

Oral Narration of Bible Stories Instruction
For the Group Leader

1. Preparing for Leading

A. Internalize, learn the Bible story in your own words, in the heart language of the students for the study. Remain faithful to the story as written in the Bible. Add nothing to it: no personal commentary, no extra descriptions nor give added emotions to the characters in the story. Narrate the story as it is told in scripture.

B. Pay attention to the details of the story.

C. If it is natural in your culture to tell a story with drums, dance, song, chants, motions, objects...use these!

B. Repeat the story out loud several times in private so that you can tell it easily. Try to use the same vocabulary and the same way of telling the story. Begin to narrate the story with the words, "This is a true story from God's Word," and give the Bible reference. When you finish narrating the story close with, "This is a true story from God's Word," and give the Bible reference.

This practice separates your words from that of the Bible.

2. Teaching the Story

A. Explain to the students that this is not a lecture. This is a participative Bible study in which each is expected to contribute answers to the questions asked. The answers to the questions they give must be directly from the Bible story narrated to them and not from other scriptures. This will keep those who know the Bible well and those who do not know the Bible on an equal status.

Explain that you will not be giving any answers or observations about the story until the very end of the lesson.

B. Ask the group to close their Bibles and to set aside their pens and notebooks. Request that they look at you. Narrate the story to the group.

C. After telling the story, narrate it once more. Ask the group to respond to the following questions that will help reinforce their learning the story:

1. Who were the people in the story?
2. Where were the people in the story?
3. When did the story take place?
4. What happened first in the story? Second? Third? And then?

Review the entire story in this way.

D. Narrate the story a third time, but this time tell it in short phrases and have the group stand up repeat it phrase by phrase after you. If you have been using hand or body motions to tell the story, have them do likewise.

E. Divide the group two by two. Have each person present tell the story to the other.

Remind them to be very supportive and encouraging of each other. They should help each other remember the story details correctly.

F. After the work in the small groups is accomplished, ask for a volunteer to stand and tell the story. The group should gently correct the person if he/she forgets something.

Be very encouraging. However, do not let mistakes pass without gently correcting them.

3. Conducting Bible Study

A. Encourage the participation of each person in the group. Avoid allowing only a few people to dominate and give all the answers. Only allow one answer to be given from one person at a time. The answers must only come directly from the story being studied.

B. When a person answers a question ask him, "How did you see that in this story?" Let them respond.

C. Hold your teaching or commentary until after you have asked all the questions.

D. Do not be concerned if it takes people time to adjust to answering questions. They have been conditioned to listen to lectures and sermons without comment. This may be a great change for them.

E. You may need to draw out responses from women and children.

F. Don't rush through the questions. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Ask one question at a time and allow for thorough reflection and response.

G. Questions to ask the participants for the Bible Study:

1. What characteristics of God have you seen in this story? What event, action or word showed you this characteristic?

2. What lessons have you learned from this story?

3. What has the Holy Spirit revealed to you through the story that you repent of and obey?

To the leader:

a. Each person who responds to this question must start the response with, "I," and not with "we," to keep the application personal.

b. When people respond to this question find someone in the group that will hold them accountable to make the life change they have confessed to. If you are meeting weekly, take note of these acts of repentance and obedience and find out how they are doing in these areas each week.

4. Who will you tell this story to?

To the leader:

a. Each person must answer this question out loud before the group and give the name of at least one person he will tell the story to. You are purposing to help your students to become life-style evangelists and disciplers through narrating the stories with others everywhere, anywhere, all the time.

b. The goal is for each student as he tells the story to another, he encourages the listener to turn around and tell the story to yet another person.

c. Depending on the situation, the student telling the story to others could simply tell the story or ask the same questions of that person.

d. Whether you send the students out immediately into the community to tell the story, or when they come back together, ALWAYS have them report on what happened when they shared the story.

e. When participants tell an evangelistic story to people, they need to give each listener an opportunity to pray to repent, confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and to surrender themselves in obedience to Christ forever.

5. Your Observations of the story

A. Now is the time for you to share what Christ has shown you through the story, or to emphasize what the students have revealed through the Holy Spirit while they have been responding to the questions. When you share, if the Holy Spirit has impressed upon you other scriptures, you may do so.

B. When you teach, keep the story central to the teaching.

C. Observe your students closely and only give them what they can retain, reproduce and share with others without taking any notes.

D. Dance the story! Sing the story! Chant the story! Do what is culturally appropriate for the people before you!

Other Important Notes:

1. If someone asks you a question to which there is no biblical response, for instance, "Why/how did the Holy Spirit snatch Philip and transport him to Azotus (Acts 8:39)?" Don't try to create a response and don't allow anyone else to. Simply say, "God didn't explain it in his Word, so it isn't something important for us to know. When we get to heaven we can ask Him!"
2. If there is a good question that you don't readily know the response to, say, "I don't know. I will find out and get back to you." We are all learners. No one understands everything about scripture.
3. A non-biblical contrived response will deviate people from true faith and create heresy.
4. If there is a good question that you are ready to respond to, do so in your time of observations of the story so the flow of questions and responses isn't interrupted through a teaching time.