

Riverview Baptist Church
Sunday School Teaching Plan
August 3, 2014
"Sharing Our Story"

Memory Verse

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. Philippians 3:7 NIV

The Big Idea:

Sermon Scripture: The sermon will be an topical sermon on Philippians 3:4-16; Acts 7:58-8:1; Acts 9:1-22.
Sermon Title: Share Jesus, Using your Personal Testimony

Essence of the Sermon: Salvation is the turning point of our life when we move from rebellion against God into a right relationship through the gospel of Jesus.

Sunday School Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20

Sunday School Title: "Sharing Our Story"

ESS: We need to be prepared to share the story of how Jesus saved us!

Imagine that everyone in the entire world was suddenly infected with a deadly disease. Some would live for years to come, slowly dying while the disease wreaked havoc on their bodies. Others would die quickly, leaving their loved ones little time to say goodbye. Now imagine that you, and only you, have the cure to this deadly illness. Would you share it? Why or why not? How does this imaginary situation relate to sharing the gospel?

This week is the second in a series that Pastor Jamey will preach on evangelism and missions. During the next few weeks, the sermons will teach us WHY it's important to share our faith, and the Sunday School lessons will teach us HOW to share our faith.

READ: *Matthew 28:16-20*

After Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead, he met with His disciples and gave them the instructions we see here in the last chapter of Matthew. One of the last things Jesus tells his disciples is "Go and make disciples." These are our directions, too! And one of the easiest ways we can do this is to share our personal testimonies with others each day.

In an article he wrote entitled, "How to Share the Good News Through Your Testimony," Pastor Rick Warren shares:

Your testimony is the story of how Christ has made a difference in your life. Peter tells us that we were chosen by God "to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you." (1 Peter 2:9 MSG) This is the essence of witnessing – simply reporting your personal experiences with the Lord. In a courtroom, a witness isn't expected to argue the case, prove the truth, or press for a verdict; that is the job of attorneys. Witnesses just tell what happened to them. Jesus said, "You will be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8 NIV) He did not say, "You must be my attorney." He wants you to tell your story to others. Sharing your testimony is an essential part of your mission on Earth.

WHY CAN MY TESTIMONY BE EFFECTIVE:

1. IT'S UNIQUE

There's no other story just like yours, so only you can share it, and if you don't, it will be lost forever. You may not be a Bible scholar, but you are the authority on your life, and it's hard to argue with personal experience. Actually, your personal testimony is more effective than a sermon because unbelievers see pastors as paid salesmen, but see you as a satisfied customer, so they give you more credibility.

2. IT'S PERSONAL AND INTERESTING!

Personal stories are also easier to relate to than principles, and people love to hear them; they capture our attention, and we remember them longer. Unbelievers would probably lose interest if you started quoting theologians, but they have a natural curiosity about experiences they've never had. Shared stories build a relational bridge that Jesus can walk across from your heart to theirs.

3. IT CAN'T BE REFUTED

Another value of your testimony is that it bypasses intellectual defenses. Many people who won't accept the authority of the Bible will listen to a humble, personal story. That's why on six different occasions Paul used his testimony to share the Gospel instead of quoting Scripture. (Acts 22 to Acts 26)

READ: *1 Peter 3:15-16.*

The Bible tells us to be ready to share our story at all times! The best way to "be ready" is to write out your testimony and then memorize the main points.

WHAT SHOULD MY TESTIMONY SAY?

Basically, your testimony should tell about your life before Christ, how you met and surrendered to Christ, and then how Christ has since changed your life. Here are 4 easy questions to answer to get you started:

- 1. What was your life like before you met Jesus?**
- 2. How did you realize you needed Jesus?**
- 3. How did you surrender your life to Jesus?**
- 4. What difference has Jesus made in your life?**

Your testimony should be a short, simple, and Jesus-glorifying!! Many times you will only have 3 minutes or less to give your testimony, so don't be too long-winded! You'll want to give the other person time to respond to what you've shared!

Closing:

Are you prepared to share the story of how Jesus saved you? It's the best story you'll ever tell!

Apply:

Using the 4 questions on the learner guide, finish writing your testimony. Now share it with someone this week. Call a close friend or family member and ask if you can share it with them. Write a letter or email to someone and include your written testimony. Publish it on facebook. Share it in a conversation with a coworker. Part of being prepared to share our faith is practicing our story! Be bold and intentional this week in sharing.

Background Study Material for the Teacher

This is for your study - It is not the lesson. These Bible Study Notes are for your personal growth and understanding of the material, and are written by David Guzik and available on Blueletterbible.org.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even to the end of the age.*" Matthew 28:18-20

- a. All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth: This commission is given in light of the authority of Jesus. This indicates that this is an authoritative command, not a suggestion. It is the same idea as if an officer reminded a private of his rank before he gave the order.
- b. Go therefore: Because Jesus has this authority, we are therefore commanded to go. It is His authority that sends us, His authority that guides us, and His authority that empowers us.
- c. Make disciples of all the nations: The command is to make disciples, not merely converts or supporters of a cause. The idea behind the word disciple is of a scholar, a learner, or a student.
 - i. The kind of commitment expected from a disciple is expressed in the command to baptize. A person is totally immersed in water, and *total* commitment is the goal for a disciple.
- d. Of all the nations: In His previous ministry, Jesus deliberately restricted His work to the Jewish people ([Matthew 15:24](#)) and previously sent His disciples with the same restriction ([Matthew 10:6](#)). Only on rare exceptions did Jesus minister among the Gentiles ([Matthew 15:21-28](#)). Now all of that is in the past, and the disciples are commissioned to take the gospel to all the nations. There is no place on earth where the gospel of Jesus should not be preached, and where disciples should not be made.
- e. Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you: Disciples are made through teaching. This teaching is not with words only, but with the power of the always-present Jesus. He will be present with His people until the job of making disciples is done - until the end of the age.
 - i. The content of the teaching must be all things that I have commanded you. The followers of Jesus are responsible to present the whole counsel of God to those who made disciples.
- f. Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age: Jesus sent His disciples with a mission, but He did not send them alone.
 - i. His presence means *privilege*, because we work with a Great King. Paul understood this principle well in [1 Corinthians 3:9](#), where he wrote: *For we are God's fellow workers*. Since Jesus promised "I am with you always," then we work together with Him in all our service. We certainly work *for* Jesus, but more than that we work *with* Jesus.
 - ii. His presence means *protection*, because we are never out of His sight or supervision.
 - iii. His presence means *power*, because as we fulfill this great command, we work in His name.
 - iv. His presence means *peace*, because it always reminds us that the church belongs to Jesus. It is His church, and His work. How then can we worry?