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## *sharing your story*

*Your most powerful tool for sharing Christ!*

### **What is “your story?”**

Your story is the retelling of when and how you trusted Jesus Christ. It is your most powerful tool for sharing Christ with people who do not know him. No one can deny your personal experience. With a little preparation you can be ready to share your story; ready to share Christ!

### **Why do we share our story?**

How is a story different from a formal presentation?

What are some situations where you might be able to share your story?

How does having a 3-5 minute story of what Christ has meant to us help us to fulfill 1 Peter 3:15, “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,”

The ABC's of sharing your story (from Seven Principles of an Evangelistic Life by Douglas Cecil)

*Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as select the words to speak.*

- Bathe the preparation and then the sharing of your story in prayer.
- Choose a theme for your story such as appearances, being a people pleaser, religion vs. relationship.
- Be yourself, but be creative.

*Be brief.*

- Share enough about your past to be real, but do not go into a lot of detail.
- Identify the root of the problem (sin) rather than the fruit of the problem.
- Transition quickly into talking about how you came to know Christ.

*Center on CHRIST.*

- The person you wish to elevate is Jesus Christ, not yourself.
- Be brief and real about your current walk with Christ.
- Include how Christ is meeting your needs now and your hope for the future.

**Developing your story.**

- Your story should follow a basic outline. Paul shares his story in Acts 26, giving us a good outline we can follow with our own story.

- > Acts 26:4-11 –Paul’s life before he trusted Christ
- > Acts 26:12-18 –How Paul realized he needed Christ
- > Acts 26:19 –How Paul trusted Christ
- > Acts 26:20-23 –How Paul’s life changed after trusting Christ

**Some Do’s and Don’ts of sharing your story. Some things you should try to do as you prepare your story:**

- Ask the Lord to guide you as you prepare
- Follow the Acts 26 outline:
  - > My life before I trusted Christ
  - > How I realized I needed Christ
  - > How I trusted Christ
  - > How my life changed after I trusted Christ
- Emphasize your life since trusting Christ if you accepted Christ as a child
- Begin with a thought provoking or attention getting statement
- Include enough detail to keep it interesting
- Weave the gospel into your story
- Practice your story with a mature believer and get feedback, then practice is until it becomes natural.
- Smile! Remember you are sharing “good news!”

**Some things you should avoid as you prepare your story:**

- Don’t use Christian jargon such as “saved”, “convicted”, or “born again” as these might confuse and alienate non-Christians.

- Don't emphasize how bad you used to be.
- Don't use superlatives like "glorious", "best ever", "wonderful."
- Don't mention denominations or other groups. Even if you have good feelings about a specific ministry or church, your listener might not share your opinion.
- Don't give the impression that Christian life is a "bed of roses" or that you no longer have struggles.

*Your story can be effective in any casual situation:*

- *over a meal, on the golf course, at the lake, at a ball game*
  - *anywhere you are having a conversation*
- *with a non-believer can be great place to share your story*

**Write out your story below.**

*How my life was before I trusted Christ . . .*

*How I realized my need for Christ . . .*

*How I trusted Christ . . .*

*How my life has changed since trusting Christ . . .*

***People are interested in your story.***

***People can identify with your story.***

***No matter what your past has been, your story is valuable!***

