Academics Affected

Quick Reflections

I just completed five packed days of *Simply the Story* training, having practiced the STS method six or seven times previously as part of a weekly Men's Bible Study group. Since this was my first official training, I did not formally lead a group, but instead had a unique opportunity to both practice and help train others as an assistant to a gifted Lead Instructor. Here are some quick reflections:

1. If you have ever doubted the role or the power of the Holy Spirit in understanding the Bible, STS will resolve it. Again and again, I witnessed new treasures brought out of the Scriptures, treasures that had a sweet relevance to those participating in the discussion. When repeating the story in two different groups (once for preparation, the second for presentation), new observations and applications were uncovered.

2. The training brought back strong memories of group therapy from my days of pursuing a degree in clinical psychology, with some significant differences.

3. STS group training was harder than any of the therapy practicums in two years of Master's level study, and was significantly better structured. Not only was immediate and detailed feedback provided, but participants were given the chance to process and practice what they had learned while the guidance was still fresh. All types and ages of individuals in the training “got it” and were able to demonstrate the STS process almost from the start. Others (like myself) struggled. But everyone learned valuable insights into the Word, their role in God’s Kingdom, and the strength and diversity of the Body of Christ. The open, kind nature of the participants and staff was a real blessing.

Post Script: The writer of this letter, DW, continues to use STS in his devotions and assist in a weekly “Interactive Bible Discussions” hosted at a coffee shop.

Tears Rolling Out of His Eyes

"One of the participants was Rev. XXX, he is a Vicar of a very important church for the last 44 years. He has written six books over these years. Also he is the faculty of [Leadership training
Higher Education

institute we will not mention].”

He said, "This is a new day for me, I never been exposed to such training in my life time. If I had got this STS training in my early ministry days, I could have done much more effective work.""

“When this guy shared the tears were rolling out of his eyes.”

All the participants had similar testimony to tell. Sri Lanka

“Making Me Wide Mind”

“I am teaching in the Bible College, but I never think about deeply like this. We just go through the story.”

“I never think like this Spiritual observation and Application methods. This is making me wide mind.”

“I will be continuing using this way of studying and teaching in my ministry.”Peter, a teacher in a Bible College in a SE Asia country.

“We Will Include STS in Our Curriculum.”
[The TGSP director in Ethiopia, who is also a certified STS instructor, sent us this report.]"The regional leader of a very large Ethiopian based denomination invited us to lead a workshop. We trained 70 evangelists and church planters from 63 local churches and 5 preaching points (annexes).

"This leader visited me this morning and had this to say:" After the training, I did not try STS method immediately. After a few weeks, I went to the church during one of our Sunday services. I was ministering that Sunday and when I was given the podium, I announced to the congregation that we would have a new way of preaching that day.

I told a Bible story as you modelled in STS to get people involved. It was exciting to see how the people responded to the questions I was asking. After the service, everyone was discussing about the new way, and all were excited that they participated in the discussion.
During the discussion two men gave answers that were wrong, but I noted immediately that someone else corrected the wrong answers they had given. I realized that in this kind of discussion there are some important elements. For example, in the discussion, the group correct itself and there is accountability. This is one of the great treasures I've seen in STS.

We have met with the church board and discussed about how we can use STS to help our evangelists be more effective in reaching our community which is made up more of non-literate people. In the coming Ethiopian new year, we are starting Bible school for our region and all of us have agreed to include STS in our curriculum.

Again, we instructed our evangelists that were trained to begin using STS as you had told us. Now they can be practitioners. Then they are to hand in a report at the end of three months. (That will be end of January).

Before we learnt STS, we wanted to reach the non-literate people but we did not know how. So we would place them in groups among the literate people and give them books in hope that they will get someone to read for them. Now I am so happy for we are using STS with the non-literate. There is a tremendous change among them as they can now participate in the Bible studies and group discussion.

Thank you and God bless you for coming to help us.

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