



My Confirmation Testimony



Can I Get a Witness?

NOTES

One of the final pieces of this Confirmation Journey is for you to think through, write, and share your testimony. It's a big deal! This is an opportunity for you to reflect and share how you've noticed Jesus changing you and growing your faith. These next pages will help you understand what a testimony is and help you plan how to write and share yours.

That word might sound scary, too: *share*. You might be thinking to yourself, "What do you mean I have to share my testimony?" We'll talk more about that below. For now, know that once your testimony is complete you'll be asked to send your testimony to Pastor Lee. Who you share it with beyond that is completely up to you but your parents, guardians, or mentors would be a great place to start!

So, exactly is a testimony?

Great question! A testimony is something that gives witness (or testament) to something or someone else. For example, sometimes people are called into court to give testimony about someone or something that happened. Their testimony provides some sort of proof about something that has happened that they may have witnessed.

Something similar could be said about this testimony. What you're preparing is a Christian testimony, which means you are sharing a witness about the work of God in your life. Here are some ways to think about your testimony:

- Your spiritual life story
- Your statement of faith
- A map of your spiritual journey
- A photo album of your faith life

You might be thinking to yourself, **"I can see why you're having us write this, but why would I share my testimony with anyone?"**

Another great question! First, and most important, you have something to share. You do! God has been at work in your life in big and small ways--ways that are unique to you and your circumstances.

No matter how long you've been following Jesus on this journey of faith you have something to share about His work in your life. It might be dramatic, a huge change that came over you in a powerful way. Or it might not. It might be how God worked in ordinary ways in your heart over a period of time. It doesn't matter either way! What does matter is that you have a story to tell and it should be told.

Brainstorming Faith Memories

With that, now is a great time to think about people God has placed in your life to help guide you in things of faith. Your parents, mentors, and pastors are all here for you and can help you work on this testimony and help you put into words what God has been doing in your life.

Use the space below and on the following page (or if you're using this resource digitally, take out a sheet of paper) to start making some notes about ways God has been at work in your life. They can be as brief or extensive as you'd like them to be! We'll call these *faith memories*.

These may include memorable moments with fellow Christians in worship or fellowship or discipleship. They may also have been while you were at a Christian camp or around the family table. Be sure to include significant moments in life (like baptism, family milestones, or getting some big news). You may also choose to include spiritual influences, like parents, grandparents, mentors, siblings, teachers, or coaches.

WHAT ARE SOME SIGNIFICANT OR IMPACTFUL MILESTONES IN YOUR LIFE? THESE COULD BE GOOD OR BAD.

WHEN WERE SOME TIMES IN YOUR LIFE WHERE YOU HAVE SEEN GOD AT WORK?

IS THERE A TIME WHEN YOU'VE BEEN IN WORSHIP OR WITH THE CHURCH THAT WAS MEANINGFUL? WHY WAS IT MEANINGFUL?

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WAS THERE A SPECIAL TRIP, RETREAT, OR CONVERSATION THAT REALLY INFLUENCED YOUR FAITH JOURNEY? WHY WAS IT SIGNIFICANT TO YOU?

WHAT EXPERIENCES HAVE CAUSED YOU TO WRESTLE WITH OR STRUGGLE IN AREAS OF FAITH? WHY?

**WHO ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL INFLUENCES?
HOW HAVE THEY INFLUENCED YOU?**

As You Continue On This Journey...

As you begin this process of putting your testimony down on paper, remember these words from 1 Peter 3:15:

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

Working on this testimony will help you be prepared to give an answer for what you believe because you will have thought it through, put it on paper, and shared it with others. Once you've completed this process of writing your testimony, you will be even more prepared when someone in your life asks why faith, church, and Jesus are important to you.

The Three Stories of a Testimony

When you look back on your life and as you start to think about the writing process, it's good to keep in mind that your testimony is actually made up of three different stories. Keeping each of these in perspective will help you as you begin to think about what to write.

MY STORY: Where I Was, Where I Am Now. My Story tells your experience. In My Story there's usually a moment where you recognized that things needed to change or you recognized that things did change. My Story might be a transformation story or a growth story. More on that later.

HIS STORY: Where God Has Been At Work In My Story. His Story explains how God was working in the experiences you mentioned in My Story. It's you telling about where you recognized that God was at work. You may have noticed this during the events in My Story or later. His Story makes sure the focus of your testimony isn't on you but on God and what He has done.

YOUR STORY: Where Someone Else Sees Themselves In My Story/His Story. Your Story is how you connect My Story to the listener, the one who will hear your testimony. Hopefully as they listen to you tell My Story and His Story they begin to see how God has been and is at work in their own circumstances, too. Your Story makes sure that your testimony is something others can relate to.

You've already made notes about faith memories. Each of those in their own way have the potential to be the sparks that get a testimony going. Those faith memories are reminders about times when your My Story met His Story--times when what God was doing intersected with your life. As those two stories collide and you share them with someone else, their Your Story is triggered and a Christian testimony is the result.

What God was doing in my life at the time. He's always at work, we often just don't notice.

- What was God going?
- Who did He use?



The goal of a testimony is to tell my story but have the listener connect to their story.

- How does your story connect to them?
- What did you learn that others might be able to learn from God's work in your life?

My experience, which is either about transformation or growth.

- Where in my life have I seen God at work?
- Did He transform me?
- Has He been helping me to grow as a disciple?

As these three pieces come together, you will begin to see that your testimony will fall into one of two categories: it will either be a *transformation* story or a *growth* story. In the next section you will find a good overview of both types. Later on you will find questions and worksheets that will help you start planning your testimony once you've determined what type of testimony you'd like to share. Even, so these three pieces of every testimony will always be at work no matter what type of testimony you end up sharing.

Two Types of Testimonies

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Is My Story a Transformation Story?

A transformation story, one that tells how God *brought you to faith* in Him, does several things:

- Gives hope to non-Christians by showing them how God cares for everyone
- Encourages Christians by reminding them of their own salvation
- Reminds you of God's goodness, which we all need to be reminded!
- Gives the "big picture" of your life by including your life before meeting Christ and after

There is no formula for a transformation story, but if there was this one might look like this...

BEFORE + HOW + AFTER = MY TRANSFORMATION STORY

In this kind of story you might share what your life was before you met Jesus, or **BEFORE** you became committed to following Him. What issues did you wrestle with? What were your thoughts about faith, God, and church? What were you doing with your life? In what direction were you heading? How did you feel?

Then you would tell **HOW** Jesus stepped in. What was said? Who told you about Jesus? Where were you? What were you thinking? How were you feeling? What did you say or pray? This part is critical because non-believers need to know that it's simple to develop a relationship with Jesus. They need to realize that they don't have to have a church membership, or a perfect past or anything else in order to put their trust in Jesus.

Finally you want to tell what your life has been like **AFTER** trusting Jesus to be your Lord. Be honest! Don't think you have to make your life look neat and pretty. Even in the midst of your struggles, Jesus can teach you incredible things, so share what you've learned and where you hope to be as you follow Jesus every day.

Is My Story a Growth Story?

A growth story, one that shares what God has been teaching you lately, does these things:

- Shows non-Christians that God is real and personal to you as they hear how He's alive and at work today
- Motivates Christians as it reminds them that God cares about all the details of life
- Holds you accountable as it encourages you to "walk the talk"
- Gives a "snapshot" of your life by showing us one piece of it
- Shows a realistic side to the Christian faith as it reveals the bumps and bruises all Christians experience

Again, no formula will fit every story, but if there was one a growth story might lay out like this...

ISSUE + LESSON + RESPONSE = MY GROWTH STORY

What **ISSUE** or **QUESTION** have you been struggling with? What's been going on in your life that God is using to challenge or stretch you? In what ways have you been stumbling in your walk with Christ?

What **LESSON** did you learn from your issue/question? What insight from the Bible did God give you? What friend encouraged you? What have you learned or in what way have you grown since the issue/question first presented itself?

What **RESPONSE** is God calling for? Or what **RESPONSE** do you need from your listeners? If there was a definite lesson God taught you, how does He want you to live now? If there hasn't been an answer yet, how do you want others to pray for you? Could your response challenge others to grow?

Transformation Story Questions & Worksheet

Remember, there is no formula for a transformation story, but if there was this one might look like this...

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BEFORE + HOW + AFTER = MY TRANSFORMATION STORY

Use the questions below to generate ideas and the worksheet on the left (or a spare piece of paper) to fill in your outline and notes.

BEFORE

- Tell how you thought, acted, and felt before you knew Jesus.
- Describe what you put your faith in or what you trusted for security (friends, money, dating relationships, school, activity, sex, sports, etc.).
- Share what you thought about God, the Bible, and Christians.
- Tell what hope you had for the future.

HOW

- Describe how you got to the point at which you knew you needed Jesus.
- Who told you about Jesus? Under what conditions?
- Share what changed that enabled you to trust Jesus.
- Write down the details of your immediate thoughts after putting your faith in Him.

AFTER

- Explain what your first days and months were like as a new Christian and what your life is like now.
- What questions have been answered for you? What questions remain?
- Have you reached out to anyone since becoming a Christian? How do you now feel about God, the Bible, church, and other Christians?
- What are the biggest differences in your life now that you're a Christian? Biggest joys? Biggest fears?

MY TRANSFORMATION STORY

BEFORE + HOW + AFTER = MY TRANSFORMATION STORY

A. **BEFORE** (*MY STORY*)

B. **HOW** (*HIS STORY*)

C. **AFTER**

D. IMPORTANT SCRIPTURE PASSAGES--WHAT SCRIPTURE PASSAGES SUPPORT MY LEARNINGS?

E. CONNECITNG MY EXPERIENCE AND NEEDS TO THAT OF OTHERS (*YOUR STORY*)

F. CONCLUSION--WHAT HAS THIS TAUGHT YOU ABOUT BEING A FOLLOWER OF JESUS AND WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO AS YOU CONITNUE TO FOLLOW HIM?

*Use these notes on this worksheet as a basic outline
as you begin writing your testimony.*

Growth Story Questions & Worksheet

Remember, there is no formula for a growth story, but if there was this one might look like this...

NOTES

ISSUE + LESSON + RESPONSE = MY GROWTH STORY

Use the questions below to generate ideas and the worksheet on the left (or a spare piece of paper) to fill in your outline and notes.

ISSUE

- Tell what question or life issue was nagging at you and why.
- Share how the issue or question affected you, your walk with God, other relationships, involvement in other activities, etc.

LESSON

- Tell about the process you went through to deal with the issue or question.
- Describe who helped you during that time (friend, family member, pastor, Bible, etc).
- Describe the conclusion you came to from this experience.
- Share what you've learned through the process about yourself, God, others, the church, etc.

RESPONSE

- Share your current plan to continue moving forward in your walk with Christ as a result of this journey.
- Share whether or not you feel equipped to help others with similar struggles or questions.
- Tell about your biggest surprise (good or bad) during the lesson.
- Tell how others might be able to care for you.

MY GROWTH STORY

ISSUE + LESSON + RESPONSE = MY GROWTH STORY

A. **ISSUE** (*MY STORY*)

B. **LESSON** (*HIS STORY*)

C. **RESPONSE**

D. IMPORTANT SCRIPTURE PASSAGES--WHAT SCRIPTURE PASSAGES SUPPORT MY LEARNINGS?

E. CONNECITNG MY EXPERIENCE AND NEEDS TO THAT OF OTHERS (*YOUR STORY*)

F. CONCLUSION--WHAT HAS THIS TAUGHT YOU ABOUT BEING A FOLLOWER OF JESUS AND WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO AS YOU CONITNUE TO FOLLOW HIM?

*Use these notes on this worksheet as a basic outline
as you begin writing your testimony.*

Tips on Telling Your Story

NOTES

Here are some quick tips that may help your preparation and enhance your presentation, especially for when it comes time for you to share it. Some of you will be asked to share your testimony in front of your fellow confirmands on the day of our Confirmation Run-Through. Even if you don't plan to present, write your testimony as if you would! After all, testimonies are meant to be shared—maybe not now but at some point in your journey.

PRAY This might seem obvious but sometimes we can get so consumed in the task of writing and figuring out our testimony that we forget to do what is essential! *Stop now* and turn it over to God in prayer before you even begin the process.

Remember our lesson from Unit 4: prayer is simply talking to God.

Share with Him what your feeling as you start this process and what you need from Him.

DO A HEART CHECK Are you ready to publicly represent Jesus? Be sure your heart is right with God and others. Is there anyone you need to talk to? Apologize to? No better time than now!

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE Remember, you're writing this as if you were going to share it with your Confirmation class—people just like you, with the same struggles and the same task of writing a testimony. This is an opportunity for them to celebrate with you how God has been at work in your life and also the chance to encourage them with your testimony. It's a win, win!

PRINT OR WRITE IT OUT This is important when it comes time to share. Not only will this help you get your thoughts together, but it will enable you to begin remembering your story. Plus, if you completely forget everything—including your name—it's right in front of you. Also, be sure to type it in a regular, easy to read font.

GET FEEDBACK Before you present your story publicly at any point in your life, be sure to share it with a trusted adult, like a parent or guardian, and anyone else you trust to get their thoughts and feelings. Be open to comments so your testimony can be as clear and effective as possible!

PRACTICE Before you share it in person, it's good to actually practice reading it out loud. Before you present it in front of a group, read it out loud *at least three times!*

KEEP IT SHORT: 3-5 MINUTES You don't have to share every detail tell your whole life story. Maybe one day you will get that opportunity! For now, keep it simple and clear.

IGNORE DOUBTS Expect your mind to be filled with lots of doubts and messages like, "Who do you think you are to share your story? You're such a hypocrite. God can't use you." This is a strategy of Satan. Fortunately, as a Christian, you don't have to be perfect to share your story (no one is perfect!). But you do need to know that God is with you and is cheering you on. And so are the number of people who are praying for you constantly.

KEEP YOUR FOCUS ON GOD Remember, it's God who has given you a story to tell. Be excited about your story, but be sure to give God the credit He deserves.

HAVE FUN! You are loved by God and your friends no matter how you do, so relax and enjoy the privilege of writing down your story with the potential of telling others about the incredible relationship you have (and they can have) with Jesus.

Now What?

- 1. WRITE IT OUT.** After you've decided what kind of testimony (transformation story or growth story) you'd like to give, use the questions and worksheets on the previous pages to help you prepare and begin the writing process.
- 2. SHARE IT WITH YOUR PARENTS/GUARDIANS.** Get some feedback. Does it make sense? What ideas might be helpful? Be quick to listen, but don't feel like you need to include suggestions. Remember, it's your story.
- 3. SHARE IT.** Remember the tips listed above, especially to have fun! When you're ready to turn it in, email it to Pastor Lee at hopfl@trinityklein.org. After reading through all of these wonderful testimonies and Pastor Lee will ask a handful to present to your testimony to your Confirmation class at Confirmation Run-Through.

If for some reason you aren't asked to share your testimony at Confirmation Run-Through, it's not because your testimony isn't worth sharing—it is! Those who are chosen will be representing a small piece of what God has been doing in your class. If you are asked, please prayerfully consider the opportunity and how God could use your testimony before accepting or denying the request.

