

BIBLE STORYING MANUAL

Foreword

There have been a number of requests for information and helps to equip ISC personnel and short term volunteers with a working knowledge of Bible Storying for use in their ministry. This manual is an attempt to begin meeting that need, hoping that others will develop models that target unreached people groups whose cultures and religions require attention to specific worldview issues. This manual takes a more generic approach which can be readily adapted as needed for differing world views.

Bible Storying is now being widely used in a variety of situations and among many different peoples. Bible Storying is in use by both missionaries and national Baptist partners. Further, Bible Storying is increasingly being used by other Baptist entities as well as many Great Commission Christians.

The manual touches on the several situations in which Bible Storying is an ideal approach due to cultural, literacy, and religion factors. For some of these there is an urgent need to use a compatible and acceptable approach for witness, discipling and training.

Perhaps the greatest factor is that of introducing God's Word in a manner which it can easily spread among a people, changing their lives and planting churches. Bible Storying is highly compatible with initiating church planting movements and fostering strengthening of church planting movements.

Workshops are still the best way to introduce the concepts of Bible Storying, to model them, and to give a time for working on model Bible stories and practicing telling the stories or demonstrating a Bible Storying session.

For some this manual may be all that is needed to learn the basics of Bible Storying and how to get started. With diligent practice and experience will come competency and skill as an evangelistic Bible storer.

For this trainer the use of Bible stories, whether in a training session with Baptist Partner evangelists, sharing the story by fast-track in a community setting, or simply using a single story or two in a ministry opportunity, has been a multi-faceted blessing. First has been the deep relationship with many who have served as interpreters. Often the interpreters will say, "I can do this." And they are encouraged to begin their own Bible Storying ministries. Next has certainly been the relationship with peoples of Asia who have come to love the Bible stories and who look forward to hearing again and again the stories that have changed their lives. It has provided a sense of satisfaction that I am publishing the Word for many who have never heard and would not have heard (and listened) unless I had been faithful to tell them. Last has been my own deepened understanding of the Word, how to share it in story form while being sensitive to the openness (bridges to the Gospel) and any hindrances (barriers to the Gospel) among the listeners, and to receive a blessing myself as it speaks to me (in preparation and

presentation) just as it speaks to those gathered to hear the stories whose lives are being changed. May you, the new Bible storyer, enjoy the same blessings as you share the Old, Old Story with a people who have never heard the story of Jesus and what God has done for all peoples through His Son.

J. O. Terry

Bible Storying for Short Term Strategies

You have heard about Bible Storying and how it is being used to evangelize, disciple and train leaders in many countries and among many people groups. Now you would like to use it yourself for your ministry time during a short term of service as a volunteer or ISCEr.

Storying is a coined word which we use to more accurately describe what we do and to distinguish our approach from what others do in their teaching of the Bible. You have heard the term Chronological Bible Storying which is a special form of Bible Storying which follows a biblical timeline, taking advantage of presenting the Old Testament foundation to adequately prepare listeners before introducing the Gospel. Other forms of Bible Storying may not follow a longer timeline but may be more thematic or may even be a single appropriate story or two at a time of ministry. In all of these there is an intentional preserving of the integrity of the Bible story—keeping it as accurate as practical for a good oral story and not interrupting the narrative to insert teaching.

A similar form of Bible teaching is Chronological Bible Storytelling which does feature the stories told chronologically but may include significant paraphrasing of the stories or even halting the story to insert teaching at appropriate points. Interrupted stories are both confusing and distracting to oral communicators who are trying to listen to them. And the interrupted story is much more difficult to remember and retell as an intact narrative. Chronological Bible Teaching does not attempt to preserve the narratives intact but may only refer to the stories or story summaries which contain the Bible truths being taught in the lessons.

So Bible Storying is an intentional use of intact (uninterrupted) stories which are altered as little as possible to eliminate confusion and told in such a way as to preserve the emotion and drama of the original event as well as the story facts and spiritual truths. Stories are easier to remember by oral communicators who can then recall the stories and retell them to their people.

First, a review of Bible Storying as an introduction.

An Introduction to Bible Storying

The Bible is a book of stories. Estimates vary between 60-70% narrative format with the remainder being teaching and meditative. The Bible is a

story which is the story of God and man's relationship. The stories link together and move toward the focus of God's provision in Christ for restoring the broken relationship because of mankind's sin. The Old Testament stories provide the needed preparation for seekers as the stories explore the matter of sin and need for forgiveness.

The stories provide a widely acceptable way of describing the characteristics of God, those of the natural (carnal) man, those of Jesus as both sinless man and the Son of God, and those of the born again believer (what God expects of believers).

The Old Testament stories deal with the issues of the authority and sovereignty of God (why we are accountable to God), the broken relationship due to sin beginning with Adam and Eve and continuing through their descendants (our ancestors), God's judgment of all sin with punishment for sin, but provision for escaping punishment if one obeys what God says to do, and God's promise of an Anointed One to suffer as a substitute sacrifice for man's sin. The Gospel stories share the fulfillment of prophecy in the coming, ministry, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus who returned to the Father when his ministry on earth was finished.

The stories of Jesus are built upon the earlier stories in the Old Testament. The Old Testament stories provide a foundation for understanding the implications of the story of Jesus. The Jesus Film makes much more sense to viewers if they have some understanding of the Old Testament background leading to the story of Jesus.

For many religions which do not have the Old Testament background there are many mythical accounts of how man came to be, while others have no account at all of beginnings. So there is little or no understanding or acknowledging of accountability to a God who is sovereign because He alone is Creator and sustainer of the world and all its people.

For others there is a faulty concept of sin. In one culture it is said to be a "sin to call a person a sinner!" Those in that religion do know that sin leads to loss of peace. Another major religion looks upon sin as only a shortcoming due to one's ignorance of God's commands. Sin can be "balanced out" by doing good works so that at the soul's judgment the balance will tip to the good side. And further, it is popularly believed their Prophet will somehow help the faithful to cross the bridge narrower than a sword's edge into Paradise. Others believe in virtually endless cycles of reincarnation where the succeeding life is better or worse depending on what one does in the present life. The adherent hopes one day to escape the endless cycles of suffering and achieve a state of lasting peace. Still others trust in a time of "purifying" in a limited punishment before going on to eternal bliss. Some define sin as bad things like murder or robbing a bank. If one has not done such things, then one is not a sinner and therefore not guilty. More attention is given to

ancestors who must be honored and served by the living with offerings and material things to ensure one's blessing and freedom from trouble.

Most of the world's major religions are both propagated by stories and maintained by stories told by leaders and attributed to their religion's founder or other ancestral teachers.

Hindrances to the Gospel.

Beyond all these are a number of hindrances to the Gospel. One is limited literacy. Some peoples are nonliterate, primary oral communicators, not reading at all. So you can't use a tract or give them a Bible to read. Others have limited literacy from lack of education and struggle with religious and other unfamiliar vocabulary which they do not know. Still others have a Bible or Scripture portions in only the regional or trade language used among their people groups, but not in their own heart language.

Many are resistant to the Gospel message and attempts to present it. They may have been cautioned against its message as being Western and part of a plan of Western imperialism. In extreme cases the people may be openly hostile to what they construe as preaching. So any attempt to witness in a manner that suggests preaching, is quickly and openly opposed. It may not be the message so much as the manner of the presentation they are rejecting. The same message in a more compatible and culturally acceptable form such as Bible Storying can be both enjoyable and acceptable to listeners.

One of the most difficult hurdles is the listeners' view of sin and what must be done about it. It can take time to draw the listeners in and hold their attention long enough for them to say, "We are like those people in the stories who have sinned and are under God's judgment." When the listeners understand their inescapable predicament before a righteous God, then they are ready to hear what God has done to redeem the sinner through Jesus.

Bridges to the Gospel.

Every witnessing encounter involves a relationship, however brief it may be. The longer the encounter, the stronger the relationship, the greater the trust level, and the greater the possibility of listeners coming to understand the implications of the Gospel for them.

Further, stories are relatively easy to remember and to recall, leading to the possibility of retelling among others. The stories serve to anchor the truths related to salvation. Whenever the stories are retold the witness continues.

Stories are entertaining. You may be thinking, I didn't come to these people to entertain them. Yet, if we don't attract their attention and hold it long enough to share the Gospel, then what have we accomplished? It may be the entertainment value which helps to overcome hostility to hearing Gospel stories. Stories foster fellowship.

There are many other bridges as people have dreams in which Jesus appears to them. Many like Hindus are seeking peace in their lives. The

downtrodden need a message of God's love and forgiveness. Even the desire to learn English can be a bridge for sharing the Gospel.

What are some limitations of Bible Storying?

First, Bible Storying takes time, especially if many stories are used and the listeners are given an opportunity to participate in the storying session. There are many stories in the Bible, one list of popular stories includes 150. Yet not all of these are needed for witnessing. Some stories are better for certain peoples, some are best not used until a people become more mature in their faith and can receive the stories without reacting negatively against the Bible because of their misunderstanding the stories. Stories take time to prepare and learn. This is a problem for the occasional Bible storyer, one who is preparing to go on a mission trip, and who will only be with a people a short time. What can be done? Normally we suggest that an understanding of the target people's worldview be undertaken to give clues as to which stories are definitely needed and which ones might best be skipped for the time being. We need some hint of how many stories are needed to bring people from where they are in their spiritual condition to have an opportunity to understand who Jesus is and why we must accept by faith what Jesus was sent to do?

However, we can take a shortcut of sorts if we consider what we call a list of core Bible stories. These stories cover the basic biblical truths leading to salvation. The list can be enhanced to cover some of the issues needed for certain worldviews. And you, the storyer, will be in the best position to pick up clues as to what the people are not understanding or having difficulty in accepting. Simply add more stories with related teaching themes following the same pattern of crafting and telling, or make story substitutions to ones which seem more appropriate as you get to know the people better.

It is important that the listeners perceive the stories as being linked together as part of a larger or continuing story. So where there are gaps, as when skipping over stories for the sake of brevity, careful bridging must be done to maintain the relationship of the stories and their continuity. This is not difficult to do. Sometimes it is enough to say "after a long time had passed..." At other times the relationship is maintained by carrying forward a character such as Abraham, or one of the promises of God, or prophecies looking forward to what was going to happen at some future date. And summary stories can be used to connect events when there is not time to go into all the intervening stories. The Joseph story could be summarized to connect Jacob's stories to those of Moses.

Basic Bible Truths Leading to Salvation

The following list is not for teaching verbatim as a propositional witnessing plan. It covers the issues which generally need to be covered in order for people to fully understand their position before God as a sinner, the love that God expresses toward man, and what God has done for man in Christ Jesus.

It would be good to go over the list and reword it in your own words, even combining some of the issues or expanding them as you understand the need.

The amount of attention to each of these is dependent to some extent upon the worldview issues of the listeners. In the Philippines most people have some understanding about sin and have a strong desire to go to heaven and to have a good relationship with God—be a part of God's family. Further, they already know about Jesus and the Bible and attend worship services of a certain church.

Among Muslims sin is seen as of little consequence due only to man's ignorance of God's laws. God is so great that for man to think of having any relationship with him is blasphemy. And besides, salvation is chancy depending on Allah's will and their prophet's assistance.

Others like Hindus see Jesus as another avatar or appearance of one of their god saviors. And they see all beliefs as leading to God, while acknowledging literally uncountable gods among their country and village deities which they worship for various reasons.

Animists fear the spirit world which exists all around them influencing their daily lives and needing more attention than a far away God. So the story list will need to vary but it is still based mainly upon the list of truths which follows:

Basic Bible Truths Leading to Salvation

1. God is one God, sovereign, creating and acting in history.
2. God is all powerful, all knowing, the source of all grace and provision for all people's needs.
3. God is ever present in His Creation, yet is holy and separate from His Creation.
4. God communicates with people by His Word, He is faithful to his Word, to keep His promises.
5. God loves all people wants fellowship with all.
6. God is righteous, hating sin.
7. God's righteous nature demands that sin be judged and punished by eternal punishment (separation from God).
8. Men and women are accountable to God for all that is said and done.
9. Men and women are sinners by inherited nature (birth) and by freewill choice, and are separated from God by their sin.
10. People can do nothing to save themselves from God's judgment and ultimate punishment for sin.
11. A person can approach (have fellowship with) God only through the justifying means God has provided through a perfect (acceptable) substitute sacrifice (Promised One who died in the sinners' place).
12. Jesus the Son of God (the Promised One come from God) is the only perfect sacrifice for sin.

13. Salvation for all people involves turning from sin, seeking God's forgiveness, and having faith and trust in God's provision by believing on Jesus as the only Savior to restore the broken relationship with God and redeem one from God's eternal punishment.

10 Note : You may need to take care in how repentance is stressed as a necessary requirement for salvation; a sign of one's willingness to leave a life of sin and seek God's forgiveness. Among many of the world's peoples there is a practice of doing penance (works of one's own suffering or righteousness) in order to atone for one's sinful acts and so to earn forgiveness and salvation by one's own works. Repentance is illustrated in many of the stories used to evangelize. Repentance can be covered in greater depth in later discipling lessons as a part of the sanctified life.

The Basic Bible Truths are carried in the list of Core Bible Stories which form the backbone of most Bible Storying evangelism strategies.

Core Bible Story List

1. How God's Word came to us (not a core story but often an essential story for people who do not now the Bible as the source of authority)
2. Creation of the Spirit World (not a core story but a needed story for people who live in fear of evil spirits or who worship or appease spirits they fear)
3. Creation of the world
4. Creation of man and woman
5. The first sin and God's judgment
6. God's judgment of a sinful world and salvation through obedience (Flood story)
7. God's promise to Abraham (Promise of One to bless all peoples)
8. God provided the substitute sacrifice for Isaac (God will provide the Lamb)
9. The Passover—the sign of blood and the lamb (saved by obedience and the sign of blood)
10. God gives His Holy Law—the Ten Commandments
11. The Sacrifice System—shedding of sacrificial blood as temporary covering for sin (Leviticus 17--"it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life")
12. The Prophets' message and promise of a Redeemer who would suffer for man's sin (Psalms, Isaiah 53, Zechariah)
13. Birth of Jesus according to prophecy (Isaiah, Micah)
14. Baptism of Jesus—testimony of God the Father, the presence of the Holy Spirit and testimony of John— "Behold the Lamb of God"
15. Jesus taught as one having great authority (speaking words of the Father and doing what he saw the Father doing)
16. Jesus has authority to forgive sin—paralyzed man and four friends (or woman who anointed the feet of Jesus)

17. Jesus has power over nature—Calms the Stormy Sea, feeding the multitudes
18. Jesus has authority over demons—man in synagogue, Gadarene Demoniac, boy with evil spirit
19. Jesus is the resurrection—Jesus raises Lazarus to life
20. Abraham, Lazarus and the rich man—Man must believe the message of the prophets in this life
21. Jesus and Nicodemus—“You must be born again of the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God”
22. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman—Jesus is the source of living water of salvation
23. Story of Prodigal Son—God the Father forgives and restores those who repent and return to him
24. The Wedding Feast and refused invitations
25. The Last Supper—“This is my body and my blood shed for you”
26. Jesus is betrayed, arrested, falsely accused, tried and sentenced to death as he said would happen
27. The crucifixion, decisions for and against Jesus by the two criminals, “It is finished”, testimony of the Centurion
28. The resurrection and appearance to disciples and other followers
29. Jesus returns to the Father, the Ascension
30. Jesus the true High Priest (Heb 8-9), an advocate before the Father making intercession for believer’s sins (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25) (esp. for Catholics and Hindus)
31. Return of Jesus to receive believers unto himself, to judge and punish unbelievers, Satan and the evil spirits thus fulfilling all promises and prophecies. (Mat 16:27; 25:32; Jhn 14:1-3; Rom 2:16; 1Co 4:5; 2Co 5:10; 1Th 4:14-17; 2Th 1:7; 2Ti 4:1; Jud 14-15; Rev 20:12; 22:12 (esp. for Muslims)

Options For Telling The Stories

Tell one story each encounter. This is the best approach if you plan to discuss the stories with your listeners to draw out the truths in the stories by dialoging with listeners about the stories their and their implication. This is the normal strategy followed in Chronological Bible Storying. If the story list is not too long you may have time to tell all the stories, discuss them with listeners and bring listeners to closure with an invitation to believe.

Tell a cluster of stories each encounter. This approach takes advantage of the fact that stories tend to group together around certain themes or characters which link the stories together. The creation stories (of the spirit world, the natural world and of man and woman) deal with God’s sovereignty. Then follows a cluster of judgment stories (Adam and Eve’s sin,

Cain's sin, judgment of the sinful world in Noah's day). Then follow the promise stories (God's promise to Abraham of a descendant to bless all peoples, the same promise to Isaac and Jacob). The Abraham stories also have the substitute sacrifice which is one of the key stories leading to Christ as the substitute sacrifice for our sin.

The stories of Jesus also fall into clusters (annunciation and birth, baptism and tempting by Satan, healings, forgiveness of sin stories, power encounter stories, passion, death and resurrection stories).

Tell as a continuous fast-tracked story. This is the best approach if time is very limited or there is a single opportunity to use Bible stories to evangelize. This approach may be done publicly where many are gathered, used with a limited group in a home, used bedside in a hospital, or even one-on-one when visiting or traveling. In this approach there is no attempt to stop the narrative in order to discuss each story. The stories continue, usually in a somewhat condensed manner moving smoothly from story to story while touching upon all the basic Bible truths leading to salvation. It may be helpful to introduce each story with a word or question about the main theme of the story. For instance: Before the Flood story you might ask: "Do you think it is important to obey what God tells you to do? Did you know that you are here today because one man long ago obeyed what God told him to do. Here's the story of that obedience."

Depending upon the worldview of the listeners more or less attention is given to the Old Testament stories as a preparation for the stories of Jesus. This approach is often done with some kind of picture set to illustrate the stories and to give an attention focus. Larger flat pictures are needed for the public groups, booklets or even photo-album pictures may be used for smaller more intimate groups of listeners. It is not always appropriate to use teaching pictures as they may not be culturally appropriate or may offend some like Muslims. For one-on-one witness a set small pictures in a photo album may be helpful.

Tell a single appropriate story or cluster but not a chronological sequence. We often call this situational storying or point of ministry storying as we choose a story best suited to the situation at hand in which we have an opportunity to witness or minister. This may be a point of encounter opportunity to open up a witness. It may be a ministry situation in which you have opportunity to minister through prayer for a person or family. Before you pray, lift up Jesus with an appropriate story or two as the Spirit leads. Then pray for the person and, before you go, offer to share more Bible stories if invited back. Then you will have opportunity to tell the chronologically arranged stories dealing with worldview issues, covering basic Bible truths leading to salvation, and answering questions.

Probing for responsiveness and opening the way for a longer storying strategy to follow. By telling the story in a short form, the volunteer or ISCer

may open up a door for an evangelist to come later and, over a much longer period of time, begin to tell the stories one by one and lead the people to talk about what God is saying to them through the stories. This could happen as a follow-up to crusades where volunteers take advantage of home visits and other personal opportunities to introduce the Bible story. Special projects like well drilling, construction of houses, disaster ministry and relief aid all provide times of contact and increased interest and curiosity which give opportunity for short track Bible storying. This, too, is a further opportunity for a longer and more thorough Bible storying strategy by a local missionary or national Baptist partner who knows the people's worldview and speaks their language with the right vocabulary for their understanding.

How To Begin A Bible Storying Encounter

Using a pocket photo album. Some like to begin a casual conversation and then move it toward the family. The photo album is opened to show a picture of the storyer's family (husband, wife, children). After some comment the storyer mentions having another family he/she is part of. The next picture is that of one's church showing people and not just a building. Discuss what it means to have a family like this who also love you and care for you. Then mention that we are all part of a larger family which has a problem. Turn now to Adam and Eve and their disobedience and proceed through the selected pictures to the resurrection of Jesus. Then offer an opportunity to be a part of the family of Jesus which we enter through faith in him as God's provision for our "family problem". sin.

Visiting bedside in a home or hospital. Because of the person's illness or possible short attention span this should be a very brief presentation which hits only the high spots and minimally in the Old Testament with major emphasis upon Jesus. At the conclusion offer to come again and give a more in-depth presentation when the person is stronger or if other family members desire it.

Family presentation in a home. This is a more relaxed presentation often done by women during a home visit. Many times children are present and may need to be accommodated by the choice of stories and by minimizing some of the harshness of the judgment stories. This presentation may be done by prior appointment or invitation of the family. Picture booklets or small flipcharts can be a very helpful way of illustrating the stories as they are told. Flipcharts have a disadvantage of having pictures already selected and locked into an order. Presentation books have an advantage in that picture books can be cut up so that individual pictures may be selected and arranged in the desired order in a clear file. That way the presentation can be edited by adding pictures or deleting pictures according to the stories being used. And other illustrations may be used as well.

Using a preaching poster. This approach works well for a small public gathering and can be set up in a moment by hanging the chart on some

handy projection and beginning the story. It takes advantage of the elements of surprise and curiosity. One such poster is "The Origin & Destiny of Man" which depicts the Bible story in seven pages. (See Visual Resource List at end.)

No visual, just telling the story. The best way to get into such an opportunity is by asking questions related to origins of man and the nature of man. The objective is to raise sensitivity and to create an atmosphere of curiosity and conjecture into which the storyer says there are some stories which speak to those very questions, and then proceeds to begin the Bible story, expanding where necessary, and skipping over parts to keep the narrative lively and moving toward the story of Jesus.

Keep the storying on a win/win basis. Avoid debate with the listeners. If you are challenged at some point in the story, tell the listeners that is what God had recorded in the Bible. And you are not free to change the story. In some circumstances you may need to let some with strong objection have an opportunity to tell their story after you finish yours. You will need to trust the power of God's Word over the words and account of man.

If questions do arise and can be answered briefly you may choose to do so. Beware of people with "pet" questions. Others may ask questions in an attempt to demonstrate what they know about the Bible. Try to overlook these or simply thank the person and continue on. Sometime you can answer a sincere question with reference to another story, hopefully one that has already been covered.

Bringing Closure to Your Bible Storying Opportunity

Simple invitation. The simplest invitation at the conclusion of your storying is to invite people to believe on this Jesus and what he has done on their behalf. Whether this is understandable or an acceptable practice will need to be informed by local missionaries or evangelists. Often foreigners can do things the local leaders cannot easily do or would feel uncomfortable doing. Be careful that any positive response such as a raised hand or verbal acknowledgement is not simply a desire to keep a good relationship with the foreigner. It would be good to have people tell why they are responding that way—to verbalize their sinful condition and desire to believe that Jesus died for their sins. Ask for testimonies.

The one-on-one presentation is the easiest to bring closure as the invitation can be personalized and extended as needed. A tract that summarizes the major points of the story in a narrative form may be helpful if the people are literate. A picture tract can be helpful for non-literates to cue them to remember the stories.

Invitation to talk one-by-one. This is an invitation to a less public time when a more intimate presentation of the invitation to believe is given. Circumstances will dictate when best to do this. The seekers in the group are

invited to come to you to express their response to the story of Jesus. Ask if you can go to their home to talk with the family about the story and what they should do after hearing the story of Jesus.

When a public response is not possible or difficult for seekers. This is particularly a problem for women in Muslim lands and common among young people in many places. One possibility for an invitation is for a "silent heart" response in which the women or young people in their own hearts decide what they must do. They can be led to pray a silent prayer to acknowledge their belief on Jesus, to receive forgiveness of sin, and to be filled with assurance of the Spirit, resulting in joy and peace. Signaling their response before others is the problem. Some have invited women to respond by making a mark on a piece of paper and giving it privately to the storryer, or in whispering to the storryer their response. Prayer is offered for all the women and for God's protection and blessing of those believing on Jesus. Again, be sensitive to local practice and advice of those who live and work among the people. Suggest that each ask God to make them bold to confess their new faith publicly.

Invitation to view Jesus Film. This is a way of preparing a people for the visualized story of Jesus in which the whole group sees the story together and are challenged to believe on Jesus in the story review at the close of the film.

Public invitation by storryer or evangelist. This is the most open way to for a people to acknowledge their belief in Jesus, hopefully as a result of expressing their sinful condition before a righteous God and their helplessness to save themselves from God's wrath. Follow the culturally acceptable pattern of local missionaries or leaders.

Your own favorite invitation or closure. You may have your own favorite invitation or closure to a presentation of the gospel. Check with a local pastor or missionary to see if it is culturally acceptable and not likely to be misunderstood by the listeners. Some use the Gospel Bridge picture or a variation of it.

Immediate affirmation of new believers. It is essential to immediately affirm new believers by going back over the key stories:

- mankind's broken relationship with God due to sin,
- God's judgment of sin,
- the substitute sacrifice,
- the covering sacrifice of blood,
- the promise of one who would suffer for our sins, and
- the death and resurrection of Jesus, or
- using affirming scriptures which show they have made the right decision according to God's Word.

Pray with the believers, one-by-one if possible, for the whole group as an alternative. Ask God to strengthen each one and to protect them from

Satan's attack. Ask how their lives will change as new believers? Teach some worship songs and have a thanksgiving worship, thanking God for His mercy on sinners and asking for His blessing on new believers.

Where Can One Get Resources For Bible Storying?

I tell people that I got mine from the Bible and that is a good place to begin looking! Of course, when you ask this, you are looking for a model to follow, or at least to use in the beginning until you work out your own stories.

Actually there are several resources available. One good one for the story of Jesus is a book called appropriately, *The Greatest Story*. It is an attempt to reassemble all the pieces of the Gospel accounts of Jesus into a single gospel narrative organized into easy-to-tell episodes. You may not agree with all the author has done in some parts of the story but you would be free to edit your account to fit what you are comfortable with. The book is very helpful in the annunciation and birth narratives, enriched parables and miracles from combining the several accounts into one, and then picking up with the Last Supper and going through Christ's suffering to the Ascension.

There is another excellent Bible story version from Tyndale House Publishers which is, fortunately, now back in print. I will mention it in the event you see one in a Christian book store. It is *The Story: From Adam to Armageddon*. This is a chronological narrative account of the Bible story. The Living Bible account has been edited into a chronological timeline account with the story presented as a narrative by episodes. There are no book, chapter or verse markings. All redundant accounts have been simplified without repetition of earlier accounts. The prophet and kingdom stories are harmonized into narratives, the four Gospels are harmonized into one narrative account with individual stories, and Acts and the Epistles are harmonized into one interwoven account. Again, you may not agree with the editor's cuts and arrangement, but the book is an excellent resource to show you how to do it. You could easily teach from this account as well as use it as a text for an ESL reading class. It is edited on about a 12th grade English level.

Another possible resource is Jesse Lyman Hurlbut's *365 Short Stories from the Bible*.

There are other resource such as the Reese Chronological Bible which retains the normal Bible wording but which has been arranged chronologically.

Timeline charts are another possibility for students and professional people. These usually do not work as well for rural peoples who may not understand that the chart is a kind of map. Timeline charts normally work better with small groups. Two are available and are listed in the Visual Resources with a note about each one. A Visual Survey of the Bible is also available in a b/w line drawing form which may be photocopied and hand colored with the storyer's own captions in the local language added. The New "Panorama" Bible Study Course is another color timeline chart of the Bible story.

The Story of God and Man

Following is a model set of chronological stories and some teaching suggestions which you can use, adapting and revising for your target group. You may want to add some additional stories of your choice. Several optional stories for women are included which are not normally a part of a generic chronological presentation and were not included on the Core Story List. You may photocopy the pages and enlarge them for personal use. I would suggest your rewriting the stories in your own words as you would tell them. Remember: You don't have to use all the stories which are given. The stories which are critical leading to salvation are marked ?.

The background scriptures are given for each story and a scripture passage which you may read for each story to anchor the story in the Bible. (When you tell the story the listeners will hear that passage as part of the story. This is one way in which we authenticate the story or anchor it in the Bible.) The scripture references given in parentheses in the stories are for your reference only and should not be given as part of the story. Later if a person asks a question and you need to refer to the passage you will have record of it. (Add your own references as you study and prepare the stories.)

The first several times you attempt to story through the Bible you will feel a need to have your outline or teaching notes in hand along with your Bible. Soon you will find that you can do the stories mostly from memory and not have to constantly rely upon your notes. This will free you to gesture and articulate your story for the entertainment of the listeners (holding their attention) and for clarity and understanding as they hear the stories from God's Word.

Go over what you will do with your interpreter so they will be familiar with your plan to tell the stories as story and not a sermon or simple factual account.

Signaling that your source is God's Word. If it doesn't cause a problem, open the Bible before you or hold it in your hand as you tell the stories. This reminds the listeners that the story comes from God's Word. When talking about the story and its implications for listeners, you may put down the Bible. In some cultures a marked teaching Bible is offensive, so keep a clean copy handy.

Do not get drawn into a debate with listeners. Keep the story session on a "win/win" basis. If necessary, answer listener questions in a hostile environment with more stories or refer to stories told earlier. Or, you might answer with a question of your own: "What do you think? Why are you asking that question?"

Make every shared opportunity a training opportunity. Make best use of every shared opportunity with an interpreter or national Baptist partner a training opportunity. In training you will want to share your vision—why you are doing what you do. You will want to share your own testimony and

especially why you were led to share God's Word in this way—a desire for all people to have the same opportunity that you had to have their sins forgiven. For them to know Jesus as the One who gave his life as a substitute sacrifice for their punishment. For all people to be able to enjoy God's fullest blessing on their lives just as you have. If they can read English, be prepared to share a copy of the Bible lessons as you are teaching them. Remember this manual is for your instruction and it may approach preparing for the evangelistic encounter differently than they might do in their own culture.

If you bring visuals with you like teaching pictures, be prepared to leave these in the hands of someone whom you train to use them. Take time with the person to go through the pictures (or other visuals) and explain each one. Then pray with the person that God will bless their use of the pictures as they teach the stories.

No apparent response to the Bible stories. This can happen for a any of several reasons. First of all, don't be discouraged if the group of listeners seems to diminish after you begin. People have a way of listening safely without being present. They will ask someone else who was present what the foreigner said. It is important to keep going if you have any listeners at all. Of course, if you inadvertently offend by the vocabulary, by something unusually sensitive in the stories, or by the use of a certain picture, be prepared to ask the listeners' forgiveness. Make the necessary changes (if possible) and continue on. A pre-story session with your interpreter can help to head off this kind of problem.

Sometimes there is a delayed response to the stories. The people hear the stories but do not respond at that time. The stories will continue to work on them after you leave as the Holy Spirit uses the stories to convict of sin and displace error with truth. (This really happens!) You will have planted the seed that a missionary or Baptist partner evangelist is able to harvest later. So count yourself as part of the team as Paul said, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, and God made it grow." (1Co 3:6)