

Di121 Effective Communication

Lesson Di121-3 Why Communicate? Telling Your Story

As followers of Jesus we each have a story to tell. This story we call your ‘testimony.’ Your testimony communicates to others exactly what happened when you came to faith in Christ. You can make it exciting for others to hear, as you tell them how you felt at that time. Your testimony might seem unbelievable to some, but you know it is true. The Bible has many stories of believers sharing their story with others. This lesson will discuss one example from the Gospel written by John the apostle.

John gives us the testimony of a man who had a life-changing encounter with Jesus. He healed the man who had been blind from birth. Before healing him Jesus made this statement, “I am the light of the world,” meaning he is the true light for all people. Then Jesus spit on the ground, made some mud, and put it on the man’s eyes. He told him to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam. After he had washed his eyes, he was able to see for the first time in his life. Those who had formerly known him as a beggar were not even sure it was him! But he himself insisted, “I am the man.”

“How then were your eyes opened?” they asked.

He replied, “The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.”

“Where is this man?” they asked him.

“I don’t know,” he said. So they brought the former blind man to the Pharisees. Now the day on which Jesus had healed the man’s eyes was a Sabbath. The Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. “He put mud on my eyes,” the man replied, “and I washed, and now I see.”

Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” By this they meant Jesus had done work on a holy day, breaking God’s law.

But others asked, “How can a sinner perform such signs?” So they were divided in their opinions about Jesus.

Then they turned again to the man who had been healed. “What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” The man told them that Jesus was a prophet. They still did not believe that he had been blind until they questioned the man’s parents. “Is this your son? Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?”

“We know he is our son,” the parents answered, “and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don’t know. Ask him, he will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who said that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.

A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. “Give glory to God by telling the truth,” they said. “We know this man is a sinner.”

He replied, “Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!”

Then they asked him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

He answered, “I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?” Perhaps he understood their jealousy of Jesus’ power.

They hurled insults at him saying, “You are this fellow’s disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don’t even know where he comes from.”

The man answered, “Now that is remarkable! You don’t know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”

To this they replied, “How dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out of the synagogue (John 9: 5-34).

We today must follow this man’s example. Every believer must testify about what they have seen and heard about Jesus. He has become the light of our lives. As this story shows, some will reject the witness we give about Jesus. As Jesus explained later in the story, such people are still living in darkness. The man’s neighbors didn’t recognize him. The religious leaders rejected his story as false and unbelievable. Even his parents refused to believe, because of fear. Eventually he was told never to enter the synagogue again.

Through all this the man’s faith remained strong. He knew his story—his testimony—was true. He continued to tell anyone who would listen, “Once I was blind, but now I see.” He spoke at that time of his physical sight. Later Jesus came to him again. After this second meeting he believed in Jesus as the Messiah. He bowed and worshiped the Lord. He received spiritual sight as well as physical sight. With his life changed, he was no longer called a blind beggar. His new identity was a disciple of Jesus.

This man knew he was forever changed. No one could argue him out of that truth. Just as a doctor cannot remove a person’s words from their body during a surgery, so his testimony could not be removed from him. He didn’t fully understand the theology behind the rejection of the Pharisees. He was frustrated that now he could see, but they were blind to the miracle Christ had performed.

Each disciple of Jesus has a story to tell. Telling that personal story communicates to others that our life has changed. It no longer centers on us or on our problems. Your story now

centers on Jesus and what he has done. You will tell people how he has changed you. Your actions and your message will agree. You **are** your story to that person who hears it.

This story is **important** because it shows the joys and sorrows of sharing your testimony with others, who may either receive or reject you.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that each believer has a story to tell about how Jesus has changed their life. This story or ‘testimony’ helps unbelievers to see the light of Jesus.

Let's **review** this lesson—

1. What was the opinion of some Pharisees about Jesus after he had healed the blind man?
A. [Pause.] If you answered that the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath,” you are correct.
2. What does each believer have that can be used to communicate his faith to unbelievers?
A. [Pause.] If you said each believer has a testimony that can be used to communicate his faith, you are right.
3. What was the testimony that the former blind man told everyone?
A. [Pause.] If you said his testimony was, “One thing I know; I was blind but now I see!” you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to tell this story to a new believer who may not have heard it before. After telling the story of the blind man, ask this person to share their testimony of how they met Jesus. Discuss the similarities and differences between their story and the story of the blind man in the Bible. Share your story with them. Together, memorize the words of Jesus, “I am the light of the world.” As you share your stories, you are giving Christ’s light to others.