



# Testify in Worship

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## Why Witness?

Talking about money can be one of the most uncomfortable and yet, most important things that we do in our churches! Thankfully, the more we do it, the easier it gets. Witnessing in front of others gives not only the witness, but the congregation as well, the opportunity to explore his/her faith and uncover his/her own personal motivations for giving. This is all part of the faith journey that we, as Christians, travel in our lifetime. We look to others in our church to provide a moral compass for us and our families in this world that God has provided. So, it stands to reason that we learn from them how to be good stewards. Witnessing in worship is an important part of faith development and discipleship for both the witness and the audience.

## What should the focus of Witnessing be?

Focus on the philosophy of **“the need of the giver to give”** for his or her own spiritual development, rather than on the “need of the church to receive.” Therefore, Witnesses should speak of their own reasons for giving, their own love of the church, and their own financial commitment. Not the budget!

## Who can Witness?

A cross-section of the church

- Young
- Old
- New Members
- Long-term Members
- Youth
- Anyone

## When can they Witness?

All the time! Any time!

- Once a month
- 3 Sundays leading up to Pledge Sunday
- A witness should plan to speak for about 5 minutes!

## What else can you do year-round?

Involve the kids!

- Have them write letters to the members about why they love the church.
- Have them design bulletin covers/other art projects around stewardship themes – Thankfulness, Being a Giver, Love, Family, Acceptance
- Ask a teenager to witness
- Skits, plays, puppet shows (Zacchaeus)

## HOW DOES A WITNESS PREPARE?

1. Explore personal motivations for giving to the church – EDUCATION
2. Relate personal motivations to a Bible Passage – DISCOVERY
3. Prepare message – PREPARATION



### **EDUCATION:** Why People Give?

from “Plain Talk About Churches and Money”, *an Alban Institute Publication* <sup>i</sup>

Understanding a bit about why you give to your church can help you understand why others give. This basic understanding can go a long way in figuring out what you are going to say. Explore your motivations and think about what might motivate others.

### **4 Main Motives for giving!**

1. **Reciprocity with a social group**
2. **Reciprocity with God**
3. **Giving to extension of self**
4. **Thankfulness**

### **Reciprocity with a Social Group**

- ✓ Philanthropy is a product of social relationships between the giver and their peers
- ✓ The person who asks you to give can be significant, thus witnessing...
- ✓ People who ask must first give a sizable contribution, and may mention it when talking with friends.
- ✓ This motivation is true to a degree in churches; “if one is giving at \$X level and I am capable, so should I.” It is more prevalent in the secular community.

## Reciprocity with God

- ✓ Unique to religious fund raising and religious people.
- ✓ God is eternal and omnipotent, God can bestow gifts far greater than anyone. Anyone who believes that God is open to reciprocal relationships will not hesitate to make immense gifts.
- ✓ Depends on belief and faith, and world view of donor.

## Giving to Extensions of the Self

- ✓ What is included in self? Spouse, family, ???
- ✓ Some church members feel as if church is a family, include it in their extended self. Feel joy when they give gifts to the church, without thoughts of reciprocity. College alma mater often generates same feeling.
- ✓ Extensions of self not permanent. Love church and others more some years than others.
- ✓ Important for church leaders to nurture feelings of love and belonging among the members.

## Thankfulness

- ✓ Church members sometimes make gifts out of a feeling of gratitude.
- ✓ No real expectation of future repayment.
- ✓ Preaching on giving out of gratitude helps sharpen people's vision of God-given gifts, resulting in spiritual growth and strengthened desire to return time, talent, and treasure in gratitude.
- ✓ More prominent among theologically committed people than those weak in faith.



## DISCOVERY: What to Say? (4 possible themes)



Take some time to investigate what Jesus or the Prophets are telling us about being Stewards. Ask yourself some questions about your motivations for giving...

Why do you give to the church?

Was there a particular time in your life that the church was there for you in a time of need?

How does being able to give make you feel?

Are you giving at the level you want to be yet? If not, how do you plan to get there?

How do you see yourself as being a Steward?

Relate your personal motivations for giving to a passage from the Bible.

### Witness 1

Theme – Thankfulness

- ❖ Talk about a particularly meaningful scriptural passage concerning thankfulness. Paul's epistles are full of them:
  - ✓ 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, 8:7-12
  - ✓ Philippians 4:5
  - ✓ Colossians 1:2, 3:15-17
  - ✓ 1 Thessalonians 5:18
  - ✓ Psalm 116:12-14
- ❖ Talk about some of what God has given you and why that is important.
- ❖ Conclude with a strong statement about the need to be grateful to God for all God gives and does.

### Witness 2

Theme – God as a giver

- ❖ Talk about a particularly meaningful scriptural passage concerning God as a giver:
  - ✓ Psalm 104: 27-28
  - ✓ Psalm 145:15-16
  - ✓ 2 Corinthians 9:6-15
  - ✓ Luke 12:32-34
  - ✓ James 1:17
  - ✓ 1 Timothy 6:17-19
  - ✓ Genesis 1:27

- ❖ Stress your own need to be a giver because of being made in the image of God, who is a giver.
- ❖ Introduce the topic of Tithing.
- ❖ Talk about how it makes you feel to be a giver.

### **Witness 3**

Theme – Being a Steward

- ❖ Talk about a particularly meaningful scriptural passage concerning being called to be a Steward or how much to give:
  - ✓ 2 Corinthians 8:1-7
  - ✓ Luke 18:18-30
  - ✓ Mark 12:41-44
  - ✓ Luke 19:1-11 (Zacchaeus)
  - ✓ Leviticus 27:30
  - ✓ Deuteronomy 12:6 or 18:4
- ❖ Transition into the value of proportionate giving. Introduce the concept of tithing. Talk about your own decision to tithe and how that makes you feel.
- ❖ Encourage/Invite members to take a step up in their giving for the coming year. Ask them to set a goal and then take steps toward achieving the goal each year.

### **Witness 4**

Theme – The Joy of Giving

- ❖ Talk about what God has done for you and how, through your giving, you feel yourself to be a significant part of the compassionate way the church helps to shape the world the way God intended it.
- ❖ Talk about Missions/Outreach and what your church does to address local, national and Global concerns and how that makes you feel.
- ❖ There might be further reference to proportionate giving. Acknowledge that not everyone is capable of giving at the same dollar level, therefore proportionate giving gives EVERYONE an opportunity to participate equally.



## PREPARATION – Public Speaking <sup>ii</sup>

Getting up in front of your congregation can be very difficult for some people. With a little preparation, it will be a lot easier.



### 1. Allow Time to Prepare

The most important step in public speaking is preparation. It is the #1 key to success in every endeavor and this applies especially to speaking in public.

Preparation creates confidence:

- ✓ Confidence in your abilities
- ✓ Confidence in your knowledge
- ✓ Confidence in a successful outcome
- ✓ Confidence to overcome fear
- ✓ Confidence to take action

### 2. Practice

- ✓ Practicing is the next simple step in developing confident public speaking.
- ✓ Be prepared to feel foolish, awkward and nervous while you are learning and trying out new skills. Just do it anyway.
- ✓ The more you practice in front of others the more and quicker you will learn. Remember, while you are learning you don't have to be perfect, just use those occasions as learning opportunities.
- ✓ Ask for constructive feedback, which is what you need while you are learning.

### 3. Plan a Simple Structure

- ✓ Introduction: Tell them what you are going to tell them.
- ✓ Body: Share two or three clear ideas.
- ✓ Conclusion: Tell them what you have told them.

#### 4. Take Pleasure

- ✓ Speaking in public is a pleasurable, exhilarating experience.
- ✓ It provides an opportunity to share your experience and your knowledge.
- ✓ You may not feel that speaking in public is a pleasure at first. You may feel absolutely petrified. Many people do. This is only natural. But once you have had the opportunity to learn a few skills and have learned how to control your nerves then you will experience the satisfaction of confidence in your abilities to speak in front of the congregation.

#### 5. Personality

- ✓ To make an impact on other people you must express your personality.
- ✓ Speaking in public is a wonderful way to do this. By sharing your real self, the hidden part of you, your feelings, your attitudes, your dreams and aspirations with your audience you connect with them in a very real and dynamic way. They see the real person and they are then able to enter into your world and empathize with you.

#### 6. Passion

- ✓ Speak from the Heart!
- ✓ To be at all convincing you must have a passion for your subject. It must be something you are interested in.
- ✓ You must exude enthusiasm and you must communicate this excitement to the congregation.



### **REMEMBER!!**

The purpose of your Stewardship campaign should be to raise the level of giving of individuals in the congregation rather than to “raise the church budget.” Church budgets usually reflect the minimum needs of our churches, and may encourage lower giving. Our goal, by witnessing, should be to help people open their hearts and give more generously. Then, we help people grow as stewards.

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<sup>i</sup> Dean Hoge, Patrick McNamara, Charles Zech, “Plain Talk About Churches and Money”, *an Alban Institute Publication*: pp 35-53

<sup>ii</sup> Alan Moreton, “Public Speaking” *10 Simple Steps to Confident Speaking*: [http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Alan\\_Moreton](http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Alan_Moreton)