



THE WELL

“How to Write Your Story”

Before you begin, consider Paul’s story as recorded in 1 Timothy 1:12-18 as a writing example:

I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Before you write:

- Pray – Ask God what He would have you share to communicate His Story and His power.
 - Clarify your primary purpose – What is the one “take away” you wish to communicate to those listening?
- Write that purpose in 10 words or less:

- Consider these things before writing:
 - Determine to exalt Christ, not your sin or even your own improvement.
 - Share struggles in an appropriate way (not in lengthy or graphic detail).
 - Is there a specific Scripture God used as part of your gospel transformation process?

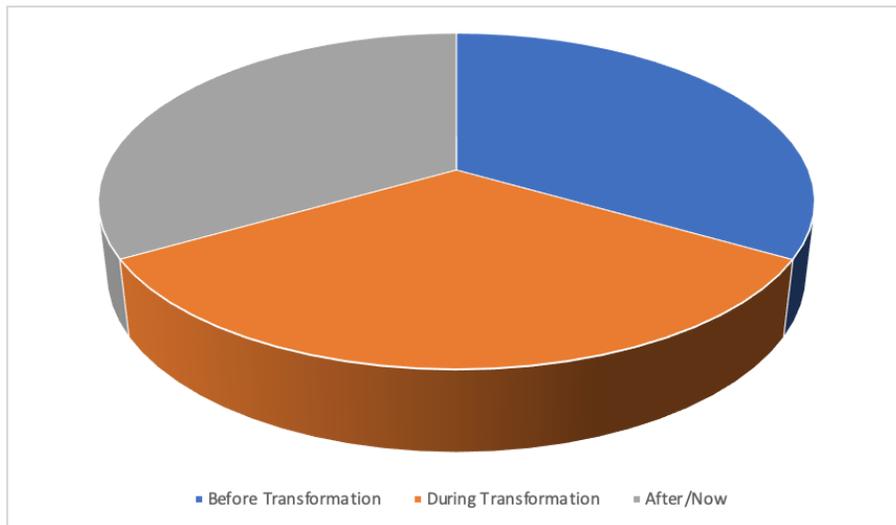
What to aim for:

Focus on a key transformation area versus your life story.

Every detail of your story is significant, but for the purpose of sharing your story, focus on the part of your story ***surrounding the key struggle/area of transformation***, limiting it to no more than 2 areas. It might be helpful to consider:

What it IS:	What it IS <u>NOT</u> :
<p>“Your Story” of transformation as it relates to God saving you, by His grace, and continually transforming your life for His glory and your good.</p> <p>What life was like BEFORE transformation in Christ. How Christ worked in you DURING the process. How is God continuing to transform you NOW.</p>	<p>A chronological life story, with all childhood information. (Though some of the backstory may be helpful in showing God’s power to transform.)</p>

Begin by dividing “Your Story” into three general movements.



(Though it may be easier to focus on life before Christ, ask God to show you how much He has worked to transform you and how your relationship with Him and others has changed.)

If helpful, prepare a short outline before writing.

This is not helpful to everyone, but can be useful if you need help narrowing the information before starting to write. Just create a 3-level outline, list out bullet points of appropriate descriptions and examples from your story, Scriptures, etc., that tell the story of Christ bringing freedom and joy in your life as you've responded to His grace.

Start Writing:

Divide "Your Story" into the following five sections. Use these questions as a guide to help you consider what you might share. You do not have to specifically answer each of these questions.

*****Be sure to share your salvation experience clearly, using simple language somewhere in your story.**

Intro (11 words)

Hi my name is _____... and this is how God... i.e. restored me from my brokenness, showed me the depths of his grace, etc)

(Be creative, brief, and honest in summarizing what God has done in your life)

Before Christ... (maximum 180 words)

- In what ways was your life not working?
- What are some of the circumstances that others could relate to?
- If you had a relationship with God, what was it like? If you did not, what was your view of God?
- What was your attitude toward others in your life?
- At what point did you know that something needed to change? What was that turning point?

Then God (This is a transitional phrase that needs to be in your story as this will be common language in all of the stories)... (maximum 180 words)

- How did God get your attention for the need for transformation?
- Describe the start of that process? How did you feel?
- Describe how God showed you that your life was out of control and you needed to submit to Christ.
- What did God do during the transformation process? When did God show you that a new life was possible?
- Give specifics on how God used his word, spirit, and people to begin to change you.

What has and is changing because of Christ in this/ these areas ... (maximum 180 words)

Describe life now (These are helpful prompting questions you won't be able to answer all of them):

- How has your walk with God changed?
- How do you continue to pursue God?
- How has God used this trial/ struggle to allow you to share the hope of Christ with others?
- What changes has God made in your relationship with others (friends, family, co-workers)?
- Any changes in your marriage, dating because of what Christ has done?
- How are you handling conflict?
- How has being in community affected this Gospel transformation in your life?
- What areas of your old life are gone? Or how have they changed? (thoughts, beliefs, actions, inactions)
- Where do you see the fruit of God's work in you?
- How has your perspective changed?
- How have your motives changed?
- How has your speech or the way you spend money changed?

Your Story :: Final Checklist

1. Was Christ exalted? Is the story more about you, a church, a specific ministry, or Him? Will the listener remember your sin or God?
2. Did you use Scripture? Is it used in context?
3. Was sin exalted or described too graphically? Is any sin or struggle described in a way that could lead others to be tempted or stumble?
4. Did you use any Christianese language? (Quiet time, fellowship, walk with God) that you can say in more plain words for a non-Christian to understand.
5. Did you inappropriately communicate that your sin is unique, instead of it being a common struggle (1 Cor. 10:13)?
6. Did you demonstrate a "victim mentality" anywhere? Did you "own your part?"
7. Did you focus on anyone else's sin to an inappropriate level?
8. Did you share your salvation experience? Was it addressed as grace through faith in Christ alone?
9. Could the way that you communicated your story offend anyone? (homosexuals, addicts, divorcees, members of specific denominations, someone mentioned in your testimony, etc.)
10. Was marriage/separation/divorce/remarriage mentioned? Was it biblically addressed? Could anything that you said be misinterpreted by the listener to justify their decisions?

11. Is there any mention of demons, baptism of the Holy Spirit, audibly hearing God's voice or anything else that needs to be checked theologically?
12. Did you mention any books or authors specifically? We do not want to specifically endorse anything but God's word.
13. Is there any unfinished business that needs to be taken care of before you give this? Anyone to whom you still owe anamends? How would you feel if that person happened to be in the audience the night you speak, or happened to listen to your story online?
14. Has someone from your community group read it? Have someone time you to ensure delivery is under 3 minutes. Make sure that you have read this out loud and timed it!
15. Was your story equally divided using the word counts?
16. Did you communicate your primary purpose/"take away"? Did you summarize it and include it in your closing?
17. Time should be under 3 minutes. **If not under 3 minutes, it will be returned to you until it is at the requested word count.**