

Title: Telling THE story  
Passage: 1 Cor 1:18-2:5  
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Series: Telling Stories

Six word stories. [video]

Legend has it 6 Word stories came from a bet someone once made with the author Ernest Hemingway to write a story in six words. He came up with this: "For sale: baby shoes, never worn." This idea has taken off. Millions of 6-word stories at <https://www.sixwordmemoirs.com/> collated by Larry Smith. Here are a few example six-word memoirs,

[slide]

- "Not quite what I was planning."
- "I still make coffee for two."
- "Named me Joy, didn't work out."
- "From migrant worker to NASA astronaut"
- "Married by Elvis, divorced by Friday"
- "Cursed with cancer, blessed with friends"

I like it. I wonder could you tell the good news story of life with Jesus, in 6 words?

It would be handy. How would you go at explaining the essentials of the Christian faith to someone? Why should I become a Christian?

[previous role – Uni evangelist]

We are learning how to share with others the compelling story of life with Jesus. [slide]

The good news of life with Jesus is told in the intersection of 3 stories.

- My Story - People get a sense of the lived reality of the Gospel.
- Your Story: Helps people know that they can relate to the story. They already have some inkling of God's great news.
- (today) The Story - Come to the centre of what Jesus is about: Saviour and Lord

THE STORY - reflect from 1 Cor 1:18-2:5

- To some it is foolishness Paul writes.
- Some it is a stumbling block
- But "24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Paul is clear. All people are accountable to THE story of what God has done through Jesus. Whether they believe this or not. FAITH in God is not just a

question of inner experience.

If we are going to share with others the compelling story of life with Jesus. At some point, THE Story has to be told. How would you go? [slide]

[GG- how I will not be in the places you go. Can't wait for a pastor...]

Must be encouraging Paul himself says

"3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men[g] but in the power of God."

It is intimidating thought. I don't want to mess it up. There is so much to say, where do I start?

THE story is a big story

how do you swallow an elephant, one bite at a time We do not have to tell the whole story in one sitting. [friends – took hours]

Maybe this brief breakdown could be helpful: [slide]

4 words, 1 verse

- God – People – Jesus – Response
- (with John 3:16)

God: The good news begins with God

People: The good news speaks about people

Jesus: Jesus is God's good news

Respond: The good news begs a response

THE story is Jesus. [slide]

The heart of THE Story is how Paul sums up the Message.

"2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

If you keep this in mind when it comes to sharing THE Story - Jesus: Jesus is God's good news

The good news is Jesus, not facts about Jesus or dot points covering the whole biblical history.

We need to renew our vision of Jesus, be fascinated by him once again.

Start Qu: What was and is so special about Jesus

- his eternal qualities (ie pre-existence)
- his lived life (what he said and did)
- his Lordship

Reflect on:

- Son of God - how do you know this in his life?

- Son of Man - what does this mean
- Saviour - How do you see this in his life?

What does his death mean?

People might say: ' Jesus accepts me as I am'- really telling own experience, my story  
Change to: Jesus accepted people as they were- He is still the same today

### THE story is a story [slide]

How often did Jesus (and Paul and others) tell the gospel by delivering a series of propositional facts? [slide]

“in our attempts to make the gospel clear, we have often squeezed all the life out of it. Jesus parables were intriguing, open to interpretation, playful, interesting. They provoked people to search further for the truth.” Shape of things to come, p100

Can we learn to tell THE story as stories again?

- Reconciliation– the Prodigal son
- Using the bible: Luke 7 – a woman who had lived a sinful life

### THE story connects with life [slide]

Several themes are often present in faith conversations

- Sin & Shame
- Identity
- Belonging
- Wellbeing & Suffering
- Meaning & Purpose
- Proof
- Future

Every year, I would prepare stories or responses for each of these themes. You could too.

(example <https://www.storyrunners.org/stories/>)

### Could you do it in 6 words? [slide]

(this week's link article)

Jason

- Jesus came, renewed life, for you
- In love, God gave everyone Jesus
- Life with Jesus is always better
- Jesus powerful risen lord defeats evil

Jasmine (11 year old) [slide]

- Jesus rescued us for the world
- God loved us and saved us
- I love Jesus, you can too

Ann

- God has no favourites just saying

[Puki story – shared before]

What is your 6 word gospel story? [slide]

**When it comes to sharing with others the compelling story of life with Jesus, we don't need fancy words.**

We don't need lofty words, or worldly wisdom.

That's not our job. We are witnesses. We share with others what we know about Jesus. It might be in weakness or fear or with much trembling. It might feel it lacks plausible words of wisdom.

But this is the testimony of God, entrusted to you.

THE story is not about you. In these moments God himself chooses you to carry the message about his son.

Read v26-31 to close [slide]

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards,[b] not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being[c] might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him[d] you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

Response/Prayer/Care cards

# GROWTH GROUP QUESTIONS

Have a go at explaining the essentials of the Christian faith. Why should I become a Christian?

## Method

Pair up - attempt to lead your partner, to Christ. Explain that you are a non-Christian who is not closed to the idea of Christianity and would like someone to explain to you just what it's all about. Try to be genuine and as non-Christian as possible; ask questions, throw in red herrings and so on.

Several themes are often present in faith conversations

1. Sin & Shame
2. Identity
3. Belonging
4. Wellbeing & Suffering
5. Meaning & Purpose
6. Proof
7. Future

What parables, Bible stories or responses can connect to these themes?

Write & Share 6-word Gospel stories?

Jason's examples - 6 Word stories for Atonement Metaphors.

- moral-influence model - Jesus' righteous suffering is our example
- representative punishment - died my death, gives his life
- God offers forgiveness - God forgives us, through Jesus' death
- Jesus frees us from shame - Freed from shame, given Jesus honour
- Saved by Jesus' blood - a purified life through Jesus' blood
- Justification through Jesus' faithful obedience - Right with God, because of Jesus
- Jesus suffered, in our place, the ultimate consequences of our sin. - Jesus died dealing with my sin
- God raised Jesus from the dead and triumphed over death (Christus Victor) - Jesus defeats death, powerful risen Lord
- The cross stops the cycle of violence - The cross stops violent, wrong power
- The cross disarms the principalities and powers - Jesus defeats evil and sin forever
- The cross judges - God judges sin at the

cross

- The cross reveals - Jesus' cross shows us God's love