

House Church

Raj and his family attend house church every week. You can experience house church in your Sunday school or mission group by following Raj's house church schedule. (*Takes about 30 minutes.*)

What is a house church? A house church is a small church (usually less than 30 people) that meets together in someone's home and does not have a paid preacher, but dedicated unpaid leaders.

At Raj's house church, very few people can read. Instead of reading the Bible for their lesson, they use storying. This means that the leader tells the Bible story to the group, then asks questions about what can be learned from the story. Then, two or three more people repeat the story so that they can be sure to remember it.

Here is a sample house church schedule that you can follow to experience your own house church:

Begin your house church service by praying that God will teach you during this time.

Sing two or three praise songs together*. If there is a song that not everyone knows, sing it through a couple times so that everyone can learn it.

Take prayer and praise requests and ask a few different people to pray for the requests (you might want to write them down somewhere so you don't forget).

Take up a special missions offering** as you sing one or two more songs.



The leader should then tell the story (for story and storying method, see Crafted Story and Storying method sheets).

When the story is finished, the leader should ask the story questions to the rest of the group.

Ask for a volunteer to repeat the entire story. The leader and other members can help this person if they forget or leave something out of the story.

Ask another person to repeat the story.

Say a prayer, asking that God will help everyone remember the story and have opportunities to tell it during the week.

Sing another song before dismissing the group. Mention that you will ask them to tell the story again at the beginning of next week.

**For a more cultural experience, try learning and singing Sindi's Urdu praise chorus (in the Videos & More section of CaravanFriends.org).*

***This can either be for foreign missions, or devoted to a missions project that the church is involved in, remember to explain why missions is so important.*

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Storying in a House Church



1. Leader tells the story twice.

2. Leader leads the group to learn and be able to retell the story. Depending on the story, you can use different methods to do this. If it's conducive to drama, you could try:

- 1) The leader tells the story and the people act it out without saying anything, then...
- 2) The leader is the narrator and the people act it out and say their parts, then...
- 3) Someone else is the narrator and the people act it out and say their part, then...
- 4) The leader tries to get at least two people to tell the whole story.



If the story isn't a good story to act out, you could try the 'hot potato' or 'popcorn' method of retelling where you have a hackysack or small ball. One person begins to retell the story, and after two sentences or so, he throws the hackysack to someone else in the group. That person takes up the story where the first one left off, and he tells two or three sentences, and so on.... At the end of this you'd still try to get two or three people to retell the whole story.

3. Leader leads the group in discussing the story. He or she can use the following seven questions, or a variation of these questions: (These are just 'categories' of questions – there are several variations of each question given as examples.)

1. What did you like?

2. What confused you?

3. What did you learn about God?

4. What did you learn about people?

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

6. How will you remember this story? Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

House Church

Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1-10

Jesus was traveling and came to a city. There was a man named Zacchaeus who lived in the city. He was a dishonest tax collector, and he had become very rich because of his dishonesty. He wanted to see Jesus, but he was very short, so he ran on ahead of the crowds and climbed a tree alongside the road on which Jesus was traveling. When Jesus reached the tree, he looked up and said, ‘Zacchaeus, come down right away! I’m coming to your house today!’ Zacchaeus was very excited and came down immediately. The people who saw this started complaining among themselves. “He is going to a dishonest man’s house,” they said. But Zacchaeus’ life was already changed. He stood up and said to Jesus, “Right now I’m going to give half of what I have to the poor people, and if I’ve cheated anyone when I collected their taxes, I’m going to give them back four times as much!” Jesus said, “Today, your disobedience is forgiven and you are free! You have believed in God just like Abraham did many years ago! I have come for people like you—to find you and set you free from your disobedience.”

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