

Storytelling Workshop

David Bok: April 19 2023

Jesus never talked about Christianity. He always talked about the kingdom of God. His kingdom manifesto in Matthew 5-7 has been hailed as one of the highest ethical teachings in the world by world leaders like Mahatma Gandhi.

Jesus also told stories. Besides healing, casting out demons and generally helping people, his primary method of communication was stories

The disciples asked Jesus “Why do you tell stories?” He replied “You’ve been given insight into God’s kingdom. You know how it works. But not everyone has this gift, this insight; it hasn’t been given to them. Whenever someone has a ready heart for this, the insights and understandings flow freely. But if there is no readiness, any trace of receptivity soon disappears. That’s why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people towards receptivity. Matthew 13:10-15 Message

With many stories like these, he presented the message of the kingdom to them, fitting the stories to their experience and maturity. He was never without a story when he spoke. But when he was alone with his disciples, he would explain how all this related to them. Mark 4:33-34 Message

I am proposing a 3 hour workshop on telling our personal stories about how the kingdom impacts our lives, and understanding how these stories naturally lead to the gospel of the kingdom. All of us have stories but few know how to tell them. In this workshop I will teach you how to choose and tell your story by actually doing it.

What you will learn :

- Why tell stories? Jesus' example
- How to choose and plan your stories
- Telling your stories with partners
- Evaluating your telling and how to improve
- Hearing examples of personal stories
- Q & A
- Relating your stories to the kingdom of God

1. “Tell me a **fact** and I will **learn**. Tell me a **truth** and I will **believe**.
But tell me a **story**, and it will stay in my heart forever.”

Why do people remember stories?

Why should we tell stories of the kingdom?

- to avoid a Western oriented marketing presentation of God incarnate
- to avoid a doctrinal gospel that leads to denominations and a head-centered nominal Christianity
- to explain the gospel of the kingdom in terms people understand, leading to spiritual fruit at the right time.

2. What kind of stories?

- Folk tales
- Bible stories (eg Discovery Bible Study)
- Personal stories: stories that come out of how you identify yourself
- How we got our family stories: stories that define your personality eg my exam failure, family issues

3. Elements of a story that is told (CASTLE)

a. Characters: Who are the main characters in your story? What is special or unique about them? What are their circumstances? What makes them interesting? What do they want or need?

b. Action: What happens in your story? What are the key events? Where and when do they happen? In what sequence?

c. Structure: A satisfying story has a beginning, a middle and an end. Imagine you are the pilot of a plane. In order to give your passengers a good experience: What do you do to get them on board and take off smoothly? How do you take them through the journey? the bumps, the instructions, the refreshments, the announcements? How do you land safely?

d. Texture

What specific sensory details do you include that appeal to the listener? What can they see, hear, touch, taste, smell?

e. Language

- When do you use direct speech?
- Are there any cliches?

f. Emotions

Anticipation, anxiety, frustration, despair, anger, shame, relief, fear, gratitude

“ A story tells people what happened to you. A good story helps people see what happened. But a great story helps people feel what happened.”

4. Exercises

a. Personal preparation. 15 mins

Choose a story from your life that has touched you. Prepare to tell it in 3 minute. Write notes beside your main points.

c. Choose a partner and tell your chosen prepared story to each other in 3 mins each. There will be a timekeeper. After each pair have told their stories we will regroup and discuss any questions. Repeat two more times with a different partner each time.

d. Review of best stories told.

5. Personal stories on storytelling the gospel (David)