*Edit this page to fit your ministry setting. Then remove this note.*

## **STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES**

## **Understand the difference between storytelling and preaching.**

## Storytelling is using a technique in which both the presenter and the audience are involved in bringing a message to life. In a sermon or regular theater, the story would be presented whether the audience was involved or not.

1. **Understand that storytelling has a purpose**.

When a Bible event is told in storytelling form, it is not just being told as entertainment, but to make a point. Storytelling will show a change in the main character. Characters will be faced with a challenge or something they desire. After an action is completed, they will either have met or not met the challenge. They will have either filled the desire or left it unfilled. One thing is for sure, change happens and teaches us about what we want to change in our lives.

1. **Logical flow—setting—conflict—outcome.**

Small details in the story lend themselves to the flow. The setting is what explains the situation and character. The conflict is the resolution, or struggle evidenced, in the action that ensues. Oftentimes, the discovery is learned or a direction is taken that can bring resolution. The outcome is the resolution or conclusion that brings transformation about. When preparing for storytelling, ask yourself these simple questions.

* How would I describe the setting or the characters?
* What is the struggle being faced?
* What discoveries or choices are being made? What is the outcome that brings change?
* What can we learn from such outcomes?

**4. Look for story patterns.**

When telling your story, look for patterns of repetition in groups of three or seven or even forty. Sometimes it’s worth counting. Sometimes it’s helpful with preschool children to have them count with you through some of those patterns. They love to count out loud. Look for special refrains, such as “And God said, ‘It was good.’” Look for surprise reversals. For example, Jesus washed his disciples’ feet.

**5. Put yourself inside the story before letting the story outside of you.**

This means reading the story and imagining the details of being there.

* What was the temperature?
* What did it smell like?
* What time of day was it? Who else was there?
* Why were certain words important?
* What were things that were funny… or sad?

**6. Tell the story to yourself before telling it to others.**

Speaking out loud is different than speaking something in your mind. Force yourself to speak it out loud to yourself. It will give you insight in the best ways to share it verbally with others. Practice telling the story with your body as well as with words for the actions will show emotion and more vividly portray the story.

**7. Whatever storytelling technique you use, think about how your audience can be a part of the experience.**

* What parts can they repeat?
* What refrains can they repeat?
* What noises can they make?
* What thoughts can they share that will help them belong to the storytelling?