

YOU HAVE A STORY; TELL IT!

Types of stories

- Miraculous, overt, 360° life turnarounds.
 - E.g. ex-offenders encountering God and changing completely, people instantly healed of grave diseases, etc.
- Discovery of who we are, who God is, and what God is doing through life's circumstances
 - E.g. relationship gains and losses, health crises, job switches, singleness, marriage, parenting, empty nesting, triumphs, tragedies, etc.
- Day-to-day happenings and experiences
 - E.g. a significant conversation, interests/passions, memories, habits, traditions/rituals, etc.

WHY we need to write and share our stories

BIG IDEA: God is not merely the Creator of our lives, He is also the Author of our lives. (#1)

#2 Your stories uniquely hold the message of the Gospel.

#3 Telling your stories bring healing and truth to you first.

HOW to write a personal story

BIG IDEA: Bring others one step closer to Christ by revealing your heart.

Elements of a personal story

- Shares about life
- Awakens people to felt needs
- Builds rapport and connection, with purpose
- Introduces the topic of God, or highlights God's values or intent for mankind
- 3-6 minutes long
- Describes something God is doing, or has done in your life
- May or may not mention Jesus Christ

How to put your heart into your story

- Making A Point
 - Who was involved
 - What I did
 - When I did it
 - Where I did it
 - How I did it
- Connection, Authenticity
 - Why I did it
 - Motivations
 - Intentions
 - Convictions
 - Emotions
- Paint a mental picture

Examples of literary devices, some of which even Scripture contains to communicate God's intentions and heart more effectively:

- Metaphors (*meaning or identity ascribed to one subject by way of another; to draw comparisons or highlight similarities of shared traits*)
 - Jesus says, "I am the bread of life", "I am the Good Shepherd".
 - "You are the salt of the earth."
- Imagery (*broad term for many literary devices used to "tickle" and awaken the audience's sensory perceptions*)
 - King David uses plenty of imagery in the Psalms he wrote, e.g. Psalm 22:14 "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast"
 - Proverbs 27:17 "As iron sharpens iron, one man sharpens another."
 - Psalm 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
- Similes (*drawing parallels between two unrelated things*)
 - "The Kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field."
- Allegories (*symbolism device, where the meaning of a greater, often abstract, concept is conveyed with the aid of a more corporeal object or idea being used as an example*)
 - Literature: John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*
 - Movies: *Matrix*, *Finding Nemo*, *Inside Out*, *Lord of the Rings*
- Analogies (*to establish a relationship based on similarities between two concepts or ideas*)
 - "In the same way as one cannot have the rainbow without the rain, one cannot achieve success and riches without hard work."
- Redemptive Analogies: Something that can be used to illustrate some aspect of salvation (especially helpful if related to a specific cultural context), e.g. [Don Richardson's Peace Child](#).

Important writing pointers

- Write your story the way you speak, NOT the way you write!
 - Think conversational.
 - Use language your audience would understand.
- Relate to your Big Idea,
- The Context of who you are.
- The Context of your audience.
- Paint a realistic picture of the Christian life.

Summary (Burger)

1. TRIGGER: Your first bite must compel the second.
2. FLAVOUR: Details add depth and richness of reader experience.
3. KICKER: Start with the end in mind for a satisfying landing.

Resources

1. [Article: I thought I didn't have a story, Doug Bender](#)
2. [Story video: Doug Bender](#)
3. [Story video: Scott Hamilton](#)
4. [Connie's story on singleness at 35](#)

5. [Story video: On the Road with Dad](#)
6. [Guiding questions to work through your story](#)