



## **Story Collective – Seeing and Sharing Your Story**

In the midst of our often messy and still-in-process lives, God uses our stories to shape and encourage both us and our community. When we reflect on our stories and ask God to illuminate them, He can show us our stories from His perspective. We may see His faithfulness and provision, as well as the ways He has been present and active in our lives, constantly shaping us more and more into His image.

When we reflect on our story, and hear the stories of others, we can see the way God's light has illuminated both the hard parts and the beauty in our lives. Knowing this helps us to shine more brilliantly and live more wholly than we ever knew we could. We all hold unique stories and we are invited to share them as a part of the larger story of God's love and pursuit of His creation that's been happening since the beginning of time.

We hope the tools that follow will be a helpful first step in seeing the ways God has been working in your life, even when you may not have seen it. Take some time to pray before you start, asking God to show you how He's been involved and active in your story. From there, navigate through the material at your own pace. You may find it helpful to answer questions out of order, skip some and return back later, or process out loud with someone else. This is not a one-time use tool, but a list of helpful questions and practices we can return to again and again when we are trying to see God's activity in our lives. We hope you find it helpful as you discover the story God is trying to share through you.

## **SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS.**

Consider moments from your life. Below, write 10-15 of these that stand out as significant. Feel free to be creative in expressing your moments, include moments both positive and negative, long ago and recent.

**PART I.** Reflect on your listed moments. What are common themes or feelings that run through these moments? Highlight or outline moments connected to the same theme. Below, list 3 themes from your story that are significant.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Now consider the following questions regarding your themes:

- Which of these themes were you aware are present in your story? Did any surprise you?
  
- Which of these themes are still present in your life today?
  
- How have you seen these themes repeat throughout your life to produce story lines and patterns you experience today?
  
- In what ways have you seen or not seen God during these storylines?
  - During the experience
  
  - Reflecting on the experience

**PART II.** Choose one theme that stands out to you. Below, list the theme and consider the following questions related to the life events that relate to the theme:

THEME: \_\_\_\_\_

- When did you feel close to God?
- When did you feel far from God?
- What voices influenced you more than God? What did they say?

1.

2.

3.

- Who are the key people in your life relating to this theme? Which voices were positive and negative influences? (Note: People can appear at multiple places on the line representing different points in time/experiences)

POSITIVE

\_\_\_\_\_ NEUTRAL \_\_\_\_\_

NEGATIVE

- What does this theme tell you about your strengths and weaknesses?

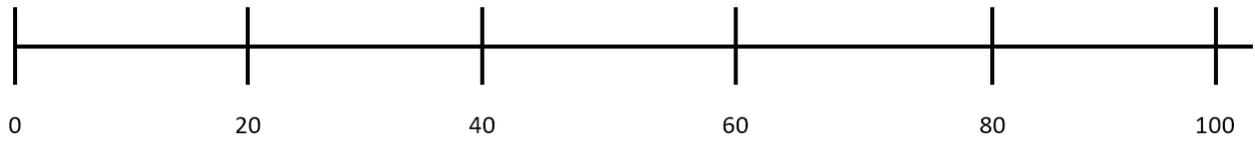
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES

- What truths or lies does this theme make you believe about yourself, others, or God?

**PART III.** Now, re-read the significant life moments you originally listed and consider them with the recurring themes.

- Which parts of your life were the most difficult to list events for? Why?
  
- If you had to create specific chapters for your life, what would the titles be?
  
- What wrongs in the world do you want to see set right? What events in your story gave rise to this?
  
- We are not always the victim in our stories; how have you hurt someone in these moments?
  
- What felt like a:
  - Struggle?
  - Joy?
  - Conflict?
  - Success?
  - Failure?
  
- What circumstances make you prone to wander from God?
  
- What did you not want to become?
  
- What were times when you felt a strong sense of calling?
  
- What values are important in your life?
  
- Based on these answers, what is the direction you want to head?
  
- If you were to boldly ask God for guidance in this direction, what would you ask for?

- Number your events on page 1. Using the timeline below, list all the numbers where they occurred during your life.



#### NEXT STEPS

- All of our themes do not represent a fully accurate view of who we are. How can these themes be redeemed to show a more accurate view of who you are?
- How can these themes be redeemed to show a more accurate view of who God is?
- Is there any place you need to make amends or offer an apology?
- What themes do you want to be true about your story?