

GOSPEL TESTIMONY

Discipleship Guide #6

TODAY'S GOAL

- For the student(s) to find joy in reminding themselves of God's transforming work in their life and be equipped to share their testimony with others in a clear and concise way.
- Be aware – not all of our students (even those who have grown up in the church) have a saving faith in Jesus and this might be the week that they first realize this. In this case, we don't want to "force" a testimony that is not based on real faith leading to a truly regenerate heart. If it happens in this time that you sense your student(s) does not have a genuine saving faith in Jesus, please have a conversation with your flock leader and/or the student(s) ministry team of steps to move forward in discipleship.

OPEN IN PRAYER

- Pray together and ask God to prepare your hearts to hear from His Word today.

DISCUSS WHAT A TESTIMONY TRULY IS & WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

- First, express the following explanation of a testimony to your student(s) in your own words
 - The purpose of your testimony is that others would hear the impact of the gospel in your life and hopefully desire the same change for themselves, whether for salvation or to grow their relationship with Jesus. Your testimony is about how God, through the grace of Jesus, has transformed your life for His glory and our good. Since the real main character in all our stories is God, we need not worry about whether or not our testimony is as "radically life changing" as someone else's. Rather, we are to worry about sharing exactly how God chose to redeem us according to His plan, purpose, and timing since this is how He desired to use you as a witness of Himself to the unredeemed world. Your testimony should clearly communicate the gospel (Jesus' life, death, and resurrection), truths of who God is, and how your relationship with God has changed your life.
- Then, share the following quote by John Piper: "One of the reasons I teach and preach on the doctrines of grace is because there are so many Christians who don't know how they got saved, so that they don't know they have a stunning testimony that they sheer believe. Your belief is a miracle; you didn't choose it." (see article in additional resources).
- Finally, read each of the following Scriptures and ask the following questions after each reading:
How does this passage help reinforce the truth that our testimony is about what God is doing in our life?
 - **Ephesians 2:1-10**
 - Example answer: "But God": point out the big shift here – target the point that it is *our* story of what *God has done*). "That He might display the immeasurable riches of His grace": our story is about the amazing things about God.
 - **2 Corinthians 5:17**
 - Example answer: Our "old self" passes away and we become "new creations" because of God's work in our life (re-highlight Eph 2:1-10 if needed).
 - **Ephesians 4:17-32**

- Example answer: Consider the work God has been doing since our initial salvation as a means of recalling His continuing faithfulness to us – “put off the former way of life” and “renew the spirit of our mind”.

SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY

- Take a moment to share an abbreviated, appropriate version of your testimony with the student(s) if you have never done so. This is a good opportunity for the student(s) to hear of God’s faithfulness in your life and hear an example of what it looks like to have a gospel-centric God-focused testimony.

HAVE THE STUDENT(S) SHARE THEIR TESTIMONY

- Have your student(s) read to you their testimony they should have written as homework following their last time with you. Look for ways to affirm and encourage your student(s) after they share their testimony. Highlight ways they highlighted the gospel. Encourage them in areas they could include a clear gospel message and or more emphasis on the work God is doing in them.

DISCUSS BENEFITS OF SHARING YOUR TESTIMONY

- Discuss the following benefits for non-believers, believers, and us in sharing our testimony.
 - Gives hope to non-Christians (shows them God cares for everyone).
 - Shows non-Christians that God is real and personal to you (He’s still alive and at work today).
 - Shows a realistic side to the Christian faith (reveals the bumps and bruises all Christians experience).
 - Encourages Christians (reminds them of their own salvation).
 - Motivates Christians (reminds them that God cares about all the details of life).
 - Reminds you of God’s faithfulness and how He continues to work in your life (everyone needs a reminder of this).

CLOSE IN PRAYER

- This is a great time to worship God in thanksgiving for what He has already done in your life. Spend time thanking him. This might also be a time to pray about things that need to be put off or put on (Eph 4).

