HOW TO GIVE A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

I. THE TERM “TESTIMONY” DEFINED.

A. The Dictionary Defines the Word “testimony” as, “a statement given as evidence or proof by a witness.”

B. The Bible Uses the Two Words “confess” and “testify” to Show that a Testimony Is Being Given.
   1. In the Bible confess means, “to make a plain, clear announcement about something or someone” (John 9:22; 12:42; Acts 24:14).
   2. In the Bible testify means, “to be a witness to; to bear record of; to give evidence; to declare (announce or state) something to be true” (Luke 16:27-28; Acts 10:42; 20:20-21).
   3. A personal testimony then is, “a declaration, or statement, of a personal experience to establish a fact” (Acts 22:1-16).

II. THERE IS A BIBLE BASIS FOR GIVING A PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

A. There Is a Need for Giving a Testimony.
   1. Everyone will be required to give a testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil 2:9-11).
      a. Everyone in heaven, including angels, seraphim, cherubim and saved people.
      b. Everyone on earth, including nations, tongues and people.
      c. Everyone under the earth, including Satan, demons and unsaved people in Hell.
   2. A testimony to God is needed for salvation (Acts 8:36-37; Rom 10:9-10; 1 John 4:2).
   3. A testimony is needed to receive honor:
      a. In the presence of God the Father (Mat 10:32).

B. The Results of not Giving a Testimony on Earth by the Saved:
   1. They will lose honor and Jesus Christ will also be ashamed of them (Mark 8:38)
   2. They will be denied (will lose) their right to reign with Christ (2 Tim 2:12).
III. THE BASIC CONTENT OF A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

A. A Testimony Should Be a Declaration (statement) of what a Person Has Seen, Heard or Said (Acts 4:20).
   1. It can be a statement about things in the Bible (Psa 119:46; Mark 2:25-26).
   2. It can be a statement about salvation (1 Cor 15:1-4).
   3. It can be a statement about the blessings of God (Eph 1:1-3).

B. A Testimony Should Be a Declaration of What Has Been personally Experienced (Psa 66:16).
   2. Like the Maniac of Gadara did in Mark 5:18-20.

C. A Testimony Should Be a Declaration of What Is personally Believed (2 Cor 4:13).
   1. Like the Apostle Peter did in Matthew 16:13-16.
   2. Like the Ethiopian Eunuch did in Acts 8:35-38.

IV. HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

A. What You Should Consider before Preparing Your Testimony:
   1. You should consider varying the contents of your testimony depending on the time limit you have to give it.
   2. You should consider the time involved in giving your testimony, allowing at least five minutes.
      a. Start with your life before you were saved (20% of the allotted time).
      b. Then relate how you were saved (40% of the allotted time).
      c. End your testimony with your life as a Christian (40% of the allotted time).
   3. You should consider the emphasis of your testimony, how you were saved and your life since you were saved, not your sinful past.

B. What You Should Do while preparing Your Testimony:
   1. You should ask God for wisdom and guidance (Jas 1:5-6).
   2. You should emphasize (stress) the positive changes in your life.
      a. Knowing God’s love.
      b. Receiving direction from the word of God (the Bible).
      c. Receiving a new inner strength through the Holy Spirit.
      d. No longer fearing death.
      e. No longer fearing old age.
      f. Having peace of mind.
      g. Having a purpose in life.
      h. Having prayers answered.
i. Having a reason for living.

j. Having a new outlook on life.

k. Having fellowship with God and other Christians.

l. Having the feeling of complete forgiveness of sins.

3. You should be sure to give enough details to make your testimony interesting.

C. What You Should Consider not Doing when You Give Your Testimony:
   1. You should not use Christian terms like, “convicted, sanctified or justified,” unless they are known or are first defined (or explained).
   2. You should not read your whole testimony word for word.
   3. You should not ramble on (talk too much) about any one part of your testimony.
   4. You should not criticize other Christians, denominations, or Church groups.
   5. You should not give the impression that the Christian life is free of problems.

V. HOW TO GIVE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

A. When Giving Your Testimony:
   1. You should give it with enthusiasm (feelings).
   2. You should give it in a clear, natural, relaxed tone of voice.
   3. You should give it without nervous mannerisms (habits).
      a. Do not clear your throat a lot.
      b. Do not say “uh; ah” or any other repeated word.
      c. Do not jingle things in your pocket.
   4. You should give it without preaching it.
   5. You should give it with a smile, but not an exaggerated grin.
   6. You should give it after you memorize the facts, but not memorizing it word for word.

B. While Giving Your Testimony, Be Flexible and Adapt to different Situations.
   1. You should adapt to giving it while on the job.
   2. You should adapt to giving it during bad times.
   3. You should adapt to giving it during good times.
   4. You should adapt to giving it while on visitation.
   5. You should adapt to giving it when in a Church setting.

VI. WHEN TO GIVE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

A. Be Ready to Give Your Testimony at a Moment’s Notice (1 Pet 3:15).
B. Be Ready to Give Your Testimony in almost every Situation.
   1. Be ready to give it when you are not able to use a Bible.
   2. Be ready to give it when you are telling someone about another person’s experiences.
   3. Be ready to give it when you are speaking to someone while on visitation.
   4. Be ready to give it when lost people make comments to you during sports activities.
   5. Be ready to give it when lost fellow-workers are sharing their personal experiences with you.

VII. A FINAL CHECK LIST FOR YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

   A. Does Your Testimony Express Your Relationship with God?

   B. Does Your Testimony Express Your Personal Experience and/or God’s Faithfulness?

   C. Does Your Testimony Emphasize the positive Benefits of Your Life in Jesus Christ rather than Your sinful Past?