



TAMPA LIFE CHURCH



YOUTH BIBLE STUDY SERIES

OFFLINE

THE TRAGEDY OF UNTOLD STORIES

How God Uses Our Testimony to Build His Kingdom

TURN OFF THE NOISE. TUNE IN TO GOD.

TAMPA LIFE CHURCH // YOUTH MINISTRY

> SECTION 1

The Half Has Not Been Told



Before the message even began, the preacher spoke a prophetic word over Tampa Life Church that set the tone for everything that followed. He reminded the church of the Queen of Sheba's response after seeing the wisdom, glory, and kingdom of Solomon: "The half was not told me" (1 Kings 10:7, KJV). What she had heard about Solomon was impressive, but what she experienced surpassed every report she had ever received. In the same way, the preacher declared that God has prepared greater things for Tampa Life than anyone has yet imagined. The church has already witnessed hundreds receiving the Holy Ghost, many being baptized in the name of Jesus, and lives being transformed, but according to the Word spoken that day, these victories are only the beginning.

This truth is not unique to one congregation. Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly reveals Himself as the God who always has "more." Abraham thought he was simply leaving his homeland, but God was establishing a covenant that would bless every nation. Moses believed he was delivering one generation from Egypt, yet God was creating a people through whom He would reveal His glory to the world. The disciples thought they were following a Rabbi through Galilee, but they would soon become the foundation of a worldwide Church empowered by the Holy Ghost. God's plans consistently exceed human expectations because His Kingdom is always larger than our present perspective.

The reason is simple: God's work has never been limited to what we can presently see. Isaiah declared,

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD."

ISAIAH 55:8 (KJV)

Every revival begins as something that appears small. A conversation becomes a Bible study. A Bible study becomes a transformed family. A transformed family becomes a thriving church. A thriving church reaches a city, and eventually the nations. This is the pattern of the Kingdom of God. Jesus compared it to a mustard seed—small in appearance, yet destined to become something much greater than anyone expected (Matthew 13:31-32).

However, there is another truth hidden within the Queen of Sheba's statement. While God's blessings are often greater than the stories we have heard, many of God's greatest works remain completely unknown because those who experienced them never shared them. Heaven continues writing miracles, restoring families, delivering people from addiction, answering impossible prayers, healing broken hearts, and filling people with His Spirit. Yet countless testimonies never leave the hearts of those who experienced them. They remain private victories instead of becoming public witnesses to the goodness of God.

This reveals one of the greatest tragedies in the Kingdom of God. It is not merely that people have difficult pasts, painful failures, or seasons of brokenness. The greater tragedy is when God redeems those moments, writes a beautiful testimony, and that testimony is never shared with anyone else. Every untold testimony represents someone who may never discover that the same God who transformed one life can transform theirs as well.

Scripture repeatedly demonstrates that God never intended His mighty works to remain hidden. After Israel crossed the Jordan River, Joshua instructed the people to gather twelve stones from the riverbed as a

memorial. Why? Because one day their children would ask, “What mean ye by these stones?” That question would open the door for the story of God’s miraculous power to be told again.

“That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them...”

JOSHUA 4:6-7 (KJV)

Notice God’s pattern. He performs the miracle, but He entrusts His people with the responsibility of telling the story. The miracle may originate with God, but the testimony belongs to the believer.

This principle continues throughout the New Testament. Jesus healed the demoniac of Gadara and then gave him an unexpected command:

“Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”

MARK 5:19 (KJV)

Jesus did not tell him to attend Bible college before speaking. He did not tell him to wait until he understood every doctrine. He simply instructed him to tell what God had done. His testimony became the first missionary message many people would ever hear.

This is the heartbeat of this lesson. God has not only called us to experience His grace—we are called to proclaim it. He has not only delivered us for our benefit, but so that others might believe through what He has done in us. Every believer carries a story that points beyond themselves to the Savior who changed their life.

As we study this lesson, we will discover that one of the greatest tools God has entrusted to His Church is not found in a microphone, a pulpit, or a platform. It is found in the ordinary believer who is willing to say, “Let me tell you what Jesus has done for me.” Every testimony becomes an invitation for someone else to encounter the same God.

The tragedy is never that God stopped working. The tragedy is when His story ends with us instead of continuing through us.

› SECTION 2

God Has Always Chosen Stories to Reveal Himself

One of the most fascinating observations throughout Scripture is that God could have chosen countless methods to reveal Himself to humanity, yet He consistently chose stories. The Bible is certainly a book of doctrine, prophecy, commandments, and theology, but before it is any of those things, it is the story of God's relentless pursuit of mankind. From Genesis to Revelation, we are not merely reading isolated teachings; we are witnessing the unfolding account of redemption. Every page reveals God's desire to restore what sin had broken. This is why stories have such power. They allow us to see ourselves in the lives of others and recognize that the same God who worked then is still working today.

The preacher emphasized that before God's people possessed complete written Scriptures, they possessed stories. Generation after generation preserved their faith by telling what God had done. Around campfires, during feasts, in family gatherings, and throughout worship, parents taught their children about God's mighty acts. They spoke of the Red Sea opening, manna falling from heaven, water flowing from a rock, walls collapsing at Jericho, and countless demonstrations of God's faithfulness. These stories were not entertainment; they were spiritual formation. They shaped the identity of an entire nation.

This explains why God repeatedly commanded Israel never to forget His works. Moses instructed the people:

"Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen... but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

DEUTERONOMY 4:9 (KJV)

Notice the responsibility placed upon every generation. God's miracles were never intended to stop with those who witnessed them. Each generation became responsible for passing the story to the next. Faith was not sustained merely by preserving information; it was preserved by remembering what God had done.

The psalmist echoed this same principle with remarkable clarity:

"We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done."

PSALM 78:4 (KJV)

That phrase deserves careful attention: "We will not hide them." The greatest danger was never that God would stop performing miracles. The greater danger was that His people would stop talking about them. Silence has always been one of the enemy's greatest weapons. If each generation fails to tell the next what God has done, spiritual memory begins to disappear, and with it, expectation for what God can still do.

This principle extends beyond ancient Israel into the ministry of Jesus. Consider how often Jesus taught through stories. Instead of presenting abstract theological lectures, He spoke about shepherds searching for sheep, fathers embracing prodigal sons, women searching for lost coins, farmers sowing seed, fishermen casting nets, builders laying foundations, and merchants seeking pearls. His listeners could immediately identify with these ordinary situations because stories bypass intellectual resistance and speak directly to

the heart.

As the preacher wisely observed, stories create connection. They allow people to recognize that they are not alone. Someone else has walked through pain, failure, uncertainty, fear, or restoration.

Stories build bridges where arguments often build walls.

This is precisely why Jesus frequently concluded His parables with invitations rather than explanations. He wanted His hearers to see themselves within the story. Every parable quietly asks the same question: “Where are you in this account?” Am I the lost sheep? The searching shepherd? The older brother? The prodigal? The faithful servant? The careless builder? Stories invite personal reflection in a way that simple instruction often cannot.

Even the Gospel itself is presented as a story. It begins with creation, moves through humanity’s fall into sin, reaches its climax at Calvary, and culminates in Christ’s resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Every believer who obeys the Gospel enters that continuing story. Our testimony becomes another chapter demonstrating that Jesus Christ still saves, heals, restores, and transforms lives today.

This is why our testimony carries such extraordinary value. We are not merely sharing personal experiences; we are providing living evidence that the story of redemption did not end in the Book of Acts. The same Savior who called fishermen, healed lepers, delivered the demonized, forgave sinners, and filled believers with His Spirit continues writing those same kinds of stories through ordinary people today.

The Apostle John expressed this beautifully when he wrote:

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us...”

1 JOHN 1:3 (KJV)

Notice the pattern. Experience naturally leads to proclamation. Authentic encounters with God produce witnesses. The apostles did not simply repeat information they had memorized; they testified about what they had personally experienced. That same pattern continues in the Church today. We tell others because we have first encountered Him ourselves.

***We have seen. We have heard.
Therefore, we declare.***

This challenges every believer with an important question: If God is still writing stories today, are we faithfully telling them? Our homes, workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and communities are filled with people who desperately need hope. They may never open a Bible before someone first shares how Christ changed their life. Long before they understand theology, they may first be moved by a testimony.

God has always revealed Himself through stories because stories reveal His heart. And when our personal story is surrendered to Him, it becomes another instrument through which He reveals Himself to a world that is still searching for hope.

> SECTION 3

Worship Tells a Story Before We Ever Speak a Word

One of the most profound moments in this message came when the preacher shifted from the power of spoken testimony to the power of worship. Before we ever tell someone what God has done with our lips, our worship is already declaring a testimony. Every time a believer lifts their hands, bows in surrender, sings through tears, or kneels at an altar, they are communicating something to heaven and to everyone around them: “God has been faithful to me.” Worship is not merely music; it is the visible expression of an invisible story.

This is why authentic worship cannot be manufactured. It is born from experience. The songs may be the same for everyone in the congregation, but each person’s worship carries a unique testimony. One worships because Christ healed their marriage. Another because He delivered them from addiction. Another because He restored their family. Another because He forgave years of guilt and shame. The melody may be shared, but every heart sings from a different chapter of God’s faithfulness.

The preacher illustrated this beautifully by describing the fragrance of worship. Just as certain smells immediately transport us back to childhood memories, Scripture teaches that worship rises before God like incense. It is more than beautiful music—it is a memorial before the Lord. As the fragrance rises, it reminds us of God’s covenant faithfulness throughout history.

David prayed:

“Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”

PSALM 141:2 (KJV)

Throughout the Old Testament, incense represented continual worship ascending before God’s throne. It symbolized communion, devotion, and covenant relationship. Under the New Covenant, our worship fulfills that beautiful picture. Every sincere act of praise rises before God as a reminder that He has a redeemed people who still trust Him.

The preacher connected this fragrance to several great altars throughout Scripture. Every altar tells its own story.

Noah’s altar spoke of mercy after judgment. After the floodwaters receded, Noah offered sacrifices unto the Lord.

“And the LORD smelled a sweet savour...”

GENESIS 8:21 (KJV)

That offering became connected with God’s covenant never again to destroy the earth by flood. Noah’s worship testified that God’s mercy had triumphed over judgment.

Moses’ encounters with God spoke of covenant and relationship. Israel learned that worship was not simply ritual but an acknowledgment that God was their Deliverer, Provider, and King.

Elijah's altar on Mount Carmel declared that the Lord alone is God. While the prophets of Baal shouted without answer, Elijah rebuilt the broken altar, prayed a simple prayer of faith, and fire fell from heaven (1 Kings 18). His worship became a testimony that God still answers by fire.

Every altar throughout Scripture reminds us that worship is connected to God's intervention in human history. Worship remembers what God has already done while expressing confidence in what He will do next.

This gives new meaning to our own worship services. We do not lift our hands merely because that is our church tradition. We do so because our hands represent surrendered lives. We do not clap merely because we enjoy the music. We clap because the King has been victorious. We do not sing simply because lyrics appear on a screen. We sing because our Redeemer lives.

The Apostle Paul captured this spirit when he wrote:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice..."

ROMANS 12:1 (KJV)

Under the Old Covenant, sacrifices were placed upon the altar. Under the New Covenant, we become the sacrifice. Every act of obedience, every prayer, every surrender, and every expression of worship tells the ongoing story of God's transforming grace.

The preacher then made one of the most challenging observations of the sermon. He reminded the congregation that many people misunderstand expressive worship. They assume believers worship passionately because they are emotional or trying to impress others. The reality is much deeper. Worship is not about drawing attention to ourselves; it is about remembering what God has brought us through.

This is precisely what we see in the man delivered from a legion of demons. Before meeting Jesus, he lived among the tombs, isolated, tormented, and completely bound by evil spirits. Yet the very first thing he did when he saw Jesus was run to Him and worship.

"But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him."

MARK 5:6 (KJV)

The preacher asked a question that deserves serious reflection: If a man possessed by demons recognized the authority and worthiness of Jesus, what should prevent redeemed believers from worshipping Him with all their hearts?

The answer is often pride. Pride whispers that someone might judge us. Pride fears appearing emotional or undignified. Pride worries about public opinion. Yet genuine worship has never been concerned with the approval of people. David understood this when he danced before the Lord after the Ark of the Covenant returned to Jerusalem. When criticized by Michal, he simply replied:

"I will yet be more vile than thus..."

2 SAMUEL 6:22 (KJV)

David understood something every worshipper must learn: when we remember where God has brought us from, human opinion loses its power.

This truth should also reshape how we view the worship of others. When we see someone weeping at the altar, lifting trembling hands, or praising God with unusual passion, we should never assume they are simply emotional. We may be witnessing a testimony that words could never fully explain. Perhaps God healed them. Perhaps He restored their marriage. Perhaps He delivered them from addiction. Perhaps He answered years of desperate prayer. Their worship is telling a story that only heaven fully knows.

In many ways, worship becomes the first testimony the world sees. Long before unbelievers understand our doctrine, they notice our joy. They observe our peace in suffering, our confidence during uncertainty, and our gratitude despite hardship. Every sincere act of worship silently declares that Jesus Christ is still worthy because He is still faithful.

For this reason, worship is far more than preparation for preaching. It is itself a declaration of the Gospel. Every hallelujah proclaims that sin did not have the final word. Every raised hand announces that Christ is still reigning. Every surrendered heart declares that God's grace is greater than our past. Before our mouths ever speak a testimony, our worship is already telling the greatest story of all.

> SECTION 4

Every Believer Has a Story Worth Telling

One of the most encouraging truths in this message is that God has never limited His work to a select group of people. Sometimes we assume that only pastors, missionaries, or experienced teachers have something valuable to share, but the New Testament paints a very different picture. The moment God touches a person's life, He gives them a testimony. The preacher reminded the congregation that those who had just been baptized that very day already possessed a story worth telling. They may not have understood every doctrine or memorized every Scripture, but they had experienced the saving power of Jesus Christ. That experience alone made them witnesses of His grace.

This principle is found throughout the ministry of Jesus. In John chapter nine, Jesus healed a man who had been blind since birth. When the religious leaders questioned him, they expected him to explain the theology behind his miracle. Instead, the man simply replied, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25, KJV). His testimony was not built upon years of theological education but upon a personal encounter with Christ. There are moments when a transformed life becomes more convincing than the most carefully constructed argument. No one could deny the change that had taken place because everyone knew who he had been before meeting Jesus.

The same pattern appears in the story of the Samaritan woman. She arrived at Jacob's well searching for ordinary water, unaware that she was about to meet the Messiah. During her conversation with Jesus, He revealed the deepest parts of her life while offering her living water that would satisfy her forever. What is remarkable is what happened immediately afterward. She left her waterpot behind, hurried back into the city, and began inviting everyone she met to come and see the man who had changed her life. She did not possess extensive biblical knowledge, nor did she preach a lengthy sermon. She simply shared what Jesus had done for her. John tells us that "many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman" (John 4:39, KJV). Her testimony became the bridge that brought an entire community into the presence of Christ.

Perhaps the clearest example is found in the life of the man possessed by a legion of demons. Before meeting Jesus, he lived among the tombs, tormented, isolated, and completely controlled by evil spirits. After Christ delivered him, his greatest desire was to travel with Jesus and become one of His followers. Surprisingly, Jesus gave him a different assignment. He said, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mark 5:19, KJV). Jesus understood that no one could tell that story more effectively than the man who had lived it. His testimony would carry an authenticity that no one else could reproduce because the people who knew him had witnessed both his bondage and his transformation.

This teaches us an important lesson about the Kingdom of God. We often underestimate the value of our own testimony because we have lived with it for so long. What has become familiar to us may be extraordinary to someone else. We know where God found us. We remember the prayers He answered, the fears He removed, the sins He forgave, and the seasons He carried us through. Yet because those experiences are personal, we sometimes assume they are insignificant. The reality is exactly the opposite. Every act of God's grace becomes another witness that He is still working in the lives of ordinary people.

The Apostle Paul never lost sight of this truth. Although he became one of the greatest theologians in Christian history, he continually returned to the story of his own conversion. Whether he stood before

governors, kings, religious leaders, or hostile crowds, Paul repeatedly testified about the day Jesus met him on the road to Damascus. He understood that while people could argue with his doctrine, they could not deny the reality of a transformed life. His testimony consistently opened doors for the Gospel because it demonstrated the life-changing power of Christ.

The preacher made a statement that deserves careful reflection. When God heals one person, that testimony becomes another person's reason to believe healing is still possible. When He restores a broken marriage, another struggling couple finds hope that their story is not over. When He delivers someone from addiction, another person bound by the same chains begins to believe that freedom is possible. Our testimonies become living evidence that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Every testimony begins where someone else's miracle ends.

David understood this principle when he wrote, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" (Psalm 66:16, KJV). David recognized that the goodness of God was never intended to remain private. Every blessing carried the responsibility of proclamation. Every deliverance deserved to be declared. Every answered prayer became another opportunity to glorify the Lord before others.

This truth reaches its fullest expression in Revelation 12:11, where John writes, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." Notice that God joins these two realities together. The blood of Jesus provides salvation, but our testimony announces what that blood has accomplished. The blood changes our lives, and our testimony invites others to experience the same transformation. The enemy cannot remove the power of Christ's blood, but he will constantly attempt to silence those who have experienced it. Fear, intimidation, shame, and insecurity all become tools designed to keep believers from telling the story that God has written in their lives.

Perhaps one of Satan's greatest victories is convincing Christians that their testimony is unimportant. Yet Scripture teaches exactly the opposite. Every believer, regardless of age, background, or spiritual maturity, carries a unique witness of God's grace. Some were delivered from dramatic lives of sin, while others were preserved by God's mercy from ever entering those paths. Some have stories of miraculous healing, while others testify of God's sustaining grace through seasons of suffering. Every testimony is different, but every testimony points to the same Savior.

When we understand this, we stop comparing our story with someone else's. The value of a testimony is not measured by how dramatic it sounds but by how faithfully it reveals Jesus Christ. The greatest purpose of our testimony is not to draw attention to ourselves but to magnify the One who redeemed us. Every time we tell what the Lord has done, we are reminding a broken world that God is still writing stories of redemption today, and perhaps the next story He desires to write will begin in the life of the person who is listening.

> SECTION 5

Miracles Require Miraculous Settings

One of the most challenging truths presented in this message is that while we often pray for miracles, we frequently avoid the very situations where miracles become necessary. We ask God to move in extraordinary ways, yet we naturally gravitate toward comfortable, predictable environments where everything is under our control. The preacher shared how, after planting a church in Baton Rouge, he and his wife continually prayed for God to give them stories like those found in the book of Acts. They wanted to witness lives transformed, miracles performed, and communities changed by the Gospel. However, they soon discovered that stories of God's supernatural intervention are almost always written in places where human ability reaches its limit.

This principle appears repeatedly throughout Scripture. God rarely performs His greatest miracles in places of comfort. Instead, He often leads His people into circumstances where success becomes impossible without His intervention. Moses stood before the Red Sea with Pharaoh's army approaching from behind. Joshua faced the fortified walls of Jericho with no military strategy that could explain the coming victory. Gideon marched into battle with only three hundred men against an overwhelming enemy. Daniel entered the lions' den knowing there was no human escape. Each miracle required a setting where only God could receive the glory.

Our natural instinct is to avoid those settings. We prefer certainty over dependence, planning over faith, and security over risk. Yet God often calls His people beyond what they can accomplish through their own strength because faith grows only when it is exercised. If we remain only where our abilities are sufficient, we may never experience the fullness of God's power.

The Apostle Paul understood this paradox. After praying repeatedly for God to remove his thorn in the flesh, the Lord answered him with words that have encouraged believers for centuries:

"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9 (KJV)

Notice that God's strength is not displayed where human strength is abundant. His power is perfected in our weakness. When our resources come to an end, His resources are just beginning. What we often view as limitations become opportunities for God to demonstrate His faithfulness.

The preacher challenged the congregation to consider what miraculous settings might look like in everyday life. They are not always dramatic moments before thousands of people. Sometimes they are far more ordinary. A conversation with a coworker who unexpectedly begins sharing the pain of a broken marriage. A classmate quietly admitting they are overwhelmed by anxiety. A neighbor asking for prayer during a difficult season. A family member finally becoming willing to discuss spiritual matters after years of resistance. These moments may seem ordinary, but they are often divine appointments prepared by God Himself.

Too often, we hesitate because we feel unprepared. We tell ourselves that we do not know enough Scripture, that someone else would explain the Gospel better, or that we might say the wrong thing. Moses expressed similar fears when God called him to stand before Pharaoh.

"O my Lord, I am not eloquent... but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue."

EXODUS 4:10 (KJV)

God did not respond by finding someone more qualified. Instead, He promised His presence.

"Certainly I will be with thee."

EXODUS 3:12 (KJV)

God has never been searching for perfect vessels. He has always been looking for willing ones. Throughout Scripture, He repeatedly used ordinary men and women whose greatest qualification was their willingness to obey.

The preacher also reminded the church that fear often disguises itself as wisdom. We convince ourselves that we are simply waiting for the right opportunity, when in reality we are allowing fear to silence our obedience. Modern culture encourages believers to keep their faith private, suggesting that spiritual conversations should remain within church walls. Yet the Gospel has never advanced through silence. From the Day of Pentecost until today, the Kingdom of God has expanded because ordinary believers were willing to speak when God opened the door.

The Apostle Paul encouraged the church at Colossae with these words:

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without... Let your speech be alway with grace."

COLOSSIANS 4:5-6 (KJV)

Notice that Paul does not instruct believers to force conversations or argue with everyone they meet. Rather, he teaches us to recognize opportunities, to respond with grace, and to allow the Holy Spirit to guide our words. Evangelism is not about winning debates; it is about faithfully representing Christ whenever He opens a door.

This perspective transforms how we view interruptions in our daily lives. The unexpected conversation, the difficult coworker, the hurting friend, or the neighbor asking for advice may not be interruptions at all. They may be carefully orchestrated opportunities prepared by God. The Holy Spirit often works quietly, arranging circumstances long before we recognize them. Our responsibility is simply to remain sensitive enough to respond when those moments arrive.

The preacher encouraged the church to stop waiting until they felt completely ready before stepping into these moments of ministry. Faith does not begin after we have all the answers. Faith begins when we trust that God will meet us in our obedience. Peter did not experience the miracle while remaining safely inside the boat. The miracle began the moment he stepped onto the water. Likewise, Abraham did not know where God was leading him when he left his homeland. Hebrews simply tells us that "he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11:8, KJV). His obedience created the setting where God's promises could

unfold.

The same principle remains true today. If we desire to see God write extraordinary stories through our lives, we must be willing to enter places where His power becomes necessary. Miracles rarely occur where everything is comfortable and predictable. They are most often found where believers choose faith over fear, obedience over convenience, and surrender over certainty. Every time we step into a situation that requires God to work, we create another opportunity for Him to write a testimony that will encourage someone else for years to come.

> SECTION 6

Your Testimony Releases Faith

One of the central truths of this message is that while stories naturally create connection, testimonies do something even greater—they release faith. The preacher explained that stories help people relate to one another, but testimonies reveal the active power of God. A good story may entertain or inspire, but a testimony points beyond human experience to divine intervention. That is why throughout Scripture God continually instructs His people not only to remember His works but also to declare them. Every testimony becomes an invitation for someone else to believe that the same God who worked yesterday is still working today.

This truth explains what happened earlier in the service when one of the church members shared what God had done in his life. The preacher observed that the atmosphere immediately changed. It was not because the testimony was emotionally moving, but because hearing about God's faithfulness awakened faith throughout the congregation. As believers listened, they were reminded that Jesus Christ is still healing, still delivering, and still transforming lives. The testimony shifted the focus from human circumstances to the limitless power of God.

The Apostle Paul explains why this happens when he writes:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

ROMANS 10:17 (KJV)

While Paul is speaking specifically about the preaching of the Gospel, the principle is equally important for our daily witness. Whenever the Word of God is proclaimed and His works are declared, faith is awakened in those who hear. A testimony is effective because it is not centered on human ability; it magnifies what God has accomplished through His grace.

Throughout the Bible we repeatedly see testimonies producing faith in others. After David defeated Goliath, all Israel witnessed that victory and their confidence in God grew. Rahab heard the stories of the Red Sea and Israel's victories long before the Israelites reached Jericho, and those testimonies caused her to recognize that the God of Israel was the true God. She confessed:

"For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you..."

JOSHUA 2:10 (KJV)

Notice that Rahab's faith began before she ever met an Israelite. She believed because she had heard what God had done. Someone had carried the story beyond the borders of Israel, and that testimony prepared her heart for salvation.

This demonstrates an important spiritual principle. Before many people believe in God's promises, they first need to hear evidence of God's faithfulness. The testimony becomes the bridge that connects the unbeliever to the truth of the Gospel. While doctrine explains who God is, testimony demonstrates what He is capable of doing.

The preacher then turned to one of the most powerful verses in the entire Bible concerning spiritual victory:

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony..."

REVELATION 12:11 (KJV)

This verse reveals that victory over the enemy is connected to two inseparable realities. First, there is the blood of the Lamb. Without the sacrifice of Jesus Christ there is no forgiveness, no redemption, and no hope. Everything begins at Calvary. However, the verse does not end there. It continues by declaring that believers also overcome through "the word of their testimony." The blood purchased salvation, but the testimony proclaims what that salvation has accomplished.

This is why Satan works so diligently to silence believers. He cannot remove the power of Christ's blood, but he will attempt to keep God's people from talking about it. If he can convince believers to remain silent, then others may never hear how God is still transforming lives. Fear, embarrassment, insecurity, and intimidation become some of his most effective weapons. The enemy knows that a silent church cannot effectively fulfill its mission.

Sadly, many believers convince themselves that their testimony is too ordinary to matter. They compare their lives with someone else's dramatic conversion and conclude that they have nothing worth sharing. Yet this mindset misunderstands the purpose of a testimony. The value of our testimony is not determined by how dramatic our past was but by how faithfully it points people to Jesus Christ. Whether God rescued us from addiction, restored a broken marriage, healed our body, preserved us through suffering, or simply kept us faithful from childhood, every testimony magnifies the same Savior.

The Apostle Peter reminds the Church why we have been redeemed:

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

1 PETER 2:9 (KJV)

Notice that our calling is not merely to experience God's grace but to show forth His praises. In other words, our lives are meant to become visible evidence of His transforming power. We are living testimonies that God still calls people out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

This is why every testimony carries eternal significance. Somewhere there is a discouraged believer who needs to hear how God sustained someone through suffering. Somewhere there is a struggling family that needs to hear about a restored marriage. Somewhere there is a young person battling temptation who needs to hear that freedom is possible. Somewhere there is an unbeliever who has concluded that God no longer performs miracles, and your testimony may be the very thing the Holy Spirit uses to awaken hope in their heart.

The preacher made an observation that deserves to remain with us long after this lesson is finished: Baptism is not the conclusion of God's work but the beginning of a lifelong testimony of His faithfulness.

Every answered prayer, every trial overcome, every victory over temptation, every opportunity to serve, and every life touched by the Gospel becomes another chapter in the story God is writing through His people.

Receiving the Holy Ghost is not where the story ends—it is where the story begins.

For that reason, we should never think of our testimony as something that belongs only to the past. Our testimony is still being written. Every day we walk with Christ, every act of obedience, every demonstration of His grace in our lives becomes another opportunity to strengthen someone else's faith. When we faithfully declare what the Lord has done, our story no longer belongs only to us—it becomes part of God's ongoing work of drawing others into His Kingdom.

› SECTION 7

The Mission of the Church Begins Outside These Walls

One of the strongest moments of the sermon comes when the preacher reminds the church that the greatest stories God wants to write are not confined to Sunday services. We rejoice every time someone is baptized, receives the Holy Ghost, or experiences healing during a church service, and we should. These moments deserve celebration because they reveal the power of God. However, if all of our testimonies begin and end inside the sanctuary, we have misunderstood the mission of the Church. The Church gathers for worship, but it scatters for ministry. Sunday equips us for Monday. The greatest evidence that revival is taking place is not simply what happens inside the building, but what happens after God's people leave it.

The preacher challenged the congregation by reminding them that Jesus never intended His followers to become spectators. Too often believers become content simply attending church, enjoying worship, listening to preaching, and celebrating what God is doing among His people. While these things are essential, they were never meant to become the final destination. Jesus did not save us merely so that we could gather together each week. He saved us so that we could become His representatives in a world that desperately needs Him. Every believer has been entrusted with the responsibility of carrying the Gospel beyond the walls of the church and into everyday life.

This has always been God's design. Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave His disciples what we commonly call the Great Commission:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

MATTHEW 28:19-20 (KJV)

Notice that Jesus did not say, "Wait until the nations come to you." His command was to go. The movement of the Church has always been outward. The Gospel was never intended to remain inside Jerusalem, nor inside a church building. It was designed to reach neighborhoods, cities, nations, and ultimately the entire world.

The Book of Acts demonstrates this beautifully. Immediately after receiving the Holy Ghost, the disciples did not isolate themselves. They became witnesses. Peter preached in the streets of Jerusalem. Philip went to Samaria. Ananias visited Saul. Barnabas encouraged new believers. Paul traveled throughout the Roman Empire. Everywhere they went, they carried the message of Jesus Christ because they understood that the Church exists for those who are not yet part of it.

The preacher emphasized that many of the people God wants us to reach are not looking for Jesus, even though they desperately need Him. The Samaritan woman went to the well searching for water, not for the Messiah. Saul of Tarsus was traveling to persecute Christians, not to become one. Zacchaeus climbed a tree simply hoping to catch a glimpse of Jesus, never expecting his life to be transformed. In every case, God met people before they realized they were searching for Him.

The same remains true today. The coworker who appears successful may secretly be battling depression. The student who seems confident may be carrying deep anxiety. The neighbor who always smiles may be struggling with loneliness. The family member who rejects spiritual conversations may simply be waiting for

someone who genuinely cares enough to listen. Many people are searching for hope without realizing that what they truly need is Jesus Christ.

This is why believers must remain spiritually sensitive. Every conversation may become a divine appointment. Every ordinary day may contain extraordinary opportunities prepared by God. We often ask the Lord to open doors for evangelism, but sometimes we fail to recognize that He has already done so. The Holy Spirit quietly arranges encounters that appear accidental to us but are intentional in His plan.

The Apostle Paul encouraged believers to live with this awareness:

“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

COLOSSIANS 4:5-6 (KJV)

Paul understood that our daily interactions matter. Evangelism is not limited to preaching behind a pulpit. It often begins with kindness, compassion, listening, encouragement, and sincere concern for another person's life. Long before someone accepts a Bible study invitation, they usually encounter a believer whose life reflects the love of Christ.

The preacher also issued an important warning. He observed that many Christians have allowed the fear of rejection to become louder than the voice of conviction. We imagine the worst possible response before we ever open our mouths. We worry about offending someone, being misunderstood, or facing criticism. As a result, fear keeps us silent while opportunities pass by.

Yet Scripture repeatedly reminds us that courage is not the absence of fear; it is obedience in the presence of fear. When Peter and John were commanded to stop preaching in the name of Jesus, they answered with remarkable boldness:

“For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”

ACTS 4:20 (KJV)

What a powerful statement. They were not speaking merely because they had received instructions. They spoke because they had experienced Christ personally. Their testimony had become impossible to suppress.

This should challenge every one of us. If God has forgiven our sins, filled us with His Spirit, answered our prayers, restored our families, and remained faithful through every season of life, how can we remain silent? Gratitude naturally produces proclamation. Those who have experienced the goodness of God should never feel ashamed to speak about Him.

The mission of the Church has never changed. We gather together to worship, encourage one another, receive biblical instruction, and grow spiritually. Then we leave those doors carrying the light of Christ into a world still walking in darkness. Every workplace becomes a mission field. Every classroom becomes an

opportunity for ministry. Every neighborhood becomes a place where God desires to write another story of redemption.

When we begin to see our daily lives through this perspective, we realize that ministry is not reserved for Sundays. Ministry happens wherever a believer chooses to represent Jesus Christ. The greatest testimonies are often written in ordinary places through ordinary people who simply make themselves available to the extraordinary work of God.

> SECTION 8

We Are Called to Be Lifeguards, Not Spectators

The sermon reaches its emotional climax with one of the most powerful illustrations of the day. The preacher shared the true story of a gathering held in New Orleans during the summer of 1985. That year, for the first time, the city's recreation department celebrated an entire summer without a single drowning at any of its public swimming pools. To commemorate this achievement, approximately one hundred lifeguards and their families gathered for a celebration around a swimming pool. There was laughter, conversation, food, and excitement as everyone celebrated a successful season. Yet as the evening came to an end, someone noticed that a young man named Juan was lying lifeless at the bottom of the very pool where all the lifeguards had been celebrating. Tragically, while those trained to save lives were enjoying the celebration, someone drowned unnoticed only a few feet away.

The preacher used this heartbreaking story to ask a question that every believer must answer: It is a sobering thought. We rejoice over powerful worship services, testimonies, baptisms, and revival, and rightly so. Yet while we celebrate, there are people all around us who are silently drowning in fear, addiction, depression, loneliness, hopelessness, broken marriages, anxiety, and sin. The mission of the Church is not only to rejoice over those who have already been rescued but also to seek those who are still struggling beneath the surface.

Could the Church ever become so focused on celebrating what God has done inside the sanctuary that we overlook those who are drowning outside its walls?

This illustration immediately brings to mind the words of Jesus:

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

LUKE 19:10 (KJV)

Notice that Jesus did not merely wait for the lost to find Him. He went looking for them. Throughout the Gospels we repeatedly see Him walking toward the hurting, the rejected, the forgotten, and the broken. He sought the tax collector that everyone despised. He sought the woman caught in sin. He sought the blind, the lame, the lepers, and the demon-possessed. The ministry of Jesus was always moving toward people who desperately needed hope.

If the Church is called the Body of Christ, then our mission must reflect the mission of Christ. We cannot become satisfied with simply enjoying His presence while forgetting His purpose. Worship without mission eventually becomes self-centered. Revival that never reaches beyond the church walls has missed the heart of God.

The preacher then made one of the strongest applications of the entire message. He imagined a young person returning to school who discovers that a classmate is battling depression or even suicidal thoughts. How easy it would be to simply promise, "I'll ask my pastor to pray for you," and then walk away. While asking others to pray is certainly valuable, the preacher reminded the congregation that God has already placed His Spirit within every believer. The Holy Ghost was not given merely for personal encouragement but for Kingdom ministry. We are called to pray, to encourage, and to speak words of faith ourselves.

This echoes the words Jesus spoke to His disciples shortly before His ascension:

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me..."

ACTS 1:8 (KJV)

Notice that Jesus did not say we would simply receive comfort, knowledge, or blessing. He said we would receive power, and that power had a purpose. It was given so that we might become witnesses. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is not the conclusion of our spiritual journey; it is the beginning of our mission.

The preacher beautifully described this by saying that when God filled us with His Spirit, He made us "lifeguards." That illustration captures the responsibility every believer carries. A lifeguard cannot remain indifferent when someone is drowning. Their training compels them to act. Likewise, when we recognize that someone around us is drowning spiritually, emotionally, or relationally, the love of Christ compels us to move toward them rather than away from them.

The Apostle James emphasizes this responsibility in practical terms:

"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace... notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful... what doth it profit?"

JAMES 2:15-16 (KJV)

Our faith must move beyond words into action. Compassion that never acts is incomplete. The Gospel calls us to become actively involved in the lives of hurting people, pointing them toward the hope that is found in Jesus Christ.

This does not mean that every believer must have all the answers. Often the greatest ministry begins with a simple question: "Can I pray with you?" Many people have never experienced someone sincerely praying for them. Others have never heard anyone tell them that God loves them, that He has a purpose for their life, or that He is able to restore what seems beyond repair. We sometimes underestimate how powerfully God can work through a simple act of obedience.

The New Testament church understood this well. They did not wait for hurting people to enter the synagogue before ministering to them. They prayed in homes, in marketplaces, beside rivers, in prisons, and along dusty roads. Their ministry followed people wherever life happened because they understood that God's Kingdom is not confined to a building.

As we reflect on this illustration, we should ask ourselves some searching questions. Are we so busy enjoying our Christian lives that we no longer notice those who are drowning around us? Have we become comfortable attending church while neglecting the mission Christ entrusted to us? Do we celebrate salvation more than we pursue the lost? These are not questions of condemnation but of calling. They invite us to realign our hearts with the heartbeat of Jesus.

Every believer is surrounded by people who need hope. Some are family members. Others are coworkers, classmates, neighbors, or lifelong friends. God has strategically placed us in their lives, not by accident but by divine design. We may be the only Bible they ever read, the only Christian they ever trust, or the only person willing to tell them that Jesus still saves, heals, and restores.

The preacher's closing appeal was simple yet profound: Will you let God tell another story through your life? The answer to that question determines whether we remain spectators or become participants in God's mission. Heaven is still writing stories of redemption. The only question is whether we will make ourselves available for God to write the next chapter through us.

> SECTION 9

God Is Still Writing Stories

As the sermon came to a close, the preacher brought the congregation back to the central question that had been woven throughout the entire message: Will you allow God to write another story through your life? This is much more than an emotional invitation at the end of a sermon. It is a call to embrace the purpose for which every believer has received the Holy Ghost. God never intended our testimony to become a chapter that ends with us. Instead, every life He transforms becomes another testimony that points others toward His saving grace. The question is not whether God is still writing stories. The question is whether we are willing to become part of them.

Throughout the Bible we discover that God delights in using ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary purposes. Noah was a builder before he became a preacher of righteousness. Moses was tending sheep before he became Israel's deliverer. David was caring for his father's sheep before he became king. Peter was a fisherman before he became the preacher of Pentecost. None of these individuals appeared extraordinary when God first called them. What distinguished them was not their ability but their availability. They simply surrendered themselves to the purposes of God, and He wrote stories through their lives that continue to inspire believers thousands of years later.

This truth should encourage every child of God. We often imagine that God is looking for the most talented, the most educated, or the most experienced people. Scripture consistently teaches otherwise. God looks for hearts that are willing to obey Him. The Apostle Paul reminds us:

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

1 CORINTHIANS 1:27 (KJV)

The power has never been in the vessel. The power has always belonged to God. We simply become the instrument through which His grace is revealed.

Perhaps that is why the Apostle Paul described believers in such humble terms:

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7 (KJV)

This verse appears immediately after the passage from which the preacher began his message. Paul reminds us that the Gospel is a priceless treasure, but it has been entrusted to ordinary people. We are fragile, imperfect, and limited, yet God intentionally chose to place His glorious Gospel within human vessels so that no one could mistake the source of the miracle. Whenever someone is saved, healed, restored, or delivered, the glory belongs entirely to Him.

The preacher repeatedly reminded the church that the purpose of our testimony is never to magnify ourselves. Every testimony should ultimately direct attention back to Jesus Christ. We are not telling people

how strong we became; we are telling them how faithful God has been. We are not celebrating our own accomplishments; we are celebrating His mercy. Every testimony should leave people impressed, not with us, but with the Savior who transformed our lives.

This perspective also protects us from another danger—believing that our failures disqualify us from being used by God. The enemy constantly reminds believers of their past mistakes, hoping they will remain silent because of shame. Yet the Gospel teaches the opposite. Very often, the places where we have experienced God's greatest forgiveness become the places from which we speak with the greatest compassion. Peter denied Jesus three times, yet he became the preacher who opened the door of salvation on the Day of Pentecost. John Mark failed during his first missionary journey, yet later became the author of one of the four Gospels. God's grace has always been greater than human failure.

This should fill every believer with hope. God does not waste our experiences. The trials we have endured, the prayers we have prayed, the valleys we have walked through, and the victories He has given us all become part of the testimony He intends to use for His Kingdom. As Paul assures us:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

ROMANS 8:28 (KJV)

Even the painful chapters of our lives can become instruments of ministry when surrendered to the Lord.

As we consider this lesson, we should ask ourselves a few honest questions. Are we intentionally creating opportunities for God to use our testimony? Have we become comfortable keeping our faith private? Is there someone in our family, workplace, neighborhood, or school who needs to hear what God has done in our lives? Revival does not advance merely because churches hold services. Revival advances because believers carry the Gospel into their everyday lives and faithfully tell the story of God's redeeming grace.

The message closes with an inspiring reminder that the greatest days of God's Kingdom are not behind us. Just as the preacher declared at the beginning of the service, "the half has not been told." God is still calling prodigals home. He is still filling people with the Holy Ghost. He is still healing broken hearts. He is still restoring families. He is still opening doors that no man can shut. He is still writing stories of redemption across the world, and He desires to write one through every believer who is willing to say, "Lord, here am I. Use me."

Isaiah responded to God's call with these simple but unforgettable words:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

ISAIAH 6:8 (KJV)

May that become our prayer as well. May we never allow our testimony to remain untold. May we never become content to celebrate while others are still searching for hope. Instead, may we faithfully carry the story of Jesus wherever He leads us, knowing that every conversation, every act of kindness, every prayer, and every testimony may become the beginning of someone else's journey toward salvation.

> CONCLUSION

The Story God Is Still Writing

Every believer is living a story that God Himself is writing. Some chapters are filled with joy, while others contain seasons of pain, uncertainty, and waiting. Yet through every chapter, one truth remains constant: God has never stopped working. The miracle of salvation is not the end of the story—it is the beginning of a life that continually points others toward Christ.

The greatest tragedy is not that people experience hardship. The greatest tragedy is when God brings them through that hardship, transforms their lives by His grace, and that testimony is never shared. Someone is waiting to hear how God answered your prayer. Someone needs to know that the chains which once bound you have been broken. Someone needs to hear that Jesus still forgives, still heals, still restores, and still fills people with His Spirit today.

Our testimony is not about preserving our reputation; it is about proclaiming His glory. Every time we tell what God has done, we strengthen another believer, encourage a searching soul, and declare to a hopeless world that Jesus Christ is still the answer.

***We overcome by the blood of the Lamb,
but we also overcome by the word of our testimony.***

May we leave this lesson with a renewed commitment to become faithful witnesses. Let our worship tell His story. Let our lives reflect His grace. Let our conversations reveal His goodness. And wherever God places us, may we never miss the opportunity to tell someone what great things the Lord has done for us. That is how the Kingdom advances. That is how faith is multiplied. And that is how God continues writing stories that will echo throughout eternity.

> REVIEW

Fill in the Blank

Instructions: Complete each statement using the lesson.

> STATEMENT 1

God never intended His work in our lives to end with us; every miracle becomes a _____ that should point others to Christ.

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> STATEMENT 2

Worship is more than music; it is the visible expression of our _____ with God.

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> STATEMENT 3

Throughout Scripture, God often performed His greatest miracles in settings that required complete _____ upon Him.

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> STATEMENT 4

According to Revelation 12:11, believers overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their _____.

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> STATEMENT 5

The mission of the Church does not begin when we arrive on Sunday—it continues when we leave the _____.

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> STATEMENT 6

Every believer has received the Holy Ghost not only to experience God's power but also to become His _____.

> _____

> STATEMENT 7

The greatest tragedy is not that God stopped writing stories, but that many of His stories remain _____.

> _____

> REFLECT

Reflection Questions

> QUESTION 1

Looking back over your walk with God, what testimony has had the greatest impact on your life, and have you intentionally shared it with someone who needs to hear it?

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> QUESTION 2

The lesson teaches that miracles usually happen in settings where we must completely depend on God. Is there an area of your life where fear has kept you from stepping into a situation that requires faith? What practical step could you take this week?

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> QUESTION 3

Think about your workplace, school, neighborhood, or family. Who might God already be preparing for a spiritual conversation with you? How can you begin praying for that opportunity?

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> QUESTION 4

Revelation 12:11 teaches that we overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony. Why do you think Satan works so hard to keep believers silent about what God has done in their lives?

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> QUESTION 5

The preacher compared believers to lifeguards who are called to rescue those who are drowning spiritually. In what ways can we become so busy celebrating inside the church that we overlook the people around us who desperately need Jesus?

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> QUESTION 6

How has this lesson changed the way you think about your own testimony? Do you now see your story as something personal to protect or something God intends to use for the salvation of others?

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> QUESTION 7

If someone asked you today, “What has Jesus done for you?”, what story would you tell? Take a few moments to write your testimony in a way that clearly points people to Christ rather than to yourself.

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> CHALLENGE

Personal Challenge

“God never performs a miracle simply to bless one person. Every miracle is an invitation for someone else to believe. Our testimony is God’s bridge from our story to someone else’s salvation.”

> THIS WEEK I WILL

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