

THE POWER OF A TESTIMONY

Introduction:

How powerful is the testimony of one person? Is it possible for the testimony of one person to get a person convicted? I looked at the question online and a lawyer responded, "If one person's testimony is convincing, and the jury believes it, a person can be convicted as a result." I would say that is pretty powerful.

I. The Significance of a Testimony

A. In a court of law, to prove something that has happened in the past, they use the legal historic method of proof.

B. To try to prove something in the past, we do not use the scientific method of proof. The scientific method of proof is used to prove something that is observable & repeatable in the present.

C. The two things that are used in a court of law to build a case are:

1. Testimony
2. Physical evidence

D. We live in a post-modern world where many people do not want to accept absolute truth. They don't want to accept the Bible as truth.

E. But people in our culture are open to hearing about your experiences with God, your testimony of becoming a Christian.

F. This makes a well worded testimony a truly powerful means of sharing the gospel in our culture.

G. How many of you like to hear the stories of others and how God has worked in their lives? Why?

H. How many of you have ever shared your testimony of God in your life with an unsaved friend? How did they respond?

II. The Testimony of the Samaritan Woman (John 4)

A. She was probably not socially accepted in her town. Notice she comes by herself to draw water from the well at noon during the heat of the day. (John 4:6-7)

B. During this time in history, women were not culturally viewed very highly. Women could not testify in a court of law because their testimony was not deemed reliable.

C. She did not have a good moral reputation.

1. In John 4:16-18, we learn that she has been married five times and is presently living with a man who is not her husband.

2. This would not have given her a very good reputation in her town.

That could very well be the reason that she is socially not accepted in her town.

D. I share these truths about this woman because all these factors would seem to weaken the power of her testimony and of people listening to & responding to what she would say.

E. She has an encounter with Jesus that moves her from seeing Jesus as just a man (vs 11) to being a prophet (vs 19) to being the Messiah (vs 29).

F. What do you believe about Jesus? Do you believe that He is both God & Savior?

G. Notice the response of this woman when she becomes convinced that Jesus is the Messiah .

1. She leaves her water jar & totally forgets why she came to the well (vs 28). She is so single focused on Christ and who He is.

2. She goes back to town & tells every one of her encounter with Christ.

4:29 “Come see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

3. She just shares about her experience with Christ in direct & understandable terms.

H. Notice the response of the people to her testimony.

1. The people come out of town to the well to meet Jesus. (vs 30)

2. Some of the people believed in Christ because of her testimony. (vs 39)

3. Some of the people were curious because of her testimony and came to investigate, and as they listened to Jesus, they believed. (vs 41)

4. God used the combination of her testimony & the words of Christ to strengthen their faith. (vs 42)

I. Do you think she knew how the people were going to respond to her testimony?

1. She had no idea.

2. But she was so moved by Jesus, she couldn't help but share about her experience.

3. How about you? Are you moved by Jesus & what He's done in your life? Will you share what Christ has done?

J. Notice Jesus tells the disciples about the harvest field. (vs 35-38)

1. How often do we think there is no one who is interested? Is that what Jesus says?

2. He says the fields are ripe for harvest.

3. How can that be? Notice in vs. 38 it says that God has already been at work in people so that there are those ready to respond.

4. We just need to be willing to share & see what God might do.

III. Preparing your own personal testimony.

A. This presupposes that you are a Christian and have a testimony to share.

1. If you aren't a Christian, I don't want you to feel pressured to try to make up a testimony.

2. But if you aren't a Christian, I would ask you, “Is there is something that is keeping you from trusting in Christ as your Savior?”

B. In Scripture when we read of Paul sharing his testimony, he usually follows a 3-point outline.

1. His life before Christ. (Acts 26:4-11)

2. How he met Christ. (Acts 26:12-23)

3. How his life changed as a result of his relationship with Christ. (Acts 26:24-29)

C. Writing out your own personal testimony.

1. Follow the outline.

2. If you got saved at a young age, you can talk about your family & religious background for “My life before Christ”.

3. Don’t use Christian jargon – words that unbelievers wouldn’t understand. Try to use relational terms, i.e. “I entered into a relationship with God” instead of “I asked Jesus into my heart”.

4. When you talk about how “Christ has changed you”, use as specific of examples as possible (i.e. instead of “I used to be afraid”, you could say, “I used to be afraid to try new things, but I know God is with me and even if I do fail it doesn’t change God’s love and acceptance of me”.

D. The whole point of this is not just to go through an exercise but to start sharing your testimony with your friends.

Conclusion:

Our theme for the year is a bold faith.

Start praying for opportunities & boldness that when those opportunities come, you will be bold and speak up and share about your relationship with Jesus.

You never know whose heart is ready, and how God might use your testimony in a powerful way!