

# discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living  
Leader's Guide

## INTRODUCTION TO EVANGELISM

### LESSON 4: COMMUNICATING A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

#### INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Discipleship Essentials module entitled 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.

#### INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience for these lessons is new Christians, those who would like a refresher on the basics of Christianity, as well as those preparing to teach these Christian practices and beliefs. Also, those with an interest in Christian thought will find value in these lessons as they pertain to daily living and choices.

The Leader's Guide is intended to help you as a leader in your preparation. These lesson outlines may be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials found online at [www.discipleshipessentials.org](http://www.discipleshipessentials.org).

---

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

All other content is © 2019 Trans World Radio Canada, and may be used in any way you like as long as you use it with the purpose of reaching the world for Christ and do not charge for the use of the material. See more license details at [www.discipleshipessentials.org/licensing](http://www.discipleshipessentials.org/licensing).



# INTRODUCTION TO EVANGELISM

## LESSON 4: COMMUNICATING A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this lesson is to discuss the Biblical foundation for delivering a testimony as part of sharing the Gospel, and to give some practical advice about how best to deliver a testimony.

### LEADER'S NOTE

This lesson goes a step further from writing down your testimony, or the story of your salvation, to discussing how to best deliver this message. Some participants will be less comfortable with public speaking than others, so it may be best to start with small groups. You may wish to create an opportunity for participants to share their stories with one another – perhaps at the end of this session. If you are able, arrange a time of giving testimonies in the context of a church service, or special worship event.

## INTRODUCTION

*Select two or three of the following questions to ask the group.*

- ❖ Have you had an opportunity to share your testimony before? If so, how did it go? What did you learn from your experience?
- ❖ Should a person's testimony change as they experience God in new ways, or does it stay the same their whole life?
- ❖ 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.
  - The purpose of a personal testimony is to present how you received Christ and how Jesus has affected your life ([1 John 1:1-4](#)).
  - We are commanded to be ready at all times to give a reason for the hope that is in us ([1 Peter 3:15](#)).



- The Bible commands us to be a witness. A witness is someone who reports what they have seen and experienced (Mark 16:15). We are to fulfill the Great Commission (the mission of the Church to make the Gospel known in every corner of the earth). We are not called to accomplish this alone or with our own resources. Our testimony is one way to share with others who God is and what He has done.
- People need to know Jesus Christ (Matthew 9:36-38; Luke 19:10).
- 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 Personal Testimonies**

- **The Testimony of the Woman at the Well** (John 4:29-42)
  - 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.
- **The Blind Man's Testimony** (John 9:24-34)
  - 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.
- **Paul's Testimony** (Acts 21:40-22:21; 26:1-23)
  - We see several instances where Paul told his testimony. It remained about the same length each time (we can read it in about three minutes), but the message changed slightly depending on who he was delivering the message to. Paul identified with the group he was speaking to, spoke of common ground, and then related his own experience.



- ❖ **Presenting Your Testimony:** There may be many opportunities to share your testimony. It might happen when a friend or family member asks you about your faith. It might happen when you are sharing with someone your beliefs and they would like to know how you came to have your faith. It might be a more formal gathering of believers. When presenting your testimony it is important to keep some ideas in mind:
- 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.

## TASK

*Group participants into pairs, or have them form small groups. In these groups, they can practise delivering their testimony to one another. Participants should give positive feedback as well as suggestions for improving their delivery. It will become easier to share their testimony as they practise. You may wish to have participants hand in a copy of their testimony to you for further feedback after this exercise.*



## DISCUSSION

- ❖ 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?
- ❖ What did you appreciate in your fellow participants' testimonies?
- ❖ What things has God done in your life recently that you could recount as part of your testimony in the future?
- ❖ How could you change parts of your testimony for different audiences? For instance, a family member, a group of youth or children, or to those in a different culture? What details would you want to change? What would remain the same?

## PRAYER

*Pray that each participant would have courage to proclaim the Gospel wherever they are. Pray they would communicate the story God has given them, and glorify Him as they speak about their changed lives. Thank God that He offers us salvation through His Son Jesus Christ, and that redemption is possible for all sinners. Praise God, who holds all of creation in His hand and knows the stars by name, that He is present in the lives of His people working out every detail for their good and His glory.*