



Why Jesus Tells Stories

Week of July 24, 2016

These discussion questions can be used the week following the message. You can use these questions for personal growth and development, or as a guide for your Connect Group discussions.

Message Recap:

Read Matthew 13:10-17

Despite how we may feel at times, we all have extraordinary stories to tell. Our lives are all uniquely different, and our stories are not something that we should shy away from. Jesus told stories in order to convey important truths in a way that people would understand. We can all relate to stories. The religious leaders of the time only wanted people to follow the rules, but Jesus knew that following these so called “rules” would only keep people away from the kingdom of heaven. Jesus wants us to live our lives together, unbound by rules, sharing in each other’s stories.

Pray

Lord, please help us to see that we are all unique and that we all have a special story to share. Help us become untethered by the rules that would try to keep us from experiencing each other’s stories, and from sharing your story. Help our eyes and ears to be opened, help our hearts heal where they need to, and let your kingdom be revealed in and through us. Help us bring peace and joy and love to a world so desperately in need of it. Thank you for showing us the way and showing us that we all matter so much to you.

Share Your Experience This Week #SevernRun

Getting Started

- What was your favorite story as a child?
- Just to get us thinking about stories, share a story about something fun, crazy, sad, funny, or normal that happened to you this week.

Listening Deeply

1. What is your favorite parable/story that Jesus told? Why does that one in particular speak to you?
2. Now, think about the “rules” that we as a society have created that keep people separate from each other’s stories. What are they? (Not legal rules, but the unwritten rules of society)
3. Why do we often believe that our personal stories seem insignificant? How has society trained us to think this way?
4. If there were one or two key barriers we could remove to rid ourselves of the stigma of devaluing other’s stories, what do you think it would be?
5. Is there someone you know whose story you haven’t really heard yet? What will you do to try to learn their story this week?
6. So, what’s your story? Is it something you’ve been hiding from the world? Do you think it might be time to share it...ALL of it?

Living Wide in Jesus

Jesus, as we have discussed, used stories to share the truths of heaven. Perhaps it’s time WE did the same. Hopefully by now you’re more convinced that your story has meaning and purpose, and that it’s worth sharing. Know that your story will make a difference. Don’t be afraid to tell it, especially to those who need to know Jesus. But, you must tell the WHOLE story. Do not be ashamed or afraid to tell the parts where Jesus appeared. Those parts are the best parts!

- Forget the rules. Jesus didn’t follow society’s rules, and you shouldn’t either. Become unchained, and let the light of your story shine forever!
- Make peace with your story, for it is yours and yours alone. Do not be afraid to tell it.
- Learn the stories of others. You cannot truly know or understand a person without knowing their story. Everyone’s story is unique, and everyone’s story is worth hearing.