

Contagious Christianity

Part 3

POSSIBLE TESTIMONY THEMES (HANDOUT)

- Remember that you have more than one testimony!
- God allows us to have many experiences in our lives so we can relate to others in similar situations who need the Lord!
- Different situations will require different testimonies!
- Choose the testimony that best matches your listener.
- Realize you can tell about how others' lives have been changed, too.
- Don't use religious terms, clichés or broad generalities.
- Ask, "If I were an unbeliever, would this make sense to me?"

TRANSLATING CHRISTIAN TERMS (HANDOUT)

HOW TO LEAD INTO YOUR TESTIMONY (HANDOUT)

- Listen for problems or needs that Jesus has helped you with.
- Refer to a news item dealing with a common need or problem.
- Start with a statement they'd agree with or a situation they relate to.
- Apologize to people you've known a long time but not witnessed to.

MY FISHING POND

- "Jesus called out, 'Come follow me and I will show you how to fish for the souls of men.'" (Matthew 4:19)
- Following and fishing go together!
- We are to be matchmakers, not salesmen.
- We are to be fishermen, not hunters.

HUNTING/FISHING COMPARISON (HANDOUT)

Three Keys to Spiritual Fishing

1. Identify your fishing pond.

MY FISHING POND (DIAGRAM ON HANDOUT)

- "You will be my witnesses – in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and in every part of the world." (Acts 1:8)
 - **Saint John – New Brunswick – Canada – Every Country**
 - "Go home to your family and friends. Tell them how much the Lord has done for you." (Mark 5:19)
 - **Family – Relatives – Friends – Acquaintances**
2. Learn about the kind of fish in your pond.
 3. Remember fish get hungry at different times.

Build A Friendship Bridge

1. Become aware
2. Commit to prayer
3. Show you care
4. Be ready to share

NEXT WEEK:
SHARING THE GOOD NEWS
(*Clear Communication – HIS story*)

An Equation For Evangelism: HP + CP + CC = MI

- Last Week: Salt of the Earth (High Potency + Close Proximity)
- This Week: Clear Communication (YOUR story)
- Matthew 5:13-16 *You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it useful again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. You are the light of the world—like a city on a mountain, glowing in the night for all to see. Don't hide your light under a basket! Instead, put it on a stand and let it shine for all. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.*

Starting Spiritual Conversations

- Direct Method
- Indirect Method
- Invitational Method

DIRECT METHOD

- Don't wait for an opportunity; create one!
- Raise a spiritual topic to see if they are interested.
- You don't force them, but you open the door.
- If they don't take the hint, return to a safe topic.

Sample Questions

- *Do you ever think about spiritual things?*
- *If you ever want to know the difference between Christianity and religion, let me know.*
- *How's it really going?*
- *Who, in your opinion, was Jesus Christ?*
- *Do you ever wonder what happens to us when we die?*
- *What do you think a real Christian is?*
- *What's your spiritual background? Were you taught a particular religion growing up?*

INDIRECT METHOD

- Builds on the direction the conversation is headed by using the topic being discussed as a BRIDGE to a related spiritual topic.

Sample Questions

- (How's it going?) Well, financially, okay; family-wise, pretty well; and spiritually, things are great. Which one do you want to talk about?
- (What are you doing on the weekend?) I enjoy working with sound equipment / kids / music / other ministry. (Where do you do that?)
- Do you think the Easter celebration is based on fact or fiction?
- Do you buy into the idea that the baby in the manger was God's Son?
- I've had similar frustrations in my life. Can I tell you about something I learned at church that really helped me?

INVITATIONAL METHOD

- Transition the conversation by inviting them to an event that relates to the topic you are discussing.
 - Give a visual reminder
 - Offer to pick them up
 - Do something together before or after the event
 - Introduce them to other Christians at the event

Starting Spiritual Conversations

- Pray about it!
- Take an interest in the other person's world
- Talk to people one-on-one
- Pique their curiosity
- Use "reciprocal reflexes"
- Be willing to take risks
- Make the most of split-second opportunities
- Don't underestimate their degree of interest!

Sharing My Testimony (HANDOUT)

- "You are the ones chosen by God ... God's instruments to do His work and speak out for Him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference He made for you." (1 Peter 2:9)
- **A personal testimony is STILL the most persuasive form of communication.**
- **DAVID:** "Come and listen, and I will tell you what God has done for me." (Psalm 66:11)
- **WOMAN AT THE WELL:** "Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in [Jesus] because of the woman's testimony." (John 4:39)
- **MAN BORN BLIND:** "I don't know whether he is good or bad, but I know this: I was blind, and now I see!" (John 9:25)
- **PETER AND JOHN:** "We cannot stop telling about the wonderful things we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20)
- **PAUL:** On six different occasions, Paul used his personal testimony to share the Good News with unbelievers. (Acts 22-26)

- **JESUS:** "I speak only of what I know by experience; I give witness only to what I have seen with my own eyes." (John 3:11)
- "Let the whole world know what He has done for you." (Psalm 105:1)
- "Every day tell how He saves us. Tell the nations of His glory; tell all peoples the miracles He does." (Psalm 96:2-3)

The Value of Your Testimony

- It is **unique** – there are no others just like it.
- It is **personal** and easy to understand.
- I am the **authority** on it, so it is difficult to argue with.
- People love a personal story – and **remember** it.
- People can **relate** to it, so it builds a relational bridge.
- In a postmodern world, it is the most **effective** witness.
- **"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." (1 Peter 3:15)**

Your Testimony

1. What my life was like before I met Christ. (LEAST TIME)
 2. How I realized I needed Christ. (MORE TIME)
 3. How I committed my life to Christ. (EVEN MORE TIME)
 4. The difference Christ has made in my life. (MOST TIME)
- If you became a Christian AS AN ADULT, use the four basic steps to compose your testimony.
 - If you became a Christian AT AN EARLY AGE BUT WALKED AWAY, use the same four steps but start with the time just prior to your RECOMMITMENT.
 - If you became a Christian AT AN EARLY AGE AND NEVER STRAYED, use the same four steps but point out some deep need or common problem that others struggle with, and explain why you never had to experience it.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARING (HANDOUT)

- The Bible doesn't tell us to share our FAITH, but to share our HOPE. What is the difference? Faith is what you believe, hope is the benefit of what you believe! Share the HOPE!