

Series: Imitate

Title: “Share Your Story”

The Word: 1 Peter 3:15, Acts 26, Matthew 4:19.

Main Thought: Imitating Jesus is sharing how He has changed your life.

Intro/Me: Have you ever looked the part but did not know the part?

We have the life-giving news of Jesus Christ. It does no good being only kept to ourselves.

Sharing our faith is not just wearing a Christian t-shirt “Jesus is my homeboy” or “God answers knee-mail.”

Jesus calls us to reach people. His first call to Peter and Andrew:

Matthew 4:19: “Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!”

We/Tension: Fishing pole prop: During the first paragraph, do some fishing poses like casting, reeling , baiting your hook, or even just sitting there waiting for a bite. Many people stand at the shore and watch. They never bait the hook, prepare the reel. We simply strike a good Christian “pose” and continue watching those who are lost go through life just that...lost. **Fishing for people**

Your story is the way to help people see Jesus as real in your life.

1 Peter 3:15: “Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.”

It is attractive to hear about how your life has been changed by Jesus.

We: There is a fine line between standing on the edge of shore and fishing. It is not enough to

look like a fisherman; you need to act like one. Jesus called this fishing for men. It is not enough to know everything there is to know about fishing and never bait the hook and cast the line. Tonight we are going to look at how Paul the apostle shared his story to King Agrippa.

God: Paul's testimony in Acts 26 is a biblical model you can follow in writing your own personal story.

LEAD IN VERSES 2-3

Acts 26:2 "I am fortunate, King Agrippa, that you are the one hearing my defense today against all these accusations made by the Jewish leaders, **3** for I know you are an expert on all Jewish customs and controversies. Now please listen to me patiently!

Apply/You: **Your Story has three parts to it**

1) Before I began a relationship with Jesus (DANIEL)

The purpose of your story is not to just memorize a script but to share the important aspects of your life before Christ. Keep in mind that you do not have to share all of the details of your life. Share the top few areas of life before Christ. How were you finding hope and purpose? What were you living for before Christ? What positive or negative ways were you seeking meaning? (Sex, money, sports, relationships, drugs/alcohol, partying, etc).

BEFORE VERSES 4-11

4 "As the Jewish leaders are well aware, I was given a thorough Jewish training from my earliest childhood among my own people and in Jerusalem. **5** If they would admit it, they know that I have been a member of the Pharisees, the strictest sect of our religion. **6** Now I am on trial because of my hope in the fulfillment of God's promise made to our ancestors. **7** In fact, that is why the twelve tribes of Israel zealously worship God night and day, and they share the same hope I have. Yet, Your Majesty, they accuse me for having this hope! **8** Why does it seem incredible to any of you that God can raise the dead? **9** "I used to believe that I ought to do everything I could to oppose

the very name of Jesus the Nazarene. **10** Indeed, I did just that in Jerusalem. Authorized by the leading priests, I caused many believers there to be sent to prison. And I cast my vote against them when they were condemned to death. **11** Many times I had them punished in the synagogues to get them to curse Jesus. I was so violently opposed to them that I even chased them down in foreign cities.”

2) How I began a relationship with Jesus (JOSH)

Describe the circumstances that caused you to consider Christ as the solution to your life. Talk about what led up to you beginning a relationship with Christ. If it was over time, talk about the different steps, people or events that helped you learn about Christ. What were the steps you took to respond? Explain the important moment of when you surrendered to Christ? Where were you? What was God leading you in your heart? Paint the picture of that moment that you responded to God’s grace.

HOW VERSES 12-20: **12** “One day I was on such a mission to Damascus, armed with the authority and commission of the leading priests. **13** About noon, Your Majesty, as I was on the road, a light from heaven brighter than the sun shone down on me and my companions. **14** We all fell down, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is useless for you to fight against my will. **15** “‘Who are you, lord?’ I asked. “And the Lord replied, ‘I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. **16** Now get to your feet! For I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant and witness. You are to tell the world what you have seen and what I will show you in the future. **17** And I will rescue you from both your own people and the Gentiles. Yes, I am sending you to the Gentiles **18** to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God’s people, who are set apart by faith in me.’ **19** “And so, King Agrippa, I obeyed that vision from heaven. **20** I preached first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that all must repent of their sins and turn to God—and prove they have changed by the good things they do.

3) After I began a relationship with Jesus this is how He is changing my life. (DANIEL)

Explain how different your life is now in comparison before you met Jesus. Share a few specific areas of your life that you are different. The greatest news is that there is HOPE in Christ. Share with your friend that the greatest news is that now you have hope not only now but in Heaven eternally. Now transition into a conversation to the person with a question similar to, “has anything like this ever happened in your life?” or “can I share with you about the story of the gospel?”

AFTER VERSES 21-23: **21** Some Jews arrested me in the Temple for preaching this, and they tried to kill me. **22** But God has protected me right up to this present time so I can testify to everyone, from the least to the greatest. I teach nothing except what the prophets and Moses said would happen— **23** that the Messiah would suffer and be the first to rise from the dead, and in this way announce God’s light to Jews and Gentiles alike.”

CLOSE VERSES 24-29: **24** Suddenly, Festus shouted, “**Paul, you are insane.** Too much study has made you crazy!” **25** But Paul replied, “I am not insane, Most Excellent Festus. What I am saying is the sober truth. **26** And King Agrippa knows about these things. I speak boldly, for I am sure these events are all familiar to him, for they were not done in a corner! **27** King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do—” **28** Agrippa interrupted him. “Do you think you can persuade me to become a Christian so quickly?” **29** Paul replied, “Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that both you and everyone here in this audience might become the same as I am, except for these chains.”

How do we learn from Paul’s example of sharing his story.

SHARE DARRYL’S STORY

Us/Takeaway: **Imitators of Jesus influence others with Jesus.** Be courageous enough to share your story and connect it to God’s Story.

Sharing Jesus is a lifestyle – each day ask God, “help me to share you with those I’m around.”