

INSPIRED STORY TELLING.



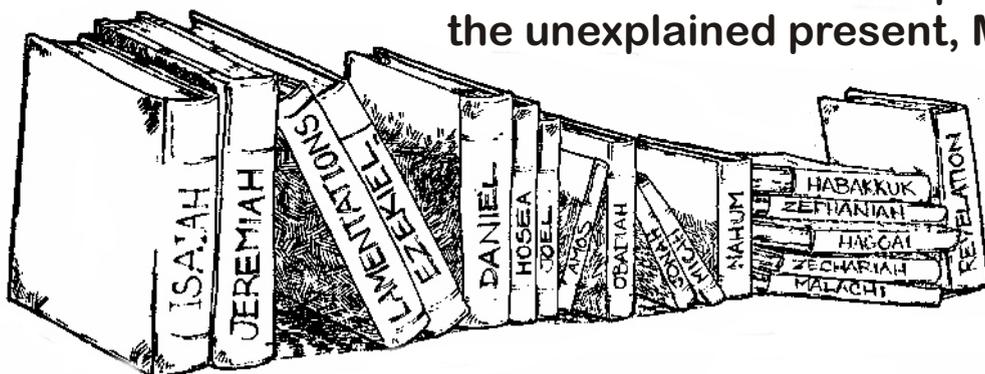
Good story telling is about relationships - those first of all that are established between the reader and the characters in the story. In oral story telling however, there is another relationship that is significant - the one between the story teller and the audience. Story telling is not about someone tossing out a mouthful of words and another bunch of people catching them. It's about something being created between them - the result of imagination and participation and eye contact and laughter and response.

In Biblical storytelling we have a third special relationship - that between the listener and God. This is the most important relationship of them all, because 'story' is the way God has chosen to reveal Himself to us. It is an opportunity for God to reveal Himself, to show us who He is and what He has done. So storytelling is sacred - yes, but it also can be enormous fun! Deciding how to tell the story is the fun part, so here are a few tips to help you.



TOP TEN STORYTELLING TIPS

- 1. Adopt the attitude of play** - that you want to have fun with the children, and then when it is more serious they will follow you there too.
- 2. Lay down a few rules** - allow them to laugh when it is appropriate, but then when you want quiet again, simply raise your hand in the air, to signal that it is time to settle down again, and move on with the story.
- 3. Keep it simple** - find a simple voice, facial expression, or posture that will distinguish one character from another. Limit descriptive language and costumes and props, as they can slow you down and hinder the explanation rather than aid it if not used correctly.
- 4. Add speaking voices** - by altering your voice and pitch.
- 5. Be prepared to look foolish** - children love it when you give them everything you've got. Being half hearted always works against the story.
- 6. Use repetition** - catchy phrases being repeated again and again, help the audience to interact and makes the story more memorable. When I tell the story of Jonah, I start with the phrase, 'Jonah was a groaner!' And the children groan every time they hear it. It keeps coming up, again and again, and each time the groans get louder and louder. It is fun and helps get the point across.
- 7. Use participation** - the important thing with this is to clearly explain what you want from them, encourage them along the way, and make the activity as much fun as possible. You can use actions, phrases, etc.
- 8. Keep it short** - Better a few short stories than one long one, or one short story, and then some rhyme or poems to fill in the gaps.
- 9. Don't worry if you have to use the book** - preparing a story every week means lots of memorization. You can apply most of the ideas given here with a book in your hand as long as you have familiarized yourself with the story and worked out how you want it to go and what participation you expect.
- 10. Finally, have fun** - if you are enjoying yourself, the children will too. They will learn as much about God from the way you tell the story - from who you are - as they will from the story itself.



'Men wrote of the unrecorded past, Men wrote of the unexplained present, Men wrote of the unknown future Under the Inspiration of God.'