

7 Stories of Hope

a process to help you help others discover the real Jesus

3rd through 7th Stories of Hope

The 3rd through 7th stories of hope all follow the exact same process as the 2nd story of hope. Simply plug the remaining five stories of hope into the same process:

- 3rd Story of Hope: The Criminal - Luke 23:32-49
- 4th Story of Hope: The Blind Man - John 9
- 5th Story of Hope: The Religious Man and the Sinner - Luke 18:9-14
- 6th Story of Hope: The Sick Woman and the Dead Girl - Luke 8:40-56
- 7th Story of Hope: The Farmer and the Soils - Luke 8:4-15

Beyond the 7th Story of Hope

Use this session to help people repent and turn to Jesus in faith. Be sure to include a solid Gospel presentation in the lesson, asking people to make a decision to follow Jesus. This is usually included in the 3rd Third as you ask people what they need to do this week.

Additional stories to choose from

The Lame Man Through The Roof - Luke 5:17-25; Jesus heals a man unable to walk.
Spiritual lesson: We have hope, because God forgives sin and helps broken people.

Thieves Crucified With Jesus - Luke 23:32-49; Jesus loves to rescue sinners from hell and deliver them to heaven.

Spiritual lesson: As long as we are alive, we have hope, because God gives us eternal life when we believe and repent.

A Cheater Repents - Luke 18:18-30; A dinner with Jesus changes everything.

Spiritual lesson: What would you say?

The Unforgiving Servant - Matthew 18:21-35; A man is forgiven much, but fails to forgive in return.

Spiritual lesson: What would you say?

A Tale of Two Sons – Luke 15:11-32 ; Your father is waiting for you.

Spiritual lesson: What would you say?

Jesus Rose from the Dead – Luke 24:1-20; The day that changed the world forever.

Spiritual lesson: What would you say?

INTRODUCTION:

The 7 Stories of Hope have proven to be an effective tool for sharing Jesus with Americans living in our “Post-Christian” society. Many who are far from God are inoculated against a one-time-event-based-Gospel-presentation, but are sincerely interested in learning about the life & teachings of Jesus in an informal, non-threatening manner. The function of the 7 Stories is to provide an extended Gospel presentation that allows people to see their need for Jesus and leads them to committed faith in Him.

COACHING:

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 of peace. A person of peace is a person far from God whose heart has already been prepared by God for His Good News. See Luke 10.

Where should the 7 Stories of Hope be shared?

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

How many people can a Story of Hope be shared with at one time?

Since you will most often be sharing the Stories of Hope in a person’s home, you are often limited to the size of their living room, but this is a good thing as 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 to an hour and a half.

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 go for it.
- If not prompted to share a direct Gospel presentation, allow the 7 Stories of Hope to do their heart work AND definitely with the final Story you should share a direct Gospel presentation.

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

Start discipling 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. This resource is called “The 7 Commands of Christ.”

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

If nobody in your group accepts Jesus after the final Story, including a direct Gospel Presentation and call for decision, then do not push them to make this decision! Let God do His work in their hearts...remember He is the one who transforms hearts & minds, not us! If you feel prompted by the Holy Spirit to continue meeting with them to share and answer questions, then do so! But do not move on to the short-term discipleship process (“The 7 Commands”) until they have done so.

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 experiment with different stories or the order of the stories 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.

Why the 3 Thirds Process?

We use the 3 Thirds Process because (1) It creates well-rounded mature Christians (2) It prevents the facilitator from focusing only on their personal areas of strength (3) It creates self-feeders because you’ve taught them a process they can reproduce without you!

- Read the story from the Bible. Mark 5:1-20
- Discuss the story with the Sword questions: (*encourage ALL to participate*)
 1. What does this story say about Jesus or God?
 2. What does this story say about people?
 3. Are there any sins to avoid or promises to claim in this story?
 4. Are there any examples to follow or commands to obey in this story?

*** Who in this story reminds me of myself? Why?

3rd Third (20-30 minutes): Look Ahead Planning and Commissioning

- What do you need to do this week that you learned from this story?
 - When and where will you do this?
 - Start with what you yourself will do this week.
- Who needs to hear this story this week from you?
 - Start with who you yourself will share with this week.
- Remind the group of why it is important to obey using one of the following ideas or others:
 - The Bible is true and we can believe what it says.
 - Jesus changed my life, the person in this story’s life, and He wants to change your life.
 - If we love Jesus, we obey what He says.
- Pray and simply ask the Holy Spirit to help you all as you go and obey.
- Thank the group...

Second Story of Hope

The Demon-Possessed Man—Mark 5:1-20

- Do** practice telling the story beforehand.
- 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 all 3 are finished return to unanswered questions!
- 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!

1st Third (20-30 minutes): Look Back Pastoral Care and Accountability

- Ask what God has been doing in your life this week. Share from your own walk briefly.
- Let the group know you have been praying for them and their requests from last week.
- Ask if they were able to do what they had planned. How did it go? Begin with your own accountability and be honest.
- Ask what you can pray for this week from each member of the group. Take brief notes on what they say.
- Pray for these needs and simply ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your time today.

2nd Third (20-30 minutes): Look Up New Teaching and Practice

- Tell the story of the Demon-Possessed Man, as best as you can remember.
- Ask everyone to repeat the story as a group, as best as they can. (In larger groups have people pair up.)

Adapt These Stories as Needed

Do not think of these stories as exhaustive content that one must go through. Instead, catch the process behind the stories. Feel free to change them and adapt them for the group you are working with. Use different stories that you like. Keep sharing stories of people who met Jesus in Scripture and how their lives were changed.

Yellow Light Strategy not 7 Stories to Teach Through

Don't think that once you start, you must go through them all. The Stories of Hope are designed to help you determine if "yellow light" people are moving toward Jesus. If so, keep meeting with them and keep sharing the next story until they believe in Jesus. If not, bless them, leave the door open for future conversations, but move on to the next group the Lord has for you.

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.

About This Resource:

- Adapted from "T4T - Training For Trainers" (www.t4tonline.org) and models developed by Jared H. and Omar Segovia.
- Produced by Jared H., Omar Segovia, and Missouri Baptist Convention. For more information, please email jlh927576@asianerising.com or osegovia@mobaptist.org.
- Open Source. This material is purposely not copyrighted. Please feel free to edit content as you feel the Holy Spirit prompts, in order to tailor it to your situation. All we ask is that you share what's working/ what's not so we can learn together.

First Story of Hope

The Sinful Woman - Luke 7:36-50

- Do** practice telling the story beforehand.
- 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 all 3 are finished return to unanswered questions!
- 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!

1st Third (10-30 minutes): Look Back Pastoral Care and Accountability

(The first third of the first story of hope is always different than the following stories of hope.)

- Tell your own story about coming to Christ and ask for others to share where they are in life. Do not force them to share.
- Ask what you can pray for this week from each member of the group. Take brief notes on what they say.
- Pray for these needs and simply ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your time today.

2nd Third (20-30 minutes): Look Up New Teaching and Practice

- Tell the story of the Sinful Woman, as best as you can remember. Remember you don't have to tell it perfectly!
- Ask everyone to repeat the story as a group, as best as they can. (In larger groups, have people pair up.)
- Read the story from the Bible. Luke 7:36-50

- Discuss the story with the Sword questions: *(encourage ALL to participate)*

1. What does this story say about Jesus or God?
2. What does this story say about people?
3. Are there any sins to avoid or promises to claim in this story?
4. Are there any examples to follow or commands to obey in this story?

*** Who in this story reminds me of myself? Why?

3rd Third (20-30 minutes): Look Ahead Planning and Commissioning

- What do you need to do this week that you learned from this story?
 - When and where will you do this?
 - Start with what you yourself will do this week.
- Who needs to hear this story this week from you?
 - Start with who you yourself will share with this week.
- Remind the group of why it is important to obey using one of the following ideas or others:
 - The Bible is true and we can believe what it says.
 - Jesus changed my life, the person in this story's life, and He wants to change your life.
 - If we love Jesus, we obey what He says.
- Pray and simply ask the Holy Spirit to help you all as you go and obey.
- Thank the group for letting you spend time with them.