

Testimony Story Writing

Basics of Story – Three Parts (Operation Timothy Book 2 Ch. 6 also good source.)

Verse – I Peter 3:15: But set apart in your heart Jesus Christ as Lord, and always be prepared to give a reason to everyone who asks for ***the hope that you have*** with meekness and fear.

I. Intro – Goal is to connect with your audience on what you will be talking about.

- a. Brief description of your work.
- b. Theme – If your story has a common theme mention what it is.
- c. Tell your audience what you will be talking about.
 - i. Example – “I will be talking about my life story today which has three parts. In my story I will share with you a defining moment in my life which my story will revolve around:
 1. Part 1 - My life before the defining moment.
 2. Part 2 - The defining moment.
 3. Part 3 - Life after the defining moment.

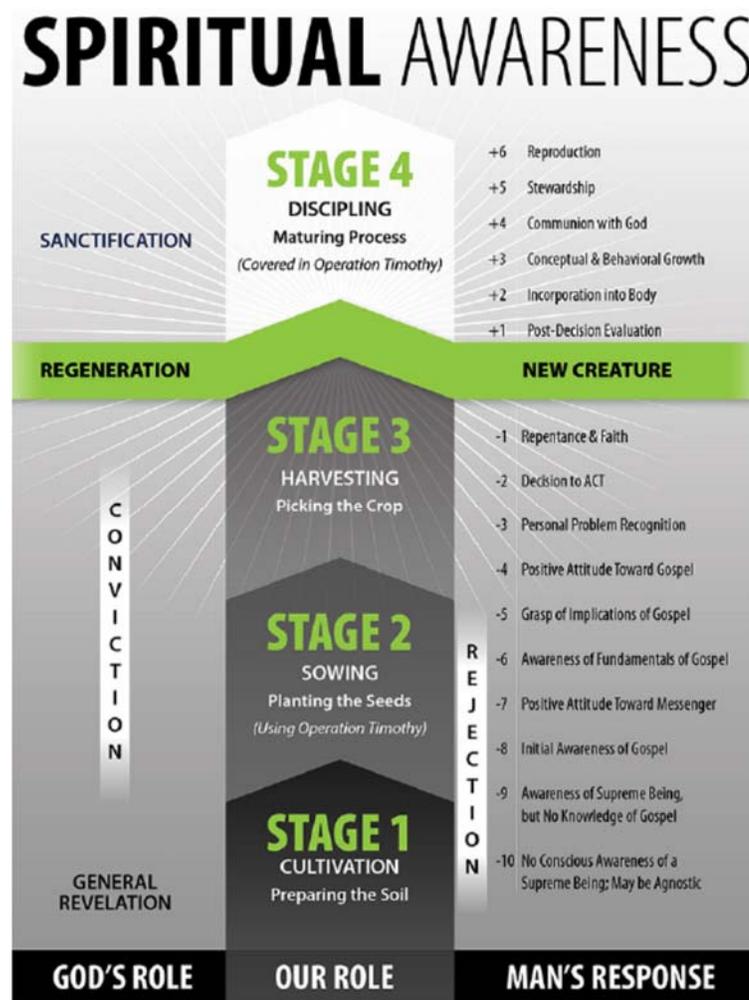
II. Part 1: Before Christ (5 - 7 minutes of spent on this part) – Purpose is to give a brief overview of your home life to include any major impactful events and how it shaped you.

- a. What did home look like?
- b. What was dad/mom like?
- c. What was their relationship like?
- d. Relationship with siblings?
- e. Any spiritual training?
- f. What did my life look like?
- g. What impacts did my family life have on me?

III. Part 2: Point of Conversion (12 - 15 minutes spent on this part. Christ is the focal point not myself.) Purpose is to tell how you came to Christ in a way that another could understand how they could come to Christ.

- a. ***Very Important: Speak the name of Jesus Christ during this part of your story. Jesus Christ is what separates Christianity from all other religions because what He is offering is not determined by my own works or goodness but on a relationship based on God’s act of love, forgiveness, grace and mercy towards me. It is the power of the gospel.***
 - i. **1 Corinthians 2:2** – For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.
- b. ***Must include a clear presentation of the gospel - the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the forgiveness and grace that God offers through Jesus.***
 - i. John 14:6 I am the way, the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through Me.
- c. At what point did I become awakened that I was separated from God because of my sinful nature?
- d. What hurdles (drugs, alcohol, pornography, lying, stealing, cheating, fornication, bad relationship(s), etc.) did I have to get over as I make my journey to placing my faith in Christ? (Use Spiritual Awareness chart to help you see how you moved through your journey to placing your faith in Christ.)

- e. What need or needs (examples – to be loved, accepted, assurance of eternal life, freed from a bad lifestyle or choices, released from an addiction, etc.) did Jesus meet in my life at the moment of my conversion?
- f. How did the mind, emotions and will play out in your coming to Christ?
 - i. The emotions will be up and down during the process. Excited, scared, leery.
 - ii. The mind/intellect will be trying to figure who Christ is, what He is offering, why do I need Him, and how do I overcome these hurdles (drugs, alcohol, pornography, lying, stealing, cheating, fornication, bad relationship(s), etc.).
 - iii. The will is the last thing to come along but is absolutely critical to the final decision.
- g. Use the chart to help you understand your journey to Christ and the hurdles you overcame.



- IV. **Part 3: After Christ (10- 12 minutes spent on this part) – The purpose here is talk about your changed life.**
- a. How have I seen God work in my life?
 - b. What difference has He made in my life?
 - c. What have I learned about who God is?
 - d. How has my worldview, values and beliefs changed? (One or two stories would be sufficient.)
 Stories are best used for explaining basics of life story (I - III.).
 [-Sensitive-]

When you're preparing, think about your audience.

When we start preparing for a presentation, the mistake we all make is starting with the topic. This immediately gets us inside the details — and makes it harder to break down the wall between us and others. Instead, start with the audience. Before diving into the information, ask yourself: Who will be in the room? Why are they there? What do they need? Be specific in your answers. Identify the audience's needs, both spoken and unspoken, and craft a message that speaks directly to those needs.

2. Right before you speak, refocus your brain.

You are the most nervous right before you speak. This is the moment where your brain is telling you, "Everyone is judging me. What if I fail?" And it is exactly at this moment that you can refocus your brain. Remind yourself that you are here to help your audience. Be firm with your brain. Tell yourself, "Brain, this presentation is not about me. It is about helping my audience." Over time (usually between four and six presentations), your brain will begin to get it, and you will become less nervous.

3. While you're speaking, make eye contact.

One of the biggest mistakes we make is speaking to people as a group. We scan the room — trying to look everyone at once — and end up connecting with nobody.

In reality, each person in the room is listening to you as an individual. And so the best way to connect to your audience is by speaking to them as individuals. How? By making sustained eye contact with one person per thought. (Each thought is about one full clause.) By focusing on one person at a time, you make each person in the room feel like you are talking just to them.

This is hard. We are accustomed to scanning the room. Making direct eye contact can feel uncomfortable at first. Yet, as you practice it more, it will actually make you less nervous. It is far easier (and more effective) to have a series of one-on-one conversations than it is to speak to everyone at once. When my clients use this technique more than three consecutive times, they almost always report a decrease in speaking anxiety. (Note that the most important people to look at are those who are at the far edges of the room. These are the people who are already at a disadvantage. By being extra generous to those at the edges of the room, you bring everyone in.)

We know the power of generosity to give us a sense of fulfillment, purpose, and meaning. Generosity is just as powerful in speaking. It turns a nerve-wracking and even painful experience into one of giving and helping others. A generous speaker is calmer, more relaxed, and — most important — more effective at reaching the audience and making the desired impact.