Themes of Theology that Impacts Missions   Center for Global Ministries

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Chronological Bible Storying/Teaching

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We had to start early in the morning, about 3:30 AM, to load the canoe and get to the rapids by dawn. The Caquetá River stretches across the middle of the state of Amazonas in Colombia, SA. At a couple of places the river narrows and tumbles over rapids making travel impossible. After two hours of portaging fuel barrels, equipment, trading goods and outboard motors, we pulled the 35 ft. canoe up the churning white-water rapids to a calm spot on the bank where all our goods had been carried. By dawn we were loaded up and began the 30-hour trip to the main Miraña village for my first contact with this bi-lingual tribe.

Since I was one of the first missionaries to ever travel in the state of Amazonas, Colombia, I decided to dedicate the first term to reaching as many as possible in Spanish with an itinerating evangelistic Cessna 185 floatplane ministry to as many Colombian villages as possible on the Putumayo River. I began to discover that most of the villages along the Caquetá River were bilingual tribal people groups (Miraña tribe). The further north I explored along the Miriti River (Yucuna, Tanimuca and Lutuama tribes) and the Apaporis River the less bilingual the tribes were.

On my first 30-hour canoe trip to the Mirañas in the early 70's I pondered, how to begin the gospel story. I had not been trained in tribal work. I knew this tribe had little or no Christian exposure except a semi-annual visit by a Roman Catholic Jesuit priest, who merely forced everyone to the river's edge and sprinkled water on them saying something in Latin, and then he would traveled on up river to another settlement. I always wondered who he was trying to impress.

Should I begin with the birth of Jesus? Did they need to know about their sinfulness and their need of the "good news" of forgiveness? As I pondered the alternatives, only 30 minutes before arriving at the first village, it just made more sense to start at creation and walk through the Bible. I would not have to cover everything, since I would be coming back periodically.

Over the next few months I would return with the Cessna, landing on the sandbar in front of the villages, awaiting work on two short airstrips by their villages. As I soon discovered, this tribe had an ancient tradition that a Supernatural Being created the world only to abandon it to the spirit world. They had a hope that someone would come to tell them of who He was. When I started talking of the Creator they hung on every word. Over the next few years many of the Mirañas would come to know Christ as they heard more and more of the Bible stories of who God is, what He is like, how men have trusted him against all odds, how no opposing force can stand against Him, how those who serve false gods end up corrupted and defeated, and how awful is the penalty for sin, etc.

Our first furlough we spent learning linguistics to begin the long task with one of the more monolingual tribes. They had interacted with some of the other 40 plus tribal people groups within a 30-minute flight from our base in La Pedrera. But this is another story.

The question of how to communicate the gospel to an unreached people groups is of vital importance if understanding biblical truth is the essential basis of faith.[1] This implies that it is our responsibility to acquire a number of skills: language learning skill, linguistic techniques to eventually break down the language into writing, and the skill of teaching the Bible in a way that makes sense to both the oral and, eventually, the literate people in any group. This is not a game. It is not because we love the problem solving task of cross cultural language learning and communications; rather, it is the only way to fulfill the task of world evangelism. It is our responsibility to communicate the gospel to them, not their responsibility to learn how we understood the gospel. This chapter will discuss the developing trend of communicating the gospel through the skill of Chronological Bible Storying and Teaching (hence CBS and CBT).

Introduction

What is the hope of reaching the nearly four billion persons who are oral learners? What is the hope for getting God's word to the speakers of the four thousand languages still without His word? These people cannot, do not and will not take in new information or communicate among themselves by literate means. It is estimated that 90% of the world's Christian workers use highly literate communication styles such as the printed page, expositional, analytical, and logical presentations of God's Word. It must be remembered that it is the messenger's responsibility to communicate the message in terms that are understood, not just heard.

The main solution today is Chronological Bible **Teaching** (CBT), which involves telling the gospel story as it has been revealed in Scripture from the beginning, intermixed with teaching about what the story means. This method of evangelism was popularized by Trevor McIlwain and used extensively by New Tribes Mission since the mid-1970s.

> "The work of Trevor McIlwain in the 1970s is the beginning of what became CBS. McIlwain worked with New Tribes Missions (NTM) in the Philippines. He tried a number of approaches with a tribal group that had previously professed faith in Christ but has revealed to many old ways and beliefs. Eventually McIlwain chose to teach chronologically through the Bible starting with Genesis. Each session started with a focus on the biblical story, then shifted to expository teaching. This chronological Bible exposition produced a much stronger understanding of God's nature and the Christian faith within the people and transformed their lives. McIlwain named this approach Chronological Bible Teaching (Lovejoy, 2000, p. 3).

McIlwain influenced John R. Cross to write "The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus," which followed the approach Jesus used with the disciples: "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them the things written about himself in all the scriptures" (Luke 24:27).   This approach is typically connected with a Bible translation and literacy program that parallels the teachings.

> Jim Slack, IMB missionary in the Philippines, invited McIlwain to teach his approach to two large groups of Baptist missionaries and national leaders. "But

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[1] "When anyone hears the word about the kingdom and **does not understand it**, the evil one comes and snatches what was sown in his heart; this is the seed sown along the path" ([NET] Matt 13:19).

after hearing McIlwain's presentation, Slack and others in both the IMB [formerly known as FMB] and NTM concluded that McIlwain's approach was too literate. It was not reproducible among most Filipino church leaders. So New Tribes missionaries ... began experimenting with and adapting McIlwain's approach. So did Slack and several SBC missionaries. The five NTM missionaries retained the chronological and biblical emphases, but reduced the amount of expository teaching somewhat and emphasized storytelling. ... This group of approaches is sometimes called Chronological Bible Storytelling because it is more narrative and less expositional than McIlwain's approach. But they retained varying degrees of expositional teaching in the story and the instruction that followed the story (Lovejoy, 2000, p. 3).

Chronological Bible **Storying** (CBS) is similar to CBT but it does not interject Bible teaching, just the Bible story followed by discussion questions. It seeks to present the Bible story as accurately as it is in the Scriptures with a minimum of explanation. CBS holds that theological truths are better understood in oral cultures within the story itself, rather than abstract principles taught in literate teaching styles.

By the late 1980s, Jim Slack concluded that existing approaches to chronological Bible presentation were too literate for use with oral communicators. He began working on a form of chronological Bible presentation that utilized storytelling followed by dialog. He carefully avoided including exposition in either the story or the dialog. ... In an effort to differentiate it from the approaches of McIlwain and the others, Slack and [J.O.] Terry called their approach "storying" (Lovejoy, 2000, pp. 3-4).

CBS is used for evangelism, discipleship and church planting since it provides the necessary background for pre-literate people with no previous exposure to Christianity who need to understand the concepts that lead up to the Gospels and the coming of Christ.

Chronological Bible Storying

CBS is a collection of selected and prepared Bible stories designed to evangelize, disciple, plant churches and train leaders, basically to completely rebuild their worldview. These stories are presented in a session that is introduced by an appropriate pre-story interaction to prepare listeners for the story. This session is followed by a post-story dialog to aid the listeners to understand the teaching embedded in the story, encouraging discussion of the stories and applying the teaching that they deduced from the story to their lives.

Grant Lovejoy, IMB director of orality strategies, defines CBS as the presentation of selected biblical stories designed to contradict the worldview of the oral people group so as to lay the foundations to bring people to genuine "faith in Christ, mature discipleship and fruitful Christian service." The presentation typically includes a time of dialog after the story during which the storyteller uses Socratic-type questions "to guide the listeners to discover the meaning and significance of the biblical story." (Lovejoy, 2000, p. 2)

Rationale for Chronological Bible Storying

Why is Bible Storying so important for witness & teaching? The fact is that a large percentage of the unreached world is not literate – not being able to read the Bible even if they had one. Many of these people do not have a written language yet so they must be reached orally, at least in the meantime. Others simply prefer learning orally in groups.

> At least three and one-half billion (60%) of the world's 6.1 billion people are oral communicators. At least one-fourth of the world's population (1,525,383,804 people) are primary oral communicators - illiterates. Primary oral communicators cannot read or write. And, at least fifty percent (50%) of those who live in the United States are oral communicators and cannot perform literate tasks well enough to function as literates. Oral communicators are likely the largest unevangelized population segment in the USA. …Over sixty percent (60%) of Islamic women are either illiterate or functionally illiterate, as is Africa south of the Sahara. At least seventy percent (70%) of the worlds least reached and unevangelized peoples are oral communicators (Slack, 2003).

A major segment of the unreached world is hostile to traditional Christian teaching or preaching but will listen to stories of any sort. "Most of the world's major religions are both propagated by stories and maintained by stories, reputedly of the founder or other holy personages" (Terry, 1999).

It is helpful for literate cross-cultural Christian workers to be aware of different degrees of literacy if they are to communicate with people in appropriate ways. These degrees of literacy reflect a continuum. One categorization of salient points along this continuum is that quoted James B. Slack, which describes five levels of literacy to be considered in presenting the gospel:

- "Illiterates" cannot read or write. They have never "seen" a word. In fact, the word for illiteracy in the Indonesia language is *buta huruf*, meaning "blind to letters." For oral communicators, words do not exist as letters, but as sounds related to images of events and to situations that they are seeing or experiencing.

- "Functional illiterates" have been to school but do not continue to read and write regularly after dropping out of school. Within two years, even those who have gone to school for eight years often can read only simple sentences and can no longer receive, recall or reproduce concepts, ideas, precepts, and principles through literate means. They prefer to get their information orally. Their functional level of illiteracy (as opposed to published data) determines how they learn, how they develop their values and beliefs, and how they pass along their culture, including their religious beliefs and practices.

- "Semi-literates" function in a gray transitional area between oral communication and literacy. Even though these individuals have normally gone to school up to 10 years and are classified in every country of the world as literates, they learn primarily by means of narrative presentations.

- "Literate" learners understand and handle information such as ideas, precepts, concepts, and principles by literate means. They tend to rely on printed material as an aid to recall.

- "Highly literate" learners usually have attended college and are often professionals in the liberal arts fields. They are thoroughly print-culture individuals (Wills, 2004, pp. 3-2).

The objectives of Bible Storying are to *publish* the Bible orally, encourage strategic church planting, disciple believers [that is, make them learners of the stories and the applications from the stories], and train emerging leaders, empowering them to teach the Bible in a form that is understandable, memorable and reproducible for their own people. CBS has become an important teaching and witnessing tool among not only Southern Baptist missionaries but also all who share in the Great Commission task.

> Beyond all these are a number of hindrances to the Gospel. One is limited literacy. Some peoples are non-literate, not reading at all. So you can't use a tract or give them a Bible to read. Others have limited literacy but struggle with religious vocabulary which they do not know. Others have a Bible in only the trade language used among their people groups, but not in their heart language Terry, 1999).

After developing a basic understanding of orality, literate missionaries and teachers then need to learn effective oral communication styles which are culturally relevant. Many trained oral teachers can easily tell a hundred or more Bible stories and lead their people to learn from them. "In general, there is a cluster of features that oral learners have in common in processing information. They most readily process information that is concrete and sequential, and which is presented in a highly relational context. Other aspects of an effective communication style for a particular oral culture may be discovered by careful observation and participation in the life of the community" (Wills, 2004, pp. 3-4).

> Jim Slack, one of the founders of the CBS, wrote, "All oral communicators find it very difficult to understand, internalize, and recall messages that do not come through proverbs, prose, or carefully constructed stories compatible with their learning preference and cultural presentation style. Their preferred learning and communication style, or format, is the oral narrative. If they are to 'hear' the Gospel of Christ it must come to them through a narrative format" (Slack, 2003).

> When this miss-matched communication between literates and oral communicators occurs, and the oral communicator attempts to embrace the literate message, serious syncretism results between what is being heard and what they already believe. Even if they do understand, and "get the message straight," they are helpless when faced with the need to remember and reproduce what they heard. Oral communicators - illiterate, functionally illiterate, and some semi-literates - use different means of constructing, internalizing, recalling, and reproducing information and beliefs than do literates. An oral communicator's patterns are the exact opposite of literate, word-culture patterns (Slack, 2003).

The stories provide a broad and memorable way of describing the characteristics of God, those of the natural (carnal) man, stories of Jesus as both man and God, and those of the born again believer, which present what God expects of all believers.

> J. O. Terry, IMB missionary in Asia, categorized the stories that deal with the issues of the authority and the sovereignty of God, which show why we are accountable to Him, then the broken relationship as a result of sin beginning with Adam and Eve and continuing through their descendants, our ancestors, resulting in God's judgment of sin, God's promise of an Coming One to suffer for man's sin, and the fulfillment of all prophecy in Jesus who returned to the Father when his ministry on earth was finished (Terry, 1999).

Some are resistant to the Gospel message and attempts to present it. They may have been cautioned against its message as being Western and part of a plan of imperialism. In extreme cases the people may be openly hostile to what they construe as "preaching". So any attempt to witness in a manner that suggests preaching, is quickly and openly opposed. It is not the message so much as the manner of the presentation they are rejecting. The same message in a more compatible and culturally acceptable form such as Bible Storying is both enjoyable and acceptable to listeners (Terry, 1999).

Implications for Chronological Bible Storying

Slack reported that demographers and researchers such as Miles Smith-Morris looked ahead years ago and saw the realities of our century. They had evidence years ago that global literacy levels would not improve appreciably by A.D. 2000. Furthermore, 9,100 language or dialectical variants of those languages have no Scripture or portions available. "Even if literacy were successful among them, there would be no Scripture, or Scripture portions, in their language for them to read. A narrative, chronological-storying approach to the communication of the Gospel is of an even greater necessity" (Slack, 2003).

The application of the principles of orality indicates a change in mission strategy. Lovejoy describes the IMB missionaries who plant 75% of their churches among 20% of the population that is literate. "Those were the people we could best communicate with." Had they learned how to evangelize oral people they would not have neglected the 80% who are oral communicators (Lovejoy, 2000, p. 10).

Terry suggests that an understanding of the target people's worldview be undertaken to give clues as to which stories are definitely needed and which ones might best be skipped for the time being. How many stories are needed to bring people from where they are in their spiritual condition to have an opportunity to understand who Jesus is and why we must accept by faith what he was sent to do (Terry, 1999).

Well-meaning ministers and missionaries assume that anybody, even a child, can under-stand simple outlines of the Gospel passages they use to present Christ's Gospel. Social, anthropological, and linguistic research reveal that is a misconception. Primary oral communicators do not understand the Gospel when it is presented to them by means of expository outlines, principles, precepts, steps, and logically developed discourses (Slack, 2003).

The practice of storying is a long process. It is building the foundations of faith, so that the results are a genuine "conversion" of worldview and beliefs of how to live.

"Once the initial worldview study has been done, storiers select stories to supplement the core list. These additional stories contain biblical teachings that are needed to speak to the aspects of the prevailing worldview that are inconsistent with a biblical worldview. Dealing with these issues before the call for decision is designed to minimize syncretism" (Lovejoy, 2000, p. 11). J. O. Terry outlines five options for telling the stories:[2]

1. Tell one story each encounter. This is the best approach if you plan to discuss the stories with your listeners to draw out the truths in the stories by talking

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[2] More practical suggestions given in Appendix 1

about them and the implication for the listeners. This is the normal strategy followed in Chronological Bible Storying. If the story list is short you may have time to go more slowly and deliberately.

2. Tell a cluster of stories each encounter. This approach takes advantage of the fact that stories tend to group together around certain themes or characters which link the stories together. The creation stories (of the spirit world, the natural world and then of man and woman) deal with God's sovereignty. Then follows a cluster of judgment stories (Adam and Eve's sin, Cain's sin, the sinful world in Noah's day). Then follow the promise stories (God's promise to Abraham of a descendant to bless all peoples, the same promise to Isaac and Jacob). The Abraham stories also have the substitute sacrifice which is one of the key stories leading to Christ as the substitute sacrifice for our sin.
      The stories of Jesus also fall into clusters (annunciation and birth, baptism and tempting by Satan, healings, forgiveness of sin stories, power encounter stories, passion and death stories).

3. Tell as a continuous fast-tracked story. This is the best approach if time is very limited or there is a single opportunity to use the Bible story to evangelize. This approach may be done in a small group publicly, used in a limited group in a home, used bedside in a hospital, or even one-on-one. In this approach there is no attempt to stop the narrative in order to discuss the story. The story continues, usually in a somewhat condensed manner moving smoothly from episode to episode while touching upon all the basic Bible truths leading to salvation. Depending upon the worldview of the listeners more or less attention is given to the Old Testament stories as a preparation for the stories of Jesus. This approach is often done with some kind of picture set to illustrate the stories and to give a focus. Larger flat pictures are needed for the public groups, booklets or even photo-album pictures may be used for smaller more intimate groups of listeners.

4. Tell a single appropriate story or cluster but not a chronological sequence. We often call this situational storying as we choose a story best suited to the situation at hand in which we have an opportunity to witness or minister. This may be a point of encounter opportunity to open up a witness. It may be a ministry situation in which you have opportunity to minister through prayer for a person or family. Before you pray, lift up Jesus with an appropriate story or two. Then pray for the person and, before you go, offer to share more stories if invited back. Then you will have opportunity to tell the chronologically arranged stories leading to salvation.

5. Probing for responsiveness and opening the way for a longer storying strategy to follow. By telling the story in a short form, the volunteer or ISCer may open up a door for an evangelist to come and, over a much longer period of time, begin to tell the stories and lead the people to talk about what God is saying to them through the stories. This could happen as a follow-up to crusades where volunteers take advantage of home visits and other personal opportunities to introduce the Bible story. Special projects like well drilling, construction of houses, disaster and relief aid all provide times of contact and increased interest and curiosity which give opportunity for short track Bible storying. This, too, is

a further opportunity for a longer and more thorough Bible storying strategy by
a local missionary or Baptist partner (Terry, 1999).

"For evangelizing we identify a core group of stories that are essential to tell God's
overarching story of salvation. Typically this list of core stories includes 22-25 stories
spanning from creation to the resurrection of Jesus. This group of stories is theologically
necessary to set forth the character of God, the reality and seriousness of human sin, the
necessity of satisfying God's righteousness, the mercy and grace of God in providing
Jesus as the only acceptable substitute for us, the necessity of faith in him alone, and his
triumphant resurrection from the dead." (Lovejoy, 2000, p. 11)

Criticism of Chronological Bible Storying

This methodology of evangelizing without the necessity of literacy or a written
text is not without its critics. This new approach of orality is called a *heresy* by some
because it is telling biblical stories based on pictures and images. Orality is said to short-
cut Bible translation and language methods of teaching the Word of God to "people
groups." The rationale for this is, of course, the "urgency" in fulfilling the Great
Commission "mandate." "Orality is by its very nature condescending, treating Third
World peoples as 'children' who supposedly do not have the 'ability' or 'desire' to learn
to read. It is being touted as an alternative method of evangelism. However, it is very
evident that some mission groups have no intention of EVER teaching these people to
read, or give them a Bible in their own language" (Discernment Group, 2005).

There may be this temptation to rely exclusively on Storying to effect a church
planting movement, especially when such evident conversions occur, but it is not the
intent of the Orality Network.

"In the past we have sometimes supposed that Bible translation must precede
evangelism, church planting, leadership training, and the like. We will gladly
partner with Bible translators because we believe in the value of their work, but we
will not let the pace of Bible translation or the pace of literacy training determine
with whom we will seek to sow the good seed of the gospel. We will sow it orally
in the heart language through chronological Bible storying and seek to encourage
those won to Christ to do the same. We support providing literacy training for those
who want it but refuse to embrace any ministry approach that is dependent on
literacy." Among the Klem tribe in sub-Sahara 75% of the illiterates expressed no
interest in learning to read. "We have anecdotal reports, however, that literacy
enrollment tripled in the aftermath of the introduction of storying" (Lovejoy, 2000,
p. 10).

In their classic description of the ministry to oral people, "Making Disciples of Oral
Learners," presented to the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism, Avery Wills and
Steve Evans clarified this misconception of the exaggerated value of, and exclusive use
of, CBS with this statement:

This [CBS] does not mean that we discourage literacy or neglect literates.
Experience shows that once oral learners accept the gospel, some will have the
desire and persistence to become literate in order to read the Bible for themselves.
The development of oral strategies is not a deterrent to translating the Bible into
every language. In fact, the opposite is true. These burgeoning church planting

movements that result from an oral proclamation will need the whole counsel of God. Requiring non-Christians to learn to read just so that they can consider the Christian faith puts unnecessary obstacles in their path (Wills, 2004, pp. 2-1). They later add even more clarification in their report through their comprehensive strategy concept that includes storying and translating. After all, the only way to do storying is to learn the unreached people's language through linguistic analysis if previously unwritten, then begin Storying as soon as a Level 4 language proficiency is gained. This is the same proficiency necessary to begin translation. Thus, while the translation is beginning, Storying is beginning as well. Language proficiency is imperative or misunderstandings are inevitable. We could be communicating false ideas unawares.

> We wish all peoples had the written translation of the Scripture in their heart language. But, for the illiterate, written Scripture is not accessible even if it is available in their own language. On the other hand, a Bible translation program that begins with the oral presentation of the Bible through storying and continues with a translation and literacy program is the most comprehensive strategy for communicating the word of God in their heart language. It offers a viable possibility of making disciples of oral learners while at the same time providing the whole counsel of God … We do not want our call for oral approaches to be seen as setting oral and literate approaches in opposition to one another. It is not a matter of "either or," but "both and" (Wills, 2004, pp. 2-2).

Conclusion

God's word has a transforming impact on people's lives when we present it in ways that they can understand. For example, missionaries worked for twenty five years with the Tiv tribe in central Nigeria and saw only twenty five baptized believers as a result. That is an average of one believer per year of ministry. Their medium of communication was preaching, which they had learned in Bible school was the proper way to evangelize.

Then some young Tiv Christians set the gospel story to musical chants, the indigenous medium of communication. Almost immediately the gospel began to spread like wildfire and soon a quarter million Tivs were worshipping Jesus. The Tivs were not as resistant as the missionaries had thought. A change in method brought abundant fruit. Prior to this, the gospel had been "proclaimed," but it had not been heard! The chosen communication strategy had not spoken to the heart of the people. This story underscores that groups may not be necessarily unresponsive, but have not yet received the gospel in their learning style. Where traditional literate methods have failed to reach people, appropriate oral strategies have succeeded (Wills, 2004, pp. 2-2).

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Appendix 1:   Techniques for Chronological Bible Storying

How to Begin a Bible Storying Encounter

      Using a pocket photo album. Some like to begin a casual conversation and then move it toward the family. The photo album is opened to show a picture of the storyer's family. After some comment the storyer mentions having another family he/she is part of. The next picture is that of one's church showing people and not just a building. Discuss what it means to have a family like this. Then mention that we are all part of a larger family which has a problem. Turn now to Adam and Eve and their disobedience and proceed through the selected pictures to the resurrection of Jesus. Then offer an opportunity to be a part of the family of Jesus which we enter through faith in him as God's provision for our "family problem"® sin.

      Visiting bedside in a home or hospital. Because of the person's illness or possible short attention span, this should be a very brief presentation hitting only the high spots and minimally in the Old Testament with major emphasis upon Jesus. At the conclusion offer to come again and give a more in-depth presentation when the person is stronger or if other family members desire it.

      Family presentation in a home. This is a more relaxed presentation often done by women during a home visit. Many times children are present and may need to be accommodated by the choice of stories and by minimizing some of the harshness of the judgment stories. This presentation may be done by prior appointment or invitation of the family. Picture booklets or small flipcharts can be a very helpful way of illustrating the stories as they are told. Flipcharts have a disadvantage of having pictures already selected and locked into an order. Presentation books have an advantage in that picture books can be cut up so that individual pictures may be selected and arranged in the desired order. That way the presentation can be edited by adding pictures or deleting pictures according to the stories being used.

      Using a preaching poster. This approach works well for a small public gathering and can be set up in a moment by hanging the chart on some handy projection and beginning the story. It takes advantage of the elements of surprise and curiosity. One such poster is "The Origin & Destiny of Man" which depicts the Bible story in seven pages. (See Visual Resource List at end.)

      No visual, just telling the story. The best way to get into such an opportunity is by asking questions related to origins of man and the nature of man. The objective is to raise sensitivity and to create an atmosphere of curiosity and conjecture into which the storyer says there are some stories which speak to those very questions. He then proceeds with the Bible story, expanding where necessary, and skipping over parts to keep the narrative lively and moving toward the story of Jesus.

      Keep the storying on a win/win basis. Try not to get involved in a debate with the listeners. If you are challenged at some point in the story, tell the listeners that is what God had recorded in the Bible. And you are not free to change the story. In some circumstances you may need to let some with strong objection have an opportunity to tell their story after you finish yours. You will need to trust the power of God's Word over the word and account of man.

If questions do arise and can be answered briefly you may choose to do so. Beware of people with "pet" questions. Others may ask questions in an attempt to demonstrate what they know about the Bible. Try to overlook these or simply thank the person and continue on. Sometime you can answer a sincere question with reference to another story, hopefully one that has already been covered (Terry, 1999).

Bringing Closure to Your Bible Storying Strategy

Simple invitation. The simplest invitation at the conclusion of your storying is to invite people to believe on this Jesus and what he has done on their behalf. Whether this is understandable or an acceptable practice will need to be learned from local missionaries or evangelists. Usually foreigners can do things the local leaders cannot easily do or would feel uncomfortable doing. Be careful that any positive response such as a raised hand or verbal acknowledgement is not simply a desire to keep a good relationship with the foreigner. It would be good to have people tell why they are responding that way—to verbalize their sinful condition and desire to believe that Jesus died for their sins.

The one-on-one presentation is the easiest to bring closure as the invitation can be personalized and extended as needed. A tract that summarizes the major points of the story in a narrative form may be helpful if the people are literate. A picture tract can be helpful for non-literates to cue them to remember the stories.

Invitation to talk one-by-one. This is an invitation to a less public time when a more intimate presentation of the invitation to believe is given. Circumstances will dictate when best to do this. The seekers in the group are invited to come to you to express their response to the story of Jesus. Ask if you can go to their homes to talk with the families about the story and what they should do after hearing it.

Sometimes a public response is not possible or difficult for seekers. This is particularly a problem for women in Muslim lands and common among young people in many places. One possibility for an invitation is for a "silent heart" response in which the women or young people in their own hearts decide what they must do. They can be led to pray a silent prayer to acknowledge their belief on Jesus, to receive forgiveness of sin, and to be filled with assurance of the Spirit, resulting in joy and peace. Signaling their response before others is the problem. Others have invited women to respond by writing on a piece of paper and giving it privately to the storyer, or in whispering to the storyer their response. Prayer is offered for all the women and for God's protection and blessing of those believing on Jesus. Again, be sensitive to local practice and the advice of those who live and work there.

Invitation to view Jesus Film. This is a way of preparing a people for the visualized story of Jesus in which the whole group sees the story together and are challenged to believe on Jesus in the story review at the close of the film.

Public invitation by storyer or evangelist. This is the most open way to for a people to acknowledge their belief in Jesus, hopefully as a result of expressing their sinful condition before a righteous God and their helplessness to save themselves from God's wrath. Follow the culturally acceptable pattern.

Your own favorite invitation or closure. You may have your own favorite invitation or closure to a presentation of the gospel. Check with a local pastor or

missionary to see if it is culturally acceptable and not likely to be misunderstood by the listeners. Some use the Gospel Bridge picture or a variation of it.

Immediate affirmation of new believers. It is essential to immediately affirm new believers by going back over the key stories:

    *   mankind's broken relationship with God due to sin,
    *   God's judgment of sin,
    *   the substitute sacrifice,
    *   the covering sacrifice of blood,
    *   the promise of one who would suffer for our sins, and
    *   the death and resurrection of Jesus, or
    *   using affirming scriptures which show they have made the right decision

according to God's Word.

Pray with the believers, one-by-one if possible and for the whole group as an alternative. Ask God to strengthen and protect them from Satan's attack (Terry, 1999).

Training Storying Workers

Experience has proven that a first time through the stories for training workers will mainly disciple them and clarify many questions they have about their own salvation and why it was necessary. A second and third time through the stories, if done as a continuous training session, may be needed to get them equipped. One of the best training schemes is to have a potential worker with you as a helper. Teach them the story lesson before going to do it with the target group. Gradually increase their participation in the lesson until they are ready to do the story itself. Experience with tribal leaders has found they readily pick up the stories and can retell them. They may not do as well with a guided discussion that has a lot of structure. Periodic refreshing of Bible stories in camps and special sessions is helpful (Terry, 1999).

The integration of audio-visuals and storytelling with literacy can be very motivating in communities traditionally resistant to the written form of their language or indifferent to reading.

The majority of this course has been designed for non-literates, people of cultures where books are not necessarily valued and where important information is passed orally from one person to another. However, this lesson is included in order to give the church planter and church developer an opportunity to promote the written "lord of God and introduce literacy when it is appropriate in the community in which he is working. We must always have a leader who can read the Word to others as we were admonished in 1 Timothy 4:13. " Until I come devote yourself to the public reading of the Scripture, to preaching and to teaching."

In promoting oral strategies we must not overlook those who have a desire to learn to read and those who can already read to some degree but need to build fluency. We attempt here to provide some practical ideas on using media and storytelling to introduce print, provide practice for semi-literates and motivate non-reading cultures toward the printed word.

The integration of audiovisuals and storytelling with literacy can be very motivating in communities traditionally resistant to the written form of their language or are

indifferent to reading. Even in largely literate societies the use of read -along audiocassettes and video versions of stories have gained great popularity.

We should take advantage of the high interest in pictures, cassettes and video to present the message or story and then introduce the printed form afterwards. This is considerably more motivating and effective than literacy classes based exclusively on written text (Terry, 1999).   Remember that literacy can be taught in classes and workshops or woven into church, Bible Study or Sunday School activities.

Oral and visual media linked to literacy classes have proven effective in different contexts. Here are some examples:

After live storytelling, the story can then be used to develop a literacy lesson Terry, 1999).

To develop reading fluency for new readers:
1. Present story in oral form.
2. Retell the story or have participants retell the story in their own words. Use pictures to enhance retelling (if available).
3. Discuss the story. With text in front of students (preferably in large letter format) encourage recall and comprehension through questions or clarification.
4. Discuss the application of the story to our lives or the Biblical principle of the story.
5. Look at the text verse by verse. Read the verse while your students look at the text or play the audio tape. Ask students to identify key words or phrases within the verse. Show words or sentences on cardboard strips. Ask them to point to certain words within the text.
6. Read a sentence aloud and have students read the last word in the sentence together aloud. Repeat process reading several verses.
7. Have students read a verse silently and then answer a question about the verse.
8. Have certain students read the parts of one character in the story or the narrator. (Readers' Theater) This will be enhanced if you can use repeating patterns.

Steps for Using a Story as an Introduction to Print (pre-literacy)
1. Present story in oral form (audio, video or live storytelling).
2. Retell the story or have participants retell the story in their own words. Use pictures to enhance retelling (if available).
3. Discuss the story. Encourage recall and comprehension through questions or clarification. Enhance interest in the story by bringing the audience's experience somehow into the story.
4. Read the story aloud from the Bible or play it on a tape.
5. Talk about key characters, animals, or objects in the story. Present these nouns on word cards in very large print.
6. Use word cards in conjunction with pictures. Use word cards to introduce letters of the alphabet. Use a different color marker for the letter you wish to emphasize or for the initial letter of the word.
7. Bring meaning to the printed words by going back to the story and text (Terry, 1999).

Appendix 2   LIST OF VISUAL RESOURCES

"Telling the Story..." Color chronological Bible teaching pictures. 105 picture set includes Acts. 40 Picture set includes basic evangelistic pictures.
>   Church Strengthening Ministry
>   P.O. Box 2656 Makati Central Post Office
>   1266 Makati City
>   Metro Manila, PHILIPPINES
>   Fax 63-2-512-1499
>   e-mail <csm@i-manila.com.ph>

"Telling the Story..." Color chronological Bible teaching pictures. Same as above but laminated for greater durability. Also CD-ROM of color and b/w teaching pictures. Ask for catalog.
 New Tribes Mission
1000 E. First Street
Sanford, FL 322771-1487
Tel 407-323-3430
e-mail <bookstore_hq@ntm.org>

"Look, Listen & Live" Eight chronologically arranged flipcharts of color pictures—five OT story sets, 2 sets of Jesus, 1 Acts
 Language Recordings International
P.O.Box 40181
Pasadena, CA 91114
Tel 250-0207
Fax 250-0136

"Jim & Jane Meet Jesus" Felt set for evangelistic presentations
 Marie Achill
Christian Felts Company
15306 Ashburton
Houston, TX 77040
Tel 713-466-0073

Betty Lukens, Bible in Felt (600 piece felt set, manual for 150 stories)
 Mardel Christian Education Office Supply or Chinese Baptist Press
1444 240 Penn Park Blvd. 322 Prince Edward Road West
Oklahoma City, OK 73159 Kowloon, HONG KONG
Tel 405-681-1444 fax 852-2336-4186
Fax 405-681-7392

"The Origin & Destiny of Man" preaching poster (Bible story in seven pages)
 Kannok (OMF Publishers)
1694/1 Prachasongkhro Road

Huay Kwang, Bangkok 10400
THAILAND
Fax 662-275-2800

The New "Panorama" Bible Study Course No. 1 "The Plan of the Ages"
(Color timeline chart with 11-page synopsis of Bible story.)
 Fleming H. Revell Company
Old Tappan
New Jersey

Retrieved 8/3/07 from
http://www.chronologicalbiblestorying.com/short/cbs_short_11.htm

Appendix 3   Bibliography of Resources

<u>**Storytelling**</u>

Building on Firm Foundations. Chapters 5 & 6 (NOTE: other chapters of book not to be counted as collateral reading) McIlwain, 1987. (*Chronological approach*).

Handbook for Story Tellers. Bauer, 1977.

How To Read the Bible as Literature. Ryken, 1994.
Look What Happened to the Frog: Storytelling in Education. Cooper and Collins, 1992.
Mission On the Way. Chapter 2. VanEngen, 1996. *(Overview of narrative theology)*
Passing the Baton. Chapter 11. Steffen, 1993. (*Chronological approach*)
Reconnecting God's Story to Ministry, Steffen, 1996. (*textbook used in previous semesters)*
Reconnecting God's Story to Ministry, Steffen, 2005 2nd edition
Religious Education Through Story Telling. Cather, 1925 (*old book but has some relevant material for today*).
Story as a Way of Knowing. Bradt, 1997
Story Telling – It's Easy. Barrett, 1960.
Storytelling in Religious Education. Shaw, 1999 (*this is not written from an evangelical, conservative viewpoint*)
"*The Art of Storytelling: Easy Steps to Presenting an Unforgettable Story*." J. Walsh, 2003. (class textbook, 2004 & 2005)
The Power of Story, Ford, 1994
The Story Teller in Religious Education: How to Tell Stories to Children and Young People. Brown, 1951. (*another older text but has some good information*).
The Use of the Story in Religious Education. Eggleston, 1920.
The World of Storytelling. Pellowski, 1990.
Understanding Folk Religion: A Christian response to popular beliefs and practices. Chapter 10 "Sacred Myths." Heibert, Shaw & Tienou., 1999.

<u>**Article**</u>

 * "Don't Show the 'Jesus' Film…" Steffen, *EMQ*, July 1993.
* "Place, Movement and Gesture in Biblical Storytelling." D. Dewey (*available from Dewey's website* – http://www.angelfire.com/ny2/DennisDewey/Gesture.txt)
"Telling gospel as story opens Muslim ears." Craig Bird, *PULSE*, July 21, 1995.
"I Am Writing Blindly." Roger Rosenblatt, *TIME*, November 6, 2000 (*one page article based on message found in sunken Russian submarine*)
"Storying the Storybook to Tribals: A Philippines perspective of the chronological teaching model." Steffen, *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, Vol 12:2 April-June 1995, pp 99-104.

Sampling: Books / articles related to Postmodernism & Orality

 "Chronological Bible Storying in Light of Post Modern Worldview." Johnson, H. (n.d.).
     available at Strategy Resources for Effective Communication of the Gospel website
     (see website listing for address).
"Making disciples by sacred story." (Feb. 2004). *Christianity Today*.
"Ministry to Millennials." (n.d.) available: http://www.alliance-
     youth.com/pdf/millennials.pdf
"Orality: The next wave of mission advance." (Jan/Feb 2004). *Mission Frontiers*.
"Poetry, Singing, and Context." (Oct. 2001). *Missiology: An international review* (Vol.
     24, 4) pp. 475-487.
DAWN Report, December 2003, Issue No. 52 (issue dedicated to storytelling)
Friends: How to Evangelize Generation X. Moore, 1997.
Generating Hope: A Strategy for Reaching The Postmodern Generation. Long, 1997.
GenXers After God: Helping a Generation Pursue Jesus. Hahn & Verhaagen, 1998.
Jesus For a New Generation. K. Ford, 1995.
The Gospel According to Generation X. Lewis, Dodd, and Tippens, 1995.

WEBSITES with Links and Resources

Chronological Bible: www.ChronologicalBibleStorying.com
Dennis Dewey (Christian storyteller): www.dennisdewey.org/
Epic Partners International (Campus Crusade, Southern Baptist, Wycliffe, Seed
     Company, & YWAM): www.EpicPartners.org
Following Jesus – **Making Disciples of Oral Learners**: www.FJseries.org
Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization: "Report from the LCWE Issue Group"
     #IG25, "**Making Disciples of Oral learners**"; this has an annotated resource list;
     www.lausanne.org/Brix?pageID=13890
National Storytelling Network: www.storynet.org/
Network of Biblical Storytellers: www.nobs.org/
New Way – (media in missions; articles, links, resources on orality and more):
     www.newwway.org.Default.htm
Oral Bible Network: www.OralBible.com
Strategy Resources for Effective Communication of the Gospel:
     http://www.communication-
     strategy.net/synapse/documents/Files_public.cfm?website=communication-
     strategy.net
 Click "World of Orality"; Power point and Workbook
William Wilder (Christian storyteller, has visited TFC):
     www.williamwilder.com/index.html

These resoureces were retrieved 9/2/07 from
     http://64.233.169.104/search?q=cache:xpPATXUVSzUJ:faculty.tfc.edu/jarvis/CCS
     T%2520Collateral%2520Reading%2520List%2520SP06.doc+%22Making+Discipl
     es+of+Oral+Learners%22&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=34&gl=us&client=firefox-a