

“Pass on Stories of Faith & Family”

As much as church and family mean to us, many of us know so little about the lives of the generations that preceded us. If we do not become intentional, the next generation will say the same about us. So how do we collect and pass on these stories? I will share my own and others' experiences and methods of collecting family stories, as well as the faith stories of your church.

1. What stories should we gather?
 - a. Family history
 - b. Personal stories from your family
 - c. Faith stories of those in your family
 - d. Your church's history
 - e. Faith stories of those in your church
2. How should we preserve them?
 - a. Recorded interviews or tours
 - b. Write them down
 - c. Tell them often
3. My projects:
 - a. “Cookbook” (stories, recipes and photos)
 - b. Cabin book (stories, surveys and photos)
 - c. Faith stories book (see below)
4. What will make people pick up this book? Or listen to your story?
 - a. Short entries
 - b. Humor
 - c. Photographs
 - d. Ownership
 - e. Time

Published materials mentioned in the workshop:

- *God Can!* by Calvin Rychener
- *I'm Not a Duck*, by John Walsh
- The Appreciation Game; contact anne@bibletelling.com

(I would be happy to tell you more about my books, but I have not gotten permission to share all my family's stories.)

To collect their faith stories, (book “C”), this is what I sent to my family members. Next, I met with them individually and took notes as I interviewed them, or I helped them get started on writing their own stories.

Here is the list of suggested questions to choose from. Choose the ones that spark an idea for you (or add your own):

1. What was your conversion experience?
2. What was another formative experience in your spiritual journey?
3. Did you have a spiritual mentor in your life? Tell a story about him/her.
4. What is your spiritual gift?
5. When and where were you baptized?
6. Who performed your wedding ceremony?
7. Tell a story from a mission trip or ministry in which you were involved.
8. What is a "life verse" for you? When did you choose it?
9. What is a favorite song? hymn? poem? (These don't need an explanation if you just want to include the selection itself.)
10. Tell about a place (or time) where you feel/felt especially close to God.
11. Complete this invitation to others to include in the collection: "Ask me more about _____."

The Process:

1. You do not need to answer all of the questions--just those that spark an idea for you.
2. I know some of you would have lengthy stories, but I want to keep these to a manageable length -- most less than 500 words, and maybe some up to 1000 words. (My experience is that people pick them up and ask questions about what is in them, so you'll have the chance to elaborate in conversation.)
3. This is a chance to tell stories about your experiences. Please resist the temptation to have a different agenda.
4. I would also like to include photos. If you have a picture of yourself at the age you were in the story, or of others involved in your story, please share them with me.