

How to use a Bible story in a conversation

How to describe a Bible story when introducing it into a conversation

- Do not ask to tell merely “a story.” In some cultures, particularly in Europe and the United States, people may feel deceived if you do not explicitly identify the story as related to Christianity. Instead, offer to tell “a story from the Bible,” “a story from the life of Jesus,” “a story from the Old Testament,” etc. This helps reduce barriers.

When introducing a story that is not related to the conversation, try sentences like:

- “I just learned a Bible story, and I’d like to tell it to you and hear what you think about what the story says.”
- “I’m learning how stories influence people, and I’d like to tell you a Bible story and hear what you think about it.”

When introducing a story related to the conversation, try sentences like:

- “I just learned/heard/read a story from the life of Jesus about <the topic of the conversation>. Would you like to hear it?”
- “That reminds me of a story from the life of Jesus about <the topic of the conversation>. Would you like to hear it?”

After telling the story

1. Ask one or more of these general questions (you’ll notice most questions are the story fellowship group discussion questions):

- Have you heard this story before?
- What did you like in the story?
- What did you not like in the story? / What did you find difficult or confusing in the story?
- What does the story show about people?
- What does the story show about God/Jesus?
- What does the story show you about yourself? / After hearing this story, what do you think needs to change in your life?

NOTE: Don’t ask Christian and/or American listeners what they “learned” because they think they have to learn something new. Simply focus on what the story shows us.

2. Ask a follow-up question related specifically to the Bible story. Think of them in advance. Here are some examples:

- Authority: Lowered Through the Roof:
 - o What kind of needs would you want Jesus to address in your life?
 - o How would you want Jesus to heal you?
- Living Water: The Woman at the Well:
 - o Where are you looking for living water in your life?
- Astonishment: Jesus Calms the Storm
 - o What storms are you facing in your life?
 - o What storms in your life would you like Jesus to calm?
- Life: Jairus' Daughter and the Bleeding Woman:
 - o In what areas of life do you need healing?

When bridging between a Bible story and your own story, think about these things:

- A variety of Bible stories relate to your story of your spiritual journey. What are those stories?
- Decide how to bridge from each Bible story to your own story or from your own story to each Bible story.
- During your conversation, use the Bible story that best fits the conversation and your listener(s).