



By Pastor Karl Bastian

We'd like to know how you began your relationship with Jesus. Everyone has a different story of how they met Jesus, and that story is called your **testimony**. Your testimony is more than just, "I asked Jesus in my heart when I was seven." Your testimony is a **STORY** – it includes details from before you got saved, how you got saved, and what has happened since. Write it as though you are writing a story and the person reading it has never heard of church, or the Bible, or Jesus! After they finish reading your story, they should know everything they need to know to accept Jesus, too! In fact, many people have become Christians after reading or hearing someone's testimony! So, on a separate sheet of paper, write (or type) your story – your testimony – using the following outline.

You don't have to answer these questions in order, but they will help you think of the kind of information you want to include somewhere in your testimony. It should be at least one full page, but probably no more than two or three – unless you have a really exciting story!

My life before I received Jesus:

- Describe the religious/Christian influences in your home and extended family.
- Before you accepted Jesus, what behaviors and attitudes were wrong in your life?

How I received Jesus:

- What caused you to want to accept Jesus as your Savior?
- Did you pray with someone else when you prayed to accept Jesus?
When did you accept Jesus?
- When you prayed to receive Jesus, what did you say?

My life after I received Jesus:

- What is different in your life since accepting Jesus as your Savior?
- How are you learning more about Jesus?
(Bible reading, prayer, family devotions, weekend children's program)
- Who would you like to thank for impacting you to accept Jesus?
(Parents, grandparents, teacher, shepherd, neighbor)

Finally, write out a favorite Scripture verse and explain why it means so much to you. You may be asked to share this verse at your baptism, so choose carefully and memorize it if you can.



PASTOR KARL'S TESTIMONY



**Next Steps
for Kids**

I was raised in a Christian home, the son of a minister. Both of my parents not only taught me the truths of Scripture in word, but demonstrated their faith through their actions. My home was one filled with joy and constant reminders of God's love for us. As early as I can remember I loved Jesus as my "bestest" friend.

At the age of four my mother went into the hospital to have my sister Melissa. I was sent to stay at the house of a lady named Candy Crowell. While outside playing on my Big Wheel, I met up with some older boys who began to have some fun teasing and picking on this new little boy on the street (me). Soon I was back inside crying on Candy's shoulder. I can still clearly remember explaining to her, "When I grow up I don't want to be mean like those boys." Candy explained to me the only way to be sure that I would be a loving person was to be sure that I had Jesus in my heart. People without Jesus in their life often are mean and selfish because they are living for themselves and not for God. Candy helped me to see that the sins I commit are the same to God as the meanness of those boys. I realized so clearly that I needed God's forgiveness as much as those boys I thought were so bad. Candy told me that **all I had to do to receive God's forgiveness and to have Jesus in my life was to admit to God in prayer that I was a sinner, tell Him I was sorry, and ask Jesus to be my Savior and Lord.** I already believed in Jesus and His death and resurrection, but I had not given my life to Him. So there at Candy's house, at the young age of four, I gave my heart and life to Jesus so that I might grow up to be a loving person who lived for God and not just for myself.

I have never doubted that on that day I was saved. But as I grew up in the church I began to learn more and more what that decision truly meant! The Lord gave me a love for His Word that I am so grateful now that I had then. Many Sunday School teachers and children's workers encouraged me and challenged me to memorize God's Word and to study it every chance I got. As the years went by I began to feel that God had a special plan for me, different than most of my friends who wanted to be baseball players, computer programmers, and businessmen. I could think of nothing more satisfying than to serve God all the time! But I did not know the 'how' until the Vacation Bible School when I was ten years old. A children's evangelist came to our church and I so enjoyed his puppets, stories, jokes, magic tricks, and way with the kids. I was ready to make a decision, but I didn't know what that decision should be. At the final closing decision time, I listened intently. The first option was to accept Christ. I had already done that. I'd wait for the next option. The next option was to rededicate my life to God if I had not been living for Him like I knew I should. That too, I felt didn't fit me. I wasn't perfect, of course, but I felt I was doing the best I could. How could I commit to do better than my best? I would wait for the next option. But the third option never came. The invitation was over and the VBS was, too. However, I was not done. I was ready to make a decision, and since none of the choices offered fit my need, I made up my own. It was really quite simple. I decided on that day that I was going to be like that evangelist. I was going to grow up and yet still be a kid. I was going to learn to do puppets and magic tricks and tell great stories. I was going to be funny and yet able to tell about Jesus in a way that kids would listen. I had never even heard of a Kid's Pastor, but that's what I grew up to be! And that's my story!