32f; 4:39; 5:31f, 34, 36, 39; 7:7; 8:13f, 17f; 10:25; 15:26f; 18:23, 37; 19:35; 21:24;
Acts 1:8, 22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; 6:3, 13; 7:44, 58; 10:22, 39, 43; 13:22, 31; 14:3; 20:26; 22:5, 12, 18, 20; 23:11; 26:5, 16, 22;
Rom. 3:21; 10:2; 1 Co. 1:6; 2 Co. 1:12, 23; 8:3; 13:1; Gal. 4:15; 5:3;
Eph. 4:17; Col. 4:13;
1 Thess. 2:10, 12; **2 Thess.** 1:10;
1 Tim. 2:6; 3:7; 5:10, 19; 6:12f; **2 Tim.** 1:8; 2:2; Tit. 1:13;
Heb. 3:5; 7:8, 17; 10:15; 11:4, 39; 12:1;
Jas. 5:3;
1 Jn. 1:2; 4:14; 5:6f, 9ff; **3 Jn.** 1:3, 12;
Rev. 1:2, 9; 6:9; 11:7; 12:11, 17; 15:5; 17:6; 19:10; 20:4; 22:16, 18, 20

SUMMARY

Biblical Testimony	Top Tip:
What to do...	
A spoken testimony rather than incarnating Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Don't give up on talking about Jesus ● Be excited! Listeners directly experience Jesus in the Word through the Spirit
A proactive not passive testimony- God sends us!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Look for opportunities ● Organise event with a testimony... ● Write down friend's name: _____ ● Commit to pray for 2 months to tell them your testimony
What to say...	
CHRIST IS LORD of the whole world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remember the big picture- Christ is ruler of whole universe ● If involved in particular projects talk about practical impact of Christianity
CHRIST IS LORD of your personal life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Talk about what it's like to be a son of God day by day ● Be honest but confident- your story <i>is</i> a miracle ● The 'Flu-Test'...?
CHRIST IS SAVIOUR of sinners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Don't forget the biggest thing of all- saved from God's wrath for an eternity with him! ● Ask: 'is the focus on Jesus & the cross?' The 'Swap Jesus Test'...?

DIY YOUR TESTIMONY:

Structure it by answering the 4 questions below and keep

asking: *am I presenting Jesus as SAVIOUR?*
am I presenting Jesus as LORD?

Aim for testimony to be 4 min long max

- 5 mins preparation now to scribble down bullet point answers
- In pairs take turns as interviewer/ testimony giver
- Avoid reading out written answers- use bullet points to prompt if necessary
- Remember 1 min per answer is not long!

1 What was life before? (1 min)

Jesus wasn't LORD- personal experiences living without Jesus...

Jesus wasn't SAVIOUR- facts about living under God's wrath...

** Can't remember life before? If so, e.g. brought up in a Christian home, start at the second question and focus on who/what were significant in turning points in your developing relationship with Christ.*

2 Why did you become a Christian? (1 min)

Why you took JESUS AS SAVIOUR- need for forgiveness...

Why you took JESUS AS LORD- decision about living for him, needing his help, wanting to be part of his big plan for the world...

3 What is life like now as a Christian? (1 min)

What is it like to live with JESUS as LORD- relationship with Jesus...

What is it like to live with JESUS as SAVIOUR- freedom from wrath, judgment, future in heaven...

4 What's the hardest and best thing about being a Christian? (1 min)

Be honest, end on best thing, with a challenge if appropriate.

FURTHER READING *(All available on Amazon):*

Know and Tell the Gospel by J Chapman, 1998, Matthias Media
Brilliant and practical intro to doing all things evangelistic- a classic!

Salvation to the Ends of the Earth by A Kostenberger and P O'Brien, 2001, Apollos
Traces theme of mission through the whole story of the bible: challenging but worth it

Christian Mission in the Modern World by John Stott, 1986, IVP
Excellent discussion of interaction between evangelism and social action

The Gospel According to John by DA Carson, 1991 Apollos
Chunky commentary on John's Gospel to follow up testimony theme