

Sacred Story: The Life of David **Transformation Storytelling**

Real change is often slow and small, so small that sometimes it is hard for us to see. More often, what we call change is temporary, and dependent on the strength or weakness of our willpower.

But occasionally, God uses an event or experience to do work in us that leaves us truly different, in some small way, than we were before, and more like Christ. This is more than a change of behavior. It is a fundamental change in who we are and in how we relate to God and others, a change only possible through the gospel of Jesus Christ. And when it happens, others see that something is different about us.

In a Transformation Story, you will tell about ONE such experience.

Ask yourself this question:

*What event or circumstance has made such a difference
in my life that people who know me well can see it?*

Then tell about it in the following way:

1) Tell what the event was. Give a very general description; don't get lost in the details. Write this out—it should be one or two paragraphs in length. It's good to leave us hanging, and wanting to hear more.

Let God be the "main character," the center of the story. You have a "bit part".

2) Describe yourself before this experience, and give one specific example of why you and others saw you as this way.

3) Tell about what God used to lead you in His direction (a person, a trip, a conversation, a Scripture, etc.)

4) Tell what is different about you. Ask someone close to you how you are different from this experience, and tell us what they said.

5) Transformation is not linear, and never complete until heaven. Tell one example of a recent struggle with what you thought had changed and was behind you. Tell what you hope for God to continue to do.

6) Tell us how we can rejoice with you over what God has done.

Practice your Transformation Story and time it. Limit your story to 15 minutes, and give us time and opportunity to ask questions and interact with you about it.

INTERACTING WITH THE STORYTELLER

The way we listen and interact with the speaker is an extended part of what God is doing in their lives, and in ours, through the work of His Spirit. After someone tells their story, we will have a time to respond to them. Here are some guidelines for that interaction.

1) We are often so tempted to give advice. We need to fight that temptation. Keep the focus on the speaker and his/her relationship with Christ, and enter into *their* story to see more of them, and more of God's work in them.

2) Be a safe listener. When we tell something to someone who is safe, we are not afraid of their judgment, criticism, or condescending attitude. A safe listener knows that he/she is guilty of as much or more as anything the storyteller is revealing, and so there is a mood of grace that invites the speaker to rest in their presence.

3) Have a Columbo-like curiosity. For you younger folks, Columbo was a television detective who would often scratch his tilted head and just say, "Mmmmmm." And then he would ask questions that didn't seem necessarily deep or probing—just curious. He just wanted to see more of what was there. That's what we want to do—see more. So be curious, and ask questions such as:

- a. What was that (whatever they are talking about) like for you?
- b. How was that different for you?
- c. Tell us more about that.

And be curious to see more of God with them in this. You might ask:

- d. What is different about how you relate to God?
- e. What do you know about God that you didn't (really) know before?
- f. What Scriptures do you more clearly see as "living and active" because of this event/experience?