STORYRUNNERS®
A Cru Ministry

# LEARNING METHODS

## Purpose:

To help participants to internalize an oral Bible story well enough so they can both process it devotionally and share it with others.

## Objectives:

1. To use oral and visual learning methods to aid internalization of the story
2. To use oral and visual learning methods to test participant internalization of the story

## Group retelling methods:

After you (the storyteller) tell the story twice, you will then test how well the group has internalized the story so far. You do this by asking them to recall the story as best they can, using one of the following learning methods. (Feel free to use another method as long as it involves the entire group in the retelling. The goal is full group participation.)

**Popcorn:** Invite the group to recall the story together by retelling it as accurately as they can. Let them know that anyone can chime in as they recall what comes next. Start by asking who in the group remembers how the story starts. After they've retold the first part of the story (a couple of phrases), another person volunteers to tell the next part and so on. This continues, with a new person picking up where the last person left off, until the story is complete. If someone skips part of the story or gets something out of order, the storyteller can help them by asking

prompting questions that will help jog their memory. If they still can't recall, the storyteller can ask who else remembers what comes next and allow someone else to pick up the thread and continue.

**Ball/object toss:** Start by giving one person a ball/object and asking them to start the story. Have them toss the ball/object to someone else when they're done or if they get stuck recalling what comes next. Continue to toss the ball so that everyone has a turn and the entire story has been told.

**Pass the glass:** Take a glass of water and tell the participants that it represents the Word of God. "We never want to add to or take away anything from it as it compromises the integrity of the Bible. So, we handle it with great care."

Let them know that you're going to pass the glass around the group. The first person to get the glass must recall the first couple of phrases of the story, then pass it to the next person, who picks up where the last person left off. Do this until the glass is passed to everyone and the retelling of the story is complete. If someone gets stuck, they can hand the glass to the next person.

> **NOTE:** Don't allow one person to dominate the retelling of the story. Feel free to stop someone after a couple of phrases so that everyone has a chance to retell part of the story. You can say, "That's great! Now let's see if someone else knows what comes next in our story."

## Learning methods:

After you've completed the group retelling, you will now employ another learning method to continue reinforcing the participants' internalization of the story. These learning methods are more involved than those for the group retelling and will involve even greater participation. Below are several you can choose from:

1. **Drama:** Invite the group to act out the story together. The participants will assume the roles of the characters in the story (as well as places, objects, animals, etc.). Once you've decided who's playing what role, you will tell them that you are going to tell the story again and they need to act out their part as you tell it.

   Next, have *them* tell the story as they act it out. You can help them if they get stuck. They can retell it as a group or have each person tell the part of the

story they are acting out. As long as the entire story gets retold, it doesn't matter how they choose to do it.

> **NOTE:** If you have a very large group, you might consider dividing them up and having each group present separately for fun.
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> **NOTE:** This is not meant to be an interpretation of the story where they rewrite it or come up with new dialogue. They must be able to retell the story, as close to what the storyteller said as possible.

2. **Hand Motions:** Use hand gestures (not sign language) to reinforce each part of the story. As a rule, use about one to two hand motions per thought or phrase to prompt the memory. Use the same hand motions each time you tell the story so that it's easier for participants to remember the part of the story associated with that hand motion.

   For example, "Jesus said, 'I have the authority <fist of one hand planted on the palm of the other to represent authority> to forgive sins, and I will show you'."

   Tell the story the first time as you do the hand motions. Next, tell them that you're going to only show the hand motions and they must tell the story as you prompt them with the hand motions for that part of the story.

3. **Things in my pocket/things in the room/props/objects**: Use everyday items to represent characters and places/objects in the story. As the storyteller, you tell the story through once using pre-selected objects you've chosen to act out the story. Be sure to do this in a place where everyone can see.

   Next, tell the group that they need to work together to use the objects to retell the story themselves. They can decide how they want to do it, but it's up to them to use the objects to both tell and act out the story.

4. **Storyboarding:** Storyboarding is when you use only pictures to illustrate a storyline. Have each participant take a sheet of paper and draw lines dividing it into a grid like a tic-tac-toe board (They should have 6 to 8 boxes, depending on how many lines they decide to draw).

   Tell them that you're going to tell the story, and they need to draw out the major scenes in each of the squares as they listen. They can't use words or

numbers, only pictures.

They may need you to tell the story again since it will take some time to draw out each scene.

Once they've illustrated the entire story, tell them to practice telling the story to themselves using the storyboard and then tell your story without it. Have a couple of people volunteer to tell the story to the group using their own storyboard. Or, for fun, you could have them trade with someone else and see if they can tell the story correctly using the other person's storyboard.

5. **Right/wrong:** After you've told the story twice, you will let the group know that you are going to tell it again, but this time you're going to tell it incorrectly. This will take planning on your part, and you will need to use the story transcript to add in the errors and then practice the story ahead of time so that you remember them.

   Make sure to tell the participants that they must interrupt and correct you as they hear the errors in the story.

   > **NOTE:** The errors need to be very obvious so they don't miss them. You just want to test their internalization of the story and not try to deliberately stump them.

6. **Flashcards:** Use prepared flashcards with pictures that represent the major scenes from the story to test their internalization. You can create pictures ahead of time (clip art pictures work well) or you can use these. As you tell the story, hold up the picture that represents that scene or part so they can see it. Next, scramble the pictures and have the group put the pictures in order as *they* retell the story. Once in order, have them retell it again.