

TESTIFY!

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November 13, 2022

Scriptures (NKIV): John 9:3; John 9:13-34; [*2 Kings 5:1-14 if there's time*]; Rev. 12:10-11a

Sermon in a sentence: Take every opportunity to tell others what God has done for you.

Everybody has a story to tell. Everyone has had an experience that has altered the course of their life and caused them to see things in a completely different way. Some things might not mean much to others, but they mean the world to you. For some of us, there are things God has done that we haven't shared with anyone else because we think they're insignificant, or because others' stories seem much more exciting than ours. But today, I'd like to encourage us all to TESTIFY! and tell the world what God has done.

Our judicial system relies heavily on the testimony of witnesses. People who were at the scene, who heard what was said and saw what was done, who can speak from personal experience.

When we go back to Old Testament times, they had no video surveillance, DNA evidence, wiretaps, voice mail recordings, text messages, emails, cell phone videos, or fingerprints. So, without any of these modern investigative tools and methods, how were people convicted of crimes? It was upon the testimony of two or three witnesses. Penalties all the way up to capital punishment were handed down based upon personal testimonies.

If I were to ask you for the world's most effective marketing strategy for any product or service, most of you would be able to correctly identify it as word-of-mouth advertising. That's why we check online reviews for things we want to purchase (even though we know some unscrupulous vendors upload bogus reviews to fool us). We all want testimonials from people who've actually used the product or service we want to buy. We're always looking for reliable testimonies. And the testimonies we value most come from family members and close friends we know we can trust. We *want* to hear what they have to say.

And keep in mind that there are people very close to us who don't know the Lord Jesus as we do. They *need* to hear our testimonies of His goodness, His mercy, and His grace.

Testimony – Sis. Kaye Anderson

One day my brother and I were walking down the road in Port Royal, Jamaica – a very small town with one main street. At that time, I was nine and he was eight, and we often walked along that road, to and from school. On this particular day, he saw our sister Elise on the other side of the road walking home from school, so he shouted her name and started to race across the street to meet her. In an instant, I grabbed his arm and swung him back to our side of the road as a truck flew by. It was that fast, and then it was over.

The amazing thing about that story is that I was the kind of kid who would simply freeze in fear when bad things were about to happen. With me, it was never a question of “fight or flight.” Neither of those options applied to me. I would just freeze, then snap out of it when it was too late. Except for that day. God (and/or Bro. Desmond's guardian angel)

used my hands to grab him and pull him out of harm's way. That's a very big testimony of God's goodness to our family. Of course, I will never forget it, and I share it with you now so you will know that God is our protector and deliverer.

We'll hear other testimonies as we go on, but first, let me take you to the book of John for a testimony that's always inspiring to read.

One day, as Jesus and His disciples were leaving the Temple grounds, they encountered a beggar who had been born blind. (*In fact, this incident took place just after Jesus had hidden Himself to escape stoning for stating "before Abraham was, I AM."*) The disciples felt they had this man's situation all figured out. Clearly, his blindness must have been a result of sin – either *his* sin or his parents' sin. They didn't even stop to ponder why an innocent baby would be under God's judgment and punishment for sins he hadn't even committed. However, Jesus immediately straightened them out and said:

John 9:3 ... "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him."

I'd like someone to realize today that the negative things that have happened in your life may not be for any reason you can legitimately put your finger on. I know we all like to think we can figure everything out, but that's not always the case. Lots of things happen that we're perplexed about and can't make heads or tails of. The truth is, sometimes God just wants us to be a part of His global "big picture" plan, to show His glory to the world through us, and to strengthen somebody else's faith.

Back to our story....

Even though it was the Sabbath day, Jesus healed the blind man with spit and dirt and washing in a pool, and it caused quite a stir in Jerusalem. We'll pick up the story in John 9:13.

John 9:13-34 They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ Now it was a 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. 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." ²⁵ He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner *or not* I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see." 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?" ²⁸ Then they reviled him and said, "You are

His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. ²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses; *as for this fellow*, we do not know where He is from." ³⁰ The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! ³¹ Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. ³² Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. ³³ If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." ³⁴

They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out.

Four times, the Pharisees spoke to the man, looking for every answer except the obvious one, that Jesus really is the miracle working God! And the man who had been healed wasn't the least bit shy in giving his testimony:

- "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."
- "He is a prophet."
- "Whether He is a sinner *or not* I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."
- "... this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! ³¹ Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. ³² Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. ³³ If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."

This is a phenomenal example for us. We need to testify of the amazing, awesome, and miraculous things God has done in our lives. And it will be the same for you as it was for this man. When God does a miracle in your life, nobody

can take it away from you or contradict your testimony. You know what God has done, you've lived it, and everyone can see it!

Testimony - Bro. Daniel Cavallini

Personal Testimony - Recession 1990/91. Financial deliverance through tithing.

Testimony - Sis. Tope Barrett

Here's how important our testimonies are.

The apostle John had an incredible vision recorded in the last book of the Bible. In chapter 12 of Revelation, he saw a woman about to give birth to a child. A dragon (representing Satan) was standing by to destroy her child (representing Jesus) as soon as it was born. God protected the child and there was war in Heaven as Michael and his angels fought against Satan and his angels. Michael won the war and Satan was thrown out of Heaven. So, where do you think he ended up? He and his angels were thrown down to Earth, and since then, they have worked tirelessly to deceive the inhabitants of Earth and turn them against God.

Then, John said:

Rev. 12:10-11a ... I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. ¹¹ **And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony....**

Believe it or not, the words you have heard today from the testimonies that have been given are supremely powerful in defusing Satan's lies. And the last verse we just read lets us know that our testimonies, along with the blood of Jesus actually give us victory over Satan. So, yes, we need to testify!

Here we are, reading from the last book of the Bible, getting final insights into how we should live and act. We see that we need to be immersed, washed, cleansed, and purified by the "blood of the Lamb." The blood of Jesus. Jesus shed His blood and sacrificed His life to pay the penalty for our sins. And we need to continually testify to all who will hear that we have been saved and delivered, sanctified, and made holy, all because of Jesus. We are children of God and citizens of Heaven because of Jesus. That is good news that's worth sharing. We need to TESTIFY!

Personal Testimony of salvation.

Prayer.