



Life Practices
Engaging the World with the Gospel
#11 Your Story

Introduction

Remember: Our kingdom assignment from Matt. 28:18-20

Acknowledge: There is a myriad of ways “to do the work of an evangelist” (II Tim. 4:5). Consider the impact of radio, TV, internet, social media, film, videos, publications, books, pamphlets, Bible distribution, “in country” missionaries, “tent makers,” traveling servants, small groups, mentorships, schools, service and medical ministries, musical outreaches, sporting and fine art events and so on.

But at the end of the day, “Men (and women) are God’s method” (Coleman).

Your Story is Powerful and God Wants to Use It.

_____ “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the answer for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

The Goal: To write out, and memorize _____, an account of how you came to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The Purpose: To be used as an AMBASSADOR (someone sent out as an official representative)- See II Cor. 5:20. This is a _____, not a “convincing tool.”

Our Intention: To participate with the Holy Spirit and watch “all over the world, this gospel bear fruit and grow...” (Col. 1:6). Please note that God is already at work in others. Everyone is on a spiritual journey of some sort. You and I are only a part of their journey -See I Cor. 3:6.

Some Important “Prep” before you start writing...

1. Commit significant time to prayer
2. Make a list of “Christianese” words/terms to avoid using (terms like salvation, fellowship, sanctification, gospel). Special Note: we are not avoiding these terms



because they are not valuable, true and important, but because an unbeliever will not (YET) know the vocabulary. We want to be understood.

This effort (sharing our story) is NOT just a “box to check.” We are standing in front of someone LOVING them as we share about our own journey. We want them to be able to understand our story, not be impressed or put off.

3. Try to identify a life verse (it may help focus your remarks)

A Great Biblical Example: Acts 26

Using this simple outline, notice how Paul shares his testimony (story) with King Agrippa.

Before (vs. 4-11): _____

How (vs. 12-18): _____

Since (vs. 19-23): _____

Using this simple outline, write your first draft of your story. Consider these questions:

Before Christ:

What did your life revolve around? What was lacking? What was your source of identity/ self-worth? What was your security “blanket”? How did these things let you down? What “solutions” (marriage, children, work, drugs, alcohol, fitness, money sex) didn’t work?

How I came to Christ:

When was the first time you heard the gospel? What was your initial reaction? After you heard the gospel, what did you begin to see? How did your attitude begin to change? Include the specific steps you took to become a Christian. Give a brief overview of the gospel (all have sinned, sin has a penalty, Christ paid that penalty, everyone must receive Christ). What were your struggles as you made the decision to follow Him?

Since you came to Christ:

How are you different now? Do you see things differently? Are there any new motivations?



What behaviors are changing and why? What is He helping you with right now? You want to show the difference that Christ has made in your personal life.

A Few Practical Thoughts:

1. Not everyone's story is the same. Some trusted Christ as an adult and have a very clear before, how and after. Some came to Christ as children, but made a full commitment to Him as an adult. Your life may have resembled a non-believer for years. Just be sure that your early "conversion" experience was genuine and then give the facts. And for those with a very early conversion and plenty of consistent growth since, you won't have much in the "before" part of your testimony. Perhaps you can speak of your parents' faith and God's grace.
2. _____ Do not over exaggerate or embellish sin. Stick to the facts.
3. _____ like you speak. This is a story, not a theological treatise. Say "I" and "me," not "you."
4. _____ so others can identify with your story. Avoid specific dates, locations, full names etc.
5. _____. Memorize the outline. And then share it with a few Christian friends. Get their feedback.
6. Before you share your story, always ask permission. And then be prepared to engage in a true conversation. Learn to listen after you share. Use kind follow up questions like, "Is there anything in my story that strikes a chord in you? Can you relate to my struggles? Could I share some more another time?"

"With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all" Acts 4:33.

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For the Over Achiever:



1. Memorize I Peter 3:15

2. Write out YOUR STORY

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