

What Makes Up a Biblical Testimony?

Scriptural References: Acts 9:1-22; Acts 22:1-22; Acts 26:1-29; John 3:1-21; Ephesians 2:1-10; Galatians 5:16-26; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; 1 Peter 2:2-3; 2 Peter 1:5-8; and Hebrews 5:12-14.

Intro: John 3:11 “Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive *our testimony.*”

Record of Paul’s Conversion to a Christ-Follower is in Acts 9

Paul gives his testimony in Acts 22:1-22 and Acts 26:1-29

3 Keys to A Biblical Testimony

Before Salvation - Acts 9:1-2, 22:3-5, 26:4-11, and Ephesians 2:1-3

Before we look at the 3 Keys to a Biblical Testimony, we must start with the realization that we are all born dead in sin and trespasses. Because of this innate sin we cannot be born saved. No pre-salvation will look different for everyone, but regardless of the specifics, we are dead in our sins. For Paul that meant being extremely religious and prideful, as well as having a murderous heart that sought the death penalty for anyone that would call on the name of Jesus as Lord.

- You Need a Place & Time

Scriptural Reference: Acts 9:3-9, 22:6-16, 26:12-18, and Ephesians 2:4-9

Paul’s place and time was on the Damascus road in the middle of the day. You may not have an exact time like 6:24 PM, or an exact date like January 26, 2014, but that doesn’t mean you don’t have a place and time. For me, the place was Cedar Glade Baptist Church Camp in Imboden, AR. The time was the summer of 1997, a few months before my 11th birthday. I know it was at the evening service and I know that the evangelist was preaching on 14:6 “*Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’*” I can’t tell you the actual date or time, but that night is forever engrained in my memory because that was the night Jesus revealed Himself to me and made me a Christ-follower.

Throughout the Old Testament we see the fathers of our faith erecting pillars (stone memorials) to signify a moment in time where the Lord had revealed Himself in a mighty way. What is your place and time? Make that a pillar in your life to look back upon and recall how Jesus revealed himself to you and made you a new creation in Christ!

- You Need Evidence of Spiritual Growth

Scriptural Reference: Acts 9:18-19, 22:17-21, 26:19-23, Ephesians 2:10, 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, 1 Peter 2:2-3, 2 Peter 1:5-8, and Hebrews 5:12-14

When Jesus met Paul on the road to Damascus it wasn't so that Paul would simply stop persecuting Jesus' followers and go to the house and chill for the rest of his life. No, Jesus had a plan for Paul, a mission for him to complete. Christ has given the same call to all of His followers "Make Disciples" and "Follow Me." We are not saved simply to keep us from eternal judgment, but Jesus has saved us to make us holy, to make us like Him, to build His kingdom by sharing the good news! We have been set apart for "*good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*"

There should be evidence of spiritual growth in the believer's life. Everyday we should make the commitment that *today, I am going to strive to be more like Jesus!* While some of us grow fast, others grow slow, the speed of spiritual growth is not a factor, simply that you are growing in the faith. Have you examined your spiritual growth lately? How is your spiritual fruit developing? Can you see, can others see, how you have been developing in your faith? Jesus says "*you will know them by their fruits.*" (Matthew 7:16a). Be a fruit inspector and make sure you have fruit to show for your faith.

- You Need a Desire for Others to Know Jesus

Scriptural Reference: Acts 9:20-22, 22:1 & 22, and 26:24-29

Lastly, we see Paul had a desire for others to know Jesus the same way he did. In Acts 26:29 Paul said, "*Whether short or long, I would (wish/desire) to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am (Christ follower) — except for these chains.*" If you were to ask around, you find that a majority of Christians are nervous, anxious, unsure, or just don't want to share their faith with others. We have created a culture where you can be a Christ follower as long as you keep it to yourself. And because of the anxiety that many feel when asked to share their faith with someone, many Christians have accepted that role. They enjoy their private faith.

If you were given good news, if you won a million dollars, if you got engaged, are having a baby, was cured of cancer, or some other great blessing, would you be unwilling to share that news with others? Of course not! You put it on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat. You sent out invites, text, and pictures. You make it known about the good news you received, and so you should. But if you believe that Jesus is worth following. If you believe He made you new, gave a new heart and new mind, and gave you eternal life, doesn't that good news deserve sharing? And you can see how Jesus has changed your life, wouldn't you want that for others? For your friends and family?

It can be scary to share your faith, your testimony with others. What will they think about me? What if they ridicule me? What if they don't believe? And many other worries and doubts may slip in your head. However, we who have a place and time and evidence of spiritual growth, need to have a desire for others to know Jesus. Do you want others to come to a personal relationship with Jesus? Do you desire that all would find eternal life in Christ? Are you doing anything about your desire?

Here's my encouragement for the day, take time during your #quarantine to write out your testimony. Examine your faith, do you have a time and place? Have you been growing spiritually? Do you desire that others come to know Jesus the way you have?