

Boyce College World Impact Center News

I remember growing up in church and as a child hearing and learning God's Word through stories. Then suddenly upon becoming a teenager, learning via stories came to an end replaced with the hop, skip and jump method of Bible studies formed around specific topics or doctrines. In the Bible studies, we would hop over to one passage, then skip to another, and finally jump to another. It was as if to say, "You have graduated from stories, and now you must learn to study the Bible in this new way, the way grown ups should study the Bible." Over the years, I lost the art of learning via stories or did I?

Most of the sermons I have heard through the years are distant memories. Unless I jotted down the pastor's outline with his main points, about the only thing I would remember were the illustrations or stories. For example, the one sermon I remember from my father (sorry, dad!) centered around the story of the football player Roy Riegels scooping up a fumble, getting spun around, and then running 99 yards in the wrong direction. This story to this day reminds me of the plight of humankind living in disobedience to God and running through life in the wrong direction. I thank God (and my father) for the story of Roy Riegels! The point is that I believe all human beings are oral communicators at their core. This is why I am convinced that about 80% of the Bible is narrative. God created us as oral communicators and oral communicators prefer to learn, remember, convey and receive information through stories, proverbs, poetry (hence Proverbs and Psalms in the Bible), music, drama, and traditional sayings. This is why I can sing all the grand old hymns I learned growing up to my 10-month-Old granddaughter as she sits on my lap! I had to be deliberately and intentionally trained over a number of years to learn a different way, but when push comes to shove (there's a traditional saying!) the oral communicator in me breaks through.

I recently came across some statistics about oral communicators from a gentleman who has spent his life helping others learn how to effectively communicate the gospel to oral communicators:

Approximately 2 out of every 4 (50%) persons in our world are oral communicators by necessity. That is, they receive, remember, learn and convey information orally because they are illiterate and have no other way to communicate. Approximately 3 out of every 4 (70-75%) persons are oral communicators by necessity or choice/preference. An additional 20-25% of the world's population is considered functionally illiterate. Only about 1 out of every 4 (25-30%) persons are print and literate communicators who learn from outlines, teaching points, notes, reading, abstract concepts, etc. (I contend that even these people started out as oral communicators, but their education suppressed this learning style!)

Did you know that in the USA about one half of all adults are functionally illiterate? Over half of the USA population never read another book after high school age and one-third of all high school graduates never read another book the rest of their lives. Over 40% of college graduates never read another book while 80% of families in the USA did not purchase or read a book during the previous year. Over half of the books purchased are never read to completion, and most people never read past page 18 in the books they have purchased. If this is the picture of people in the USA just think what it is like for the rest of the world!

Could it be that the church in the USA and in many other places around the world is communicating the gospel using methods and media that are inappropriate to the learning preference of the hearers? It is the church's responsibility to ensure effective communication of the gospel so that the hearer does not walk away confused. If God's Word is 80% narrative and if 70-75% of the world's people are oral

communicators, what better way to effectively communicate the glorious gospel than by simply telling the stories that present God's grand narrative of salvation?



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Missions Department News:

☞ Crossings Camps & Hands On: Crossings Camps is now partnering with the International Mission Board's Hands On program. Students who serve one summer with Crossings will be automatically accepted into Hands On and provided a 50% scholarship towards the program. Up to 12 credit hours are also offered through Hands On including the missions internship requirement.

☞ World Impact Center 2010 Mission Trips:

The World Impact Center has already scheduled the two mission trips for the summer of 2010! There will be a North America trip and an international trip. The summer of 2010 seems so far away, but students can begin praying and planning for which trip they feel led to join.

First, Dr. Kerns will lead another team to Utah in the summer 2010 to minister to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As you know, Dr. Kerns is Boyce College's resident expert on ministering to Mormons. We will be looking for at least 6 students who would be willing to invest a week or so of their time to learn about and be a part of ministry to Mormons.

The second trip is equally as exciting, and perhaps even more challenging. The World Impact Center is looking for students who want to venture to one of the neediest areas and some of the least reached peoples in South America. No, we are not planning to go up the Amazon or wander deep into the Andes Mountains. Instead, we are looking for a team of students to go to the Foz de Iguazu (Falls of Iguazu), an area of South America where Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay share borders. This area is populated with peoples of Arab and Chinese descent as well as other unreached peoples. Journey with Dr. Carlton to this unique area of South America where we will have the opportunity to witness and minister to people who desperately need to hear the Good News.

☞ Internship: If you are planning to do your missions internship this summer you will need to make an appointment with Dr Carlton as soon as possible to begin the process. The sooner you begin arranging details the less likely you are to encounter problems as the summer approaches. Remember certain pre-requisites must be completed and all field supervisors and job descriptions must be approved.

Boyce Highlight: Praxis Team

There are more than eight Indian language groups currently living here in Louisville. Within each of these languages there are multiple cultural, religious, caste, and socio-economic groups represented. As a church planting team we have taken on the task of working under the broad category of South Asian Indians, presenting us with the intriguing challenge of presenting the gospel in a culturally relevant way to a highly diverse population. Although those who have shown interest in the gospel so far come from a variety of backgrounds, the storying method has so far proven to be extremely effective across a wide range of people. This strategy has allowed us to teach the Bible even to non-believers in a less threatening, easier to learn format.


The first of our storying groups has now been meeting for eight months and is currently working through stories from the life of Christ after spending most of this year in the Old Testament. The storying method is sometimes criticized as operating on too low a level in terms of being intellectually and spiritually challenging, however our team has not found this to be the case. Among those who have attended this group are waiters and house wives, but our most faithful attendee and strongest oral learner has been a post-doctoral studies cancer researcher from Maharashtra. It is such a blessing to watch as our South Asian friends not only learn the stories from God's Word, but also retell them to their friends, family and co-workers outside the group. Our team has also found that this method of teaching has improved our knowledge of Scripture and made us better communicators of God's Word.


*Spotlight on the Unreached:**Negev Bedouin*

The Negev Bedouin are a nomadic people group living in the deserts of Egypt and Israel. Their primary positions are tents woven from goat hair, which can be easily broken down and relocated. There are over one million Bedouin, among whom less than one percent are followers of Christ. The rest are traditional Muslims practicing Shariah Law. The nomadic desert lifestyle of this people group makes accessing them for evangelism and church planting logistically difficult. Likewise, their strict adherence to the religious and cultural traditions of Islam creates an equally difficult spiritual climate. The Bedouin have no portions of the Scripture in their dialect, no known churches among them, and missionaries willing to endure such harsh conditions are hard to come by.

Prayer Requests:

- CS* Pray for OneStory workers who invest two to three years crafting story sets for unreached oral people groups in remote parts of the world.

-  Pray for the South Asian Indians of Louisville team as they near the end of their story set and move into crafting their own from the book of Acts.

-  Pray that believers would respond to the call and that God would plant His church among the Bedouin of the Negev desert.