

5 Tips for Telling Your Story

1. **Pray about it.** “Lord, show me the parts of my life I need to share. Give me courage to be honest and the courage to be vulnerable.
2. **Keep it real.** Just be you. Don’t embellish. Tell the truth. Don’t downplay. Tell the truth. Be uniquely you.
3. **Share in 3 stages.**
 - a. My life before...
 - b. My decision to follow...
 - c. My life since...
4. **Write it down.** Treat it like a real assignment. Put pen to paper (or fingers to keypad.) Practice it. Can you tell it in 4 minutes or less?
5. **Don’t be afraid of God-talk.** Don’t be afraid to say, God spoke to me, I felt led by the Holy Spirit, or God rescued or saved me. But shy away from churchy, insider language.

How would you tell your story to somebody who doesn’t know anything about Jesus, or church, or what it means to follow Jesus at all? There is somebody out there waiting for you to give them The Gift of Your Story.

Your Life Before

Maybe you came to Christ as a child. Maybe you grew up in a home where Christ was central in your family’s life and was talked about openly. Maybe you had parents who raised you in church. Resist the urge to think that your story is not worth telling. There is someone out there who needs to understand that faith is not about drama. Or maybe you came to Christ as an adult. If so, you have some experiences that shaped your decision to follow Christ. What were they? Was there a trauma? Exhaustion? A realization that something was missing in your life? What led up to your decision to follow Christ? Begin writing about Your Life Before below.

Your Life Before

Your Decision to Follow

To write this stage of your story, think in terms of details. Think about who, what, when, where, why, and how. Who was involved in that decision? Was it a parent, a friend, a sibling, a Pastor, a teacher? What was going on in your life at the time? What were the circumstances? When did you decide to follow Jesus? Do you remember how old you were? Where were you when you made your decision to follow? At church? At camp? At home? Why did you make the decision? Perhaps most importantly, why at that precise moment? Did you have a specific hope or expectation? How did it happen? Describe the moment. Begin writing about Your Decision to Follow below.

Your Decision to Follow

Your Life Since

What difference has your decision to follow Jesus made in your life? How has your life changed? Have there been specific times when you have been especially thankful to have Christ in your life? How do you see yourself and the world around you differently because of following Jesus? Begin writing about Your Life Since below.

Try to write your whole story – your testimony – in one flowing form. Your life before, your decision to follow, then your life since. Don't be afraid of God-talk (God spoke to me, I felt led by the Holy Spirit, God rescued or saved me), but do shy away from churchy, insider language like "washed in the blood" or "walked the aisle". Not everyone knows the song, *Just As I Am*. Your story could very well be a literal, physical gift. Do your children, grandchildren, extended family, friends, or co-workers know the story of your walk with Christ? Those might be good places to start sharing The Gift of Your Story.

Your Life Since