



Discipling Disciple

Session 1 & 2 - Creation to Return



CHRIST CENTRAL

Session 1

Objective: To be reminded of the overarching narrative of the Bible and be able to share it when needed.

Part 1(looking back: Hospitality/Catching up/Review/)

identity

worship

community

Spend time catching up with everyone's week – consider that eating food together can be a good context of building friendship and trust in the group.

After everyone has shared a bit, ask how everyone found crafting and telling the story.

This is the time for caring for those in your group, hearing about what's going on in their lives, asking questions, listening, and praying.

Prayer and worship

Spend some time at the beginning in worship – this can be singing together, or it can be declaring truths about God, each person reading a verse or psalm from scripture etc.

This sets the tone for all that follows – we are engaging with the living God - not learning a syllabus.

Part 2 (Looking into God's word-story)

identity

mission

worship

i) **Ask 3 people to read the following story out loud**

Creation to Return

Part 1

At the very beginning, God was there, and there was nothing else...only God. He spoke, and when he did, he created the universe and everything in it—and it was all good. Then He decided to make His special creation—people—a man and a woman. He made people to be like Him. He had a perfect relationship with them. He walked with them, talked with them, gave them responsibilities to care for the world, and took care of them—until one day, the man and woman listened to the lies of Satan and disobeyed God, and they broke their relationship with God. From that moment, everything God had made to be perfect and beautiful became broken and distorted: the relationship between God and His people, the relationship between people – and especially between men and women – and the relationship between people and nature. And all things, including people, would eventually die. The man and woman had children. Their children had children, and their children had children, until all the earth was filled with people. But, just like the first man and woman, people continued to be separated from God and live in a broken and distorted world.

Part 2

However, God had a plan. He never forgot his special creation, and He wanted his people back. Many years later, He spoke to a man named Abraham, and He told Abraham, "I am going to give you many descendants. I am going to make a great people—a nation—out of them. They will be my special people, and it's my people through whom I will show my favor on everyone." And, even though Abraham was a very old man, he believed God. Because of his belief, God considered Abraham to have a right/good relationship with Him. God totally accepted Abraham.

Part 3



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God kept His promise to Abraham, and Abraham did have a son, and His son had sons, until God had indeed made a great people for Himself out of Abraham's descendants. God really loved His people. He gave them their own special land, He gave them rules for living well, and He allowed them to have a king, even though He wanted to be the only one they relied on. But, even then, most of the time they were disobedient and separated from God, just like the first man and woman. Their disobedience led to fighting amongst themselves and even to other nations conquering them. Often, God would send spokesmen (His ambassadors) to His people to show them how they could have a restored relationship with Him. One of these spokesmen was named Isaiah. Isaiah brought God's people a message of hope about a Promised King. He said, "We have all strayed away from God. We disobey him. But God says, 'I am sending you an ultimate King. When he comes, you won't recognize him as king—you'll reject him. But he will take all of your disobedience and rebellion on himself. He will be whipped and beaten. He will die because of your disobedience. But, I will give him life again. And I will give him the honour and authority of the king that he is. And, because of what he does, you will be able to have a restored relationship with me. I will accept you.'"

From that time on, they waited expectantly for this Promised King...and they waited...and they waited....

Part 4

When the time was right, God did keep His promise to His people. He sent this Promised King, Jesus, God's very own Son. Jesus proved that He was indeed the Promised King of God's people by performing many miracles, by forgiving people when they disobeyed God, and by restoring people to peace with God. Not everyone recognized who Jesus was, but some people did follow Him as their king. To His followers, Jesus said, "The true people of God are those who turn away from their disobedience and follow me." One day He told them, "You are my friends, and I love you so much that I'm willing to die to take the punishment for your disobedience. If you follow me, my Father God and I will make our home with you." Those who did not believe in Jesus were angry and threatened about the claims He made about Himself. So, they convinced the government to have Him executed. And, just as God had said, Jesus was whipped. He was beaten, and He died. But, just as God had said, Jesus was given life again!

Part 5

After Jesus had been raised to life, He showed himself to his followers, and He proved beyond a shadow of doubt that He had come back from the dead. For forty days, He taught His followers. He told them, "I will leave you soon, but when I do, I will send God's Spirit to you. And when you receive God's Spirit, you will receive power—power to tell everyone that they can become a part of God's Kingdom/people through believing in me. So, go to the whole world and tell people about me. Teach them to obey what I taught you. And, when they believe in me, baptise them. Have them undergo this symbolic washing in water to show that they have turned from their sins and have become part of God's people/Kingdom.

Part 6

One day, Jesus did leave them. He went up into the clouds right in front of their eyes. As they were watching all of this, two men appeared and asked them why they were looking up into the sky. "Jesus will come back one day the same way he left," they said. So Jesus' followers waited. Jesus did send God's Spirit, and when He did, His followers did receive power—power to tell everyone that they can become a part of God's people.

Part 7

This is what God's people do to this day. We tell everyone about Jesus. When people believe in him, they are baptised—symbolically washed in water—to show that they have turned from their sins and become one of His people through believing in Jesus. Jesus' followers gather together. They meet together to worship God, learn to be followers of Jesus, and to take care of one another's needs.

Part 8

And we wait expectantly for Jesus to return one day just as He said He would—as king. Jesus said that when He



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comes back, there will be a loud shout, and we, God's people, will be reunited with Him in a perfect kingdom. In God's kingdom, there will be no suffering, no tears, no pain. God will be our God, and He will make His home with His people.

Try writing notes or drawing pictures in the first 3 parts of the storyboard handout to help you remember these parts of the story.

- ii) **Act out the first three parts of the story** - Talk about the characters in the story and choose them. If you know anything about the characters, talk about the person.
 - a. Determine where the scenes will be acted out and the spacing of the story.
 - b. Act out the story with one person narrating.
 - c. Act out the story at least one more time, with people switching parts. This time, stop at crucial points in the story, and certainly at the main action(s) of the story that illustrate the main point of the story. Each time you stop consider how each of the characters must have felt. Describe the scene to each other a bit more, describing what everyone in the scene is doing.
 - d. If you forget parts of the story, the entire group can work together to remember what happened next, or what was said.

- iii) **Ask the questions about the first 3 parts of the story**

- 1. What do you like about this story/What stood out to you?
 - 2. What bothered you about this story?
 - 3. What does this story show you about God?
 - 4. What does this story show you about people?

Part 3 (application and commission)

identity

worship

mission

Ask the remaining questions:

- 5. If this story is true, what does this story mean for your life? How will you live your life differently having learned this story? What is God showing you? what does this story show us about what it means to be a follower of Jesus? How will you respond? (it is really important to give time in this section for reflection and response. Don't settle for superficial answers, hopefully as you model honesty and vulnerability this will be imbibed by the group. However, you may want to help people go deeper, by asking some follow on questions. Don't be afraid to do so.)
 - 6. Who are you able to tell this story to?

- iv) **Now, get each person to tell the story they have crafted**

Encourage everyone in the group to think of people in their life whom they could retell the story to; mention that at the next session we will recap the story and ask who remembered to tell the story. Again it is helpful to emphasise the reason for going and telling the story ourselves is that it is the best way for us to remember the story and we are learning these stories to share the gospel with others.

A note on Prayer

Make sure time is guarded to pray. You may want to do it at the beginning of the meeting or wait till the end.



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For next week - Try crafting parts 4-7 of the Creation to Return story, using the story crafting process we gave you. When you do day 3 (experiencing the story) you could try going through the story as a disciple, seeing the entire ministry of Jesus. What did it feel like to you to have journeyed with him like that?



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identity

mission

worship

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Try writing notes or drawing pictures in the last 5 parts of the storyboard handout to help you remember these parts of the story.

- ii) **Act out the last five parts of the story** - Talk about the characters in the story and choose them. If you know anything about the characters, talk about the person.
 - e. Determine where the scenes will be acted out and the spacing of the story.
 - f. Act out the story with one person narrating.
 - g. Act out the story at least one more time, with people switching parts. This time, stop at crucial points in the story, and certainly at the main action(s) of the story that illustrate the main point of the story. Each time you stop consider how each of the characters must have felt. Describe the scene to each other a bit more, describing what everyone in the scene is doing.
 - h. If you forget parts of the story, the entire group can work together to remember what happened next, or what was said.
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 - 1. What do you like about this story/What stood out to you?
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For next week

1. Craft Session 2's story (Prodigal Son, Luke 15) using the 5-day story crafting guide.
2. Here are some notes for day 4:

Luke 15 is all about celebration and joy—the joy of receiving back that which has been lost and the celebration that ensues. The third story Jesus told in Luke 15 is the accumulation of his teaching to the religious leaders that he began in 15:1-2, so you may want to include verses 1-2 in your story. In the first two stories Jesus described the economy of God—that no sinner is too unvalued for God to search for and take him into his Kingdom. Jesus plays a part in God's purpose in doing that. A sinner's entrance into God's Kingdom is cause for great celebration. This third story takes it a step further, as parables often do—Jesus invites the religious leaders to change their own actions in response to God's action of accepting sinners—or will the religious leaders continue to act as the older brother did? Jesus fulfills two goals with this parable: 1) He expresses the magnitude and consistency of God's grace, and 2) He invites the religious leaders to align with God in accepting sinners into the kingdom and celebrating their entrance. Ultimately, this parable implies that Jesus can forgive sins as the representative of God.

Story Outline

- a. Introduction of characters and setting the scene for the story (15:11-12)
- b. The younger son's life in a distant land (15:13-16)
- c. The younger son comes to his senses (15:17-19)
- d. The father joyfully restores his son (15:20-24)
- e. The older son protests (15:25-30)
- f. The father explains his joy and invites the older son to join them (15:31-32)

Cultural Background

The tax collectors mentioned at the beginning of Luke 15 were Jews who collected tariffs, customs, and tolls at commercial centers for the Roman government. They bid for the authority to do so, and so their profits were determined by how much they could collect over how much they had already paid for the right to collect these taxes. Dishonesty among them was rife, and in fact tax collectors were not allowed to give witness in court because of their known corruption. They were placed in the same category as prostitutes and other sinners. Be sure that it is clear that the tax collectors were considered sinners too, or simply say that Jesus spent time with sinners.

Both Pharisees and Sadducees were Jewish religious parties at that time. Many scribes and priests were members of one of these sects. If possible, it is best to keep these sect names as generic as possible—'religious leaders.' If you use a term for 'religious leaders' used in a major religion here, be sure that those names do not refer ONLY to a member of that specific religion. The **teachers of religious law** studied, interpreted, and taught the law of Moses.

The younger son may have been no older than 17, since it is implied that he is unmarried, and marriage normally (although not always) took place between 18-20 years of age.

The father would normally leave an inheritance to his sons, but he would give twice the portion to his eldest. Therefore, the younger son would receive 1/3 of the inheritance at the death of his father. If the disposition of the inheritance happened earlier, the portion for the younger son would be less,



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perhaps only 2/9. In the Second Temple Jewish Literature, there have been cases of the father giving away his inheritance before his death, but it is frowned upon. (Tob. 8:21, Sir. 33:21-24) In this story, the father divides his estate at this time and therefore, by implication, gives the eldest son his share also (vs. 31 seems to indicate this), but the father would have remained on the property and had the right to control it until his death. The father also usually holds a moral claim to the way the inheritance is used, which was obviously ignored by the younger son. By receiving the younger son back into the family although he had spent all of his portion of the inheritance, the father would have had to take some from the older brother.

Even if a father had divided his estate before his death, it would have been a rare occurrence for the estate to be transformed into transportable capital. The fact that the younger son must have done this in order to be able to leave with his inheritance is even more shocking. The younger son has broken all family ties—he even travels to a Gentile area, evidenced by the presence of pigs.

The younger son ends up getting a job feeding swine, a detestable occupation to the Jews. The younger son had fallen to the lowest depths at this point.

The ring, sandals, and robe all symbolized the son's restoration to a place of honor within the family. The **best robe in the house** was reserved for honored guests. The ring was an almost royal symbol of authority. The sandals indicated that the son was a freeman and not a slave.

The **fattened calf** was a special calf that was reserved for special celebrations, as meat was not usually eaten at meals. These calves would be given an overabundance of grain so that they were ready and fat when it came time for a feast.

Words and phrases

The **wild living** in 15:14 refers to reckless or extravagant living. The younger son did useless things with his money, and probably including inappropriate things like gambling, holding big parties, getting drunk, and spending time with immoral women.

Hired servants are people of low status who work for pay or for food, usually getting paid on a daily wage basis.

The father **embraced** his son, meaning that he threw his arms around him. The father **kissed** his son; in that culture it probably meant that he kissed him on each cheek. The verb form suggests that the father kissed his son repeatedly. The kiss and embrace show his affectionate greeting to his son. You may explain the meaning by stating that the father kissed and embraced his son to greet him, or, if your culture does not greet in this way, you may generalize the action by simply saying that the father greeted his son affectionately.

I have sinned against both heaven and you can be restated as **I have sinned against both God and you**. Jews often used **heaven** in place of God's name because they hesitated to say his name. You may make the meaning explicit in your story by saying **I have sinned against both God and you...**The order of "heaven" and then "father" is significant—the son has first of all sinned against God himself. The son has sinned against his father by dishonoring him, and against God because he has broken the 5th commandment that tells him to honor his parents.



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The father says that his younger son **was dead and has now returned to life**. This probably does not imply that the father had totally disinherited his son, but that either his son was thought to be dead because they had not heard from him, or that the son had announced his intentions to never return, and therefore was as good as dead. If your audience will think that the father meant that the son was literally dead, you may say something like ***it was like this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life***...You may do the same thing with ***it was like he was lost but now is found***.



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Creation to Return Storyboard



Significance, Security & Acceptance

Restored in Christ

I Am Significant

I am no longer worthless, inadequate, helpless or hopeless. In Christ I am deeply significant and special. God says:

Scripture	Truth	I believe this:		
		Never	Sometimes	Always
Matthew 5: 13, 14	I am the salt of the earth and the light of the world.			
John 15: 1, 5	I am a branch of the true vine, Jesus, a channel of His life.			
John 15: 16	I have been chosen and appointed by God to bear fruit.			
Acts 1: 8	I am a personal, Spirit- empowered witness of Christ.			
1 Corinthians 3: 16	I am a temple of God.			
2 Corinthians 5: 17-21	I am a minister of reconciliation for God.			
2 Corinthians 6: 1	I am God's fellow-worker.			
Ephesians 2: 6	I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms.			
Ephesians 2: 10	I may approach God with freedom and confidence.			
Philippians 4: 13	I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!			



I Am Secure

I am no longer guilty, unprotected, alone or abandoned. In Christ I am totally secure. God says:

Scripture	Truth	I believe this		
		Never	Sometimes	Always
Romans 8: 1,2	I am free forever from condemnation.			
Romans 8: 28	I am assured that all things work together for good.			
Romans 8: 31-34	I am free from any condemning charges against me.			
Romans 8: 35-39	I cannot be separated from the love of God.			
2 Corinthians 1: 21,22	I have been established, anointed and sealed by God.			
Philippians 1: 6	I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected.			
Colossians 3: 3	I am hidden with Christ in God.			
2 Timothy 1: 7	I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.			
Hebrews 4:16	I can find grace and mercy to help in time of need.			
1 John 5: 18	I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me.			

I Am Accepted

I am no longer rejected, unloved or dirty. In Christ I am completely accepted. God says:

Scripture	Truth	I believe this		
		Never	Sometimes	Always
John 1: 12	I am God's child.			
John 15: 15	I am Christ's friend.			
Romans 5: 1	I have been justified.			
1 Corinthians 6: 17	I am united with the Lord and I am one spirit with Him.			
1 Corinthians 6: 19, 20	I have been bought with a price. I belong to God.			
Ephesians 1:1	I am a saint, a holy one.			
Ephesians 1: 5	I have been adopted as God's child.			
Ephesians 2: 18	I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.			
Colossians 1: 14	I have been redeemed and forgiven for all my sins.			
Colossians 2: 10	I am complete in Christ.			

Personal Thoughts and Reflections: