



WEEK 19

2ND SEMESTER · DISCIPLESHIP & SERVICE

Sharing the Gospel and My Testimony

Telling my story so it points to Christ

SPIRITUAL THEME

Sharing the Gospel

PERSONAL THEME

**Giving my testimony – my story
with Jesus**

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Spiritual Theme: Sharing the Gospel

Personal Theme: Giving my testimony – my story with Jesus

Main Bible Passage: Acts 26:12-23

Parallel Passages: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Mark 5:19

Lesson Aim: Students learn to share the gospel clearly and give a personal testimony that points to Jesus, not to self.

1. Introduction: My Story Must Serve His Gospel

Many Christians know that they should share the gospel, but they are not sure how to speak personally. They may think, "My story is not powerful," or "I was not saved from dramatic sin," or "I do not know enough theology." But the Bible shows us that a testimony is not meant to make us look special. A testimony is meant to show what Jesus has done.

In Acts 26, Paul gives his testimony before King Agrippa. He speaks about his past, his encounter with the risen Jesus, his calling, and the message he now preaches. He does not make himself the hero. Christ is the hero. Paul's story becomes a doorway into the gospel.

A Christian testimony is my story with Jesus, told in a way that points people to the gospel.

This matters for Bible students because testimony is one of the simplest bridges into evangelism. A student may not answer every hard question, but he can say, "This is what Jesus has done in my life, and this is the gospel I now believe."

2. Reading The Whole Passage Together: Acts 26:12-23

"Whereupon as I traveled to Damascus with the authority and commission from the chief priests, at noon, O king, I saw on the way a light from the sky, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who traveled with me. When we had all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But arise, and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you a servant and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and of the things which I will reveal to you; delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those of Damascus, at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing

works worthy of repentance. Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would happen, that the Christ must suffer, and that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to these people and to the Gentiles." (Acts 26:12-23)

3. The First Movement: Paul Tells The Truth About His Past

Paul begins by telling where he was going and why. He was traveling to Damascus with authority from the chief priests. He was not searching for Jesus. He was opposing Jesus and persecuting His people. This is important because Paul does not clean up his past to protect his reputation. He tells the truth because grace is greater than his sin.

A testimony should be honest, but not dirty or proud. Some people speak about their sinful past in a way that makes sin sound exciting. That is not biblical. Paul mentions his past to show the mercy of Christ, not to entertain people. The focus is not how bad Paul was, but how powerful Jesus is to save.

A good testimony is honest about sin, but it does not glorify sin. It glorifies Christ.

Practical Application: Tell Enough, But Not Too Much

Students should learn to speak about their past with wisdom. It is enough to say, "I lived in fear," "I was proud," "I followed religion without knowing Christ," "I was controlled by sexual sin," or "I lived for myself." They do not need to describe every detail. Too much detail can distract, tempt, or shame the hearers.

In class, ask students to write two or three sentences about their life before Christ. The teacher should help them remove unnecessary details and make the focus clear: What was wrong in my life? What did I need from God? How did my life show that I needed Jesus?

4. The Second Movement: Paul Meets The Risen Jesus

The center of Paul's testimony is not a feeling, a church, or a human teacher. The center is Jesus. Paul says he saw a light from heaven and heard the voice of Jesus. The risen Christ stopped him, exposed his sin, and called him by name. Paul discovered that by persecuting believers, he was persecuting Jesus Himself.

This shows that conversion is not merely changing religion. Conversion is meeting the living Christ, being convicted of sin, and coming under His Lordship. Jesus does not only improve Paul's life. Jesus takes command of Paul's life.

The turning point of every Christian testimony is not self-improvement, but repentance and the grace and authority of Jesus Christ.

Practical Application: Make Jesus The Center

When students give testimony, they should not spend ten minutes on their old life and one sentence on Jesus. The most important part is how Jesus came to them through the Word, prayer, preaching, conviction, mercy, or a faithful witness. Even if the conversion was gradual, the testimony must make clear that salvation came from Christ, not from human effort.

A helpful sentence pattern is this: "Jesus showed me that __, **and He called me to _____**." This helps students connect conviction, grace, repentance, and faith. The aim is not to sound dramatic. The aim is to be truthful and Christ-centered.

5. The Third Movement: Paul Receives A New Purpose

Jesus tells Paul to stand up because He has appointed him as a servant and witness. This is very important. Paul is not saved only from something; he is saved for something. He is saved from sin, darkness, and rebellion. He is saved for service, witness, obedience, and mission.

Jesus says Paul will open eyes so people may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. This is strong spiritual language. The gospel is not a small religious idea. It is rescue. People need forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those sanctified by faith in Christ.

Jesus saves us from darkness and gives us a new purpose as His witnesses.

Practical Application: Show The Change Jesus Is Making

A testimony should include change, but the change must be described carefully. We should not pretend that we became perfect. We should say, "Jesus is changing me." This is more honest and more biblical. A student can say, "I still grow, but now I belong to Christ. I repent when I sin. I want to obey Him. I am learning to forgive. I am learning to serve."

This is especially helpful for students who were raised in church. Their testimony may not include a dramatic outward change, but it can still show real grace: Jesus opened my eyes, made the gospel real to me, convicted me of hidden sin, gave me love for His Word, and called me to follow Him personally.

Sketchnote: My Story With Jesus

6. The Gospel Must Be Clear: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

"Now I declare to you, brothers, the Good News which I preached to you, which also you received, in which you also stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold firmly the word which I preached to you - unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

This passage gives the core of the gospel. Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. A testimony without this gospel can become only a personal story. It may be interesting, but it may not save anyone. The gospel is the power of God, not the drama of our life story.

My testimony is useful only when it leads clearly to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Practical Application: Include The Gospel In Simple Words

Students should practice saying the gospel in simple English: **"God is holy. We have sinned. Jesus died for our sins and rose again. He calls us to repent, believe, and follow Him."** This sentence is short, but it carries the center. The student can add more depending on the conversation, but the center must not be lost.

In class, let each student write a short testimony of about three minutes. Then ask: Did I mention Jesus clearly? Did I mention sin and forgiveness? Did I mention His death and resurrection? Did I invite the listener toward repentance and faith?

7. Parallel Passage: Mark 5:19

"Go to your house, to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he had mercy on you." (Mark 5:19)

Jesus gives a simple instruction to the man He delivered: go home and tell what the Lord has done. This verse is very helpful because it shows that testimony can begin close to home. The man did not need Bible school before he could tell of mercy. He needed to speak truthfully about what the Lord had done.

This does not replace teaching and growth. New believers need discipleship. But it shows that witness can begin early. A changed life and a simple word about mercy can open a door for the

gospel.

Tell what the Lord has done, but always lead people toward the Lord Himself.

Practical Application: Start With People Who Know You

A testimony is powerful among people who knew your old life. Family and friends may not believe everything immediately, but they can see change over time. Students should not force or argue at home, but they can speak humbly and live consistently. A quiet changed life often supports a spoken testimony.

8. Cultural Background And Application For Uganda

In many Ugandan settings, storytelling is natural. People learn through stories, family history, examples, and public testimony. This can be a strength for evangelism. But testimonies can also become performance. Some people exaggerate stories to impress others. Some make the preacher, the miracle, or the church the center instead of Christ.

Bible students must learn a different way. The testimony should be honest, humble, and Christ-centered. It should not manipulate emotions. It should not promise that every problem disappears after conversion. It should show the mercy of God, the truth of the gospel, and the call to follow Jesus.

In Christian testimony, truth is more important than drama, and Christ is more important than the speaker.

9. A Simple Testimony Structure

Practical Application: Keep The Testimony Short And Clear

Many students will be tempted to speak too long. A long testimony can lose the listener, especially in a normal conversation. Teach them to prepare three versions: one minute, three minutes, and ten minutes. The one-minute version is useful in the market, at school, or when a conversation is short. The three-minute version is useful in church, outreach, or a small group. The longer version can be used when someone asks more questions.

A clear testimony should not move in many directions. It should have one straight road: this was my need, this is how Jesus met me, this is what He is changing, and this is the gospel I now believe. If the student adds too many side stories, the listener may remember the drama but miss Jesus.

Practical Application: Avoid Common Mistakes

There are some common mistakes students should avoid. Do not exaggerate to make the story sound stronger. Do not attack your family, church background, or former friends. Do not describe sin in a way that makes it attractive. Do not promise that following Jesus removes every problem. Do not speak as if your testimony is the gospel itself. Your testimony supports the gospel, but Christ crucified and risen is the message that saves.

The teacher can read sample testimony sentences and let students identify what is helpful or unhelpful. For example, "Before Christ I was lost and proud" is helpful. But a long, detailed story about immoral behavior may distract. "Jesus forgave me and is teaching me to obey" is helpful. But "now everything is easy" is not truthful and may damage trust later.

A helpful structure has four parts. **First: before Christ. What was my life like without Him? Second: meeting Christ. How did I hear, understand, and respond to the gospel (repentance)? Third: new life. What is Jesus changing in me? Fourth: gospel invitation. What does this mean for the person listening?**

This structure keeps the testimony clear and not too long. It also prevents two dangers. One danger is making the story too focused on sin. The other danger is making the story too vague, with no gospel. The best testimony is personal, honest, short enough to follow, and clear enough to point to Jesus.

Before - Met Jesus - New Life - Gospel Invitation.

10. Theological Summary

This lesson can be summarized in five truths. First, a testimony is not self-promotion; it is witness to Christ. Second, honesty about sin must lead to the mercy of Jesus. Third, the gospel must be clear: Christ died for our sins and rose again. Fourth, the changed life supports the spoken message. Fifth, every believer can begin by telling what the Lord has done.

D. T. Niles described evangelism as "one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." This fits testimony well. We are not superior people showing off our success. We are sinners who found mercy in Christ and now point others to Him.

11. Main Application For The Students

Practical Application: Move From Testimony To Invitation

A testimony should normally end with a gentle invitation. This does not need to be manipulative. A simple invitation may be: "Would you like to hear more about Jesus?" or "Can we read a Bible passage together?" or "May I pray with you?" or "Jesus also calls you to repent and believe." The invitation should fit the situation, but it should not disappear completely.

Students should practice this because many believers tell their story and then stop awkwardly. They need to learn how to open the door for response. Some people will not be ready. That is okay. The witness can still be loving and patient. But when the Holy Spirit opens a door, the student should be ready to invite the person toward Christ, Scripture, prayer, baptism, and local church fellowship.

Practical Application: Connect Testimony With Local Church

If someone responds positively, the student should not leave that person alone. The New Testament pattern is not isolated believers. New disciples need teaching, fellowship, prayer, and pastoral care. Therefore a testimony should naturally connect people toward the local church. This is especially important where people may make emotional decisions during events but receive no follow-up.

A practical follow-up plan can be simple: meet again within one week, read a short Gospel passage, pray together, invite the person to church, and connect them with a mature believer. Testimony begins a conversation; discipleship helps the new believer grow.

Each student should prepare and practice a three-minute testimony. It should be simple enough for a neighbor to understand, honest enough to be real, and biblical enough to lead to the gospel. The testimony should not end with "my life is better." It should lead to Jesus: His death, resurrection, forgiveness, and call to repent and believe.

A faithful testimony is personal, truthful, Christ-centered, gospel-clear, and humble.

Practical Response Time

Give students quiet time to write. Ask them to use four headings: Before, Met Jesus, New Life, Gospel. Then let them practice in pairs. The listening partner should answer: Was Jesus clear? Was the gospel clear? Was the testimony humble? Was there one practical invitation?

12. Discussion Questions

1. Why is it dangerous when a testimony makes the speaker the hero?
2. What parts of Paul's testimony in Acts 26 are most important?
3. How can we speak honestly about sin without glorifying sin?
4. Why must 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 shape every testimony?
5. Who is one person who could hear your testimony this week?

13. Group Exercise

Divide the class into small groups. Each student shares a short draft of his or her testimony. The group listens for four things: Is the story clear? Is Jesus central? Is the gospel included? Is the application respectful and practical?

After each testimony, the group gives one encouragement and one improvement. The goal is not to embarrass anyone. The goal is to help every student become clearer and more faithful in witness.

14. Memory Statement

My testimony is my story with Jesus, told truthfully and humbly, so that others may hear the gospel and turn to Him.

15. Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for Your mercy in our lives. Help us to tell the truth about what You have done without pride, fear, or exaggeration. Make our testimonies clear, humble, and centered on You. Teach us to share the gospel faithfully: that You died for our sins and rose again. Use our stories to point people to Your grace, forgiveness, and new life. Amen.

Source Note

Research and background were checked against Acts 26:12-23, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, and Mark 5:19. The testimony structure follows the biblical pattern of former life, encounter with Christ, new obedience, and gospel witness. D. T. Niles quote included as a short illustrative mission saying.