

## “Prepared to Give an Answer...”

*A Personal or Small Group Experience*

Depending on your religious background, the word ‘testimony’ may be a completely foreign concept or something that was drilled into your head on a weekly basis. In college, I remember being asked, ‘What’s your testimony?’ My response was something like, ‘What’s a testimony?’ Background aside, the purpose and impact of our testimony is crucial to sustaining and growing the Christian Church and also answering the call that Jesus gives us. Think about it--Jesus relied on the testimony of 12 lowly dudes and entrusted the future of the church with their testimony about Him. Unbelievable! Their testimony, along with that of the early Christians catapulted the Christian faith on a growth spurt of unprecedented levels and of a church that is estimated between 1.5 and 2.0 Billion people globally.

**Read through Acts 21:37-22:30** and discuss what stands out to you from this passage. This is Luke’s (writer of Acts) 3<sup>rd</sup> inclusion of Paul’s (formerly Saul) conversion experience on the road to Damascus. The irony is that Paul was heading to this city to continue the eradication of the followers of ‘The Way’ or the early Christians.

My simple definition of a testimony is your account of God intersecting your life. A Dictionary definition is bearing witness or a solemn attestation as to the truth of a matter. You are sharing why you believe what you do about Jesus! No one else on the face of the planet shares the exact testimony that you do and God desires to use your testimony to further His Kingdom.

**So, what is your testimony or journey with God? Spend time sharing your faith journey and who Jesus is to you.**

**How have you seen the realness of God in your life?**

**Have you wavered greatly in your faith and what caused this? How did you move beyond that?**

Saul was converted to Paul after encountering the risen Jesus and was transformed from an entrenched, militant Jew to a passionate, Christ-follower that travelled the world to share his testimony. People can argue difficulties from Scripture, potential conflicts with science, and that Christians are hypocritical all day long, but they cannot dispute your testimony!

**Read through 1 Peter 3:15-16 and discuss what this passage calls Christians to do.** The words you say matter tremendously, but the manner in which you share it and how you treat those around you leave as much of a fingerprint on people’s lives as does your verbal testimony.

**How have people reacted when they find out your beliefs?**

**Have you faced any pressures or exclusion because of your faith?**

**Who is the hardest person/people to share your faith with? Why is that?**

**Who is in your life right now that might be far from God and could benefit from your testimony?**

Spend time thanking God for your unique journey. Ask that He prepares your heart and your mouth to always be ready ‘to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.’ Pray specifically for opportunities to share your testimony with people around you. Think of specific names, beginning with your closest family and friends, and pray that God grants you the opportunity to share your faith with them. Pray for your availability to the Spirit of God to guide and direct you and for you to accept your calling as a local and global missionary in the name of Jesus!

## “ACTS : Part III”

*Deployed into Chains...sharing our testimony!*

### “Connecting With God” Weekly Guide

This booklet is a resource to help you “Connect with God” this week. He deeply desires ongoing personal connection with you. You are that important to Him.

**This Page** has some scripture verses for you to meditate on each day this week. Notice the helpful hints section – these are great things to consider when personally engaging with God through His Word.

**The Center Pages contain** the notes and outline for the message given on Sunday. The message is also available as an audio download from [www.pointofgracechurch.org](http://www.pointofgracechurch.org)

**The Back Page** has a study written specifically for a small group of people (or an individual) to drill down deeper into a particular aspect of the week’s theme. Small groups can review memorable points of the week’s message and then work through the study concluding with a time of prayer.

### *Scripture & Meditation Guide - July 11-16*

#### Helpful Hints:

- 1) Find a quiet place along with 15-20 minutes!
- 2) Focus on God for a few moments asking His Spirit to speak to your heart and offloading your heart of stifling, burdens, guilt, worry etc.!
- 3) Listen to Him by reading a section of scripture then rereading it several times, dwelling on “words and phrases” which grab your heart’s attention. As you read and reread keep asking God, “What do You want me to hear?” “Why this word at this time?” “How are You inviting me to respond? Keep talking it over with Him—chew!
- 4) Pray (and journal) everything that is on your heart and mind as you are ready!

*Worship Him, Bless Him, Thank Him, Ask Him, Trust Him*

**Monday:** Acts 9: 1-31

**Tuesday:** Matthew 5: 13-16

**Wednesday:** 1 Peter 3: 15-16

**Thursday:** Matthew 28: 16-20

**Friday:** 1 Corinthians 3: 1-9

**Saturday:** Acts 21:37—22:30