

Giving Your Personal Testimony

The aim of giving your personal testimony is to be a witness to the working of God's grace in your own life, so that the faith of your listeners may be built up. Remember the ABC of giving a testimony:

- **A**udible. Speak as if the person furthest from you is the one you are personally addressing. You might like to have a friend sit down the back and indicate to you if you are too quiet.
- **B**rief. Before you prepare your testimony, ask the leader how much time is allocated for it, and make sure you stick to that time, no matter what you must leave out. Therefore, you should pray about what is really essential to tell in your story, and make sure this is included.
- **C**hrist-centered. The focus should be on God's initiative and God's grace, and not on your-self. It is your experience of God working in the world that people want to hear.

When preparing, first ask the Holy Spirit to guide you, so that the most important things will be said. Believe that God will empower you through his Spirit to be his witness as he promised (Acts 1:8).

In preparing your story, you might like to structure it in this way:

- Before God's loving touch. Set the scene, explaining the situation before God acted. Tell your story in an interesting way. Avoid identifying other people in the story unless you have their express permission. Don't take too long getting to the point. There isn't time for your whole life story, as interesting as it is.
- The experience of God's grace. Describe the turning point. Describe the experience. Share your feelings and the meaning of the event for you.
- The change. Describe your current situation. Explain the changes in your life (prayer, experience of God's presence, relationships, healing, experience of Church, etc).

Remember, in your testimony, you are giving thanks to God for his goodness. Moreover, your words are words that can build up others. Therefore, avoid criticism or judgment of others. Instead, use words that give hope and meaning to your listeners, sharing with them the goodness of life in God.

In telling your story:

- Look at your audience
- Keep an eye on the time
- Don't lecture — this is not a teaching you're giving
- Don't be hard on yourself. Rather, rejoice in the Saviour
- Don't exaggerate. God doesn't need it
- Smile

After you have given this testimony, recall the other experiences of God's grace that you didn't have time to mention. And begin to get ready for your next testimony — each of us has many stories to tell.