



The Greek word for testimony is "μαρτυρία" (pronounced "martira" ie martyr – to bear witness or testimony). In the New Testament, this word is frequently used to describe both the act of giving testimony or bearing witness and the content of that testimony. It appears in various forms throughout the New Testament writings, particularly in the context of proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ and the truth of the Gospel. The concept of testimony is integral to the Christian faith capturing its significance in conveying personal experiences of faith and encounters with God.

A testimony typically involves recounting how a person came to faith in Jesus Christ, how their faith has impacted their life, and the transformative power of God's love and salvation. Testimonies can vary widely in content and style, ranging from simple narratives of conversion experiences to more complex reflections on ongoing spiritual growth and struggles.

A testimony serves several purposes in faith:

Witnessing: Sharing one's testimony serves as a witness to others, both believers and non-believers, of the reality of God's presence and work in the world. It can inspire and encourage fellow believers in their faith journey and serve as a point of connection and encouragement for those who may be seeking spiritual truth. Philippians 2:1-5

Encouragement: Testimonies often include accounts of personal challenges, doubts, and struggles, as well as moments of triumph and spiritual breakthrough. By sharing these experiences, individuals can offer encouragement to others who may be facing similar trials, demonstrating how God's grace sustains and strengthens them through adversity. 1 Corinthians 14:26

Evangelism: Testimonies play a vital role in evangelism by providing a personal, relatable narrative of faith that can resonate with those who have not yet embraced Christianity. Through the power of storytelling, testimonies can help bridge the gap between intellectual understanding and heartfelt belief, inviting others to consider the claims of the Christian faith in a deeply personal way. Acts 1:8

Celebration: Testimonies also serve as a means of celebrating and giving thanks for God's faithfulness and provision in the lives of believers. By sharing stories of answered prayers, miraculous interventions, and moments of profound spiritual insight, individuals bear witness to the goodness of God and the transformative power of His love. Acts 4:32-35

In all this, God's purposes are revealed to others through the word of our testimony and it is for this reason the believer exists, to reveal God in our spheres of influence.

God has empowered all believers with the Holy Spirit transforming us into New Creations. The New Creation has benefits for you but not entirely for your benefit. When we remember this, we are free to share God's word with others in humility.

Sharing your testimony

So, God has done His work in you, you have something to say, something to share. We have all experienced this in some ways finding great pleasure in telling it. Sharing a testimony is a deeply personal and meaningful experience that involves recounting one's encounters with God, experiences of faith, and the impact of those encounters on one's life.

Here are some things you might consider as you tell your story.

Reflect – All too often we share what God has done in and to us without stopping to appreciate it ourselves first. Often, the work God does in us, is not His focus. His focus is how His work will influence the other. This is why I say that God's work will benefit you, but not entirely for your benefit. Remember that all God's work in us is given such that we can testify to His goodness, grace, and mercy. Telling your story without this understanding usually results in making you its centre.

Take the cripple healed by Jesus at the pool of Bethesda, John 5:1-15. When he was confronted with Jewish leaders, he did not know who it was that healed him. When Jesus found him some time later, we read, "Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you." He then told the leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him. The word Jesus uses here is 'a-martyr' which is 'to be without testimony.' His testimony was not his alone, it was for others. God's work benefited him but not entirely for his benefit.

Be Authentic and Vulnerable – Remember that your story is personal and you are about to make it public. Being authentic and vulnerable is a part of that, so you need to show some wisdom in how deeply you share. Sometimes our story is not necessarily something to be shared in public, rather one-on-one might be more appropriate. This requires us to treat what God has given in prayerful consideration.

Focus on God's Work – All that God does is for His purposes; all that God says is for His redemptive plan. Your story is to reveal His plans and purposes, and how you tell your story will greatly influence that. Psalm 9:1-2 NIV “I will give thanks to you, LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing the praises of your name, O Most High.” We find this theme throughout the entire Bible.

Be Sensitive and Respectful – There will always be people who would have experienced similar experiences as you, who have not been touched or healed. As you share, share with compassion in bringing hope such that the other is encouraged forward in faith. Compassion is ‘to suffer with’ and Jesus would often show compassion to those left out, the sick, the lame, the lepers, and certain ethnic groups.

This is why the beatitudes are so powerful as they empower the weakest of the weak to stand tall in their brokenness. When you share, share in ways which compassionately builds the other, especially those who are yearning to be touched in the same way you have been touched.

Remember, your story is only yours in as much as it happened to you. However, as your story is told, it becomes our story affecting the whole community of faith, and the world around us.