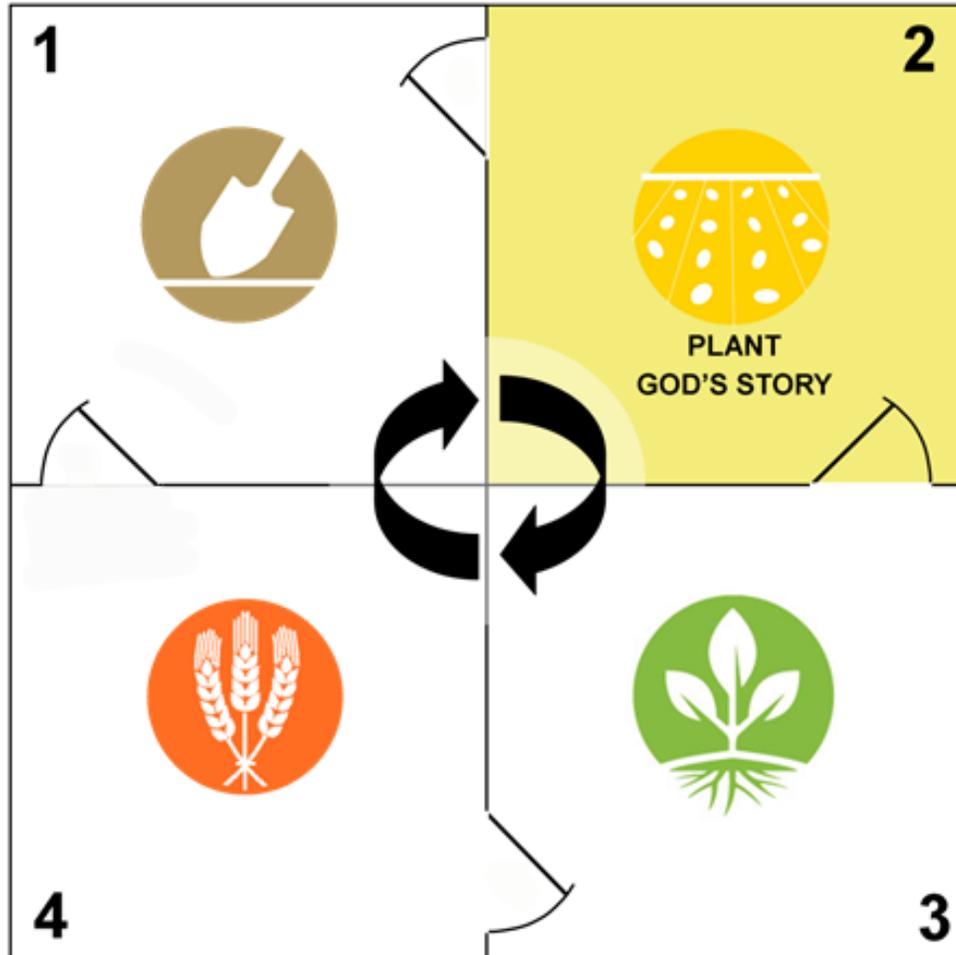


7 Stories of Hope

An Extended Gospel Conversation



Please feel free to amend this document to be more effective to your discipleship context.
Note also that proprietary branding or marketing will likely diminish its effectiveness.
May this be to the anonymity of man and the glory of God.

Story of Hope Process

Look Back



Appreciate
Give Thanks & Credit to God

Relationships
Ask questions, connect people

Accountability
Follow - Did you obey prompting?
Fish - Who did you share with?

(20 minutes)

Look Up



God's Vision
Share a story of God working through yourself or others.

Story
Tell, repeat, pray, read.

Discovery
Cross Questions

(20 minutes)

Look Ahead



Goals
Follow - What are prompted to do?
Fish - Who will you share with?

Practice
Skills needed to achieve goals

Pray
For others & ourselves

(20 minutes)

Don't leave out the red parts!

Story of Hope Process

with more details

- **Do** stick to this Bible story, don't talk about other stories and verses!
- **Do** only talk 20% and let the group talk 80%!
- **Do** let the Holy Spirit work, rather than correcting for right answers!
- **Do** have fun!
- **Don't** get stuck in one of the 3 thirds; once the 3 thirds are finished go back to unmet needs!
- **Don't** chase "rabbits" (subjects which are appealing, but off topic)!
- **Don't** talk about politics or religion, either good or bad!
- **Don't** bring this outline with you!

Look Back (20 minutes)

1. **Appreciate** – What are you thankful for?
2. **Relationships** – Ask questions! How are you doing? How was your week?
3. **Accountability**
 - a. Fishing: Who did you retell last week's story to? How did it go? Were there challenges?
 - i. Pray for friends and people who heard the story that week!
 - b. Following: Last week you said you were going to do _____. Did you do that?
 - i. How did you live out the story from last week in your own life?

(Please Note that the 1st Story of Hope is always different because it is your first gathering. Therefore replace Appreciate, Relationships and Accountability in Look Back with the following:

1. *Facilitator tells their own story of how they developed their relationship with Jesus.*
2. *Facilitator asks one or more to tell their story if they are comfortable doing so.)*

Look Up (20 minutes)

1. **Our Story** – The purpose here is to connect people's story with God's story. So for this story, ask if anyone would be willing to share a story about a time when others were judgmental towards them. How did you feel? What did you do about it?
2. **God's Story** – Facilitator tells the story from memory, best they can.
 - Facilitator asks everyone to repeat the story, best they can. (In larger groups have people pair up.)
 - Pray a SHORT PRAYER asking the Holy Spirit to guide and teach us the truth about the story.
 - Read the story from the Bible, from two different translations.
3. **Discovery** – Ask the Cross Questions. (*encourage ALL to participate*)

Look Ahead (20 minutes)

1. **Goals** – (*Be a doer*)
 - Following
 - After discussing this story what are you feeling prompted to do?
 - Write down what everyone said.
 - Fishing
 - Who needs to hear this story of hope from you?
 - Who will you share this story of hope with this week?
2. **Practice** - (*What do we need to practice to achieve our goals?*)
 - Retell the story as a group or do a skit to retell the story. Have fun, be creative!
 - Ask for people to retell the story to the group.
3. **Pray** – (*Allow all to pray.*)
 - Ask them how you can pray for them.
 - Ask God for success at what we said we will do.

Facilitator not Teacher

While leading the 7 Stories of Hope you are not teaching a lesson with a single application, you are facilitating an open ended environment that allows the Holy Spirit to lead each person to their own personal application. This means anyone can do this, one doesn't need the gift of teaching.

Stories of Hope

The woman who wept at the feet of Jesus.	Luke 7:36-50
Who does God accept?	Luke 18:9-17
Two Lost Sons	Luke 15:11-32
Love Others	Luke 10:25-37
A hole in the roof	Luke 5:17-26
A hard road	Matthew 16:21-26
Jesus' death and resurrection	Luke 22:66-25, 23:32-43, 24:1-12

Next see "*Learning to Follow Jesus*" and do *Repent and Believe*.

Optional Stories of Hope:

Who does Jesus call?	Luke 5:27-32
Be Born Again	John 3:1-17
Where is lasting wealth?	Luke 12:13-23

A simple way to remember the Cross Questions:

The Cross points up, reminding me to ask, "*What does this story say about Jesus or God?*"

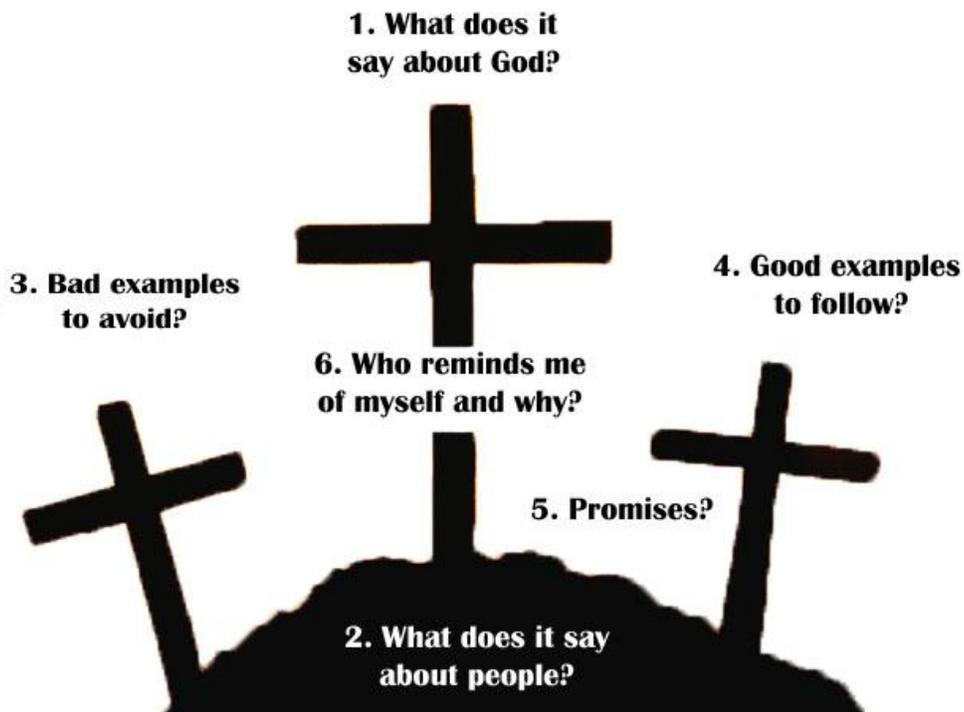
The Cross points down, reminding me to ask, "*What does this story say about people?*"

One thief mocked Jesus, reminding me to ask, "*Are there any bad examples to avoid?*"

The other thief confessed his sins, reminding me to ask, "*Are there any good examples to follow?*"

Jesus gave the confessing thief a promise, reminding me to ask, "*Are there any promises in this story?*"

Since Jesus died a death he didn't deserve, for me, I am reminded to ask, "*Who in this story reminds me of myself and why?*"



Why the 7 Stories of Hope?

The 7 Stories of Hope have proven to be as effective with Americans, as missionary's experience with people in non-post-modern countries. Most Americans who are far from God are inoculated against a one-time-event-based-Gospel-presentation. The function of the 7 Stories of Hope is to provide an extended Gospel conversation that allows people to discover their own need for Jesus, thus beginning their own personal relationship with Jesus.

Why use this Process?

We use this Process because (1) It creates well rounded mature Christians (2) It prevents the facilitator from doing only their tendency (3) It creates self-feeders because you've taught them how to fish, instead of bringing them fish.

Who are the 7 Stories of Hope meant to be shared with?

The 7 Stories of Hope are meant to be shared with a person who is far from God whose heart has already been prepared by God for His Good News.

Where should the 7 Stories of Hope be shared at?

In the home of a person of peace, also known as a home of peace. See Luke 10.

How many people can a story of hope be shared with at one time?

The most effective group size is smaller than 10 people at a time. Have more than 10 people to share with? Train others to start new groups.

How long should it take to share a story of hope?

The 7 Stories of Hope are meant to be shared one at a time in about an hour.

How frequently do you share the 7 Stories of Hope with a person of peace?

Typically the 7 Stories of Hope are shared once a week.

While sharing the 7 Stories of Hope should I make a more direct Gospel presentation?

- While sharing the 7 Stories of Hope you may see people confess sin and Christ all on their own.
- If you are prompted by the Holy Spirit to share a direct Gospel presentation then do for it.
- If not prompted to share a direct Gospel presentation, allow the 7 Stories of Hope to do their heart work. The 7th Story of Hope is a direct Gospel presentation.

What if everyone in my group accepts Jesus by week 4, then what?

If this happens disciple them; teach them to obey the commandments of Jesus. We do this through short term discipling which introduces new disciples to the foundational commandments of Jesus.

What if no one in my group accepts Jesus after finishing the 7 Stories of Hope?

It may be time to walk away as these people are not ready for discipling until they repent and believe accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior. Remember, Jesus also walked away from those not yet ready.

Can I use different stories or change the order of the current stories?

Yes. The process is much more important than the content. So feel free to try different stories or change the order as the Holy Spirit leads you. We recommend sticking to stories of Jesus from the Gospels that contrast Jesus with man. We do not recommend changing the 3 thirds process.