

First Love Life... *Loving Jesus first*

Your Love Story with Jesus

Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (Psalm 73:25-26)

Do you love Jesus? When we are in love we want to tell the world! This week our lesson will be different. You are going to write down your love story with Jesus so you can tell your small group. Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance as you write (James 1:5-6). But first we'll look at the apostle Paul's story to inspire us and give us an example of how to tell our story.

Day One

1. Read Acts 26. Who was Paul before he met Jesus (vv. 4-11)? _____

2. What was his life goal or purpose/mission before he met Christ? _____

3. How did Paul meet Jesus (vv. 12-16)? Describe Paul's conversion and experience. _____

4. What did God do for Paul as he lived for Him (vv. 17-22)? _____

5. What was his life goal or purpose/mission after he met Christ? _____

6. What was Agrippa's opinion of Paul? What did he tell Festus? (see Acts 26:30-32)? _____

Life Points...

- What can we learn from how Paul told his story? _____

For those of you who want to dig deeper, Paul tells his story several other times in Acts and his epistles. See what else can you learn from these additional passages.

Paul was a great communicator, telling his story with gentleness, courage and humility. He identifies with his audience, and that is a beautiful example to us as well. Paul's focus in his message is on the intervention of God. Our message should not be as much about ourselves, our journey, or our discoveries, as the God who knew us well enough to find us and speak to us. Paul hated Christians, and the Lord cared enough about him to speak to him. He is offering these folks the same opportunity. This message centers on the intervention of Christ, and that should be the center of our message, as well.

Nine

Day Three

“O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.... Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.” (Psalm 63:1-3, 7-8)

Now that you have a basic framework from your timeline, use these questions to help you discover you how God has been working. They will help you write your story on Day Five. Some people have exciting stories like Paul’s, but that is not everyone’s experience. For many, this is a slow process. Some have a clear “before Christ, met Christ, after acceptance” story. Others grew up in the church. Each person’s story is unique, so these years may or may not include God. If you aren’t at a place of full acceptance of Jesus’ offer of a personal relationship with Him, just be honest where you are.

1. What was the emotional and spiritual climate of your family? _____

2. What were the key problems, emotions, situations or attitudes you were dealing with? _____

3. What did your life revolve around? What was most important to you? _____

4. Where did you look for security, peace of mind and happiness? _____

5. When did you first hear the gospel? _____

6. When were you first exposed to dynamic Christianity? _____

7. What do you believe about God:
a. Do you believe that God exists? _____
b. Do you believe God loves you and created you to have a personal relationship with Him? _____
c. Do you believe our sin keeps us from having a personal relationship with God? _____
d. Do you believe that it's only through Jesus Christ can you have a personal relationship with God?
e. Do you know your trust in Jesus Christ begins a lifelong relationship with Him that is a relationship, something different than religion and/or religious beliefs? _____

8. Do you find comfort or uncertainty in the statements above (a.-e.)? _____

9. How and why did you choose to know Jesus or why are you hesitating to choose Him? _____

Day Four

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. (Psalm 100:1-5)

These questions will help you think about where you are today with God and how far your understanding of Him and His ways have come. He has been interacting with you all your life, but we don't always notice, do we? Pray that God will reveal His work in your life through today's questions.

1. What difference has Christ made in your life? _____

2. How has his forgiveness impacted you? _____

3. How have your thoughts, attitudes and emotions changed? _____

4. How is Christ meeting your needs and what does your relationship with him mean to you now? _____

5. Do you struggle with your faith? _____

6. How did God answer prayer, or strengthen you in difficult situations? _____

7. What's your purpose? _____

8. What has God done in your life (What has he taught you)? _____

9. What scripture verses relate to your experience? _____

