



Grace Bible Church –Global Impact Ministry

Short Term Trip Playbook

Supplement – Preparing Your Testimony

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Introduction

This companion to the Short Term Trip Playbook will assist each team member to prepare for their trip. Knowing how to concisely and compellingly present the story of how you met Christ and how the listener can believe, is the most important skill for the mission field. This guide, plus the coaching of your trip leader, will help you prepare a testimony and become comfortable sharing it and the Gospel.

Writing Your Testimony

Guidelines

Preparing your personal testimony begins with telling the story of what your life was like before you received Jesus Christ. It is not necessary to go into extreme detail. Effective communication is usually brief, to the point, and clear. In fact, orally explaining your testimony should not take more than 3 or 4 minutes.

What to Do:

- Ask God to give you wisdom.
- Keep to a 3-5 minute limit.
- Be realistic, don't exaggerate.

What Not to Do:

- Make statements that reflect negatively on any church organization.
- Make statements that reflect negatively on any individual.
- Mention denominations or church names.
- Speak or write in a preachy manner.
- Use vague terms like joyful, peaceful, or changed without explaining them.
- Avoid religious terms like saved, sin, or convicted without explaining them.

Writing Style:

- Begin with an attention-getting sentence or incident.
- Be positive, accurate and specific - details arouse interest.
- Use Bible verses directly related to your experience. Delete references, for example, say, "One of Jesus' disciples said..." rather than writing "1 Jn 5:11-13 says..."
- Write a logical conclusion
- As you begin writing your testimony, write things just as you would say it to someone in person. Such as, "Before I received Christ as my savior, my attitude was..." or "My life was filled with problems I could not solve..."

How to Begin

Write out your answers to the following topics or questions. These ideas will help you prepare your testimony.

My attitudes, needs, and problems before I received Christ...

My life revolved around, and I gained happiness and security from...

Use an example from your personal life here. For instance, did your security come from money, your relationships, etc? Remember, avoid being overly sensational.

How did this disappoint me?

How was this unfulfilling? How did you come to realize this? What were you struggling with (if anything) just before you received Christ?

How I Received Christ

This part of your personal testimony is where you come to the transition in your life, where God's work begins to become evident in you. Remember to follow the same guidelines as before.

When and how did I first hear about Christ?

What were my struggles just before I received Christ?

What happened when I received Christ and how did my attitude begin to change, and why?

Since I Received Christ

When giving a personal testimony, many people concentrate on the sin they had before they received Christ - even the sensationalism. However, an effective testimony focuses not on our sin, but on the work of the Holy Spirit in us, so that Jesus Christ takes center stage. It is at this point that your testimony should begin to shine.

What happened after I received Christ?

How has my life changed, and when did I notice that change?

How am I motivated differently now?

Bring it all Together

Review the answers above. Rewrite your answers to the questions so they tell a continuous story. You'll know you are done when you can answer 'yes' to the following questions.

- Does this read like a story?
- Is it disjointed? Does it make sense?
- Can I read this out loud in 3 to 4 minutes?
- Am I telling the truth without exaggerating?
- Did I give the Lord enough credit for the change in my life?
- Can you tell it consistently?

Remember that you will need to be able to adapt your testimony while in the field.

Sample Testimony

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

by Robert C. Singleton

PEACE is an elusive thing! You can work for it all your life and never attain it. Some try to buy it from an insurance company. But almost everyone wishes they had more of it. On the outside my childhood was very peaceful. I was raised in a stable home where I was loved. And there was a fairly small amount of strife, considering that I had two brothers and a sister. Yet inside my heart there was not a pervading peace. I was troubled about my relationship with God.

Now I was a good boy and a regular church attender. But it was all external. Although my sins were few in comparison to those around me, I knew that they separated me from my Creator. In my heart there was little peace, and I was afraid to die. I was fortunate to have someone to talk to about life's most important issues, my parents. One afternoon they explained to me that to have peace with God I didn't need to walk an isle, or join a church, or be baptized, although these are all good to do. Rather, I needed to accept God's free gift of forgiveness through Jesus Christ. They explained that I needed to ask Jesus to be my personal Savior, and that they could not do it for me. So, that afternoon, in simple childlike faith, I invited Jesus to be my personal Savior.

Frankly, I did not feel much different. I went outside to play as usual. The primary difference I sensed was a peace in my heart that everything was alright between myself and God. I began to experience what Jesus promised to all those who place their trust in Him as their personal Savior when He said: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful" (John 14:27). That peace grew over the next few months, and the fear of death, which had consumed me before, mysteriously disappeared.

As life went on, I encountered other fears, like the fear of failure and the fear of rejection. But Jesus handled each one and transformed my fear into faith and courage. I found that life was just as Christ had promised when He said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). I grew to understand that Christ could provide His peace amidst all of life's fears. Would you like to know how to have the peace of Christ in your life?