

Session 7

I Say, I Say

Aim: To encourage the group to think through what God has done for them and then put it into words.

Objectives:

At the end of the session the group should:
Have considered the value of their testimony.
Be able to write their testimony.

Personally Speaking...

I have only had to give my testimony in public on a couple of occasions. I have used it when talking to other people and it has changed quite wildly between tellings depending on who I'm talking to and how what I'm saying fits into the overall thrust of a conversation.

Like a lot of Christians a could spend either three minutes, three hours or three days etc. telling of what God has done in my life. As each day is over there is at least one more sentence that can be added.

Some things stick in my mind more than others, not necessarily because they were big but because they changed me. Other things come to mind as and when I need them - Holy Spirit recall. One of the biggies that I think of a lot was from when I was about 15 years old. I was sitting on the floor in my bedroom listening to a worship tape. There was a song on called 'Wounded Soldier' As I listened to it it dawned on me that God did love me and accept me. This wasn't a new idea, it had just made the journey from head to heart. That it is part of my testimony. There is a lot more.

The Session:

Warming Up - On the spot Courtroom Drama.

Before doing this activity you will need to photocopy and cut up the 'Courtroom Drama' handout. You will also need three copies of the 'Evidence' handout. It would also be good to

have some idea of who you might cast in the five roles.

Give each cast member the piece of paper that explains their role in the drama that is about to unfold. Explain that they are not to reveal the contents of the piece of paper to anyone and that they must abide by any instructions on the sheet. Call the court to order and let them get on with it. The remaining members of the group will act as the jury (they will have no powers to sentence the accused if found guilty however.)

The cast and their roles:

The Judge: Presides over the proceedings and sums up at the end of the trial. He or she must be completely impartial, even if the convict is his or her best friend. The Judge rules over the courtroom and can not be spoken against by any of the cast members. He or she will need a copy of the evidence sheet.

The Convict: has been accused of stealing a calculator from the school/college maths department. He or she is innocent but can not prove it. He or she knows that Witness 2 planted the calculator so as to get them into trouble but has no evidence and can therefore not use this information in court.

The Prosecution: is seeking to have the convict sent down for the theft. As evidence he or she has the calculator as recovered from the convicts school bag and a statement from Witness 2 saying that the convict was seen stealing the calculator at 4pm on the Friday of last week. His aim is also to discredit Witness 1.

Witness 1: is the convict's best friend but he or she is not known as a reliable witness. Witness 1 was not with the convict at the time that the calculator was stolen, but saw Witness 2 plant the calculator in the convict's bag.

Witness 2: planted the calculator in the convict's

bag in revenge for a joke played earlier by the convict. Witness 2 is prim and proper but not at all honest. He or She also needs a copy of their statement - so they know what they are supposed to have said.

Once the trial is over, give them a ten minute time limit, ask the jury to 'deliberate' and return either a guilty or not guilty verdict. Spend a few minutes discussing with the group, particularly the convict and witness 1, how they felt whilst in the courtroom. Make the point that testimony is a powerful thing, that it bears witness to the truth (or not). In Revelation 12:11 it says "they overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." Used wisely a testimony told at the right time can be used mightily by God.

Over To You - Write your own testimony.

This is the group's chance to write down their own testimony of how they became Christians, what they were like before and what has happened since.

Give each of them a copy of the 'My Testimony' handout. Before they start it is worth pointing out the following:

Testimony has to be truthful. There is no point in embellishing what appears to be a plain story

with lots of tasty morsels that never happened. A plain, unglamorous testimony to what God has done is as powerful as an "I was converted from a life of sex, drugs and Rock 'n' Roll" type testimony. Each testimony is personal and reflects what God has done with one person's life - their own.

Conversely, if a group member has a testimony of coming from an extreme background they shouldn't play it down nor should they glorify their previous sinfulness.

Also they don't have to fit absolutely everything in. A testimony will vary depending on who they are talking to and what point they are wanting to make.

Testimony can be used any time and shows that God is a reality in a person's life and that he deals with them on a one to one basis.

Pulling It Together.

If time allows at the end of the session it is worth asking one or two of the group to share their testimony, maybe do yours too. Finish up by praying with and for each other and thanking God for how he has worked amongst you. Be specific in thanking God!

Courtroom Drama



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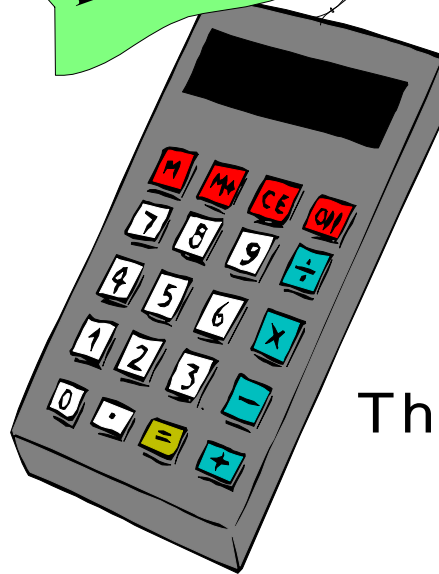
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Evidence

Exhibit A



The Calculator

Statement from Witness 2

Statement

On the previous Friday at 4pm I saw the accused remove a calculator from the store room in the maths department and place it into the bag which was being carried by the aforementioned. The accused then left the department glancing over a shoulder.

Signed:

A N Other

Exhibit B

My Testimony



Before I was a Christian

How I became a Christian

Since I became a Christian