

7 Steps – Bible Storytelling & Dialogue

1. **Greet Group:** Greet group, have introductions, and connect socially with each other. Use the two greeting questions to connect socially and follow-up from the last story you told (pray if appropriate).
 - 1) What are you happy or sad about right now? (Greeting)
 - 2) How did it go applying the last story to your life and to whom did you tell it? (Greeting)
 - 3) May I share a story from God’s Word?
2. **Introduce Story:** Introduce story by explaining what is needed to understand the Bible story and build interest. Explain difficult story words, background information, place names, or important things that happened before the story with which the listener may not be familiar. (Ask God to speak by His Word.)
3. **Tell Story:** Tell the story accurately as it is recorded. Do not add opinions, details, or explanations. Use your voice and body to accurately project the feelings and actions of the story. Clearly mark the story beginning and end.
4. **Story Question:** Ask simple questions about the story that the group answers directly from the story text. Ask the questions chronologically from the beginning to end of the story so that the listeners re-tell the story step-by-step from start to finish without adding explanations or preaching. (Be sensitive and encouraging when people give wrong answers.)
5. **Volunteer Question:** Ask, “*Who will volunteer to retell the story as he or she remembers?*” Listen while the volunteer retells the story. (Be sensitive and encouraging when re-teller gives inaccurate information or misses something.)
6. **Observation Question:** Ask open observation questions to help the group discover deeper truths from the story. (Listen attentively, reflect questions back to group, follow interest, and maintain positive dialogue from within the story.)
 - 1) What do you love about the story? (Observation)
 - 2) What do you not understand about the story? (Observation)
 - 3) What do you observe about people? (Observation)
 - 4) What do you observe about God? (Observation)
7. **Application Question:** Ask questions that help the group to consider what action steps they will take to apply the story to their own lives and share it with others. (Give time for silence. Ask for hearing and for God’s Spirit to speak clear responses to His Word.)
 - 1) From what you heard, what are you going to do in your life? (Application)
 - 2) Who will you tell this story to? (Application)

5 Strategies in 7 Steps of Storytelling and Dialogue

Strategy	Most-Engaged Step(s) of the 7 Steps
PLANT	Steps 2, 3 (Introduce / Tell Story — what is the Word being planted?)
HEAR	Steps 1, 3, 4, 5 (Greeting / Tell Story / Story Questions / Volunteer Question — do people feel safe enough to open their hearing? does the hearer’s understanding match the story?)
DISCOVER	Step 6 (Observation/Discovery Questions — interactive discovery)
SPACE	Intrinsic to all, but especially Step 7 (Application Questions — sacred space made operational)
TRUST	Underlies all 7 — the Spirit does the work in every step

7 Steps – Learning the Story

1. **Choose the story.** It is important to choose the right story that fits into the proper stage of the circular process of Making Disciples and fits the listeners' overall understanding of the Bible.
2. **Learn the structure of the story.** Divide the story into easy-to-memorize parts. Most stories have a beginning, a middle and an end. Memorize each event of the story. For example, the story of Zacchaeus can be divided into six parts.
3. **Imagine the setting of the story.** Imagine the setting of the story in your mind. What did it look like in that place? In this way, you may identify with the story, experience the story, and make it your own.
4. **Imagine the action taking place.** For example: Imagine the excitement and the pushing and shoving of the crowds! Imagine little Zacchaeus climbing the tree. Imagine Zacchaeus taking out his money and the amazement of the disciples.
5. **Use your voice to project the images you've imagined.** Project your voice appropriately to the mood of the story. Pay close attention to the volume of your voice, from a whisper between the disciples to the angry shouts of John the Baptist.
6. **Learn the story by memory.** Do not change the story! Accuracy is very important because oral people will retell the story exactly as you have told it. Do not add details that are not in the Bible.
7. **Practice telling the story until it comes naturally.** Rehearse the story while you are alone, without interruption. Practice telling the story within the cultural context and style of the people you are ministering to. Present a storytelling style in harmony with the group. Practice telling the story out loud, paying close attention to volume, tempo, and pauses.

Ten-Minute Story Learning Method

1. Ask God to help you remember, understand, and tell the story clearly.
2. Read the story out loud once. Picture it in your imagination as you read. Make mental markers at turning points in the story — visual images you can return to.
3. Close your Bible and retell the story out loud in your own words all that you recall of the story. This is remembering, not memorization. Use common language, not religious jargon. Do not go back and check the Bible text until you finish!
4. Again read the story, close the Bible, and retell 1-2 times without looking.
5. Practice your story beginning and ending lines so you can begin and end with confidence.
6. Repeat this process until telling the story comes easily and accurately.