

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians

Sunday, October 29, 2017 Pastor Tom Gang

In the last three messages from Galatians 1-2 we have seen how Paul's defense of the gospel was contended by presenting his personal _____. Today we will turn aside from our textual study to address the importance of our own life experiences. Perhaps the greatest witnessing or inspirational tool any of us possess is our individual _____—our life before we received Christ, events surrounding our salvation, and our personal life experiences since, looking ahead to the future. This morning we will examine practical issues surrounding this essential theme.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY – GALATIANS 1:10-2:21

1. Identifying your personal testimonies

- a. Differing types of testimonies – Daniel 4:2; John 9:24-25; 15:26-27; 1 John 1:2-3; 5:10-11; Ps. 22:22; 35:28; 66:16; 71:15-16; Mt. 5:14-16; 10:32; Mk. 5:19-20; Lk. 21:12-13; Acts 14:27; 23:12-24:27; 1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; Gal. 1:10-2:21; 6:14; Phil. 1:12, 27-30; 1 Thess. 5:11, 14; 2 Ti. 1:8; Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Peter 2:21; Rev. 12:11

- Salvation testimonies –

To edify other believers

As a tool to witness the gospel to the unsaved

To bring _____ to God

- Inspirational testimonies

To motivate others, lost or saved, to do something they would not normally do

To encourage or strengthen other believers in time of need

To persuade or convince others to change their thinking

- Informational testimonies

To give an accurate account of an event or circumstance to aid in a decision-making process

To report on a missionary trip to other believers or an entire church assembly

Any account rendering designed to provide needed information

b. Some biblical examples:

- John 4 – The woman at the well. Her testimony brought curiosity to the hearts and minds of the hearers. They wanted to know more.
- John 9 – The man born blind. He gave a defense of how he received his sight in an encounter with Jesus. They did not believe him.
- Philippians 1 – Paul tells his story. Each time he spoke he simply shared his story—how God _____ his life.

- c. You have an important story – Every individual believer has a story. Your particular story, no matter what the details, is unique. One is ____ better than the other. God uses each of them for His glory.
- We measure value by the uniqueness of something (I.E. gold, silver, copper, diamonds, etc.)
Q: How many of you are there? A: _____!

2. Organizing your personal testimonies

a. Key elements to consider

- Be prepared – Practice your testimonies, especially your salvation testimony.
- Speak clearly – Don't talk in circles, and don't be random, connect your life with the listener. Be precise with details.
- Be _____ about your life – Be yourself, don't try to be someone you aren't.
- Be flexible for varying time allowances. Study to give your salvation or discipleship testimony in 1, 3, 5, or 10 minutes.
- Remember, your story is designed to bring _____ to God, not you!

b. Verbalizing and communicating

- Make sure they are interested in hearing. It is always good to ____ if you can share your testimony or talk about God and the Bible...
- Be a good storyteller. Be persuasive, ____ pushy. Tell specific memories and experiences. Avoid speaking in generalities.
- Include meaningful Bible verses to compliment and solidify your story.
- Avoid speaking Christian-ease...words only born-again Christians are familiar with...
- Make sure people understand that you came to a point of _____. Most people here in America think that because they are not something (Hindu, Muslim, etc.) that they are "Christian.". Also, religious or church-going people will not have a testimony and will have to come to grips with your point of decision and their lack of one.
- Close (and open) the conversation by asking them, "*If they were to die today would they go to heaven?*" (or a question like this). Don't be afraid; they will appreciate it after they get saved!
- _____ to God about your story. Ask him to direct you and help you prepare. Ask him daily for people to share your story with...

- c. A biblical pattern: Paul's salvation testimony before king Agrippa
- Acts 26:1-12 – _____ I knew Christ, I lived and thought this way – In this part of your testimony you want to share your spiritual background: what you thought of God, the Bible, religion, etc. You want to mention other things that characterized your life and how these things affected your outlook on life (I.E. religious, dredging through the motions of church-going, lonely, depressed, crazed, violent, alcoholic, etc.)

 - Acts 26:13-19 – ____ I received Christ – At this point you will share the gospel—the plan of salvation and the personal decision you made to become a Christian...explain what thoughts went through your mind and how you came to this important decision.

 - Acts 26:20-32 – _____ I received Christ, these changes took place. Explain how your outlook on God, the Bible, and life has changed. Then explain how this has affected your behavior, your thoughts, and your life in general.
- d. Study these things and ___ them. There is nothing more important to reach the lost world and to help other believers. This will bring _____ to God!