

# discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living  
Study Guide

## INTRODUCTION TO EVANGELISM

### LESSON 4: COMMUNICATING A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

#### INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Discipleship Essentials module titled Introduction to Evangelism. This series of lessons aims to prepare participants to effectively share the Gospel with others. Understanding how God equips us for ministry and how to prepare our Gospel message for various worldviews will help us bring the unchanging message of the hope found in Jesus Christ to a world that does not yet know Him.

The Study Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on [www.discipleshipessentials.org](http://www.discipleshipessentials.org).

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# INTRODUCTION TO EVANGELISM

## LESSON 4: COMMUNICATING A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

### WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

The purpose of this lesson is to discuss the Biblical perspective for presenting a personal testimony as part of our sharing the Gospel. It also gives some practical advice about how to deliver a testimony effectively.

### JUST SO YOU KNOW...

This lesson goes a step further from writing down your testimony (the story of your salvation) to discussing how to best deliver it. Public speaking may be new to you, and something you have fears or concerns about. Consider praying through your fears and looking at exactly what you have concerns about. Sometimes practising your testimony with a trusted friend or family member is a good place to start. If you are going through this material as part of a group, consider sharing testimonies with one another. The more often you share, the more natural it will become! Not everyone is called to be a pastor or teacher, but we must all be able to share our own story.

## GETTING STARTED

1. Have you had an opportunity to share your testimony before? If so, how did it go? What did you learn from your experience?

2. Why are testimonies sometimes more convincing of the truth of the Gospel than a list of facts from the Bible? Why are personal stories so important in evangelism?



# STUDY

❖ **REASONS FOR PREPARING A PERSONAL TESTIMONY:** Preparing and presenting your story as part of sharing the Gospel is one of the most important steps you can take to be an effective witness.

➤ What do the following verses tell us about our testimonies and why we should share them?

1 John 1:1-4	
1 Peter 3:15	
Mark 16:15	
Luke 19:10	

The Bible commands us to be witnesses and to be ready at all times to give a reason for the hope that is in us. We are to fulfill the great Commission of Jesus Christ, which is the mission of the church (to make the Gospel known to all people on earth). We are not called to accomplish this alone or with our own resources. Through our testimony, we share with others who God is and what He has done.

- Our testimony is a unique ministry tool. You are the only person to possess your story! You don't know how God will use your experiences to help others to turn to Him. If you don't share your story, no one else can do it for you.
  - Nearly every witnessing opportunity can benefit from a well-prepared, clearly organized testimony, relying on the Holy Spirit to move the listener.
  - A testimony is the evidence that God is at work in this world, and your life. Your changed life is proof that is impossible to refute!
  - Testimonies can be used with a friend one-on-one, or delivered to large audiences. It is a very flexible tool, and it can always go with you (unlike tracts, videos or other tools).
  - If delivered correctly, it will point people clearly to their need for Jesus in their own life, and the way to find salvation.



- ❖ **BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF TESTIMONIES:** There were many people in the New Testament who gave accounts of their encounter with Jesus Christ. Read each and summarize how they shared their story and, if applicable, what the result was.

- **John 4:29-42: The Woman at the Well**

When the Samaritan woman shared about how Christ had spoken with her and knew about her life, many in the city sought out Jesus to hear what He had to say. The result was that many believed in Him.

- **John 9:24-34: The Blind Man**

Although the Pharisees did not want to believe that Jesus healed the blind man, it was very difficult to refute what had happened-- because the man was there to personally tell the story of what he had experienced.

Recall also that the Apostle Paul shared his testimony three times in the book of Acts, and each time was slightly different because of his audience. The Bible shows us that personal experiences are very powerful tools for sharing the Gospel, and we should prepare ourselves to share our own!

- ❖ **REHEARSING YOUR TESTIMONY:** If you have not finished writing down your testimony, that is the first thing you should do. Then it is up to you to practise it until it becomes natural. Here are some other suggestions :

- Practice your testimony until you are very comfortable with it, and don't need to rely on notes to share it with someone.
- Pray before speaking that the Holy Spirit would work through you, and give you just the right words to say. Trust God to give you the confidence and eloquence needed.
- Be careful to speak slowly and clearly enough that your audience can hear and understand you, but use a casual comfortable tone rather than a dramatic voice.



- Try to avoid actions that could distract your audience such as fidgeting, swaying, playing with a pencil or keys or scratching your head. These can distract your audience from your important message.
- Don't use emotional pressure or fancy speech to convince your audience to give their lives to Jesus. Only God through His Holy Spirit can change your listeners, and He will work through your ordinary words.
- Be joyful, pleasant and humble. Your story is a gift from God, salvation is something God accomplished for you, and the results of your testimony are up to God.
- Close with an invitation to follow Christ, and a brief prayer.

### IN SUMMARY:

- ❖ The reason for preparing a personal testimony is to be ready to give an account of the joy and hope that is in us because of Jesus Christ.
- ❖ People need to know about Jesus Christ, and our testimony is a powerful way to deliver the Gospel message.
- ❖ Our testimony is a unique ministry tool – we are the only ones who have our story!
- ❖ We have examples in the Bible of testimonies used in a powerful way.
- ❖ We should practise our testimony and be ready to deliver it at any time.
- ❖ We should minimize distractions when presenting our testimony. We can use our testimony to present the Gospel and invite listeners to make a decision to follow Jesus.

1. What situations can you think of where it would be natural or appropriate for you to share your testimony? How could you create such a situation?

2. How could you change parts of your testimony for different audiences? For instance, what would be different about sharing the Gospel with a family member, a group of youth or children, or those of a different culture? What details would you want to change? What would remain the same?