



Saying Is Believing: The Necessity of Testimony in Adolescent Spiritual Development

Amanda Hontz Drury

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"I have seen and I testify . . ." (John 1:34)

The idea of giving one's testimony often evokes summer church camps, evangelistic revivals, mission trips and baptisms. Like an eyewitness called to testify in a courtroom, sharing a testimony of faith is for specific people at special moments.

But what if our view of testimony is all wrong? According to Amanda Drury, testimony is not merely about describing something that happened in the past. It is a practice that forms our present and future identity. Testimony changes us, and without it we risk having a stunted and stale faith.

Drawing on work in sociology, psychology and theology, Drury develops an understanding of testimony as an essential practice for Christian spiritual formation, especially for adolescents who are in the process of developing their identity. Recent studies reveal a staggering inability for adolescents to articulate their religious beliefs. Now more than ever, churches need to recover the practice of testimony as an integral part of communal worship.

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