



EDSD
COURAGEOUS LOVE

Testimony: Sharing Your Story

“Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.” - Mark 16:15

Giving your “testimony” means sharing the story of Jesus’s good news in your life. Christians throughout history have believed that God changes lives. The word “metanoia” is used in Scripture to mean a complete change of mind, heart, or way of life in response to what God has done. This is sometimes a story of sudden transformation in your life but can also be a story stretched over a longer period. You are being invited to share your testimony during the bishop’s visitation so that others may hear of the life-transforming work Jesus continues to do in the lives of those that follow Him. Here are four suggestions from the Presiding Bishop’s office for you as you prepare your testimony¹:

1. **Keep it real.** Tell your story in your words. Don’t use someone else’s.
2. **Pause and listen to your own life.** What’s happening? What is God doing in your life? How is your life enriched by your relationship with Jesus?
3. **Focus on God and your experience of God in Christ.** If it’s an experience at church, talk about where and how you encountered God, not just what’s good about your church. If it’s an experience in nature or some other holy place, share how you knew God was there.
4. **Do you recognize Jesus in the story?** Scripture tells us the signs of his presence: unconditional love, resurrection, perseverance, healing, teaching, community, sacrifice, redemption, etc. Where is Jesus in your story?

Your story should also be brief, positive, and personal. Here are three more suggestions from This I Believe, Inc. in preparing your spiritual story²:

1. **Be brief:** Your statement should be between 500 and 600 words. That’s about three minutes when read aloud at your natural pace.
2. **Be positive:** Please avoid preaching, editorializing, or offering an opinion on a social issue. Tell us what you do believe, not what you don’t believe.
3. **Be personal:** Make your essay about you; speak in the first person. Avoid speaking in the editorial “we.” Write in words and phrases that are comfortable for you to speak. We recommend you read your essay aloud to yourself several times, and each time edit it and simplify it until you find the words, tone, and story that truly echo your belief and the way you speak.

Keep it rooted in Jesus and be yourself. Your story is an irrefutable demonstration of what God is doing in the world. That is good news! Thank you for your sharing your story!

¹ Spellers, The Rev. Canon Stephanie, et al. *Episcopal Evangelism 101*, The Episcopal Church, New York, NY, 2018, 10.

² Allison, Jay, et al. *This I Believe: The Personal Philosophies of Remarkable Men and Women*, Moline Public Library, Moline, IL, 2009, 273.