

The INVITE Strategy

Week Five: Tell THEM Your Story



Acts 4:20

“We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

Seven Principles for Telling Your Faith Story

Know the difference between a _____ and a _____.

Don't suffer from testimonius comparituis.

Watch your _____.

Keep it s _____.

Keep it s _____.

The hero of the story is _____, not you.

Seek a _____ from your story.



Have you heard of "Six Word Memoirs"? At sixwordmemoirs.com people are encouraged to submit summaries of their life in just six words. Here are some six-word sentences that have been submitted to the website. Choose one that best captures your life at this point. Explain why you chose it.

- ___ "Followed yellow brick road. Disappointment ensued."
- ___ "Life isn't a party; dance anyway."
- ___ "Should have risked asking, he sighed."
- ___ "Still crazy after all these tears."
- ___ "I wrote it all down somewhere."
- ___ "Unfortunately my doubt calls shotgun first."
- ___ "Took happiness for a joy ride"
- ___ "Outcast. Picked last. Surprised them all."
- ___ "I colored outside of the lines."
- ___ "Never really finished anything, except cake."
- ___ "Many risky mistakes, very few regrets."
- ___ "It got better after middle age."
- ___ "Running on empty, but still running."

Today we're looking at the importance of telling your faith story. It's the fifth week in our study through the "INVITE Strategy." We're learning how to connect with others so they might connect with Jesus. Complete these blanks:

- I _____ your THEMs
- N _____ a relationship with THEM
- V _____ their spiritual condition
- I _____ THEM with your church family
- T _____ THEM your story
- Encourage** THEM to cross the line of faith

Today we'll focus on the fifth step. You have a story to tell!

We started today's discussion with "six word memoirs." Now let's choose or write a "six word testimony." From the list below, choose a six-word memoir of what *Jesus* has done for you, or write your own. Explain to the group why you chose (or wrote) that particular six-word sentence:

- ___ "I was blind, now I see."
- ___ "He provides what I most need."
- ___ "He broke the habits breaking me."
- ___ "My fear fled at his arrival."
- ___ "He caught me when I fell."
- ___ "Looking back, I recognize His plan."
- ___ "I am alone but not lonely."
- ___ "He was there all the time."
- ___ "Unloved and abandoned; now God's treasure."

In John 4:28-30, a woman didn't quite get her story down to six words. But she did get it down to two sentences. Read those verses and then answer the following questions.

- ❖ What was the woman's faith story?
- ❖ What was the response to her faith story?
- ❖ Why do you think she got this kind of response?
- ❖ What does this tell you about length of story vs. effectiveness?

You've told your story in six words. Now it's time to fill it out with some detail. This week we want you to submit your story to hillcrest.church/mystory. In today's sermon, Pastor Tom made 7 suggestions to make your story more effective. Discuss the 7 suggestions using the questions on the other side of this page.

First, know the difference between a point and a plot. Which is more effective at changing hearts: direct advice or a story? Explain.

Second, don't suffer from *testimonicus comparititus*. What is this awful disease and have you ever suffered from it?

Third, watch your language. Don't use "churchy" words. Give some examples of "churchy" words that might be meaningless to nonbelievers.

Fourth and fifth, keep it short and simple. Have you ever had to suffer through a lot of unnecessary detail when listening to someone tell of an experience they had? In what way does that diminish the power of their story?

Sixth, the hero of the story is Jesus, not you. What are some ways people tend to make themselves the hero of their Christian testimony?

Seventh, seek a response from your story. Conclude your story by asking something like, "Can you relate to this?" This turns the story from one-way communication to two-way communication. How is this helpful?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests