

# Testimony Picture (My Personal Testimony)

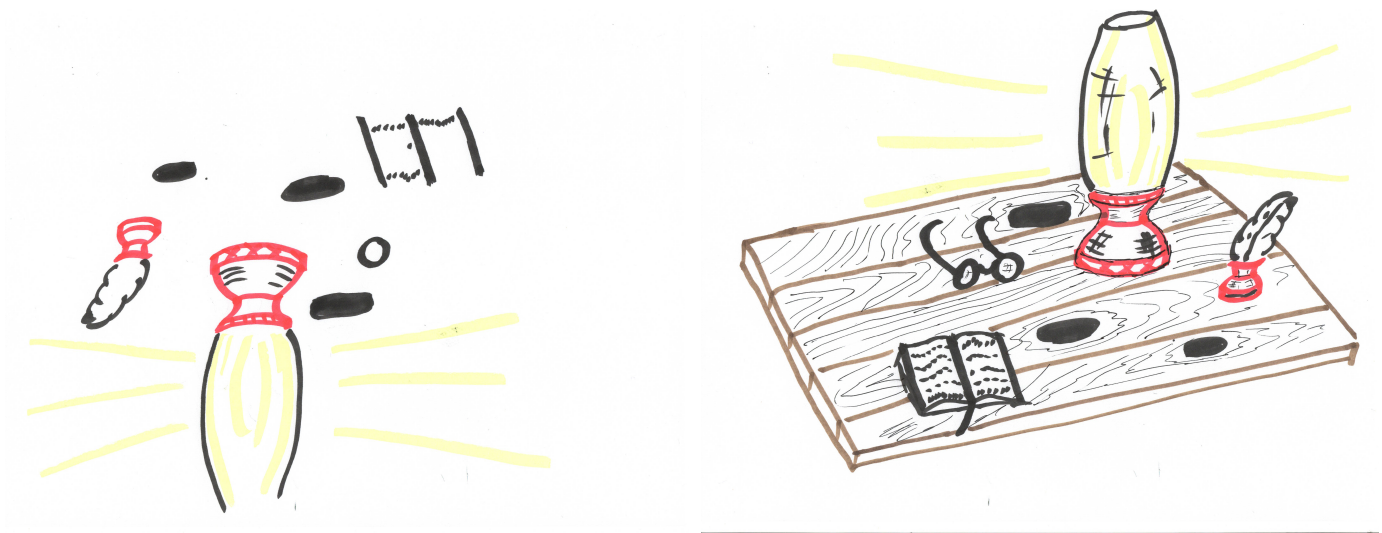
*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16*

## The Basic Bible Truth

God wants each of us to come to the point where we recognize that we are in need of a Savior. He has promised, that if we believe, He will save. I discovered that simple truth at the age of 8 years old. It has been 53 years ago now, but I can still remember the little classroom behind where the piano stood, in a little church in Newton, Kansas. I do not remember the dear lady's name, but my Sunday School teacher reminded us in the class of the truth of this verse and the horrors of the alternative of an eternity in Hell, and I knew I needed God in my life. A short simple prayer and my life changed forever.

## The Object

A Blank Sheet OF Poster Board  
Magic Markers Of Various Colors



If you choose to do this lesson, you will have to make your own version. Mine won't work for you. It's my personal story. I choose to give my testimony in public in a unique way. I draw a picture of my life. But I do not draw the story of my life chronologically. Rather I draw it from this viewpoint—the least important aspects of my life, to the most important aspects of my life.

## My Personal Testimony

We all have the opportunity to make of our life whatever we want. It is like having a blank sheet of paper to draw on. We can draw our life as we want it to be. We all want to have a beautiful picture of our life when we are all finished. That was my goal. Allow me to draw for you the story of my life. I am not going to draw this picture for you in chronological order, from first to last. Rather, I would like to tell you about the least important things in my life first and get on to the most important things last. OK? Here we go.

I grew up during the beginnings of the race for space. The USSR and the USA were in a tight contest to see who could accomplish each benchmark achievement first. I was fascinated by all of this science and

new horizon stuff and I watched, read, and soaked as much into my life as I could. I knew all of the first 7 astronauts by their first names and their histories and their specialties. I watched every lift-off carried on broadcast TV. I bought toy models of the various spacecraft and had the assembled projects up on a shelf in my room. In short, I lived and breathed the contest for, and conquest of, space. I so wanted to have the opportunity to grow up to be an astronaut like all of my heroes! So to represent that period of my life, right here in the middle of my picture of my life I am going to draw an enormous rocket. It is going to be an amazing machine. I will start with the single rocket motor, flames shooting out in a dramatic display of power and thunderous noise. You can see the flames for miles around. It is magnificent, it is awesome, it....is....a mistake...I have drawn the motor too large. I don't have room on the page for the rocket I had in mind.

I discovered in my research for being an astronaut, that you could not be a member of that elite group if you had even the slightest bent toward motion sickness. The physical extremes of space cause all kinds of difficulties for anyone prone to getting sick in that way, and I am the motion sickness king. Put me on a merry-go-round, push me one revolution, and I will graciously excuse myself from your company to go barf up lunch. I would never be an astronaut. It wasn't going to happen. What a disappointment that was for me to learn. And here I have this huge rocket motor right here in the middle of the picture of my life. And I can't erase it. Have you ever noticed that you can't erase the mistakes in life? Well, I'll just ignore it. I still have other areas here that I can work with. Perhaps I can still draw a beautiful picture after all. All the while I heard God's still small voice telling me that He would like to help me draw the picture of my life. But I ignored Him, too.

So I set my sights on something more realistic, but still in the realm of the conquest of space. I decided I would be a aerospace engineer. That would keep me there on the cutting edge of everything going on. So let me draw a smaller rocket motor over here to the side to represent that part of my life. It is much smaller and more reasonable for this sized paper. But...I'm bored with it already...I am going to just put a puff of smoke coming out of it and stop right there. I decided that wasn't the direction I wanted to go with my life after all.

I discovered cars, and BASKETBALL. I loved basketball! I was taller than most of my friends and quite naturally talented at the sport. All the while I kept hearing this still small voice telling me that He wanted to help me draw the picture of my life. I continued to ignore Him. I could do this on my own. Look, I still have plenty of plain paper area left. I can still make something of my life.

Our coach was an amazing man. He had a talent for designing last minute plays that would baffle any opponent we faced. He would draw them out on a clipboard for us and we would then take that idea to the floor and execute it with unfailing results. I remember one in-bound play that worked every time. Let me draw over here a small basketball court and show you one of those plays. We were to in-bound the ball here, dribble up to the half court line and pass it off to the point guard. It was then dribbled down into the corner, passed back out to the top of the key, where Randy would be waiting. He was an absolutely amazing shot from that position, and swoosh, it was in. Nothing but net. But my hips could not take the ponding of the running up and down the court, and I had to bow out of basketball. It was a tremendous disappointment. But it had to be. And again, I heard that still small voice telling me that He wanted to help me draw the picture of my life.

But I continued to ignore it. I had my own plans and goals and would draw the picture of my life all by myself, thank you. But this picture wasn't looking very good about now. I had made some big mistakes, and I can't erase anything here. It's all drawn in magic marker.

Then God did something I didn't expect. I thought it wasn't fair, but He did it anyway. First, there was this big black blotch. He took my Grandfather away. My hero was dead and gone. Then he put another

black blotch right here. My best friend took a bicycle trip across the state one summer and stopped to take a short swim in a farm pond to cool off. There was a sea weed type plant growing just beneath the surface of the water that he didn't notice until he was caught up in it and he drown. I didn't even get to go to his funeral. And then there was another blotch here. I was involved in an accident, and it was my fault. Luckily no one was hurt, but it was one of the most embarrassing moments of my life.

Remember, we are going from least important things to most important things. When I was in college, I decided to attend a roller skating event sponsored by the school in a nearby town. At one point during the evening, the "Couples Only" announcement came over the loudspeaker and I found myself heading off to the other side of the rink to find a random young lady to skate with. I have been married to that young lady now for 42 years! So I will draw a ring right here on the picture of my life.

About now I am beginning to realize that the picture of my life is not going the way I had planned. It is not beautiful at all. And that still small voice that I had been ignoring for so long was still there. So I began to listen. He said that He was the Great Artist, and that He could still make something beautiful of my life. I finally agreed that I could not do anything right on my own and needed help. I needed Him to be in control of the picture of my life. The most important thing that has ever happened in my life was this: I asked Jesus to be a part of my life. I became a Christian.

Then He did something I didn't expect at all. You see, one of the things that we must do when we come to know Jesus as our Savior, is that we must repent of our sins. To repent means to turn around. He reached down into my life and turned my life around. He told me to take up the magic marker and begin drawing, but only mark where he told me. You see, from his vantage point, he could see what I could not, that my whole life has been a part of his master plan all along. Now each morning, I have to tell myself, God is going to draw my life. I just need to hold the marker and move as He directs. And all of those things, those mistakes in my life, are still there. Nothing has been erased. But God has used everything that I have experienced to make me who I am today.

Are you beginning to see the picture of my life? Each day we add more details to the drawing. It's not done yet, and won't be until the day that I die. Let me explain what I have drawn here. Everything here sets on an old wood table. I am a woodworker by trade. It is a big part of my life in that it provides what we need for everyday existence—food and shelter. And God has given me a talent in that area that is sought out by many people. And this, of course, is a Bible. That is a huge part of my life. The old kerosene lamp represents one of my favorite verses in the Bible, *Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path always*. The old quill pen and ink well represent the book I wrote several years ago and my web site with all of my materials that has been published online. That ring is now a pair of spectacles. I have learned that my wife sees life a bit differently than I do and I have grown to appreciate her input. I see life more clearly now with her at my side. The knots in the wood are the most difficult moments of my life. In woodworking we call knots and defects like this "character". It seems appropriate for life as well, because it is during times like that that I find myself growing the most.

One day, I will stand before God, with the picture of my life in my hands, and I expect Him to ask, "So, what does the picture of your life look like, now that it is all finished?" I want to be able to turn the picture of my life toward my God and have Him say, "Well done. What a beautiful picture we drew together!"

May I ask you a question? What does the picture of your life look like?