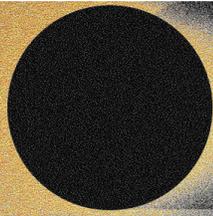


Jesus In His Own Words Story Sets



JESUS

IN HIS + OWN WORDS

WHY WE STORY

For thousands of years, God's people have used story-telling as a method to tell the Word of God. The benefit of telling the story is that people understand the big picture and can pass it on in a clear way.

During group time you or someone in your group will tell the story aloud and then the group will have the opportunity to rebuild the story using their Bibles. The majority of us actually learn better by retelling the story. As the story is told and retold, you will be amazed to see the number of people in our groups that will be able to better understand and apply the heart of the story.

You will be challenged to re-tell the story to someone outside of the group. This takes practice. Pray for the opportunity and the courage to share the story. Start by sharing the story with your family members or a close friend. As your confidence builds, begin looking for the opportunity to share the story with a co-worker or someone else you come in contact with. Re-telling the story may feel a bit awkward at first. Our Gateway groups are a place for us to learn, explore, experiment and grow. The more you practice, the easier it becomes to tell the story. One measure of success is when people can pass God's Word on to others.

HOW TO USE THIS STORY GUIDE

At the top of the first page for each week you will see the story number, story title, and scripture reference. For each story, we put the verses in context with "set the scene" and we provide you with "head, heart and hand" questions to encourage growth in a relational environment.

DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS

SHARE – CONNECT – MINISTER – DISCIPLE

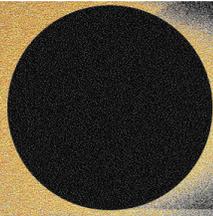
S: We SHARE with the spiritually DEAD AND INFANTS, making disciples of all nations.

1 Peter 2:9

C: We CONNECT spiritual CHILDREN into a discipleship group. *2 Timothy 2:2*

M: We train spiritually YOUNG ADULTS to MINISTER in the church and in the world. *Ephesians 4:11-12*

D: We release spiritual PARENTS who have been developed to DISCIPLE others. *Matthew 28:19*



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SMALL GROUP COMPONENTS

WELCOME

This makes new believers, visitors and members feel valued and welcomed. This begins with your phone calls and continues as they enter your home and all throughout the evening. A warm welcome establishes a foundation for relationships

OPENING PRAYER

Invite God's Holy Spirit into your presence. This prepares your hearts for what God has for you and shifts your attention from individual fellowship to the group.

PURPOSE

Express your purpose behind meeting as a small group (making disciples, reaching the lost). This helps prepare your hearts and minds for the discussion.

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

Small group guidelines establish boundaries for a healthy group and create a safe environment where everyone can share honestly.

STORY

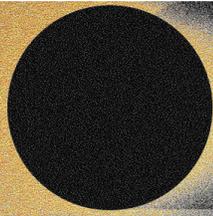
This is where you will look at God's word together.

TAKEAWAY/RECAP

How can we apply what we learned? Paraphrase your groups discussion. You may even choose to challenge your group in light of what you have learned.

CLOSING PRAYER

Refocus your attention on God and His provision. This is the time for personal prayer requests, group needs, and to praise God.



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SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

SAFE GROUP

This is a safe group. We will all do our part to create an environment where everyone can be real, open and honest with their struggles and victories.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is key. What is said in the group stays in the group.

LISTEN

Be sure to listen well. Let's value one another during our discussions by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you're going to respond or what you're going to say next.

PAUSE

Allow a pause in conversation after someone shares to give the personal sharing the chance to finish and the group the opportunity to consider what was just shared before responding.

SILENCE

Allow silence in the group. It is important to allow silence in the group as it provides an opportunity for someone to share and for members in the group to process the topic or question being considered.

NO FIXING

We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Give encouragement, speak truth, and point to Jesus. Don't try to solve or fix each other.

NO RESCUING

When people are sharing something deeply personal there can be a tendency to try and make them feel better about themselves or the situation by providing immediate condolences. This will often cause them to stop sharing. Resist the temptation to rescue people.

BE SELF-AWARE

Be self-aware of how you are personally affecting the environment through your words, actions and nonverbal communication.

"I" STATEMENTS

Use "I" statements. It's easy to talk about the issues of others, but we want to share with each other. Try to use "I" statements rather than "them", "they", "we", "you".



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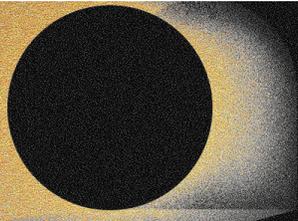
NO CROSSTALK

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, including cell phones.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

We will commit to resolve conflict biblically. When conflict or sin issues between group members arise, we want to make sure that we are honoring God and each other in the way we deal with these issues. The following are a few key Scripture references regarding conflict resolution (there are many others).

- **Someone has sinned against you.** *Matthew 18:15-20*
- **Restoring someone who is in sin.** *Galatians 6:1-5*
- **Forgiving a sinner.** *Colossians 3:12-13*
- **Reconciling differences.** *Matthew 5:23-24; 7:1-5t*



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01

Faith and Doubt

Mark 9:14-27

GROUP TIME

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast the purpose of your group
- Review group guidelines
- Give any announcements

TELL THE STORY FROM GOD'S WORD

Bible passages covered: Mark 9:14-27

SET THE SCENE: Jesus had recently brought Peter, James and John up on a mountain. While there, Jesus gave them a glimpse of his godliness – so much so that His clothes became dazzling! After hearing the Father speak, they headed back down the mountain and encountered a conflict that was taking place. Here is the story from God's Word.

TELL THE STORY: Tell the story as best as you can. Don't stop and teach, try not to make points – just tell the story.

REBUILD THE STORY: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

ASK: Was anything added or left out of the story that would change the meaning of it?

DISCUSS

HEAD

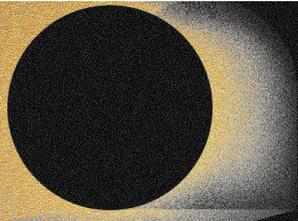
1. What did you notice for the first time in this story?
2. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?

HEART

1. Who do you identify with most in the story?
2. What do you think of the father's comment about his faith (and/or lack of it)? (for more clarity read [I Believe: Help My Unbelief](https://www.gotquestions.org/I-believe-help-my-unbelief.html) (<https://www.gotquestions.org/I-believe-help-my-unbelief.html>))
3. How did Jesus respond to the father's comment about faith? Do you see any significance in this and if so, what?
4. When have you responded the way that the father did? What was the outcome?
5. What issues or topics cause you to move toward doubt? (ex. the future, faith-issues, self-image, etc.)

HANDS

1. What area of your life will you ask Jesus to give you more faith?
2. What action step will you take in light of this story?



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02

Bread of Life

John 6:25-42

GROUP TIME

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast the purpose of your group
- Review group guidelines
- Give any announcements

TELL THE STORY FROM GOD'S WORD

Bible passages covered: John 6:25-42

SET THE SCENE: Jesus had recently fed more than 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish. He withdrew from the crowd and crossed the lake on foot. Eventually, the people caught up with Him. Here is the story from God's Word.

TELL THE STORY: Tell the story as best as you can. Don't stop and teach, try not to make points – just tell the story.

REBUILD THE STORY: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

ASK: Was anything added or left out of the story that would change the meaning of it?

DISCUSS

HEAD

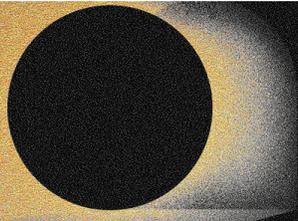
1. **Read: Ex 16:1-21.** How is Jesus a spiritual equivalent to manna?
2. What made those who grumbled especially cynical about Jesus' claim to be "the bread that came down from heaven"?
3. What does Jesus say, "the work of God is"? What is the irony of calling that "work"?

HEART

1. How would you describe your own spiritual hunger right now?
 - a. Starving
 - b. Ready for a "meal."
 - c. Well-satisfied
 - d. Other _____
2. Has your familiarity with Jesus (from Sunday School stories, different teachings) ever kept you from seeing who He really is? If so, share.
3. Jesus describes aspects of His Father's will in verses 39-40. How does this impact you and how you see other people?

HANDS

1. What is God speaking to you about doing in light of this story?
2. How can this group help you with the hunger you described earlier in question 1 in the "heart" section?



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03

Light of the World

John 9:1-41

GROUP TIME

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast the purpose of your group
- Review group guidelines
- Give any announcements

TELL THE STORY FROM GOD'S WORD

Bible passages covered: John 9:1-41

SET THE SCENE: Jesus often utilized miracles to reveal an aspect of who He is. Let's look at an instance of this as He interacts with His disciples. Here is the story from God's Word.

TELL THE STORY: Tell the story as best as you can. Don't stop and teach, try not to make points – just tell the story.

REBUILD THE STORY: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

ASK: Was anything added or left out of the story that would change the meaning of it?

DISCUSS

HEAD

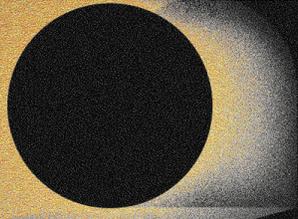
1. What was Jesus' response as to why the man was born blind? Why does this matter?
2. Why did some of the Pharisees take a stand against Jesus?
3. What was new for you in this story?

HEART

1. Which character(s) do you most relate to? Why?
2. What physical or emotional misfortune in your life has turned into an opportunity for God to demonstrate His power?
3. The blind man has a simple testimony, "I was blind but now I see." Do you have a simple statement testimony that you can share?
4. **Read Exodus 13:21.** What's the context for this story? How does this relate to what Jesus meant when He said, "I am the light of the world"?

HANDS

1. Who can you share your simple testimony with this week?
2. What is God challenging you to do in light of this story?



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04

Good Shepherd

John 10:11-16

GROUP TIME

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast the purpose of your group
- Review group guidelines
- Give any announcements

TELL THE STORY FROM GOD'S WORD

Bible passages covered: John 10:11-16

SET THE SCENE: Once again, Jesus started to make proclamations to the Jewish people about who He is. While His words were divisive, they were true. Let's listen to how Jesus describes Himself in comparison to the other leaders of His day. This is the story from God's Word.

TELL THE STORY: Tell each story as best as you can. Don't stop and teach, try not to make points – just tell the story.

REBUILD THE STORY: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

ASK: Was anything added or left out of the story that would change the meaning of it?

DISCUSS

HEAD

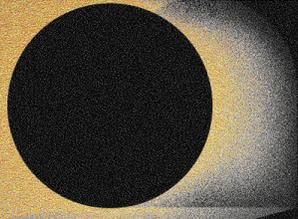
1. What are the various things that are listed or implied in this passage that the Good Shepherd does for His sheep?
2. **Read Psalm 23.** How is Jesus like the shepherd in this passage?
3. Who are the "other sheep" that Jesus is talking about in verse 16? Why does He feel it to be important that He bring them in?

HEART

1. What "wolf" is most threatening your life right now? How can the Good Shepherd help you find protection from this "wolf"?
2. What does "listening to Jesus'" voice mean?
3. Have you heard "Jesus' voice" before? If so, please share about an instance.
4. How do you need Jesus to "shepherd" you at this time in your life?

HANDS

1. What is Jesus calling you to do in light of this story?
2. Who can you tell this story to this week?



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05

Easter Resurrection & Life

John 20:1-31

GROUP TIME

- Opening prayer
- Vision cast the purpose of your group
- Review group guidelines
- Give any announcements

TELL THE STORY FROM GOD'S WORD

Bible passages covered: John 20:1-31

SET THE SCENE: It was over. Jesus had paid the ultimate sacrifice to redeem us – death on the cross. Two members of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish high court) – Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus buried Jesus in Joseph's new tomb. The women who had followed Jesus during all of His ministry saw where they buried Him and planned to bring spices the next morning after the Sabbath. Here is the story from God's Word.

TELL THE STORY: Tell the story as best as you can. Don't stop and teach, try not to make points – just tell the story.

REBUILD THE STORY: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

ASK: Was anything added or left out of the passage that would change the meaning of it?

DISCUSS

HEAD

1. Using the Scriptures, discuss how you would answer someone who asked what proof you had that Jesus was resurrected?
2. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
3. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?

HEART

1. How do you think you would have reacted if Jesus appeared to you after you saw Him dead?
2. Would you be afraid to tell people if you saw Him? Why?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?

HANDS

1. Will you retell this story to someone this week with the same enthusiasm as the disciples had telling others? Why or why not? What more do you need in order to be able to do so?
2. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?

