



**WHAT IS A TESTIMONY?** Most people have seen a movie or tv show with someone testifying in court. A testimony is simply a person sharing their story of X event. It can be telling a story of your favorite vacation, a special class, a crime, a special time with a parent, sibling, friend, or whatever event. It is you sharing your personal experience.

In relation to sharing our personal testimony of being Born Again, Redeemed, and Saved by Jesus Christ it is the same thing. People hear us share (testify) our reactions to the Gospel and our testimony. Everyone has a reaction to the Gospel; some accept it while others do not. Those accepting the truth of the Gospel are simply sharing the story of how and when we were Born Again, Redeemed, or what many call **SAVED**. Yes, information about our past lives before salvation can be included yet those details should not be the focus. The focus should be on the impact of how the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ literally changed our life. How Jesus IS the Son of God and freely chose to come to earth and experience life as a human – with all its challenges and temptations. How we now submit our will to His authority, that whatever He says to do – I say “Yes Sir, not my will be done but Thy will be done!”

**CROSS EXAMINATION:** The crucial question with any testimony, whether in court, a marriage, a friendship, a religion, a conversion - is it the TRUTH? Sadly, we all know people can and do lie, even under oath, eye to eye with a spouse or child or friend, etc. So, there is a cross examination of the testimony of a witness. For example; in a criminal case there are supposed to be several witnesses – people and items (exhibit A, B, C) to prove guilt or innocence, in a marriage the ceremony is normally in front of people, clergy, with a marriage license. Is there any witness (proof) for people who testify they have been Born Again, Redeemed, and Saved? Should there be a **CROSS** examination to determine if it is the truth, or a false testimony?

God is the ultimate and only Judge of mankind, period. What does God state in His Holy Word, the Bible? Can these Bible verses be acceptable to **Cross** examine a salvation testimony? Should we see the following evidence: a changed life, exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit (singular not plural), loves others, no longer

likes (seeks) to sin as it offends their Savior and no longer wants to be like their old self, not ashamed of Jesus and the Gospel regardless of the people or situation. Are these a few clear proofs (evidence) that a person has spoken the truth in their testimony of salvation?

\***Identify:** Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

Matthew 7:20

\***Are we changed:** Therefore if anyone is in Christ [that is, grafted in, joined to Him by faith in Him as Savior], he is a new creature [reborn and renewed by the Holy Spirit]; the old things [the previous moral and spiritual condition] have passed away. Behold, new things have come [because spiritual awakening brings a new life]. 2 Corinthians 5:17

\***Lifestyle known:** Even children are known by the way they act, whether their conduct is pure, and whether it is right. Proverbs 20:11

\***But the fruit** of the Spirit [the result of His presence within us] is love [unselfish concern for others], joy, [inner] peace, patience [not the ability to wait, but how we act while waiting], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...Galatians 5:22-23

\***The Holy Spirit Himself witnesses** with our spirit that we are children of God. Romans 8:16

\***Heart change** to love others: We know that we have passed out of death into Life, because we love the brothers and sisters. He who does not love remains in [spiritual] death. 1 John 3:14

\***We desire to stop sinning**, no excuses: What shall we say [to all this]? Should we continue in sin and practice sin as a habit so that [God’s gift of] grace may increase and overflow? Romans 6:1

\***I am not ashamed of the gospel**, for it is the power of God for salvation [from His wrath and punishment] to everyone who believes [in Christ as Savior], to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Romans 1:16

\* “If you [really] love Me, you will keep and obey My commandments. John 14:15

I used the Amplified version of the Bible.

**NOTE:** to be clear, we are **not** the JUDGE. However, can we seek to know the truth, even in a salvation testimony? Do I want anyone to believe a lie that they are Born Again, Redeemed, Saved but somehow they are not? What if a false teacher led them astray?

A Christian testimony should not end with the conversion experience, but should include the ways the Lord continues to work in our lives to sanctify us for His service and glory. As an example, a testimony could include how He brought us through a difficult time in our life building our faith in Him through that experience. We should describe the continual process by which the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, leads, guides, molds, disciplines, shapes us and gives us a spirit of conviction that we have messed up (sinned) as we mature daily becoming more like Christ.

## HOW TO BE SAVED?

I believe salvation starts with acknowledging and believing that Jesus Christ truly IS the Son of God. That He has all authority and is the final authority – period. In the beginning was God...

Do I believe Jesus Christ is LORD of all and will I confess with my mouth (out loud) that He IS my Lord, my Savior, the Boss of all my life, the authority in all my life decisions – today and eternally?

Do I truly BELIEVE in my heart and mind (that Jesus did die, and that only the almighty power of God that raised Jesus from the dead and Jesus is now alive.

Because only by God's power and authority will I also be delivered (saved) from the penalty of my sins. I believe the penalty for my sins is eternal death, eternal separation from a relationship with my Creator, God. It is only Christ's death, His shed blood that is/was the perfect payment (sacrifice) for my sins that allows me to be totally pardoned and forgiven so I can be restored back in a relationship with a Holy God. Everyone has sinned and the penalty for any sin is death.

Remember † **CROSS** examination? Well when we say "I believe in Jesus" what does that actually mean? Believing is obviously a very general term. Believing I'm sitting in a chair does not mean I worship, submit, and obey the chair. On any given day, over 1 million people are flying in a plane above the earth in the sky. They do not know the pilot, they do not know the engineers who designed the plane and engines, they do not know the mechanics that assembled everything, yet they believe and trust in all of these people to safely transport them while literally thousands of feet above the ground. They do not worship any of these people but they sure do believe and trust them with their very life - even though they do not know their names. Yes, Lucifer believes there in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit – he has actually seen them and apparently used to worship the Trinity. Even all the demons believe it says in James 2:19 but they clearly do not

obey and serve the LORD though they recognize His authority and sovereignty. Satan, and his followers, called demons, still seek to over through God. There is a radical difference in "Believing" and "Serving, Following, Obeying, Submitting, and yes, loving" God. As a former Soldier in the Army for 25 years, I knew firsthand that loyalty, trustworthiness, and obedience are crucial.

**EXAMPLES:** Here is the story of the 2 thieves on the cross: One of the criminals who had been hanged [on a cross beside Him] kept hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us [from death]!" But the other one rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? We are suffering justly, because we are getting what we deserve for what we have done; but this Man has done nothing wrong." And he was saying, "Jesus, [please] remember me when You come into Your kingdom!" Jesus said to him, "I assure you and most solemnly say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." Luke 23:39-43 The one thief is mocking Jesus but the other thief says to stop and then says to Jesus, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." Some may say, "There was no statement of faith, no repentance, no altar call, no baptism, etc." Yet, what are his words? He did acknowledge to this brutally beaten up 33 year old man hanging on a cross that He was the KING. The thief acknowledged Christ authority and power asking if he could be with Jesus, in eternity (remember me). Is that belief, repentance and submission all in one? The thief certainly made a public statement of faith as he was dying on his cross.

I believe in Acts 16:31 And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." John 3:16 says only believe in the Son of God. The word repent is not used anywhere in the of Gospel of John. The saved thief on the cross did not verbally repent or even say "I believe You are the Christ"

I strongly recommend taking the "**Follow Me**" class if you have the opportunity.

## THE 3 WORST BIBLES YOU CAN HAVE

1. The one you do not read
2. The one you do not know
3. The one you do not obey