

CHOSEN VESSEL

BY B.V. CORNWALL

*The Master was searching for a vessel to use:
Before Him were many, Which one would He choose?*

*“Take me,” cried the gold one, “I’m shiny and bright.
I’m of great value and I do things just right.
My beauty and luster will outshine the rest,
And for someone like you, Master, gold would be best.”*

*The Master passed on with no word at all,
And looked at a silver urn, narrow and tall.
“I’ll serve you, dear Master, I’ll pour out your wine
I’ll be on your table whenever you dine.
My lines are so graceful, my carvings so true,
And silver will always complement you.”*

*Unheeding, the Master passed on to the brass,
Wide-mouthed and shallow and polished like glass.
“Here! Here!” cried the vessel. “I know I will do.
Place me on your table for all men to view.”*

*“Look at me,” cried the goblet of crystal so clear,
My transparency shows my contents so dear.
Though fragile am I, I will serve you with pride,
And I’m sure I’ll be happy in your house to abide.”*

*The Master came next to a vessel of wood,
Polished and carved, it solidly stood.
“You may use me, dear Master,” the wooden bowl said,
“But I’d rather you used me for fruit, not for bread.”*

*Then the Master looked down and saw a vessel of clay,
Empty and broken it helplessly lay.
No hope had the vessel, that the Master might choose
To cleanse, and make whole, to fill, and to use.*

*“Ah! This is the vessel I’ve been hoping to find.
I’ll mend it and use it and make it all mine.
I need not the vessel with pride of itself,
Nor one that is narrow to sit on the shelf,
Nor one that displays its contents so proud
Nor the one that thinks he can do all things just right,
But this plain earthen vessel, filled with power and might.”*

*Then gently He lifted the vessel of clay,
Mended and cleansed it, and filled it that day.
Spoke to it kindly – “There’s work you must do!
Just pour out to others as I pour into you.”*

**SARASOTA BAPTIST CHURCH
PROCTOR ROAD CAMPUS: 7091 PROCTOR ROAD, SARASOTA, FL 34241
LAKEWOOD RANCH CAMPUS: 5600 DEER DRIVE, SARASOTA, FL 34240
(941) 922-1449**

PACKING TIPS

- Pack light!! You will have to carry what to pack. We will be taking extra tracts, Bibles, supplies, etc, so plan to put your personal belongings in one bag so you can have an extra bag for items needed for the trip. You may also have one carry on bag that can fit under the seat.
- Tightly secure any items that may come open while traveling, you don't want it to end up everywhere. Good idea to pack things like shampoo in Ziploc bags.
- Take luggage you don't mind having damaged.
- Carry one change of clothes and some toiletries with you in your carry-on luggage. Sometimes luggage is lost or delayed.
- A modest set of clothing for church. (Clothing specifics will be shared at team meetings.)
- Take items you won't mind leaving behind if you see a need.
- Leave a little room for souvenirs.
- Pack enough film and any batteries you may need for cd players, etc. In most places these are costly and may not be easily accessible.

Don't Forget:

- Bible/journal/pens
- Camera (with batteries and film, or several disposable)
- Handy wipes
- Antibacterial hand cleanser
- Battery operated alarm clock
- Toiletries: shampoo, soap, shaving items, toothbrush, toothpaste and floss, tissue packets, toilet paper (2 rolls, just in case!)
- Towels/washcloth
- Flashlight
- Snack foods
- Spending money
- Pepto-Bismol or equivalent
- Bug repellent
- Sun block

Gift Ideas to Share with Your Hosts:

For children:

Baseball caps
Hair barrettes
Socks
Pencils/sharpeners
Jigsaw puzzles/games
Stickers
T-shirts

For Adults:

Instant ground coffee
Shampoo/soaps
Stationary
Band-Aids
Nuts/spices
Hair brushes
Lotion

****No Jewelry or Money****

SARASOTA BAPTIST CHURCH
PROCTOR ROAD CAMPUS: 7091 PROCTOR ROAD, SARASOTA, FL 34241
LAKEWOOD RANCH CAMPUS: 5600 DEER DRIVE, SARASOTA, FL 34240
(941) 922-1449



JOURNALING

Journaling is an important way for you to process what you are learning about yourself, God, and the world. This short-term mission trip will be forever embedded in your mind, but you will begin to forget some important events, names, and feelings. If you journal, you will find yourself returning to it for many years to come.

Your Team Leader will provide a short devotion/journal for you to take if necessary. Those of you who are writers may want to bring along an extra! We even suggest that you begin journaling now. While on the field, try not to miss a day! It will take some discipline to journal on the field but *you will be glad you did!*

Here are a few journaling tips:

1. Write down the impressions that you have of the culture. Was it as you expected? What did you learn about the culture? Are you burdened for their needs? Questions are good, but try not to pass judgment in trying to find an answer.
2. Write special places, events, foods, etc. You will not have time to capture all of the details, but journal about those that stuck in your mind.
3. Write about your relationship with God. What are you learning about Him? What are you learning about His purposes in the world? What are you learning in Scripture?
4. Write about your relationship with others. How are you relating to your team? The missionaries? The nationals? Any special national friends?
5. Write down what you are learning about yourself. Have you learned something new about yourself? Are there some old flesh patterns coming out? Are you learning to respond in a Godly way to all things? Are you learning that you have gifts and abilities you did not know about?
6. Write down your questions and thoughts about missions and your participation in them. Consider and ponder your future.
7. Write your praises and prayer needs to God.
8. Document answers to prayer.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

- *For Protection Psalm 34:7
 Psalm 121:7-8
 Psalm 91:9-10
- *For Courage Isaiah 43:1
 Joshua 1:9
 Psalm 31:24
 Psalm 27:1-5
- *For Your Needs Philippians 4:19
 Luke 22:35
 Matthew 6:33
- *For His Power John 14:12-14
 Luke 10:17-19
 Mark 16:14-20
 John 15:16
 Acts 1:8
- *For His Glory John 15:7-12
- *Pray for *Those who make up your prayer/financial support group
 *Those who God has appointed you to minister to on the field
 *Your other team members
 *Your field contact, missionary, or local church pastor, for their ministry and their encouragement
 *That you may stay close to God so as to hear and learn all He has for you during this project
 *Your team leader and the wisdom he needs to make any necessary decisions
 *That the whole team, especially yourself, may keep a devotional time as a priority in all the hectic schedules throughout the project
 *That you will be open to the Holy Spirit and whatever work He has for you

PERSONAL PREPARATION

Purpose

To examine your daily walk as you prepare for service.

Memory/Theme Verse

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10 (NAS)

Prayer Life

Luke 11:11-10
Psalms 66:18-20
Philippians 4:6-7

- Christ’s example and teaching
- Confess sin, then pray
- Don’t worry, pray! The peace of God will keep you!

Daily Walk

With God:

Romans 12:1
Romans 12:2

- Present yourself a holy sacrifice-expected
- Don’t be conformed, so you may prove the will of God.

With Others:

John 13:34-35
Romans 15:5-7

- Love one another
- One mouth, one mind, glorify God, work together, worship together

Setting Spiritual Goals

Growth:

I Peter 2:2
II Peter 3:18

- Desire the Word so you may grow
- Grow in grace

Accountability:

I John 1:5-10
Romans 14:12-13

- Walk in the light
- Accountable to God

Witness:

I John 1:3
I Timothy 4:12

- What we saw and heard we told you
- You are not too young or inexperienced

SARASOTA BAPTIST CHURCH
PROCTOR ROAD CAMPUS: 7091 PROCTOR ROAD, SARASOTA, FL 34241
LAKEWOOD RANCH CAMPUS: 5600 DEER DRIVE, SARASOTA, FL 34240
(941) 922-1449

Personal Response

1. How should I pray

Before the trip? _____

During the trip? _____

After the trip? _____

2. Why should I pray? _____

3. What are my spiritual strengths? _____

4. How will my strengths and weaknesses affect my service while on this trip? _____

5. What are my goals to improve my daily walk with God? _____

6. How do I expect this ministry experience to help me grow spiritually? _____

PERSONAL 30 DAYS PREPARATION

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1) Spiritual Renewal for Service | Psalm 51 |
| 2) Taking Time to Pray | Mark 1:35-45 |
| 3) The Word and the Way | Psalm 119:2, 19, 105, 165 |
| 4) The Power to Serve | Acts 1:1-12 |
| 5) Christian Depression | 1 Kings 19:1-18 |
| 6) Here I Am, Let Me Go! | Isaiah 6:1-12 |
| 7) Fit to Serve | Ephesians 5:1-17 |
| 8) Availability Plus Christ | John 6:1-14 |
| 9) Commissioned to Serve | Matthew 28:19-20 |
| 10) Empowered to Serve | Matthew 28:16-18 |
| 11) The Unlikely Witness | John 4:1-42 |
| 12) The Expected Result | John 4:1-42 |
| 13) Making the Ordinary Extraordinary | Acts 4:1-19 |
| 14) Revive Us Again | Psalm 85 |
| 15) Overcoming Difficulties | Numbers 13:25-33 |
| 16) Removing the Stones | John 11:39-40 |
| 17) The True Measure of Greatness | Matthew 20:20-28 |
| 18) Differences Between Good Missionaries | Acts 15:36-41 |
| 19) When You Cannot Finish the Task | Luke 10:25-35 |
| 20) Acting Like What You Are | Matthew 21:18-19 |
| | Galatians 5:22-23 |
| 21) Overcoming Prejudices | Jonah 1:1-3; 3:1-20; 4:1-3 |
| 22) Serve With Gladness | Psalm 100 |
| 23) Serve With Gratitude | Psalm 103 |
| 24) Serve With Compassion | Jonah 4 |
| 25) Serve With Urgency | John 9:1-7 |
| 26) Serve With Inner Strength | John 15:1-16 |
| 27) Serve With Love | John 21:15-23 |
| 28) Serve With a Team Spirit | Romans 12 |
| 29) Serve for Common Purposes | 1 Corinthians 1:23-31; 2:1 |
| 30) Proclaiming Liberty to the Poor | Isaiah 61:1-6 |

Purpose

To discover the Christian's personal responsibility of world evangelization.

Memory/Theme Verse

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20 (NAS)

God Reaches Out to Man

John 3:16
Romans 10:12-15

- God loves the world, sent His Son
- God is over all, whosoever, how shall they hear

Great Commission

Acts 1:8
John 20:21
Matthew 28:19-20

- Power, be a witness, reach out
- Jesus sends, as God sent Him
- Go, make disciples, bring in to local church, teach I am with you

Personal Responsibility

Mark 10:45
John 4:35

- Even Jesus came to serve and give His life
- Urgency, don't wait to minister, do it now

A Missionary Pattern

Acts 13:1-5
Acts 14:26-28

- Called to go, went! Church sent!
- Went, witness, accountable to sending church

Personal Response

1. Is every Christian a witness? _____

2. How does witnessing relate to leading someone to Christ? _____

3. Where is my Jerusalem? _____

4. Where is my Judea? _____

5. Where is my Samaria? _____

6. Where is my uttermost part of the world? _____

7. According to John 20:21, in what way does Jesus send us? _____

8. When should I begin to minister? _____

9. On this ministry trip, to whom am I accountable? _____

Purpose

To look closely at God's definition of a servant so I can better serve God and others.

Memory/Theme Verse

**“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served,
but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45 (NAS)**

A Servant's Heart

Christ as the Example:

John 13:2-20
Philippians 2:5-8

- Humbles Himself, washes feet
- Humble, obedient

Christ, Others, Me:

II Corinthians 4:5

- Not us but Christ, then your servant, we come last

Motivation to Serve:

John 15:16
Isaiah 41:9-10
Colossians 3:23

- I have chosen you, to go forth and produce fruit
- I have chosen you and will protect you
- Do all for God with all your heart

Traits of a Servant:

Matthew 10:16
Ephesians 4
Matthew 25:21

- I sent you be wise, harmless
- A worthy walk
- Good and faithful

A Model Servant

(taken from the Scofield notes)

Genesis 24

- Does not run un-sent (verses 2-9)
- Goes where he is sent (verses 4, 10)
- Does nothing else (verse 5)
- Is prayerful and thankful (verses 12-14, 26, 27)
- Is wise to win (verses 17, 18, 21)
- Speaks not of himself, but of his master (verses 22, 34-35, Acts 1:18)
- Presents the true issue and requires a clear decision (verse 49 and verse 66 gives report)

Ministry Goals

**“Whatever you do, do for God’s glory, not for my profit
but that they be saved.” I Corinthians 10:31-33**

Optional Activity:

List specific service goals for this trip:

- (1) As a group
- (2) As an individual

GROUP

INDIVIDUAL

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

SARASOTA BAPTIST CHURCH
PROCTOR ROAD CAMPUS: 7091 PROCTOR ROAD, SARASOTA, FL 34241
LAKEWOOD RANCH CAMPUS: 5600 DEER DRIVE, SARASOTA, FL 34240
(941) 922-1449

Personal Response

1. How can I better exhibit a servant's attitude?

At home: _____

At church: _____

With friends: _____

2. Do others see Christ in me? If yes, why? If no, why not? _____

3. List several ways that you can be of service on this trip to:

Team members: _____

Host/Missionaries: _____

Nationals: _____

4. What is my purpose for going on this ministry trip? _____

5. What personal attitudes do I need to adjust in order to have a servant's heart while on this trip?

HOW TO SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” I Peter 3:15

One of the most effective tools you have for sharing your faith is the story of how Jesus Christ gave you eternal life and how He has enriched your life. The Apostle John wrote, “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard” (I John 1:3), testifying about his relationship to Jesus Christ.

When the Apostle Paul stood before King Agrippa (Acts 26), he spoke simply, logically, and clearly about his life before salvation, how he met Christ, and what his life was like after conversion. Paul’s testimony takes three or four minutes to read aloud in a conversational matter.

By following the steps outlined in this article, you will learn how to tell others in the same manner about how you came to know Christ. The choice of the right words, the flow of your story, and knowing how to begin and end are all-important.

Testimonies can be prepared on many subjects and tailored to various audiences. The kind of testimony outlined here is designed to give to a non-Christian. It will be best suited for sharing one-on-one or in a small group. It can also be adapted for a group setting using an interpreter. *The key is to practice with your team so you are all comfortable with sharing.*

The purpose of preparing a testimony is not to memorize it and give it verbatim, but to help you put into words some of the important and interesting details of your conversion. A testimony serves primarily as a “door opener,” not a “convincing tool”. Many people are not ready to be convinced that they need Christ, but can often be led to talk about the Gospel after hearing a personal testimony.

Before, How, and After

Paul’s testimony in Acts 26 is a biblical model you can following in writing your own personal testimony. Paul’s format in Acts 26 is:

Lead In	➤	Verses 2-3
Before	➤	Verses 4-11
How	➤	Verses 12-20
After	➤	Verses 21-23
Close	➤	Verses 24-29

SARASOTA BAPTIST CHURCH
PROCTOR ROAD CAMPUS: 7091 PROCTOR ROAD, SARASOTA, FL 34241
LAKEWOOD RANCH CAMPUS: 5600 DEER DRIVE, SARASOTA, FL 34240
(941) 922-1449

HOW TO SHARE YOUR TESTIMONY

(CONTINUED)

Here are some suggestions for developing the *'Before, How, and After'* sections of your personal testimony.

Before:

1. Many people's actions spring out of their unsatisfied deep inner needs. What were one or two of your unsatisfied, deep inner needs before you came to know Jesus Christ? Some examples of inner needs are:

Lack of peace	Lack of security
Fear of death	Lack of purpose
Something missing	Lack of significance
No meaning to life	No real friends
Desire to be in control	No motivation
Loneliness	

2. Non-Christians are usually trying to satisfy their deep inner needs through unsatisfactory solutions. In the past, what unsatisfactory solutions did you use to attempt to meet those deep inner needs? As you develop your testimony, list positive, as well as negative, solutions you may have tried. Some examples are:

Marriage/family	Education
Work	Hobbies/entertainment
Drugs/alcohol	Sex
Sports/fitness	Wrong friends
Money	

How:

1. Describe the circumstances that caused you to consider Christ, as the solution to your deep inner needs. Identify the events that led to your conversion. In some cases this may have taken place over a period of time.
2. State specifically the steps you took to become a Christian. If there is a particular passage of Scripture that applies here, you may want to use it. Usually you will simply paraphrase it. (i.e. the Net: Rom. 3:23, Rom. 6:23, John 3:16, John 1:14, 1 Cor. 15:3-4, John 1:12, John 10:10, Acts 3:19)
3. Include the Gospel clearly and briefly. The Gospel includes:

All have sinned
Sin's penalty
Christ paid the penalty
Must receive Christ (free gift!!)

SARASOTA BAPTIST CHURCH
PROCTOR ROAD CAMPUS: 7091 PROCTOR ROAD, SARASOTA, FL 34241
LAKEWOOD RANCH CAMPUS: 5600 DEER DRIVE, SARASOTA, FL 34240
(941) 922-1449

After:

1. State how Christ filled or is filling your deep inner needs. In the *'Before'*, you expressed your needs and how you tried unsuccessfully to meet them. You now want to briefly show the difference that Christ has made in your life.
2. Conclude with a statement like: *"But the greatest benefit is that I know for certain that I have eternal life."* The person you are talking with will tend to comment on the last thing you say. Often it is natural to move from the testimony into a clear presentation of the Gospel.
3. In group settings it is always good to give an opportunity to make a decision. Be sensitive to your setting, surroundings, and the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Choose Your Testimony Format

Read the three sample testimonies in the boxes that follow. Then, come back and check the box beside the format that best fits your own story. You can use the *Testimony Worksheet* that corresponds to this format.

Format 1: Adult Conversion

You trusted Christ as an adult. You have a distinct *before, how, and after*.

Format 2: Early Conversion, Adult Full Commitment

You made a decision for Christ as a child, but your life was characterized by spiritual immaturity – a lifestyle similar to that of a non-Christian – until you reached a point of crisis and recommitted your life to Christ. Evaluate whether your early conversion experience was genuine. If you conclude it was not genuine, then use Format 1 as your model.

Format 3: Early Conversion, Consistent Growth

You probably grew up with Christian parents and have a strong church background. You may have very little *before*.

The *Testimony Worksheet* (at the end of this section) provides questions that will help you get started in writing your testimony. Select the appropriate format and jot down thoughts for each question on a separate piece of paper. This will give you a basis from which to write your sentences and paragraphs about your own experience.

As you write your first draft, refer again to the sample testimony that is more like your own story. Note how the person began the testimony and how he/she made the transitions between the main points. In addition, follow these guidelines:

1. **Make it sound conversational.** Avoid literary sounding statements. Use informal language.
2. **Share about what happened to you.** Don't preach about what should happen to them. Say "I" and "me", not "you". This helps keep the testimony warm and personal.
3. **Avoid religious words, phrases, and jargon.** Don't assume the listener knows what you mean by terms such as *sin*; *accepted Christ*; or even *Christian*.
4. **Generalize, so more people can identify with your story.** Don't name specific churches, denominations, or groups. Avoid using dates and ages.
5. **Include some humor and human interest.** When a person smiles or laughs, it reduces tension. Humor is disarming and increases attention. Be aware of social/cultural differences.
6. **One or two pictures increase interest.** Don't just say, "*Bill shared the Gospel with me.*" You might briefly describe the setting so a person listening can visualize it.
7. **Explain how Christ met or is meeting your deep inner needs.** Do not communicate that all your struggles and problems ended at conversion.
8. **Sound adult, not juvenile.** Reflect an adult point-of-view even if you were converted as a child.
9. **Avoid dogmatic and mystical statements that skeptics can question.** Statements such as; "*I prayed and God gave me a job*"; or "*God said to me.*"
10. **Simplify and reduce 'clutter'.** Mention a limited number of people and use only their first names. Combine information when you can.
 - a) *Poor:* "Martha Smith, Nancy Van Buren and her cousin Jane came by my office at Digital Binary Components Corporation"
 - b) *Good:* "Martha and two other friends talked with me at work one day"
 - c) *Good:* "After living in five states and attending six universities, I finally graduated and got an engineering job."
11. **Avoid examples that do not cross cultures.** For example, do not use an example of American football in a country that does not even know what it is.

Practicing Your Testimony

After you have written your testimony, you may want to have another Christian read it and make suggestions for improvement. Ask them to point out any areas that you need to explain further to make sure the Gospel is presented clearly. When you have a final draft that you like, outline your testimony on a 3" x 5" card. Practice giving your testimony with your small group. This will be an excellent opportunity to practice and receive feedback.

Leading Into Your Testimony

When you feel comfortable giving your testimony, you may begin to wonder, "When do I share it with a non-Christian?" "How do I direct the conversation so it will lead to presenting my testimony?" You may find the following suggestions helpful.

1. **Include some 'small talk' before discussing spiritual matters.** Discuss family, job, hobbies, interests, etc.
2. **Be alert for expressed needs such as family problems or stress on the job.** You can use these to show how Christ has helped you through some of the same areas.
3. **Discuss past concerns and needs in your life.** "We used to struggle in your marriage relationship" or "I used to allow the pressures at work get to me." "Then I discovered something that made a tremendous difference in my life."
4. **Discuss contemporary situations in the news or in your area.**
5. **Build relationships with them.** It may take ten minutes, ten hours, ten days, or even ten months, but build relationships.
6. **Don't condemn them for living *like* non-Christians, they *are* non-Christians.** Your objective is to share how they can have a better life in Christ.
7. **Avoid dogmatic 'religious' statements.** "Jesus is the answer to all your problems." He is, but they don't even know *who* He is, much less what He can *do* in their lives.
8. **Avoid arguments on moral issues.** You can expect non-Christians to have conflicts with clear biblical teaching. Remember that they do not have a valid base from which to make correct moral decisions.
9. **On the field.** If you have used a skit, drama, etc. you can lead into your testimony by relating back to whatever was just presented.

The Close

When you have shared your personal testimony, you may want to conclude with a statement that causes the person to reflect on what you have just shared. What you say will depend on how this person responds to what you have shared. If they respond positive, you could say something like:

1. "Bill, has anything like this ever happened to you?"
2. "Mary, do you know for certain whether you have eternal life?"
3. "May I share with you some day how I know for certain that I have eternal life?"
4. "May I share an illustration with you that explains how a person can know for certain that he has eternal life?"

If they respond negatively or neutral, you could say something like:

1. "If you are interested I would like to share more with you sometime."
2. "Do you have any questions on what I have just shared with you?"
3. "Well, that is what happened to me. If you ever want to talk about it further, I would love do so."



TESTIMONY WORKSHEET

□ **FORMAT 1: Adult Conversion**

Before:

What was a deep inner need in your life before you met Christ?

Give some examples of how you tried to meet or fulfill that need with unsatisfactory solutions.

How:

Describe the circumstances that caused you to consider Christ.

State how you trusted Christ. Briefly include the Gospel.

After:

Give an example of how Christ met or is currently meeting your deep inner needs.

End with a statement to the effect that you know for certain that you have eternal life.

□ **FORMAT 2: Early Conversion, Adult/Deeper Commitment**

Before Deeper Commitment:

What was a deep inner need you were trying to fill?

Give some examples of how you tried to fill that inner need through unsatisfactory solutions.

How:

Briefly describe the situation in which you made a deeper commitment to Christ.

Refer to your conversion experience. State how you trusted Christ. Briefly include the Gospel.

After:

State how Christ is currently meeting your deep inner needs.

End with a statement that you know for certain you have eternal life.

□ **FORMAT 3: Early Conversion/Consistent Growth**

Before:

State the deep inner needs you see people trying to fill.

Describe how you see people trying to satisfy those needs.

How:

Explain why you never experienced this problem.

Refer to your conversion experience. State how you trusted Christ. Briefly include the Gospel.

After:

Illustrate how Christ met or is meeting your deep inner needs.

End with a statement to the effect that you know for certain that you have eternal life.

SARASOTA BAPTIST CHURCH
PROCTOR ROAD CAMPUS: 7091 PROCTOR ROAD, SARASOTA, FL 34241
LAKEWOOD RANCH CAMPUS: 5600 DEER DRIVE, SARASOTA, FL 34240
(941) 922-1449