

# Yesterday. Today. Forever.

## Module: Sharing the Story

### Lesson 1: Tell me a Story

#### Objectives:

- Students will practice sharing stories in a community setting.
- Students will discuss and understand what makes a good story.
- Students will begin to develop a framework for their own life story: Yesterday, Today and Forever.

#### Materials Needed:

- Min. 2 papers per student
- Pens or markers for students
- Poster boards (for story boards)
- LCD projector, speakers and laptop to view storyboarding video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfBsmY2dP40>)
- Min. 1 per student of any of the following books (Bibles, kid bibles, kids story books, comic books, whatever stories your students love or will relate with.)

## Minds On

Let students choose one of the books provided (Bible, kid's bible, kid's books and comics). Give students five minutes to prepare to tell that story (min. 30 sec, max 1 min).

**(Leader's note:** If you have a large group, you can have small groups tell a story.)

Encourage the students not to simply read or summarize the story, but tell it using emotion, gestures, and descriptive words. **(Leader's note:** It may be helpful to have a leader or someone who is skilled in story-telling to demonstrate.)

Afterwards, gather the large group together. Invite each student/group to tell their story.

When everyone has presented, ask:

- What makes these stories significant or important?
- How do we know a story worth telling?
- What makes a good story?

## Action

**Prompt:** Do you ever feel like your life is boring, not exciting or meaningful sometimes, maybe most of the time? Hopefully, our time together today will help you see your life as an epic story, by looking at it in a new way!

Watch the Story Board video together. (Leader's note: You may also choose to teach that material yourself or invite someone familiar with storyboarding to teach a 5 min.

segment). Then give students each a piece of paper. Ask them to create their own life story boards with 6-8 frames. (It doesn't have to be every moment but 5-6 key events that they remember or shaped their life.) Remind students that a story board is simply a series of pics that share parts of the story and some notes that tell what is happening in each picture. Afterwards, they will share their storyboard in a small group to be assigned. If students are having trouble deciding how to create their storyboard, give them Appendix

1.

After approx. 15 min, divide students into groups of 3-4 and they can share their storyboards to one another.

After they have shared their storyboards, still in their small groups, have them read Proverbs 16:1-9 together. As a group, they will answer the following question: According to this passage, how does God see our story? Each group should be prepared to report their answer to the larger group. You can provide a brief summary tying together what they have shared.

**Leader's note:** Here are some of the elements you're looking for  
What do people do in their plans according to this passage?

- We have plans of the heart and our ways seem pure
- We can commit whatever we do to God
- Proud and wicked will pay their dues
- We can be loving and faithful and fear the Lord
- We plan our courses

You want youth to see that we have the potential to live an excellent life with God...

What does God do in our plans according to this passage?

- Weighs our motives
- Establishes our plans
- Works things to proper ends
- Destests pride
- Helps us avoid evil
- Causes enemies to make peace
- Establishes our steps

We can plan but God will make it last and endure.

## **Consolidate/Debrief**

Give each student two pieces of paper and a pen. Have students find their own space in the room. On the first paper, encourage students to write down reasons they would/should let God write their story with them. On the second paper, ask students to write down one thing they enjoyed about another person's story and write that person's name on it; it can remain anonymous. Afterwards, they can give that note to that person or hand it to you to give to the addressee.

**Leader's note:** With students' permission, you may also want to display the storyboards around your meeting space during the weeks of this module.

End by praying that God would meet the students in their story and help them add meaningful chapters to their story.

## Appendix 1

Guiding Questions to be used as students are thinking through their story board.

- What are some of the themes and key moments in your life?
- What is your story of origin (starting)
- When did you find your passions, skills, best friends, talents,
- Have they ever been in danger or felt challenged faced a great enemy or giant
- When have you felt most alive, at peace, afraid?

# Yesterday. Today. Forever.

## Module: Sharing the Story

### Lesson 2: Shared Story

#### Objectives:

- Students will see the intersection of God's story and their story.
- Students will identify 3 types of story sharing: communication, common experience and relationship.
- Students will encourage each other that it is good to tell stories to others and begin to understand that it is by story- telling that we learn about life.

#### Materials Needed:

- 1 copy of Appendix 1
- optional: 1 copy of Appendix 2
- 1 copy of Appendix 3 per student
- 1 pen per student

**Leader's Note:** If you are planning to use option 3 in lesson 3, bring digital camera and take random/fun pictures, print them out during the week and have them for the group to use in the next lesson.

## **Minds On**

Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have them create promotional material (e.g. a letter, a poster, a travel brochure, a video, a commercial, a skit, etc.) from God to an anonymous person inviting them to visit to heaven or to visit Jesus for a week. (**Leader's note:** Think Expedia commercial or Disneyland ad. You can use some ads on YouTube as samples). Students can be silly and fun but need to be respectful in their presentation. After 10 minutes of preparation, have each group present their promotion.

**Prompt:** God not only wants you to spend a week with Him, in this life or the next but he wants to share all eternity with you... Yesterday, Today and Forever. Jesus came and gave us an open invitation to share in His story. Some call this faith, some call it salvation, and some call it the good news or new life in Christ.

## **Action**

**Prompt:** You may have heard we are all connected; it is true we all share a common story. Over the next few minutes, we will explore 3 different ways in which we can connect in our stories.

Have students return to their original groups. Give each student a copy of Appendix 3. Each group chooses a popular film, book or famous story (it doesn't have to be long). Together, they need to identify how the characters communicated together, shared common experiences and had intentional commitment to live out the story together. Each student can write down their answers on the first part of Appendix 3. Each group will present their findings to the larger group. (**Leader's note:** Disney movies and fairy tales work well here. There is an example provided in Appendix 2. There are lots of others that work well.)

Have a student read Romans 5:1-8 (you can use Appendix 1). Have that student repeat the verse that has the phrase: “at just the right time”. Returning to their original groups, have students complete the second part of Appendix 3 together; each group should have a spokesperson to report their findings. Afterwards, gather students into the larger group and ask each group to report their answers.

**Ask:** How does what Jesus did change our story, if we accept his offer to share in his story with us? What if we ignore or reject his offer?

### **Consolidate/Debrief**

**Prompt:** Working with God enriches our lives. In Him we connect in all these ways, we communicate and we experience him and we commit our lives to Him. In fact Jesus said. He is the way, the truth, and the life! Those are his 3 types of sharing! Take a moment by yourself and think of your answer to this question: “How would those things make sharing your story that much more enjoyable and why do you think that is?” If Jesus did anything that impacts the way you think or act or live. He has become part of your story!

Ask students to choose a spot in the room by themselves. Give them some time to think about this question and encourage them to write down on the back of Appendix 3 as many details as possible: “In all the ways Jesus has become part of your story which way are you most grateful? Was it what he said, what he did in your life, what he’s shown you, what he did for you, what he does with you today? What he will do someday?” Encourage students to give examples, and then ask why they are grateful.

Afterwards, encourage your students to pray for what is on their hearts and to pray for each other. Giving thanks for the ways God has given us to share our story, our faith and life, with others.

## Appendix 1

### **Romans 5:1-8 New Living Translation (NLT)**

#### **Faith Brings Joy**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. <sup>2</sup> Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

<sup>3</sup> We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. <sup>4</sup> And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. <sup>5</sup> And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

<sup>6</sup> When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. <sup>7</sup> Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. <sup>8</sup> But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

**3 Types of Sharing**  
Leader's Sheet with Example

**3 Types of Sharing in Movies:** Ex. Finding Nemo

**Communication:** Messages of "You can't do that" Marlin to Nemo, trying to protect, Dory forgetting and remembering.

**Experiences:** Over protection turns to great loss, drive to find Nemo. Nemo's attempts to escape the fish tank. Both stories of overcoming great obstacles

**Commitments:** Marlin and Nemo both make new friends in the end. Marlin's unending love for Nemo, giving everything up to Find Nemo.

**3 Types of Sharing used by Jesus:**

Communication: Bible, Gospels, Famous verses, Jesus spoke the truth to His disciples and others, Jesus shared comforting and challenging words. Jesus is the truth...

Experiences: Jesus walked with the disciples, they lived together did everything together! Jesus is with us in everything. When we wake and when we lie down, when we are at school and at play. Also Jesus calls us into prayer, missions, worship, service, fellowship, bible study etc. Jesus is the way...

Commitment: Spirit moves hearts, causes changes in heart, warmth in Spirit, Jesus offers us new life, Jesus offers us friendship, lordship, teacher, master. Jesus gave his all to us and we in turn should give our all to Him! Jesus is the life!

**We share our stories in 3 different ways:**

- Communication: what we say and gesture and messages we send
- Experiences: what we do and see with each other what we go through together
- Commitment: Understanding, love, trust, testing, relationships and growth.

### **3 Types of Sharing**

#### **3 Types of Sharing in Movies**

Describe each of the following types of sharing by using examples from a movie.

- Communication:
- Experiences:
- Commitments:

#### **3 Types of Sharing used by Jesus:**

Describe each of the following types of sharing by using example from Jesus' life.

- Communication:
- Experiences:
- Commitments:

In what ways did Jesus come at just the right time? In what ways did Jesus come for us?

#### **We share our stories in 3 different ways:**

Describe each of the following types of sharing, and give an example from real life:

- Communication:
- Experiences:
- Commitments:

# Yesterday. Today. Forever.

## Module: Sharing the Story

### Lesson 3: Everyone's Story

#### Objectives:

- Students will learn that God's big story is the renewal of all things in heaven and on earth.
- Students will learn that God wants them to play a vital role bringing new life where they live.
- Students will encourage each other that they all have what it takes to share God's story and invite others to be a part of it.

#### Materials Needed:

- 1 Bible per student
- 1 pen per student
- 3 copies of Appendix 1 already cut into strips and placed inside envelopes
- 3 foam boards (or poster boards or Bristol boards)
- Rolls of tape or glue
- Variety of coloured pencils or crayons
- Min. 5 sheets of paper per student
- A large sample of pictures. Here are some options you may choose to use:
  - Have a series of books or magazines where pictures can be cut out of.
  - Have a laptop with internet access and an LCD projector to download and create a slideshow. (**Leader's note:** Check with your child protection policy about appropriate use of the internet.)

- Provide digital cameras for groups to take pictures with and a laptop to download the pictures to create a slideshow.

## Minds On

Have students break into 3 teams. (Leader's note: If you have a large group of students, you may have to divide the group in half to form 2 smaller groups, then each group divides into 3 teams. For example, a group of 30 becomes 2 groups of 15, and then the 15 students are then divided into 3 teams of 5. Follow the instructions below with each half (15 students) operating as a separate group.)

1. Each team takes/picks out 10 loosely related pictures (see Materials Needed on the method you're allowing students to use).
2. Each team puts the 10 pictures in order of their choosing.
3. Once the pictures are arranged, have the teams rotate to another team's pictures. Using the order provided, each team prepares and tells a short story (i.e. less than 1 minute) based on the 10 pictures to the larger group.

Note: Large groups can share within their group of 3 groups.

**Afterwards ask:** So whose story is this? Is it the people in the pictures, the people who put each picture in its time and place or the ones that interpret the pictures and share the story with us? (Allow students to give their opinions.)

**Prompt:** Did you feel that it was your story more when you were in it and picking the pictures, when you were ordering it or when you were telling it? Do you wonder where God is in our story sometimes? Have you ever thought that maybe we haven't included Him in our story or we that haven't bothered to be part of His story? Maybe we need to let Him rearrange the pictures in our lives and listen to the story that he wants to tell!

## Action

Have students return to their groups, giving each group an envelope with Appendix 1 already cut into strips. Each group will arrange a storyline based the passages provided. (Students do not need to read all the details of the passage but need to know the main idea

of it.) Then they will create a storyboard (i.e. 10 frames) telling their arrangement of God's story. Each group will present their storyboard to the larger group.

**Prompt:** God's story in the Bible isn't just isolated in history. It's still unfolding before us. And as it unfolds, we get to see how we're included in that. We also get to see how others around us are also included in it.

### **Consolidate/Debrief**

**Ask:** How do we now share our story as part of God's story?

(Be a witness and disciple: We Communicate, Experience and Commit to Jesus. We share the story with the community. Share the way, truth and life of Jesus in your story.)

End in a special prayer time by encourage your students to pray 1 on 1 with you, your leaders, and/or each other about where they are at with God. Challenge them to think about whether their story is being written in his story and if his story is rewriting theirs. (Adapt this activity to suit the needs of your students.)

## Appendix 1

Genesis 1:1

Genesis 3

Genesis 12

Genesis 22:8-18

Exodus 3:5-10

1 Chronicles 17:16-27

Isaiah 6.

John 1:1-5, Romans 5

Matt 28:16-20 Acts 1:8, Acts 2:42-47

Revelation 21:1-7

## Appendix 2

1. Creation: Genesis 1:1. God makes everything
2. Sin and Death: Genesis 3. Our sin tears us from God
3. A Call from God: Genesis 12. God reaches out to Abram calling him and his family to new life
4. The first Sacrificial Lamb 22:8-18. Abram now Abraham is challenged and has faith in God, God provides for Mankind
5. Moses and the Exodus: Exodus 3:5-10. After 400 years of trying it on their own God's people cry out and God comes through big time!
6. Nation and Kingdom: 1 Chronicles 17:16-27. Though imperfect God grants his people a nation and a kingdom and then promises them a kingdom that will never end.
7. Prophets: Isaiah 6. During this time God's people are called to speak the truth of bad relationship with God and the coming of God's big plan to reconcile us to Him
8. The Word made Flesh: Jesus the true sacrificial lamb. John 1:1-5, Romans 5. Jesus is born, lives, is crucified and rises again. He show he is the truth the way and the life to God, relationship is restored if we believe.
9. Church: Matt 28:16-20 Acts 1:8, Acts 2:42-47. Those who believe gather and show witness to God's presence and love in this world and they in meeting together live new life in Christ and get a glimpse of what is to come.
10. New Heaven and New Earth: Revelation 21:1-7. God will make all things new and defeat death and sin and bring all who believe to a new Heaven and a New Earth.

# Yesterday. Today. Forever.

## Module: Sharing the Story

### Lesson 4: In His Story

#### Objectives

- Students will think about how they identify personally with characters in a story as an insight to how God identifies with them.
- Students will consider that God can personally identify with them as characters in His story.
- Students will encourage each other that they have a meaningful place in God's story.

#### Materials Needed:

- optional: Paper, Markers and Pens (Students can story board, take notes, draw, whatever helps students share what they are experiencing.)
- Movie Clip (e.g. Lord of the Rings-Fellowship of the Ring. Scene: fellowship forms at Rivendell) **Leader's note:** Any clip with strong characters will do, watch as little as 2 minutes or have a special movie night and make this a 2 part lesson. Make sure characters share life in the clip (3 types of sharing from last lesson) Another option is to read or watch simple stories depicting life and emotion. (Fairy Tales or YouTube clips)
- 1 Bible per student

## Minds On

**Prompt:** We have gone on quite a journey here: From learning, to living, to loving, to sharing the story. What story??...my story, a little ...your story, partly ...but mostly it is has been His story and how we can be a part of it! Tonight we are going to have some fun and really dive into thinking about how can we make our lives all about His story?

Show a clip or whole movie. Before you start, ask students to choose a character to “be”: to think and feel like, to struggle with, to engage with personally. Make sure that they choose a main character: hero or villain, sidekick, damsel in distress etc. Run through the characters in the scene/movie ahead of time and make sure that each person has clearly chosen a character. It is fine if multiple students choose the same character, but if your group is smaller, and there are enough character for each to have one, that would be good as well.

As you watch the clip, encourage your students to write notes of the things that they felt, saw, heard and experienced as the character.

After the clip **Ask:** How did it feel being a character, rather than watching as a spectator?  
Did you feel that it was your story more when you identified with one character?

## Action

**Prompt:** We see in the Bible many stories. Some short and sweet, and some that cover generations, and there are even a few stories that carry all the way through the Bible. Those stories are called Meta-Narratives. That is a fancy work for big or over-arching story.

It is key to remember: Even in the smallest of actions, something bigger is always going on. God's creation is one of those Meta-narratives, as is God's redemptive love. Can you see yourself now as a part of something bigger? Something that has been going on for years and decades and centuries and even millennia on earth? Do you believe you are even part of something that is eternal? Take a look at these stories to see how a few biblical characters became a big part of everything God was doing.

Divide students into 2 even groups. Each group will read Genesis 22. One group will take on the role of Abraham, the other as Isaac. Each person is to understand their character's perspective (including emotions, attitudes, thoughts in their mind). Afterwards, have each person number off starting at 1 to however many people are in the group. Have each person partner with their corresponding number (i.e. 1s together, 2s, etc.). They can either act out the story together or talk through the perspectives their character has on the situation. Then have them answer the following questions:

- What happened when God joined the story?
- How did you feel at each part of the story? (e.g. when you were leaving home, on the journey to the mountain, while the alter was being built, etc.)

Gather everyone into the larger group and have 3-4 pairs give their answers.

**Ask:** How did Abraham and Isaac's story become part of God's story here, how did they experience God, build relationship with Him and communicate to Him?

Have a student read Exodus 2:23-25.

**Prompt:** This passage begins by saying that time had passed...in fact 400 years passed, how do you think the people of Israel felt in this story?

(Forgotten, hopeless, alone, unloved)

**Ask:**

- What happened when they cried out to God?
- Do you know what happens next?
- Have you ever cried out to God like this?

- Do you believe God can hear your cries? Your prayers?

**Prompt:** From these examples, we can see that God can interact with our stories in very real ways...both big and small, and in fact, when we get closer to His Story, we can start to see Him at work all around us. And not only that, but he invites us to share what God is doing in our story, and how we are sharing in his!

### **Consolidate/Debrief**

**Ask:** Are there any stories or verses in the Bible, or even phrases that you know of that help you see the reality that God is close and cares?

(As an option, create group art or personal poster boards based on responses.)

**Ask:** Does seeing God act in these stories give you hope that he will act in yours or confidence He is currently at work? What do you think is the key to seeing God act in your story?

(Making your story a part of his!)

**Leader's note:** This would be a good time to share personal examples of God's story meeting yours and how you have been able to see him at work in your life. You could also invite someone from your church to share part of their story with the group.

End in prayer. As you pray, ask them the following questions and have them reflect silently:

- Is their story in His story?
- Are they willing and ready to share some of the stories that God is writing with them?
- Are they are willing to start that relationship (Lord and Savior), practice communication with God (prayer) and have shared experience (New Life in Christ)?

Suggest afterwards if any of them said yes to any of those questions, they should connect with you or another leader to see how that can be done practically.

# Sharing the Story

If someone saved your life, maybe by rescuing you from a fire or cured your disease, or if someone jumped in front of you to take a bullet or dove to tackle you away from an oncoming bus that wasn't stopping, wouldn't you want to share that story with others? Wouldn't you want others to know that person as well?

What if super heroes were real, like Batman: With all the saving the day he does, wouldn't you want to meet him? If you did know him, and he wanted you to tell others about him, you probably would.

With this in mind, why is it so hard to share stories of and invite others to meet Jesus? Is it the beard? Or is it the whole Spirit thing, like talking to a ghost... Is it because you haven't really decided if you believe yourself or is it that you don't want others to associate you with Him or with others who claim to follow Jesus?

-Or-

Could it be partly that something as simple as sharing stories can be hard? Maybe you believe and are pretty solid in your faith, but getting the words out is hard...

This module is designed to help students work through those very questions!

Lesson one, **Tell Me a Story**, is all about understanding and seeing all of creation as a whole bunch of stories. This lesson also helps you see your life as a complete story that can be understood by breaking it down and focusing on certain aspects of what you have and are experiencing.

Lesson two, **Shared Story**, is about how our own complete story intersects with the stories of others and also that our story connects with God's ultimate story. Practically,

we look at how it is good to be connected in communication, in shared experience, and in committed relationship with others and God

In lesson three, **Everyone's Story**, we explore the reality that ultimately, we all end up in His story because of what God has planned. We reflect on what it means to live our lives in light of the kingdom and eternity, as yesterday and today always lead to forever.

Lesson Four, the final lesson of our series is called, **In His story**. This lesson is a personal and community call to find yourself in His story. We will explore the intersection of our story from God's perspective and challenge the students to take their story and let God rewrite the rest of it with them.