

youthESource Bible Study

Sharing Jesus - Sharing the Faith Bible Study Series

By Jay Reed

This series of four Bible studies on sharing faith (being witnesses to the Gospel in our lives) is designed to help teens overcome fears and give them a simple framework to share the hope that they have in Jesus Christ.

Session 1, "Why Share Your Faith" helps them to understand what God has done for them in Jesus, and that He uses ordinary people such as them to be salt and light to the world around them. The power to change hearts and lives is the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel. He simply asks people like us to be messengers of His Good News.

Session 2, "God's Story" helps them review the basics of the faith—our condemnation under sin; our redemption through Jesus' atoning sacrifice; the new life He has bought for us, including the gift of the Holy Spirit and the promise of eternal life; and the personal application of all His promises in Holy baptism.

Session 3, "Your Story" challenges them to see their lives through God's eyes and be able to share how Jesus has made and makes a difference in their lives every day.

Session 4, "Seeing How God's Story Colors My Story and Their Story" (I know, super long title...) gets them to examine how the Good News of Jesus applies to their friends who don't know Jesus and challenges them to pray for ways to communicate the Gospel to those friends.

Take some time to read through both the leaders' guides and the student pages well in advance of the teaching sessions. There are some suggestions in the guide to help the studies be more effective in your students' lives. You might also think of other activities to add which would increase the impact.

Finally, this series might be used as a springboard to focus your youth ministry on outreach and witnessing, with regular prayer sessions and follow up during your activities.

Why Share your Faith

Leader's Page

Opener- Divide your class into groups of three or four students. Give each group one dice. Have them take turns rolling and then sharing the following based on what they roll:

- 1- One great experience they've had this past month
- 2- Two fun times they've had with friends
- 3- Three achievements they're proud of
- 4- Four possessions they enjoy and why
- 5- Five things that make them happy
- 6- Six of the best gifts they've ever received

Give them five minutes or so to roll the dice and share their answers. When time is up, ask them, "How difficult was it to come up with things to share?" and, "Could you have kept going for a while?" Allow them to respond, then say something like, "What if sharing your faith was as easy as coming up with responses from this game? We're going to take some time over the next few sessions to see how sharing your faith can be a natural part of your life. But the first question we want to ask is 'Why?' Why share your faith?"

Why Reflection-

Pass out the student sheets and give them a few minutes to complete the "Why Reflection" at the top. It's alright if they struggle a bit with the answers. The point is to get them to think about and share the difficulties they face (as well as the successes) in trying to communicate the Gospel in a personal way to others.

Once students are finished, ask various students about how they scored themselves and why they chose those scores. Ask them about their fears and confidences when it comes to talking about their Christian faith and what they would like to be able to do better.

It's good to remind students that not everyone is an evangelist in the way many think of that term. Some are very gifted in sharing the Gospel, others not so much, and yet they have other gifts which still serve the overall sharing of the Gospel (perhaps they simply invite someone to church, perhaps they open their home for a small group Bible study where another leads and others invite their friends, etc.) and thus they still participate in the Church's call to "baptize and teach."

The Why from The Word...

Direct their attention to the Bible passages on the student page. If you have a smaller class, you can work through the verses and questions all together. If you have a larger group, you can have them work in their smaller groups from the opener to come up with the answers and have them share with the larger group after they're finished. Below are listed some responses:

The Word

John 17:20

The Why

Jesus is praying for those who will hear the Gospel through us

Philemon 1:6	In the process of sharing our faith, we grow in our knowledge and understanding of all the great things we have in Christ
Mark 5:18-20	Jesus simply asks us to share the difference He makes in our lives so people might see Him working on and in us
Acts 1:8	The Holy Spirit works in us to make us "witnesses"—people who simply share what we know about the love of Jesus
John 4:35; Luke 19:10	There are many people Jesus wants to bring into a saving relationship with Him. His Word, the Gospel is the power to do that. He sends His people (us) into the world (the harvest) that we might share the good news and more people might come to faith by the power of the Gospel.
Romans 10:14-17	Faith comes from hearing the Gospel. God sends people to preach, to share the Gospel, that others might hear and believe.

My Why-

After you have discussed the whys that they discovered in the Word, challenge them to come up with a statement of why to share their faith.

To keep their statements Gospel focused (what God does rather than what we need to do) have them use the following template:

By sharing my faith, God can use me to...

Tell them to think of people they know who are not Christian. They could be close friends or family, or people they don't even know yet. But try to get someone in mind.

In later sessions students will get a clearer focus on the Gospel and their faith and how God can and does work. The purpose of this session is to simply get them to see that God works by the power of the Gospel when it is shared by people like us.

Close your time together in prayer asking the Lord to open their eyes to see the power of His Word to change hearts and minds of the people who do not yet know Him.

Why Share Your Faith

Student page

Share Your Life!

Take turns rolling the dice and, after each roll, answer the corresponding question with the number on the dice.

- 1- One great experience you've had this past month
- 2- Two fun times you've had with friends
- 3- Three achievements you're proud of
- 4- Four possessions you enjoy and why
- 5- Five things that make you happy
- 6- Six of the best gifts you've ever received

Why Reflection-

Answer each of the questions below on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being high and 1 being low.

- 1- I am comfortable when it comes to talking about faith and Jesus with people I know ____
- 2- I am comfortable when it comes to talking about faith and Jesus with people I don't know ____
- 3- I regularly share my faith and invite people to church, Sunday school or youth activities ____
- 4- I am comfortable with my knowledge of the Christian faith and feel I could answer most questions that a non-Christian might ask ____
- 5- I can point to a number of examples where God is active in my life and in the world around me ____
- 6- I can often see how knowing Jesus would be a benefit for my non-Christian friends ____
- 7- I am excited about sharing with others how God has blessed my life and do it on a regular basis ____

The Why of the Word-

Look up the following passages of Scripture. Next to each passage, jot down what it says about why we should share our faith with others.

The Word

The Why...

John 17:20

Philemon 1:6

Mark 5:18-20

Acts 1:8

John 4:35; Luke 19:10

Romans 10:14-17

My Why-

By sharing my faith, God can use me to...

God's Story—Rediscovering the Good News

Leaders Guide

Opener- Divide your class into groups of three or four students. Give each group one dice. Have them take turns rolling then sharing the following based on what they roll:

- 1- One of their favorite characters of the Bible and why
- 2- Two things about God for which they are thankful
- 3- Three things they hope will be in Heaven
- 4- Four good things that God provides for them
- 5- Five ways God takes care of all creation
- 6- Six promises that come from God for His people

Give them five minutes or so to roll the dice and share their answers. When time is up, ask them, "How difficult was it to come up with things to share?" and, "Could you have kept going for a while?" Ask, "Was this a little more difficult than simply sharing about your life from last time? Why or why not?"

Point out that we are not always consciously thinking about how God works in our lives and the world around us. In this session they will rediscover why the Gospel, "God's Story," of Jesus is such good news and be able to share it in a simple way.

The Colors of God's Story--

Pass out the student sheets and, in small groups of 3-4, have your students complete "The Colors of the Gospel" portion. Explain that the words and colors listed at the top are not in the right order. Their challenge is to read the passages, figure out what word goes with each set and then what an appropriate color would be that represents those passages and that word. Under the "Truth" column, have them come up with a short statement that reflects God's truth from his Word

The idea of this exercise is to try to help your students make a simple association to God's Story with one word and a color to aid them in recalling and sharing it with others.

Below is the completed chart for you to guide your students:

Passage	Word	Color	Truth
Psalms 51:5 Is. 59:2	Condemned	Black	Sin condemns us
Rom. 5:8-10 Col. 1:21-22	Reconciled	Red	We are reconciled to God through Jesus' blood
Is. 1:18 2 Cor. 5:17	New	White	Christ makes us new
Jn. 14:26 1 Cor. 6:19-20	Helped	Green	The Holy Spirit is our helper

John 5:24
1 Pet. 1:3-5

Promised

Gold

God promises eternal life to those who believe in Jesus

Acts 2:38-39
Titus 3:4-7

Washed

Blue

In baptism, God applies all His promises in Jesus to us

Below are some ideas for aiding students in being able to recall and share God's Story:

- 1- Use colored beads to create a bracelet and assemble it as you are sharing the example below. That way, they'll have a wearable witness tool!
- 2- Use paracord strands of the colors for the same effect.
- 3- Explore other craft ideas or activities that involve the colors of God's Story that they could wear, have on a keychain or carry with them that would help them to share the Gospel.

For example, if you were using the bead bracelet idea, you might share something like this:
"God's story can be explained by the colors on this bracelet. The black bead represents sin that condemns us and separates us from God. The red bead stands for the blood of Jesus, who gave His life to reconcile us back to God. Since we have forgiveness through Jesus, we are now new creations in God's sight, represented by the white bead. As His people, God does not leave us to live life alone, but has given us a helper to guide, strengthen and help us grow in His Word, which is reflected by the green bead. The gold bead represents the promise God has given us of eternal life, so we have no fear of death. Finally, the blue bead reminds us that God washes away all our sins and applies all these promises to us by His Word working in and through our baptism."

If time allows, have kids practice sharing God's story in their groups.

Close your time in prayer. Preview the next session by saying something like, "In the next session, we'll see how God's Story colors your story."

God's Story

Student page

Share Your Life!

Take turns rolling the dice and, after each roll, answer the corresponding question with the number on the dice.

- 1- One of their favorite characters of the Bible & why
- 2- Two things about God for which they are thankful
- 3- Three things they hope will be in Heaven
- 4- Four good things that God provides for them
- 5- Five ways God takes care of all creation
- 6- Six promises that come from God for His people

The Colors of God's Story-

Colors-	White	Words-	Condemned
	Red		Washed
	Gold		Reconciled
	Blue		Promised
	Green		Helped
	Black		New

Passage	Word	Color	Why
Psalm 51:5 Is. 59:2			
Rom. 5:8-10 Col. 1:21-22			
Is. 1:18 2 Cor. 5:17			
Jn. 14:26 1 Cor. 6:19-20			
John 5:24 1 Pet. 1:3-5			
Acts 2:38-39 Titus 3:4-7			

Your Story—The Difference the Gospel Makes in your Life

Leaders Guide

Opener- Divide your class into groups of three or four students. Give each group one dice. Have them take turns rolling then sharing the following based on what they roll:

- 1- One time you got lost and were found
- 2- Two injuries you recovered from
- 3- Three scars and how you got them
- 4- Four things you worry about
- 5- Five hopes you have for the future
- 6- Six people you hope come to know the Gospel as their own

Give them five minutes or so to roll the dice and share their answers. When time is up, ask them, "How difficult was it to come up with things to share?" and, "Could you have kept going for a while? Were some of these harder to answer than others?"

Explain that the last session was about rediscovering the Gospel as God's Story; that even though we are condemned by sin, God reconciles us back into a relationship with Him through Jesus' blood shed on the cross. Through Jesus, God makes us new people and gives us His Holy Spirit as a helper. It's that Spirit working through God's Word that gives us hope each day through the promise of eternal life. All this, God applies to us individually by washing us in baptism.

God's Story review-

Pass out the student sheets and briefly review the chart at the top. You might want to go over the passages with students and refresh their memories with the colors, words and truths for each.

How the Colors of God's Story Color My story--

Next, have the students look at the "How the Colors of God's Story Color My Story" section. Explain that the point of this section is to help them see their lives in the context of the Gospel. That is to see how God colors their story.

Challenge them to look at the thought starters under each word and see if they can find an illustration that relates. Some students will be able to relate to experiences in their lives. Others will find that difficult but might be able to come up with a different illustration. They can choose whichever of the thought starters that is helpful to them.

It will be helpful to them if you can offer a few of your own as examples. Here are a couple examples for the first one:

A time in my life where I have been condemned, cut off, separated is when I lied about stealing something from my teacher's desk and everyone in class got punished for it. Nobody would talk to me.

Being condemned is like not having any hope and thinking things are never going to get better.

Have them work in their small groups and share their responses with each other. If there's time, invite a couple of students to walk through their responses in front of the class.

Close with a time of prayer.

Your Story- The Difference the Gospel makes in Your Life

Student page

Share Your Life!

Take turns rolling the dice and, after each roll, answer the corresponding question with the number on the dice.

- 1- One time you got lost and were found
- 2- Two injuries you recovered from
- 3- Three scars and how you got them
- 4- Four things you worry about
- 5- Five hopes you have for the future
- 6- Six people you hope come to know the Gospel as their own

God's Story

Passage	Word	Color	Truth
Psalms 51:5 Is. 59:2	Condemned	Black	Sin condemns us
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Is. 1:18 2 Cor. 5:17	New	White	Christ makes us new
Jn. 14:26 1 Cor. 6:19-20	Helped	Green	The Holy Spirit is our helper
John 5:24 1 Pet. 1:3-5	Promised	Gold	God promises eternal life to those who believe in Jesus
Acts 2:38-39 Titus 3:4-7	Washed	Blue	In baptism, God applies all His promises in Jesus to us

How the Colors of God's Story Color My Story

1- Condemned (black)

A time in my life where I have been condemned, cut off, separated is...

Or

Being condemned is like...

2- Reconciled (red)

A time in my life when I was reconciled to someone, when I was forgiven and a relationship was restored was...

Or

Being reconciled is like...

3- New (white)

A time in my life when I got to start all over again with a new, clean slate was...

Or

Having a new start is like...

4- Helped (green)

A time when I got critical help in my life was...

Or

Having a good helper for every day in your life is like...

5- Promised (gold)

A time in my life where a promise gave me hope to get through something was...

Or

A promise gives us hope, which helps us in tough times. It's like...

6- Washed (blue)

A time that I was the dirtiest in my life and how good it felt to be washed was...

Or

Clean water washing away all our dirt and grime is like...

Seeing How God's Story Colors My Story and Their Story

Leaders Guide

Opener- Divide your class into groups of three or four students. Give each group one dice. Have them take turns rolling then sharing the following based on what they roll:

- 1- One gift you'd give your best friend
- 2- Two fears you see in people your age
- 3- Three words of advice you'd give to a younger sibling
- 4- Four "needs" kids your age have that are not really needs
- 5- Five difficulties kids face in their homes or at school
- 6- Six challenges that your friends are facing right now

Give them five minutes or so to roll the dice and share their answers. Explain that part of being able to share our faith effectively is being good listeners and paying attention to what is going on in the lives of those around us.

In this session students will come up with ways of how they can share their faith in ways that both honors God and blesses their friends.

God's Story Colors My Story Review-

Have students look over the last two sessions to refresh what they learned about God's Story and how it colors their story. You might want to invite a student or two to walk through the words, colors and what they represent or go over it yourself.

Introduce the next activity by saying something like:

"Jesus said that His followers would be a light to the world (Mt.5:14) and His witness to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). In that He promised to be with them always, even to the end of the world (Mt.28:20). As modern followers of Jesus, we have that same invitation and promise as we live our lives every day. God will use the Gospel to touch the lives of people around us in many ways. In this session we will be looking to see who some of those people might be and how the Holy Spirit might use us to share the Gospel."

Who's Near?

The people closest to us are often the ones that are most available to share our faith with. Ask your students to fill out the "Who's Near?" portion of the student sheet. After they have narrowed the list down to three names, invite them to fill out a "Their Story Prayer Sheet" for each of the people they chose.

Explain that in order to sensitively tell God's story and their story with their friend's story, it is helpful to know some things about their friend's story. The prayer sheet is simply a way to think about their friend and prayerfully consider "openings" where the Gospel might be applied.

For instance, if one of the special needs or issues in a friend's life is loneliness, then sharing how Jesus is a friend to the lonely and inviting them to church would be a way to connect God's story to their story.

As they fill out their sheets, they will find that there is information they don't know. Explain that these sheets can be an ongoing reminder to listen to their friend's story and pray. In prayer, they can not only lift up their friend and their concerns before God, but also ask the Lord how your student might connect the Gospel to their friend's specific needs.

After they have filled out a sheet for each person, ask them to share with the others in their group. Encourage group members to offer ideas that offer additional opportunities to share the Gospel.

After they have shared, encourage them to pray for one another and one of the people for whom they have filled out a profile sheet.

See How God's Story Colors My Story and Their Story

Student Sheet

Share Your Life!

Take turns rolling the dice and, after each roll, answer the corresponding question with the number on the dice.

- 1- One gift you'd give your best friend
- 2- Two fears you see in people your age
- 3- Three words of advice you'd give to a younger sibling
- 4- Four "needs" kids your age have that are not really needs
- 5- Five difficulties kids face in their homes or at school
- 6- Six challenges that your friends are facing right now

Who's Near?

List below people (relatives, friends, acquaintances) who you think are not Christian and who you have contact with on a regular basis:

Underline the ones you have influence with

Put a check mark by those you think are open to the Gospel

Circle those you like spending time with

Draw a star by those who you think might come to Sunday morning worship, Sunday school or a church youth event.

Draw a smiley face next to those God has given you a special concern for.

List the three people that have the most marks by their names below:

1

2

3

Fill out a prayer sheet for each person

Their Story Prayer Sheet...

Name:

Basic Information (address, phone, birthday, etc)

Family information-

Hobbies, talents, interests-

Special needs, problem concerns...

Openness toward God (church, youth group etc)

Things we have in common (interests, friends, classes...)

Where is my story similar to their story?

What part of God's story would speak to their story?

Tips-

Find ways to listen to and get to know their story.

Pray regularly and specifically.

Show that you care and be intentional in building a stronger relationship.

Invite other Christians come alongside.

Be patient & don't get discouraged. God works in His time.