
Authentic Storytelling

Session Two Handout

PERSPECTIVE, 5 Spiritual Lenses

BY Dayna Mazzuca
www.daynamazzuca.com

THE FIVE LENSES WE SEE THE WORLD THROUGH affect how we tell our stories, and how we hear what others tell us. This is because these lenses inform and influence our PERSPECTIVE. And perspective is everything when it comes to storytelling and other forms of authentic communication.

Any time we seek to speak from our core or share a piece of who we are through our words or action, we seek to communicate authentically. And a key-critical part of that is what we are, spiritually speaking.

“He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-12

-
1. SOME OF US ARE TEACHERS AT HEART, THE RESIDENT SCHOLAR IN THE ROOM. The one people trust as their go-to source. *If this is true of you*, then you tell your stories with an eye on building knowledge, proving accurate, and being found trustworthy. So, you may take a straightforward approach to your storytelling, bringing a formal lens to the table.

This is an easy-to-spot lens, which helps put others at ease when you speak, because they understand your perspective, and are familiar with it. You have no trouble being heard. The trouble might come when you seek to hear another type of communicator, with a different perspective on HOW they share what they share. They may not cover all the bases. They may leave gaping gaps. Or interrupt themselves. Or lose their thread of thought entirely. This may make it hard for you to receive what others are saying.

You need your sources to be *reliable, credible, trustworthy*. This is important to you. It's the lens you bring to the table. This is because you take the long view. You see where one mistake today might lead off track tomorrow, and so on. This level of concern is what makes it a spiritual perspective as well as one that affects how you communicate and what you need in place to be able to receive from others.

2. SOME OF US ARE SOCIAL CONNECTORS, WITH A PASTOR'S HEART FOR OTHERS. This is the person who listens with their heart, who empathizes with your problems. Who is there for you when you need a shoulder to cry on, or someone to lean on. This person is a natural storyteller, at home with the buzz and flutter of an animated, bunny-trail laden story. One that's never quite finished. Full of character and colour. Dynamic, told with hand-gestures and emotional response and unfiltered reactions.

This is the Social Connector in your circle. This is the Pastor, he or she is able to pick up where you left off last and who not only remembers your name but says it like they've known you forever. This is the one with a familial touch. The hub of their circle. The multi-tasker and leisurely listener all in one.

If this is you, *you carry a burden for the people you know and love*. You take on their problems and pain as your own. You empathize. You care. And when you communicate, you do not share details, or listen closely for logic when people share. You are a broad stroke communicator. The story is the thing. And helping people relate to what you're saying, in a way that's meaningful for them, is important to you.

Relatability and connectivity are the lenses you see through. You are a man or woman of the people. With both feet on the ground, one in your own world and the other in your friend's world. You walk WITH PEOPLE. And this is a spiritual lens inasmuch as you lift the people and problems on your heart up to God and rely on him to WALK WITH you.

3. SOME OF US ARE EVANGELISTIC CHANGE AGENTS IN OUR CORE. If this is true of you, then you are a very persuasive, passionate communicator with a real sense of urgency. Time is of the essence. This is because you are on a mission to make the world a better place, with measurable results by the way, and there is no time to lose. You are no stranger to good causes and compelling cases. *You able to sift through information and separate the wheat from the chaff, with impressive speed*. This means you prefer information in visual, bullet or chunky form. You are able to synthesize and interpret data faster than the other four types, making you both a charismatic and formidable speaker and storyteller.

The lens you see the world through—and share your ideas through—is one that brings you face-to-face with life’s challenges, which you do not fear. You are motivated on mission, and to equip teams to join you and advance the cause. Because of this *intensity*, you can and do move mountains. This is your strength and your perspective on God’s goodness and willingness to see good work done plays a big part in that. You are A BIG PICTURE PERSON and able to frame the whole of your work and life in light of God’s might.

The only problem that might come up, as you seek to share your message and rally people to your mission, is impatience. As a very competent person with an eye on successful, measurable results, perceived incompetency or inexplicable apathy has no place in your wheelhouse. You may struggle to have patience with people who are not on board or pulling their weight. And this comes through in all forms of communication; people are pretty good at picking up on the message behind the message. *You may also lose patience with yourself* in seasons where your body, mind or soul need to slow down.

4. SOME OF US BRING AN ADVENTUROUS APOSTOLIC LENS TO THE TABLE. With this lens, we are able to come alongside a friend in need, lend them our strength to help overcome life’s many obstacles. *This lens sees the summit of the mountain with great clarity.* This vision of reaching the top, of finishing strong, and advancing spiritually throughout our lives is what motivates the apostle to keep on keeping on. This is the lens needed to persevere. To do what needs to be done. To dig in and dig deep. To embrace the challenges of life, which they know are many.

If this is true to you, you also know that with each obstacle overcome, we gain strength to tackle the next one, until it begins to look like child’s play. There is a sense of *the striding conqueror* in this spiritual gift; a real grit belief in the ability

of others to give and do their best for God and others. They know it can be done because they've done it. When it comes to communication, they speak from experience. They speak with confidence. With faith and a sense of bring-it-on. And for them to be able to receive in a meaningful way from others, they need to hear that same sense of competency based on experience, or success. This is because they can't afford faulty advice, any more than faulty equipment on the side of the mountain.

They love stories that are tightly woven, adrenalin driven and wholly credible. This is the lens they apply to what they share and what they receive. It doesn't mean they need non-fiction only. Both fiction and fantasy intrigue this type of communicator, as long as the worlds contrived by the storyteller are *credible, consistent and believable*. For this type of communicator, gaining ground is the bottom line. It's the air they breathe.

The Apostle's need for credibility and believability in the stories they attune to stems from a deep need for respect. They respect themselves. And want the storytellers they tap into to respect them as well. They want to be challenged even in the act of listening or reading. This type has no time to "waste" on being bored or being led down a garden path in any way. They value time for its qualitative nature. As someone seeking their attention, you can take all the time you need to tell a good story, but it better be good.

5. SOME OF US BRING A PROPHETIC OR MYSTICAL

PERSPECTIVE TO THE TABLE. This means we see the world through a lens where the spiritual and natural sides of life are relatively seamless. God is a constant presence. This means no one tells their story in a vacuum; *there's always a listener*. The Prophetic gift tries to listen in a way that is attentive to both the speaker and God; this can lend a rich quality to their storytelling.

This awareness of and attentiveness to the Holy Spirit also means no one tells their story without meaning; *there is always someone who cares*. The Prophet may bring a sparse lens to the world of communication, rarely filling the space with too many words, or cluttering it with an excess of images, but when they do communicate, there is a depth that is authentic to who they are and where they're going, and also to where they've been.

This means *prayer, solitude and times of personal devotion* are important to the Prophet or Mystic. This is what allows them to maintain their perspective, with a spiritually healthy and felt emphasis. The strength of this perspective is that it lends AN INTENTIONAL FOCUS ON THE SPIRITUAL SIDE OF LIFE. It points to and includes what the Spirit of God may be adding to the conversation or exchange, leading from the inside out. This is a perspective that values authenticity very much.

This *expectation of authenticity* can prove a demanding, exacting or even otherworldly point of view for their listener. If the Prophet is not aware of how he or she is coming across to others, and adjust accordingly by speaking directly to their concerns, then this can present a problem when it comes to sharing their story or entering into the lives of others. The Prophetic perspective is invaluable when it's valued and/or understood and appreciated. But when it is not, it goes underground very quickly, usually able to maintain silence, without taking offense.

ALL FIVE SPIRITUAL LENSES lend a distinct perspective to the conversation, or story. Each one adds value. As they remain true to their God-given role and purpose, this is a huge blessing to any community. This is ever-more true, as we embrace authentic communication as a shared goal.

Which one of the 5 Spiritual Lenses do YOU MOST IDENTIFY WITH?

1. *TEACHER, Resident Scholar who values the possibilities of the mind*
2. *PASTOR, Social Connector who prizes the life of the heart*
3. *EVANGELIST, Change Agent -- passionate about putting their hands to work*
4. *APOSTLE, Adventurer who loves to come alongside to lend courage*
5. *PROPHET, Mystic who prayerfully dwells in the unseen*

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- Review the above descriptions, add to the one you relate to, make it your own.
- Try and identify people in your life who might align with the other four spiritual perspectives, or gifts. Consider the lens they bring to the table. Think about the strength of a body where all the parts work well, in harmony, together.
- Think about *the gift* you are to the body, to others, to God. Know that others are thankful for YOU.
- *Reread Ephesians 4:11*