

## First Story of Hope

### **Remember:**

- **Do** Stick to the **bible stories**.
- **Do** only talk 30%, trainers, and let your group talk 70%.
- **Do** let the Holy Spirit work, rather than looking for right answers
- **Don't** talk about politics.
- **Don't** talk about religion, either good or bad.
- **Don't** chase "rabbits" (subjects which are appealing, but off the topic)
- **Don't** dominate the conversation; let everyone participate

**First Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes): Trainer tells his/her story, then ask one or more of them to tell their story if they are comfortable doing so.

**Second Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes): Ask two willing volunteers to read the story below *in two different translations*, (ask two different people, or you read it once, and one other person reads it once) *then* Pray a SHORT PRAYER, (or ask someone to pray) for The Holy Spirit to teach us. **Trainer** then retells the story, to model for them to retell later.

### **First Story of Hope:                    The Sinful Woman** *Luke 7:36-50*

**36** When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. **37** A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. **38** As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. **39** When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner." **40** Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you." "Tell me, teacher," he said. **41** "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, (about two years' salary) and the other fifty. **42** Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?" **43** Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven." "You have judged correctly," Jesus said. **44** Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. **45** You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. **46** You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. **47** Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little." **48** Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." **49** The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" **50** Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace"

**Sword Bible Study Method:** *(remember: encourage ALL participation and answers)*

- 1. What does this story say about Jesus?**
- 2. What does this story say about the sinful woman? What does this story say about Simon the Pharisee (Jewish religious scholar)? What does this story say about the other guests?**
- 3. What are the sins to avoid in this story? What are the promises to claim in this story?**
- 4. What are the examples to follow in this story? What are the commands to obey in this story?**
- 5. Who do you identify with in this story? Why?**

**Final Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes): **Practice**

- Get in groups of 2-3, and retell the Bible story above to each other in their own words. (or do a skit to retell the story)
- Ask 2-3 willing volunteers to retell the story to everyone.
- Trainers share whom they will tell this story to this week. Do they have a friend they can share this story with this week?
- Share personally (trainers) what you will do this week because of this story. Ask them what they will do because of this story. Pray for them to succeed at what they said they would do. (and other needs)

## Second Story of Hope

### **Remember:**

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- **Don't** dominate the conversation; let everyone participate

### **First Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes):

- **Fishing:** Who did you retell last week's story to? How did it go? Were there challenges, questions? Pray for friend and people who heard the story that week!
- **Following:** How did you live out the story from last week in your own lives?

**Second Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes): Ask two willing volunteers to read the story below *in two different translations*, (ask two different people, or you read it once, and one other person reads it once) *then* Pray a SHORT PRAYER, (or ask someone to pray) for The Holy Spirit to teach us. *Trainer* then retells the story, to model for them to retell later.

### **Second Story of Hope: Who can come to God? Luke 18:9-17**

**9** To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: **10** "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11** The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. **12** I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' **13** "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' **14** "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." **15** People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. **16** But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. **17** Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

### **Sword Bible Study Method:** (*remember: encourage ALL participation and answers*)

- 1. What does this story say about Jesus? What does this story say about God?**
- 2. What does this story say about the Pharisee (Jewish religious scholar)? What does this story say about the tax collector? What does this story say about the disciples? What does this story say about the children?**
- 3. What are the sins to avoid in this story? What are the promises to claim in this story?**
- 4. What are the examples to follow in this story? What are the commands to obey in this story?**
- 5. Who do you identify with in this story? Why?**

### **Final Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes): **Practice**

- Get in groups of 2-3, and retell the Bible story above to each other in their own words. (or do a skit to retell the story)
- Ask 2-3 willing volunteers to retell the story to everyone.
- Trainers share whom they will tell this story to this week. Do they have a friend they can share this story with this week?
- Share personally (trainers) what you will do this week because of this story. Ask them what they will do because of this story.
- Pray for them to succeed at what they said they would do. (and other needs)

## Third Story of Hope

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- **Don't** dominate the conversation; let everyone participate

### **First Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes):

- **Fishing:** Who did you retell last week's story to? How did it go? Were there challenges, questions? Pray for friend and people who heard the story that week.
- **Following:** How did you live out the story from last week in your own lives?

**Second Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes): Ask two willing volunteers to read the story below *in two different translations*, (ask two different people, or you read it once, and one other person reads it once) *then* Pray a SHORT PRAYER, (or ask someone to pray) for The Holy Spirit to teach us. **Trainer** then retells the story, to model for them to retell later.

### **Third Story of Hope: Who is your God?** Acts 17:16-34

**Acts 17:16-34** <sup>16</sup> ¶ Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. <sup>17</sup> So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. <sup>18</sup> Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babblers wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"-because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. <sup>19</sup> And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" <sup>20</sup> For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." <sup>21</sup> Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. <sup>22</sup> ¶ So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. <sup>23</sup> For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, <sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. <sup>26</sup> And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, <sup>27</sup> that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, <sup>28</sup> for "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring." <sup>29</sup> ¶ Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. <sup>30</sup> The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, <sup>31</sup> because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." <sup>32</sup> ¶ Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." <sup>33</sup> So Paul went out from their midst. <sup>34</sup> But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

### **Final Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes): **Practice**

- Get in groups of 2-3, and retell the Bible story above to each other in their own words. (or do a skit to retell the story)
- Ask 2-3 willing volunteers to retell the story to everyone.
- Trainers share whom they will tell this story to this week. Who will they share this story with this week?
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## Fourth Story of Hope

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- **Don't** dominate the conversation; let everyone participate

### First Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes):

- **Fishing:** Who did you retell last week's story to? How did it go? Were there challenges, questions? Pray for friend and people who heard the story that week.
- **Following:** How did you live out the story from last week in your own lives?

**Second Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes):** Ask two willing volunteers to read the story below *in two different translations*, (ask two different people, or you read it once, and one other person reads it once) *then* Pray a SHORT PRAYER, (or ask someone to pray) for The Holy Spirit to teach us. **Trainer** then retells the story, to model for them to retell later.

### **Forth Story of Hope: Who is your God?** Matthew 16:21-17:9

*Jesus tells His gospel plan and displays His holiness as God's Son.* **21** From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. **22** Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" **23** Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." **24** Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **25** For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. **26** What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? **27** For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done. **28** "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

### **Sword Bible Study Method:** (*remember: encourage ALL participation and answers*)

1. **What does this story say about Jesus? What does this story say about God? What does this story say about God the Father?**
2. **What does this story say about the elders and chief priests? What does this story say about disciples? What does this story say about Peter?**
3. **What are the sins to avoid in this story? What are the promises to claim in this story?**
4. **What are the examples to follow in this story? What are the commands to obey in this story?**
5. **Who do you identify with in this story? Why?**

### Final Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes): **Practice**

- Get in groups of 2-3, and retell the Bible story above to each other in their own words. (or do a skit to retell the story)
- Ask 2-3 willing volunteers to retell the story to everyone.
- Trainers share whom they will tell this story to this week.
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## Fifth Story of Hope

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- **Don't** chase “rabbits” (subjects which are appealing, but off the topic)
- **Don't** dominate the conversation; let everyone participate

### First Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes):

- **Fishing:** Who did you retell last week's story to? How did it go? Were there challenges, questions? Pray for friend and people who heard the story that week!
- **Following:** How did you live out the story from last week in your own lives?

**Second Third of the Disciple Cycle** (20-30 minutes): Ask two willing volunteers to read the story below *in two different translations*, (ask two different people, or you read it once, and one other person reads it once) *then* Pray a SHORT PRAYER, (or ask someone to pray) for The Holy Spirit to teach us. **Trainer** then retells the story, to model for them to retell later.

### **Fifth Story of Hope: Who is your God?** Luke 22:66-23:25; 23:32-43

**Jesus Before Pilate and Herod** **66** At daybreak the council of the elders of the people, both the chief priests and the teachers of the law, met together, and Jesus was led before them. **67** “If you are the Messiah,” they said, “tell us.” Jesus answered, “If I tell you, you will not believe me, **68** and if I asked you, you would not answer. **69** But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.” **70** They all asked, “Are you then the Son of God?” He replied, “You say that I am.” **71** Then they said, “Why do we need any more testimony? We have heard it from his own lips.” **Luke 23 1** Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. **2** And they began to accuse him, saying, “We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king.” **3** So Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” “You have said so,” Jesus replied. **4** Then Pilate announced to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no basis for a charge against this man.” **5** But they insisted, “He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here.” **6** On hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean. **7** When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. **8** When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform a sign of some sort. **9** He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. **10** The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. **11** Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. **12** That day Herod and Pilate became friends—before this they had been enemies. **13** Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, **14** and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. **15** Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death. **16** Therefore, I will punish him and then release him.” **18** But the whole crowd shouted, “Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!” **19** (Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in the city, and for murder.) **20** Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. **21** But they kept shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” **22** For the third time he spoke to them: “Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore I will have him punished and then release him.” **23** But with loud shouts they insistently demanded that he be crucified, and their shouts prevailed. **24** So Pilate decided to grant their demand. **25** He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, the one they asked for, and surrendered Jesus to their will.others. **32** Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. **33** When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. **34** Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”[a] And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. **35** The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah,

the Chosen One.” **36** The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar **37** and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.” **38** There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. **39** One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” **40** But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? **41** We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” **42** Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. **43** Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.

**Sword Bible Study Method:** *(remember: encourage ALL participation and answers)*

- 1. What does this story say about Jesus? What does this story say about God?**
- 2. What does this story say about the disciples? What does this story say about the elders and people of Jerusalem? What does this story say about criminals to Jesus left and right? What does this story say about soldiers?**
- 3. What are the sins to avoid in this story? What are the promises to claim in this story?**
- 4. What are the examples to follow in this story? What are the commands to obey in this story?**
- 5. Who do you identify with in this story? Why?**

**Final Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes): Practice**

- Get in groups of 2-3, and retell the Bible story above to each other in their own words. (or do a skit to retell the story)
- Ask 2-3 willing volunteers to retell the story to everyone.
- Trainers share whom they will tell this story to this week. Do they have a friend they can share this story with this week?
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## Sixth Story of Hope

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### First Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes):

- **Fishing:** Who did you retell last week's story to? How did it go? Were there challenges, questions? Pray for friend and people who heard the story that week.
- **Following:** How did you live out the story from last week in your own lives?

### Second Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes):

Ask two willing volunteers to read the story below *in two different translations*, (ask two different people, or you read it once, and one other person reads it once) *then* Pray a SHORT PRAYER, (or ask someone to pray) for The Holy Spirit to teach us. *Trainer* then retells the story, to model for them to retell later.

### Sixth Story of Hope: Cost of following Christ? Luke 18:18-30, 19:1-10

**The Rich and the Kingdom of God** **18** A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" **19** "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. **20** You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother. **21** "All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said. **22** When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." **23** When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. **24** Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! **25** Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." **26** Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?" **27** Jesus replied, "What is impossible with man is possible with God." **28** Peter said to him, "We have left all we had to follow you!" **29** "Truly I tell you," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God **30** will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life." **1** Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. **5** When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." **6** So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. **7** All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." **8** But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." **9** Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

**Sword Bible Study Method:** *(remember: encourage ALL participation and answers)*

- 1. What does this story say about Jesus? What does this story say about God?**
- 2. What does this story say about a certain ruler? What does this story say about Zacchaeus? What does this story say about Peter? What's this story say about religious people?**
- 3. What are the sins to avoid in this story? What are the promises to claim in this story?**
- 4. What are the examples to follow in this story? What are the commands to obey in this story?**
- 5. Who do you identify with in this story? Why?**

**Final Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes): Practice**

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## Seventh Story of Hope

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### First Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes):

- **Fishing:** Who did you retell last week's story to? How did it go? Were there challenges, questions? Pray for friend and people who heard the story that week!
- **Following:** How did you live out the story from last week in your own lives?

**Second Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes):** Ask two willing volunteers to read the story below *in two different translations*, (ask two different people, or you read it once, and one other person reads it once) *then* Pray a SHORT PRAYER, (or ask someone to pray) for The Holy Spirit to teach us. **Trainer** then retells the story, to model for them to retell later.

**Seventh Story of Hope:**            **Merciful King?**            Matthew 18:21-35

**21** Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" **22** Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. **23** "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. **24** As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold[h] was brought to him. **25** Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. **26** "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' **27** The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

**28** "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. **29** "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.' **30** "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. **31** When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. **32** "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. **33** Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' **34** In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. **35** "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

**Sword Bible Study Method:** (*remember: encourage ALL participation and answers*)

1. **What does this story say about Jesus? What does this story say about God? What does this story say about the Kingdom of Heaven?**
2. **What does this story say about Peter? What does this story say about Master? What does this story say about servants?**
3. **What are the sins to avoid in this story? What are the promises to claim in this story?**
4. **What are the examples to follow in this story? What are the commands to obey in this story?**
5. **Who do you identify with in this story? Why?**

**Final Third of the Disciple Cycle (20-30 minutes): Practice**

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- Ask 2-3 willing volunteers to retell the story to everyone.
- Trainers share whom they will tell this story to this week. Do they have a friend they can share this story with this week?
- Share personally (trainers) what you will do this week because of this story. Ask them what they will do because of this story.
- Pray for them to succeed at what they said they would do. (and other needs)