Morality in Orality

Ethics in Biblical Storytelling

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Introduction

Teaching God’s truth through story is nothing new. In 2008, however, the “church seemed to pick up on the fact that storytelling made sense in and of itself as a tool for evangelism.”1 Organizations specializing in the art of telling Bible stories are flourishing, recognizing that a well-told story catches attention and is likely to be remembered far longer than lists of facts or sermon outlines. Some of these organizations specialize in reaching illiterate societies. Others have broadened their intended audience, realizing that even among literate populations, a higher percentage of people prefer to learn orally rather than through printed media.

Some methods being promoted as storytelling, however, are falling into the same legalistic trap that has plagued other good methods of evangelism. Disregarding sound hermeneutical principles in favor of “just telling the story,” these storytellers have reduced the storytelling art to a formula. Trainees are directed into a method that rejects outside resources and instead are taught to be dependent upon personal interpretation that assumes the Holy Spirit’s guidance. Insisting that the trainee dig for “nuggets of gold” in biblical stories, they nevertheless deny the trainee access to the rich storehouses of the Church’s knowledge and spurn

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the God-ordained role of teacher. In so doing, they have rejected the very tools that can help the storyteller distinguish whether his nuggets of gold are the genuine metal or only fool’s gold.

**Storytelling has a purpose**

Anyone who tells a story, formally or informally, does so with a purpose. The story may be a narrative of the day’s events, or perhaps a child’s exaggerated telling about a gang of bullies that chased him home from school. The main purpose of such a story is to impart information.

A second purpose is to entertain. When the host of a children’s Halloween party dims the lights to tell traditional tales of ghosts and headless horsemen, he wants them to experience the scary pleasure of suspense, crowned with the customary “Boo!” at the end.

The third purpose of storytelling is to teach. Through story we learn the history of our own families, our nation, and our faith. Fictional tales, whether based on actual happenings or sourced entirely in the storyteller’s imagination, can teach the young what is considered honorable and good in society. Grandfathers in Ghana, for example, relate the folk tales of their tribes in order to instruct the young in right and wrong, instilling in them the moral values necessary to live successfully. The stories, much like Aesop’s fables, always end with “the moral of the story.”

It is very possible for stories to be informative, entertaining, and instructive all at the same time, including Bible stories. The primary purpose of Bible stories, however, is to teach. Jesus used story to teach about the Kingdom of God (e.g., Matt. 13:3-9), about forgiveness (e.g., Matt. 18:21-35), and about persistence in prayer (e.g., Lk. 18:1-8). He used story to answer questions, as he did in the account of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37).

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2 Told to the author by a Ghanaian mission leader, October 2009. The same pattern is expected in the telling of Bible stories.
Some have tried to separate storytelling from teaching. This distinction is both unnecessary and fallacious. When a storyteller speaks with the purpose of having the listeners come to predetermined conclusions, he is not simply “telling a story.” He is teaching. And as a teacher, he is included in James’ warning that teachers will be judged more strictly.

**Storytelling: one method among many**

It should not be necessary to defend storying as a method of teaching the Bible. The greater error is perhaps in defending it with arguments that raise story above other methods of teaching, particularly expository preaching. The wise teacher does not rank the various media, however, but chooses an approach that is appropriate to the audience and its context.

Support for story over exposition is sometimes attempted with statistics. “God wrote the Bible as 75% narrative (story), 15% poetry, and 10% expository [sic],” claims Simply the Story, a worldwide organization committed to spreading the Word of God through story. Statistics based on how much of the Bible is narrative, however, are irrelevant. The Bible itself is a text, written so that God’s people would have a permanent record of past events and present instructions. Our job is to pass on this message. The medium chosen should be based on factors necessary to achieve communication rather than on the percentage of narrative in Scripture.

A similar argument comes from counting the amount of text given to Jesus’ stories and parables in the gospels. But consider this statement from the Gospel of Mark: “When the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach (Mk. 1:21).” We have no clue either to

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3 This is a basic tenet taught by Simply the Story, a division of The God’s Story Project that trains people to be storytellers but without directly teaching. A careful examination of their materials (or attending the workshops) makes it clear, however, that teaching is the goal. Storytellers are to lead their audience, through carefully crafted questions, into the spiritual truths contained in the story.

4 Jas. 3:1.

5 Jn. 18:20 indicates that Jesus continually taught in the synagogues and in the temple.
the content of his teaching or the length of time he spent teaching. Nor do we know what genre he used. Can we legitimately say, then, that Jesus told more stories than he explained the Word of God? No. The amount of room the account takes on the page cannot determine the relative importance of using story, sermon, or any other method of proclaiming the Word.

A particular kind of story, the parable, is also used to argue the necessity of using story. Did not the evangelists say that “Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; [that] he did not say anything to them without using a parable”?6 But is this reasoning valid? Our purpose in using story is to make clear the contents of Scripture. In contrast, Jesus’ often used parables to hide meaning. Even his disciples were confused as to why he would use such mystifying stories to teach about the Kingdom of God. He answered, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them [the crowds]….This is why I speak to them in parables. Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.”7 In private, Jesus explained the parables to his disciples, illustrating the need for a teacher anointed by God to bring greater understanding.8 Telling the parable was only a starting point for Jesus. The parable needed further explanation.9

The Storyteller’s Responsibilities

Responsibility #1: To know the story

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6 Matt. 13:34, quoting Isa. 6:9. All Scripture references in this paper are taken from the NIV unless otherwise noted.
7 Matt. 13:11,13. One interpretation is that Jesus started using parables (as opposed to other kinds of stories and illustrations) after the Jewish leaders’ rejected him (Matt. 12), which occurred later in his ministry, a subject which is beyond the scope of this paper.
8 Certainly the need for the teacher capable of exposition is demonstrated in such passages as Rom. 12:7, 1 Cor. 12:28-29, Eph. 4:11, Col. 1:28, 1 Tim. 3:2, 4:13, et. al.
9 This is not to say that the explanation need take place at the same time as the story. Jesus explained the meaning of the parables to his disciples in private after the crowds were gone. We can do likewise if it seems wise to do so.
The storyteller, like all teachers, needs to prepare, studying what he plans to share so that he will “correctly handle the Word of truth.”\textsuperscript{10} Some storytelling instructors forewarn their trainees that they should study the story only from the Bible itself, not even using parallel passages or cross-references. Their own reading becomes the basis for finding “spiritual truths” or “golden nuggets” to which they will eventually lead others. Although they are told to tell the story and nothing else, the addition of this step is evidence that they are not just storying but also adding interpretative tasks.

How can they be confident that they have interpreted the story accurately? Our own experience teaches us that “when two people receive the same message from the same communicator, they frequently have different understandings of the message.”\textsuperscript{11} If this is true of human communication, how much more so is it true of God’s communication through the Scriptures! God’s people have been wrestling with the same message for thousands of years. A storyteller-teacher who refuses to draw upon the wealth of the Church to enhance his knowledge of the Author’s meaning but instead determines to learn directly and personally only from the Holy Spirit is essentially telling God, “No, thank you, your servants from the past have nothing to say to me. I’ll do it myself.”

Some have been instructed not to consult commentaries or similar helps. They may use other translations of the Bible, including those in foreign languages they may understand, but they must never consult Greek or Hebrew, even if they can handle those languages well.\textsuperscript{12} The

\textsuperscript{10} 2 Tim. 2:15.


\textsuperscript{12} “In STS we use only information found in the Bible, not extra biblical information or Greek/Hebrew word definitions as that kind of information is only available to a select few. We want to encourage and empower all believers to share Scriptures through stories. People need to be encouraged to utilize and trust the story” (“Simply the Story: Experiencing Scripture through Discussion,” [The God’s Story Project, <www.gods-story.org sts/3_Skills.asp> 14 Oct. 2008]).
reasoning is that listeners in an oral society will not have access to those kinds of tools and, therefore, the storyteller shouldn’t have them either. Another reason is based in a fear of “adding to the text.” If the storyteller were to glean a meaning from the Greek, for example, that is not immediately evident in his own language, he should not use that meaning in telling the story because that would be “adding to the text.” On the contrary, he is effectually subtracting from the text.

We need to distinguish between the storyteller who does not have access to Bible helps and the one who does but refuses to use them. God does not require an accounting for what he does not give. But the person who deliberately ignores what God has made available has little excuse for succumbing to error, as one instructor did in making conclusions about Luke’s story, in the King James Version, of the miraculous catch of fish:

Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken. (Lk. 5:4-9)

In her preparation of the story, the instructor was intrigued by Simon Peter’s seemingly extreme reaction. What sin had he committed that would cause him to fall before Jesus and beg him to go away? Reading the text over and over, she finally noticed that Jesus had said to Peter, “Let down your nets”—plural. But Peter only let down “the net”—singular. Ah, that was the sin!

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13 The biblical principle is found in Lk. 12:48: “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”
He had disobeyed by letting down only one net when Jesus had commanded more than one.

“This is huge!” she told her listeners.14

One does not need Greek or a course in hermeneutics to spot the problems. Checking English translations would have revealed that although the various versions consistently translate nets in “Let down your nets” as plural, they vary in the next phrase, “I will let down the net.” King James uses singular net, but other versions say nets. Further curiosity and research—in her own language—would have led to the knowledge that Greek manuscripts differ for that word.15

A better understanding of the King James English in her own Bible would also have prevented an error. The text literally says that Jesus spoke to Peter, but in the context, Jesus is speaking to all those with him. If the command had been only for Peter, the translators of the seventeenth century would have used thy net (2nd person singular possessive) instead of your nets (2nd person plural possessive) as they did in translating Peter’s response: “at thy word I will let down the net.” The command is directed to more than just Peter.16

The true explanation of Peter’s reaction is included in the text itself, in verse nine: “For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken.” His reaction was not caused because he sinned in throwing out the wrong number of nets.

Those who teach, whether by storytelling or any other method, are ethically responsible to take advantage of whatever helps God has given them towards understanding the text. Deliberately choosing not to use good hermeneutics is irresponsible, setting up both teacher and listener for error.

Responsibility #2: To know the audience and the way it communicates

14 From a storytelling workshop in Portland, OR in 2008.
15 Gr. τὰ δίκτυα vs. τὸ δίκτυον.
16 Gr. καλάσατε. Less obvious in English is the grammatical number (pl.) of the Greek verb in “Let down your net[s].”
The storyteller may know the content of the story and deliver it well in practice. However, unless he knows how the intended audience receives communication, he may actually deliver a message quite different from what he believes he is conveying. Everyday communication is difficult enough. How much greater the challenge when we are trying to mediate God’s message!

We are attempting to communicate clearly an infinite message to finite human beings. We must communicate that message in thousands of widely different cultures and subcultures, each with its own way of seeing the world. The very least we can do is understand the raw materials of communication with which we must work.  

The most basic of all these “raw materials” is language. What language—or level of language—does the audience use and understand? Does the audience speak the same variety of English, for example, that the storyteller does? What adjustments need to be made in a different language and culture group so that the verbal communication has the same meaning to the listener as it does to the storyteller? The only way we can know the answers is by getting involved with the community. “Involvement with any new community means learning the language of that community.”

Language may be the foremost communication tool in telling a story but not the only one. Donald K. Smith, missionary educator and author, writes about twelve signal systems involved in communication. Of these, the verbal and kinesic are the most important in storytelling, supported by the pictorial, artifactual, and audio systems (and possibly others at times). Their use will change according to the audience. “Usage of the signal systems is a function of culture;” Smith writes, “thus they are used differently in different cultures.”

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17 Smith 163.
18 Ibid., 31.
19 The twelve systems are verbal, written, numeric, pictorial, audio, artifactual, kinesic, optical, tactile, spatial, temporal, and olfactory.
20 Ibid., 144.
The Bible story itself is delivered verbally, but it is, at the very least, accompanied by the gestures of the storyteller. In addition, pictures, objects, and sounds (e.g., music or drumming) may supplement the verbal and kinesic signals. Each signal carries meaning. The challenge for the storyteller is to ensure the verbal message is not contradicted by one of the other signal systems, something that frequently occurs when working in unfamiliar cultures. “A person may genuinely mean what he or she is communicating verbally, but the people to whom the communication is directed interpret [the other signals] in a way that the speaker does not at all intend. As a result, they do not believe what he or she says.”

The storyteller naturally uses gestures appropriate to his story-message. Will these kinesic signals be interpreted in the intended way by the audience? Not necessarily. Culture and past experience give gestures meaning that may be very different from our own. The storyteller can send the wrong signal if he does not understand what the gestures mean to his audience; the only way he can learn these is by becoming involved with the people.

An example of an artifactual signal will further illustrate this principle. How do you, reader of this paper, respond when you see someone holding a Bible? Possibly you will see a symbol of spiritual authority since you know the Bible to be God’s Word. One organization’s instructors teach their trainees to hold an open Bible while telling the story, saying that this “indicates to the listener that what you are saying comes out of the Bible. When you complete the story, tell the listeners, ‘This is the end of the story,’ and close your Bible.”

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21 Smith, 162.
22 Ibid., 52-53.
23 Simply the Story: “Experiencing Scripture through Discussion.” Simply the Story recognizes that this action may not always be wise. “If you are storytelling in a region that is anti-Christian, you may not want to hold a Bible or even tell listeners it is a Bible story.” Refraining from a direct reference to the Bible in such cases is a safety measure.
A Bible does not always carry that symbolism, however. If you were a Muslim at a
gathering of international students, you might react negatively: “I know the Bible is supposed
to be a good book, but it’s obvious they’re trying to convert me. I’m out of here!” A third reaction,
suggested by an Egyptian Christian, might be: “That’s the book our leaders have been warning
us about. I’m not going to stick around to listen to these infidels!”

An interesting fourth response is suggested by the Tamil Nadu context of southern India.
“Hindu and Buddhist scriptures were often written on palm-leaf books, and these were frequently
illustrated with narrative scenes.” These books are still a necessary part of Tamil Nadu rituals.
Manuscripts from one or two centuries ago must be included as part of the rituals. Only these
manuscripts have the power to call forth the invoked deities. Even if they are not used directly,
they must be present and visible, serving to ensure the authenticity of the scriptures in the same
way a Bible might be used to ensure the truthfulness of a speaker in a Christian event.

A storyteller-evangelist in the Tamil Nadu region might be tempted to think he could take
advantage of this custom, substituting the Bible for the Hindu manuscripts. A closer study of the
custom, however, would reveal that scriptures made of paper do not carry any authority. Printed
versions of the ancient Hindu scriptures cannot substitute for the palm-leaf manuscripts. A
storyteller would have to consider carefully whether a Bible on display would accomplish the
intended goal.

24 Told to the author October 2009.
25 Pellowski, Anne. The World of Storytelling: A Practical Guide to the Origins, Development, and Applications of
26 “Under the Hindu kings, these [palm leaf] manuscripts [of Hindu scriptures] were recopied every 100 years or so
to preserve them. Since British times, this process has ceased and existing manuscripts, even in the best-preserved
collections, are deteriorating, some already to the point of uselessness. In consultation with scholars in Tamil Nadu,
Kauai Aadheenam has investigated the use of digital cameras for the purpose of rapid photography and hence
preservation of the leaves” (“Palm Leaf Manuscript Preservation,” Kauai’s Hindu Monastery <www.
himalayanacademy.com/resources/books/agamas/palm-leaf-demo/> 6 Nov. 2009.). The contents will thus be
preserved, but it remains to be seen whether these will be considered authoritative to the popular mind.
Responsibility #3: To know the culture’s way of telling stories

Each culture has a way of introducing a story so that the audience knows whether the story is historical or purely fictional. 27 “Once upon a time” in western culture directs the listener to an imaginary place and time where magic is a normal occurrence and the unfortunate hero and heroine can eventually rise above all odds and live happily ever after. This kind of signal would be inappropriate to use, for example, with events from the life of David or Jesus.

Primary oral cultures—those essentially unaffected by reading and writing—often have an official storyteller, who knows the signals of that culture. If the Bible storyteller wants to be effective, he will learn the ways of the indigenous storyers. Better yet, he will work with the recognized storyteller and let him do the actual telling in order to avoid attaching a foreign label to the story.

Responsibility #4: To recognize the spiritual nature of storytelling

Any time the Word is given out—whether by storytelling or through some other means of proclamation—Satan’s kingdom is threatened. We would like to believe that the response to a well-delivered story will always be positive, but we know both from Scripture and from experience that this is not so. Jesus told his disciples, in his explanation of the parable of the Sower, that another spirit is at work: “When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart.” 28 If the storyteller has not succeeded in creating understanding in his listeners, Satan is more than ready to seize what has been heard so that the seed of God’s Word has no chance to germinate.

27 The two categories can overlap, of course, as in the case of historical figures that have become folk legends.
Oral storytelling vs. orality

One mistake that has crept into the orality movement is the assumption that telling the story aloud—as distinguished from reading it—constitutes orality. However, merely voicing what is on the written page is vocalization, not orality. “We…are so literate that it is very difficult for us to conceive of an oral universe of communication or thought except as a variant of a literate universe,” writes Walter J. Ong, recognized authority on orality.29 We imagine that by reading aloud a Bible story, or by memorizing the story in order not to refer to the printed page, we are somehow overcoming the literacy barrier. This way of thinking, however, reveals our own misunderstanding of the differences between orality and literacy. “Understanding the relations of orality and literacy and the implications of the relations is not a matter of instant psychohistory or instant phenomenology. It calls for wide, even vast, learning, painstaking thought and careful statement.”30

Ong distinguishes between primary and secondary orality. A culture having primary orality is “totally untouched by any knowledge of writing or print,” whereas cultures having secondary orality have been highly influenced by “telephone, radio, television, and other electronic devices that depend for their existence and functioning on writing and print.”31

Our own culture made the shift to literacy so long ago that it is difficult for us to see orality as anything but an ability or preference to communicate by mouth what we normally communicate by the written word. Orality, however, is much more. It “engages social, economic, political, religious and other structures” in society, not just words.32

Sacred words

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid., 11.
32 Ibid., 3.
At the foundation of understanding orality is the comprehension of what a *word* is. For literate cultures, a word is a *thing*, composed of letters or characters and able to be put into a dictionary, followed by one or more definitions that are generally accepted by society. In an oral culture, a word is not a *thing* but an *event*. Once the word has passed the mouth of the speaker, it no longer exists. “Written words are residue. Oral tradition has no such residue or deposit. When an often-told oral story is not actually being told, all that exists of it is the potential in certain human beings to tell it.”33 It is perhaps no accident that Hebrew *dabar* means both *word* and *event*.34

What happens, then, when one takes the story from the biblical text with its “words as residue” and tries to tell it in an oral society in which words disappear as soon as they are spoken? If he believes that the *words* are sacred—whether in the original languages or in his own version of the Bible—and cannot under any circumstances be changed, then he will be bound by legalistic cords that will keep him from adapting his method of storytelling to what is needed in order to reach understanding in a truly oral society.

In this regard, the storyteller faces the same dilemma as a Bible translator. What will be his philosophy in translating the story? Debating, for example, whether an “essentially literal” translation35 is more faithful to the original languages than a translation produced by “functional equivalence” is in reality only a surface issue. The choice ultimately depends upon the translators’ understanding of *word* and how language functions.

33 Ibid., 11.
34 Heb. רבד.
35 The English Standard Version (ESV) claims to be “essentially literal,” and thus its emphasis is on “word-for-word” correspondence” while “taking into account differences of grammar, syntax, and idiom between current literary English and the original languages. Thus it seeks to be **transparent to the original text**, letting the reader see as directly as possible the structure and meaning of the original” [bold in the original]. “Translation Philosophy,” *English Standard Version Bible*, <www.esv.org/translation/philosophy> 27 Oct 2009.
God’s Word is in the form of human language. The belief has arisen that because God’s Word as a whole is sacred, the individual words are sacred too, i.e., the words in the Greek or Hebrew text. God’s Word, though, is not a collection of things or residue. Rather, it is a living message. In translation and in storytelling, that message must not change, but the way it is delivered can have great variety. We, the message deliverers, are not copy machines but living representatives of the living God, passing on a living message, capable of being expressed not only in narrative but also in poetry, chant, music, and drama, with the rearrangement and repetition that are often associated with those genres.

When a word is considered an inanimate “residue” or thing, both storytellers and translators can become fearful of changing any of the words of the text. They cite Deut. 12:32 and Rev. 22:18-19 as warnings that nothing must be added or taken away from God’s Word. However, if the words themselves are elevated above the message that the words are to convey, then we have begun to honor words for words’ sake rather than honoring the meaning that is God’s truth. “If the meaning is the important thing, then I dare not love the words. If the content is to be communicated, then the words will need to be expendable.”

Sacred emotions

The same concept applies to the emotive elements of words. Simply the Story, for example, rightly encourages storytellers to speak dialog from Bible stories with emotion. “Be as dramatic as possible as you say what that character said.” But they add this caution:

36 Smith, 55.
37 “See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it” (Deut.12:32); and, “I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book” (Rev. 22:18-19). These are frequently used to refer to the entire Bible, although technically they refer only to the Law and to the prophecies of Revelation. Nevertheless, we do need to take caution. If it is God’s Word—his message—then we dare not change that message as though it were a new or different revelation.
38 David Augsberger, “Writing is Translating,” Festival Quarterly, (Summer 1975): 4; quoted in Smith, 58.
If you cannot be CERTAIN from the story what emotion the speaker is feeling, do NOT speak the words with the emotion that you THINK the speaker had. That would be adding to the story, which in the Bible God warns us never to do.\(^{39}\)

A lack of emotion, however, also sends a message. For example: if the storyteller has been speaking with emotion but suddenly changes to a monotone with an expressionless countenance, the audience will interpret the look and tone of voice according to the signal systems of its own society—perhaps concluding that the story character has no emotion or is lying. The emotive silence intended to protect the storyteller from “adding to God’s Word” has in fact done that very thing.\(^{40}\) Silence and blank expressions are not neutral; they contain meaning.

The storyteller-messenger should have the freedom to tell the story without fear of being consumed by a fire from heaven if a word in the text has been changed. This kind of legalism unethically impedes the storyteller from creatively using his art in order to adapt it to the communication demands of the audience. Fear and legalism actually impede communication rather than helping it. Encouraging rather than discouraging good hermeneutical practices would help eliminate quandaries as to the story’s factual or emotional content and allow the storyteller to be more confident about being faithful to the text in his delivery.

Word-for-word rendition of a biblical story is also the aim of the Network of Biblical Storytellers (NBS), but not the only aim.\(^{41}\) The mission of the NBS “is to encourage everyone to learn and tell biblical stories…with 75% word accuracy and 95% content accuracy.” They encourage storytellers to take a well-informed approach to both the content of their stories and to

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\(^{39}\)“Simply the Story.” Bold and capitals in the original.

\(^{40}\)This result would be by the group’s definition. Whether it actually is a violation of the biblical command is a debatable issue.

the art. In reality, they advocate many more ways of telling Bible stories, giving storytellers much more freedom in delivering God’s message.\textsuperscript{42}

How do orality and storytelling entail ethical considerations? A system of ethics regulates standards of “conduct governing a particular class of human actions of a particular group” as well as the rightness and wrongness of conduct.\textsuperscript{43} In this case we are dealing with those who by choice are using story to teach God’s Word. As messengers, they have a responsibility to do everything in their power to make that communication successful. They must know the message, know the audience, know storytelling within the context of the audience, and understand their engagement in a spiritual battle. Those who would deliberately impede the storyteller’s successful communication with the audience by legalistically imposing manmade rules on the storyteller provoke ethical concerns.

Jesus used stories appropriate to the needs of his audience, contextualizing his method of delivery to each situation. Those who are following in his footsteps should have the freedom to do the same.

\textsuperscript{42} Browsing the web site makes this abundantly clear. Their home page also indicates that they are not particularly focused on people of “primary orality” but on another group entirely: “We bring God’s stories to life for a post-literate, digital age.”

\textsuperscript{43} Webster’s, 2000.
Partial Bibliography


