

Session 1: God's BIG Story

Bible as God's Story

The Bible is not a random assortment of spiritual stories. It is one story with a unified theme and purpose. It reveals God's passion and purpose to be worshiped by all peoples.

Introduction: Genesis 1-11

Adam and Eve were to populate physically, but God also intended they reproduce spiritually (Genesis 1:28).

As humanity filled the Earth, so would the glory of God (Isaiah 11:9)

Sin enters the world in Genesis 3.

God gives Noah the same command He gave to Adam (Genesis 9:1).

One nation is turned into 70 at the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9).

Plot: Genesis 12- Malachi

God's mission is set into motion as He sets out to reach all nations. Abraham is invited to trade his story for God's (Genesis 12:1-4).

The promise is repeated to Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 26:2-4; Genesis 28:13-14).

God was interested in getting His people, the Israelites, out of Egypt and into the Promised Land but he was also just as interested that the Egyptians would know He was God (Exodus 9:15-17).

When the nation of Israel was establishing itself in the land God gave them the Ten Commandments. The Law caused the nations to see Israel as different (Deuteronomy 4:5-7).

Nation of Israel: with God's blessing came responsibility to pass it on to all peoples.

Rahab recognized the greatness of God and joined the Israelite people (Joshua 2:9-10).

The parting of the Red Sea and the separating of the Jordan River served their purpose of showing God's glory to the nations (Joshua 4:23-24).

Psalms is one of the greatest missionary books in the Bible, though it is rarely seen that way (Psalm 46:10).

God raised up the prophets to remind Israel of their calling (Isaiah 12:4-5, Zephaniah 2:11, Malachi 1:11).

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Plot: Life and Ministry of Jesus

As Mary and Joseph present this new baby in the temple, an old prophet named Simeon sees the baby, raises Him up and says,

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. (Luke 2:30-32)

About 2/3 of Jesus' miracles were performed for Gentiles.

Jesus praised the faith of a Roman centurion in Matthew 8, saying He had not found such great faith in all of Israel (Matthew 8).

At the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, there were some Greeks who requested to see Him. When He had been lifted up from the earth, He would draw all men - both Jew and Greek - to Himself (John 12).

Plot: A Big Commission

The Great Commission does not refer to one single passage; instead it refers to five specific passages, each spoken by Jesus.

- Matthew 28:19-20
- Mark 16:15
- Luke 24:44-49
- John 20:22
- Acts 1:8

Plot: The Gospel Spreads

In Acts 1-7 the gospel is in Jerusalem (Acts 1-7).

Through the persecution that broke out after the stoning of Stephen, we see the gospel go to Judea in Acts 8 and Samaria in Acts 9 (Acts 8-9).

In Acts 10, it breaks free to the ends of the earth with the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10-following).

The apostles did not see their commission as having its origin in the last words of Christ. They referred back to the original commission given to Abraham in Genesis 12.

Peter says in Acts 3:25,

And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, "Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed." (Acts 3:25)

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Paul states in Galatians 3:18,

The scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." (Galatians 3:18)

The authors of the New Testament stood on the solid ground of the Hebrew Scripture and on over two thousand years of history as they sought to prove to their readers the responsibility of all to bless the nations. It was the driving force of Paul (Romans 15:20).

The Conclusion: Revelation

God achieves the goal toward which He has been moving – the redemption of all nations. Heavenly scene (Revelation 5:9-10).

Mission vs. Missions

God's mission: God's desire to make His name great so that people from every nation, tribe, and tongue might know and worship Him.

Missions: the local and global activity we do to help carry out God's mission.

What is the world population? _____ billion

10 people that represent the world:

Person 1 (both hands crossed over heart): _____

Persons 2 and 3 (one hand crossed over heart): _____

Persons 4, 5, 6 (push hands out in front as if rejecting): _____

Persons 7, 8, 9, 10 (hands over ears): _____

How many people have never heard the gospel message? _____ billion

What fraction of the world has never heard the gospel message? _____