



Purposes of a Testimony


1. To give God the credit for coming to our rescue when we were helpless.
2. To give others a concrete example of the power of God and His ability to change lives.






Make Certain Jesus Comes Out The Star


- I can't convince you what a clever and charming and good person I am and glorify Jesus at the same time.
- I can give credit to the wrong ones
 - "I was lost, but then I joined the youth group."
 - Your church or Sunday School class
 - The home your parents provided
 - Your pastor or staff member






Tell One Testimony at a Time


- Salvation testimony
- Growth testimony
 - How God is helping me overcome an unforgiving spirit
- Testimony of God's sustaining
- A testimony should be more like a television commercial— one theme, tightly developed and packed into a short time— rather than a mini-series.





Your Testimony Has a Plot Hammer Out a Theme

- You were searching for something.
- You looked for it in the wrong places.
- God spoke, you resisted.
- Brought to a point of crisis.
- You submitted to Jesus Christ.
- Christ began to work changes in your life and you found that the deepest needs of your heart were being met.
- Theme: What were you seeking? Why were you so stubbornly resisting God?





Tell the Key Stories


- Certain events symbolize whole periods in our lives or entire struggles throughout our lives.
- How you came to realize your need of Christ
- What caused you to take spiritual matters seriously
- The thing that attracted you to Jesus Christ
- How you were brought to the point of crisis
- What finally clinched it for you



Deacon Ministry That Works

Use Thought-Provoking Sentences


- Develop concise sentences which sum up the main points of your story.
- Fine tune these sentences.
- Word them in such a way they will help others to get a mental picture
- "I used to feel like I was my own God until the heart attack"



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Let Them Inside Your Head


- How did it feel?
- Example: A man whose wife came to the Lord before he did, might tell how at first he felt threatened by his wife's faith and feared it would cause her and the children to lose respect for him.



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Be Clear

- Make clear the distinction between your salvation experience and later growth experiences.
- "Was he saved the first time or the second time?"



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Ditch the Lingo


- Walked the aisle
- Prayed the prayer
- Gloriously saved



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Don't Preach

- Just tell your story
- Your story, rightly told, will be challenging in and of itself.



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Come Across as In Progress

- Humility and honesty polish a testimony.
- People relate better to our weaknesses and struggles than to our successes.
- Celebrities may draw bigger crowds, but people often get more out of hearing an honest person with whom they have more in common.



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A FAMILY MINISTRY THAT WORKS USES BASICS FOR IMPACT


Session 7 – Protecting the Unity



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Ephesians 4:3-6
New American Standard


3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.



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Robert Naylor
The Baptist Deacon

"When a man becomes a deacon, he loses the privilege, if such exists, of participating in a church row. A member of the ranks may claim that often-abused privilege, 'speaking his mind.' When a man becomes a deacon—selected and called by the Holy Spirit, chosen by the church, dedicated by personal choice—he forfeits the right to promote in any fashion, a division in the life of the church. The one inescapable duty of the deacon in the New Testament was the protection of the church fellowship.



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When things arise that are divisive, it is time for a deacon who believes the Book to stand up and say: 'We cannot do it this way in this church. We must have harmony and peace if we are to follow Christ.' That could make the difference between a great, fruitful church and an ineffective, dried-up one."



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Disunity Could Be Caused By...

- Doctrinal controversy
 - Tongues, Predestination, Specifics of the Second Coming, etc.
- Someone developing a personal following
- The application of church discipline – sinner or victim
- Differing expectations of pastor



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Preventing Disunity


WHAT DEACONS CAN DO



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Early Warning Detection System

- Deacons are the eyes and ears of the church leadership team
- With early warnings, they enable the church to “Nip it in the bud!”



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Apprehend, Foresee, and Take Steps to Avoid Danger


- Say up front what will not be a controversy here
 - *In essentials, unity*
 - *In non-essentials, liberty*
 - *In all things, love*
- *We don't fight over spiritual gifts, predestination, or the details of the Lord's return*
- Deal with touchy subjects before there are actual people involved (eg. Divorced deacons)



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Don't Let Sleeping Dogs Lie


- It's not a sleeping dog just because it isn't biting you.
- *Have deacons trained in conflict resolution*
- *Philippians 4:2-3 "I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I also ask you, true partner, to help these women who have contended for the gospel at my side, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers whose names are in the book of life."*



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Deacons and Pastor

- First Timothy 5:19 “Don't accept an accusation against an elder unless it is supported by two or three witnesses.”
- Staff against weaknesses
 - People expect: visiting pastor, prepared preacher, compassionate counselor, soul winner, administrator, disciple-maker, and family man



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