

There is an old wrestling team called Team 3D. Bubba Ray was the main mouth piece and he could go on and on about how they would tear their opponents apart. After Bubba's 5 minute spiel, he would pass the mic off to Devon who would say, "Oh my brother, testify." Bubba would testify to the beating that they were about to give. I wanted to start with 3D because it is an exaggerated use of testifying, but it is still an example for us.

When Heidi and I came to interview with the call committee here at Immanuel, we stopped off at a church in the Dallas/Fort Worth area first. Heidi was not allowed anywhere near the church and even though there were various groups going on and people all over the place, I was shuffled through halls quickly so that nobody would see me. I was told that they had decided to keep everything a secret and did not want the congregation to know what was going on. Heidi and I talked about how that was one huge red flag.

And then we came here and we both were welcomed and given a tour of the church and the city. I met with the call committee and I believe the council on that first visit. John Heline also showed a couple of houses that were on the market. Our visit here was a totally different experience than the one in Texas but both of them testified to the people and the ministry that was done in the communities.

How many of you have testified at a trial? When you give a testimony, what are you supposed to do? You are to tell the truth. How many of you have given a statement to the police? Again, what are you supposed to do? You are supposed to tell the truth about what you witnessed.

In all of these examples, the testimony is about telling the truth according to their perspective of things. Team 3D planned on giving a beating. The two churches that I interviewed with before coming here testified to their ministry and how they did it through their interactions with Heidi and me. And in the trial or in giving a statement to the police, we testify to what we saw.

We are always testifying, telling others about a variety of things based on what we say and do. After people see or hear our testimony, they then decided if our testimony is accurate. They decide if they can trust what we do or say. It really is no different than a court case. The jury hears all of the testimony and then determines what testimony sounds more truthful and make their decision based on that.

People see and hear us and make the same determination. As we interact with others, we decide if they are somebody we can trust and work with based on what they do and say. We make our decision based on their testimony.

In our second reading, John tells us that we receive human testimony. Each one of us gives testimony about what is going on in our lives. We tell others how we have been treated and what we have seen. That is our testimony but John goes on to tell us that God's testimony is greater.

No matter how important or great that we think our testimony is, God's testimony is greater. God's testimony is all about what HE has done for each of us. It is about how HE has broken into our broken world to make it better and there cannot be any doubt that we need God to be a part of our world.

And do you know what God's testimony is? John reminds us that HIS testimony is that HE gave us eternal life through HIS son. God gave us life through the death and resurrection of HIS son. That is the greatest testimony for all of us.

As God's disciples, we are called to testify about what we know of God. The easiest way for us to give that testimony is by describing the relationship we live in with God. We testify to God's love for us by sharing how HE has helped us through the challenges of our life. We testify by talking about the sacrifices that God and Christ made for each one of us.

Whenever we do or say something to glorify God, then we are testifying to what HE has done for us and that testimony is the most important testimony that we will ever give.