

SERMON NOTES - My Testimony - 2 - Your story

These notes are designed to be read along with the associated audio / video message

Intro & Recap:

Words and the Tongue:

- Pro 18:21 - "21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit."
- James 3 - your tongue is a "rudder" and a "spark"
- Mat 12:36-37 - our words are judged at the judgement day.
- Our words are to ... Preach, pray, prophesy AND **testify**
- Psalm 107:2 "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy". Some of the categories in that Psalm... **The wanderer** - **The Prisoner** - **The Sick** / weak - **The Businessman** / sailor

Testimonies:

- Reveal how God works
- Create an expectation of God working again
- Release His power into situations and into the lives of those who hear it - The root meaning of Hebrew word testimony means "**repeat, do it again.**"
- Lift my my own faith & hope - Lam 3:20-24 NKJV — "**21 This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope.** ... They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness."
- Defeat the devil and affect those around us - Psalm 107:42 & Rev 12:11

This week: Your story... the Blind man who met Jesus in Jn 9

<p><u>Jhn 9:1-38</u> NKJV - "1 Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.</p> <p>2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. 4 "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. 5 "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."</p> <p>6 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. 7 And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.</p>	<p>Jesus sees. He knows & is watching. The background is important. The story.</p> <p>People's perspective on your story can be wrong. God knows and His is the true perspective that really matters.</p> <p>cf. <u>Luk 13:4-5</u> - "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.""</p> <p>God's ways and working can be strange and confusing. It doesn't always fit into a mould or template that we expect.</p> <p>There is power in obedience and responding to what God says.</p>
<p>8 Therefore the neighbours and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" 9 Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." 10 Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"</p> <p>11 He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." 12 Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."</p>	<p>Others are watching & your life is a testimony. We must be ready to answer.</p> <p>Be honest. Be brave. Be authentic.</p>
<p>13 They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. 14 Now it was a</p>	<p>Some may not</p>

<p>Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. 15 Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." 16 Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. 17 They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." 18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.</p>	<p>respond well to your testimony.</p> <p>Be honest. Be brave. Be authentic.</p>
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<p>19 And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" 20 His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 21 "but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." 22 His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. 23 Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." 24 So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner."</p>	<p>Don't let fear stop you. <u>2Co 2:14-16</u> - "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. 15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?" <u>Mat 10:32-33</u> "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 "But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.</p>
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<p>25 He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. <u>One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.</u>" 26 Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" 27 He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" ... 34 They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out. 35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and <u>when He had found him</u>, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" 36 He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" 37 And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." 38 Then he said, "<u>Lord, I believe!</u>" And he <u>worshipped</u> Him.</p>	<p>A clear, summarised testimony. The way you share your testimony depends on the situation and context. Be ready always.</p> <p>"Pearls before swine". "Shaking the dust off our feet". Sometimes we share less depending on the situation and hearers.</p> <p><u>1Pe 4:14</u> - "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified." He believed. He was saved. He worshipped.</p>
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Closing Thoughts and points

1. You have a unique story - it's yours. Others may misunderstand it or criticise it but...
2. God sees and cares and has a plan for your story to become **His story**
3. How many people were impacted through this, including the Pharisees and his family & HIM?
4. We must respond as the blind man did ...
 - Meet and respond to Jesus and follow His instructions - Get to KNOW Him
 - Respond by Worshipping Him and You must "Say so" - speak about it.

Lessons for our testimony from this story - Be **Real**, honest and authentic. - Tell **Your own**

story not a copy, a script or an act - Have a "**Before, during and after**" - Be **Brave** & courageous

Other Verses:

Act 15:5 NKJV - "5 But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses."

Psa 107:42 NKJV - "42 The righteous see it and rejoice, And all iniquity stops its mouth."

1Pe 3:15 NKJV - "15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;"

Small group discussion guidelines

Remember that the aim of the small group is to foster discussion and community, rather than for the leader or one individual to preach to everyone.

1 - Often an **Icebreaker question** is a great way to start discussion. You could ask a question like:

- What were the highs or lows of your week?
- What is your earliest memory?
- If you had to describe yourself as one animal, what would it be and why?
- What is your favourite type of holiday destination?

2 - Next, **read the passage**. You can ask various people in the group to help by each reading a portion of the passage.

3 - These are the **main questions** to ask to understand the passage:

- What is the main message of this talk / passage?
Allow discussion and even diverging from the main topic if it is helpful.
- What did you find particularly helpful or challenging?
- What did you not fully understand?
- What can we do PRACTICALLY in response to this teaching?

4 - Close by offering **prayer** for each person.

- Ask, "how can we pray for you / each other now?"
- Ask each person to pray or you, as leader, pray for each person's need

The blessing and opportunity in Small Groups is the possibility for...

- Each person to contribute and/or ask questions,
- People to pray for each other and to ask for prayer,
- People to learn to use and grow in their gifts,
- Community, friendship and intimacy in relationships.

God Bless you in this very important ministry.