

The Stories We Tell: Course Introduction:

Class 1, April 22 – What is the Story God is telling?

The Big Story of Scripture – Creation, Fall, Rescue, and Restoration

As humans, we love stories, and they effect the way we see our world. As Christians, true story of scripture is a metanarrative that reflects the “one big story” of God’s love woven through many smaller stories and characters. Our world offers other narratives –some adding to the cacophony of our modern culture and some echoing the divine author. Stories have incredible power. They can help bring order and context to our lives, pointing us to God as the source of life. Our own stories also have power, so we seek to share stories of God’s work in our lives. God’s Story, the stories of our culture, and our stories. These are the the stories we tell.

The Storyline: The Big Story of Scripture - Creation, Fall, Rescue, Restoration

“I had always felt life first as a story and if there is a story there is a story teller.” (G.K. Chesterton)

The Questions We Are Asking: (Metaphysics)

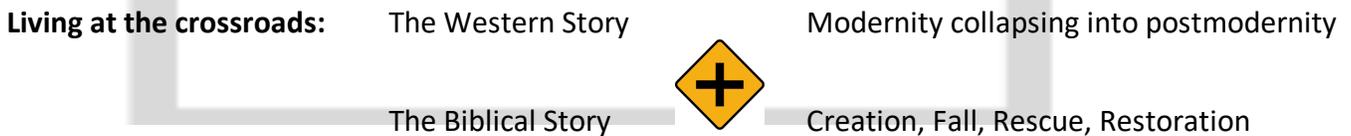
1. Where did I come from?
2. Why is there such a mess in the world?
3. Is there any hope?
4. What am I here for?
5. What happens to me when I die?

Worldview: How do we see the world? What is the narrative we are using for understanding?

Postmodernism: There is no narrative

Christianity: We are living in God’s Story — “History or ‘His Story’”

“The good news of Jesus Christ is virtually incoherent unless it is securely set into a Biblical Worldview.” (D.A. Carson)



The Storyline: The Big Story of Scripture - Creation, Fall, Rescue, Restoration.

1. The Bible is one big story.
2. The story has a plot line (Creation, Fall, Rescue, Restoration)
3. The theme of this story is God’s grace: Jesus’ rescue of sinners and redemption of the world.
4. We are all participants in this ongoing story. (Participators with agency) (victims vs. agents)

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“... a story... is... the best way of talking about the way the world actually is.” (N.T. Wright)

“The whole point of Christianity is that it offers a story which is the story of the whole world. ...It is public truth.” (N.T. Wright)

The Arc of God’s story



Exposition — The Creation
Rising Action — The Fall
Climax — The Rescue
Resolution — The Restoration

The Bible is one big, complete story, which can be referred to as a metanarrative.

“The way we understand human life depends on what conception we have of the human story. What is the real story of which my life story is a part?” -Lesslie Newbigin

“I can only answer the question “What am I to do?” if I can answer the prior question “Of what story do I find myself a part?” -Alasdair MacIntyre

Next Week — Class 2 – April 29 – Stories of Redemption: Preparing a Personal Testimony (Peter Schwanda) Reflect on a few simple questions about God’s work in your life and consider how to share your story. *Resource: Telling His Story by Telling Yours* by Joe Maschhoff

Resources or Suggestions for Further Reading:

- *The Drama of Scripture*, by Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen
- *Living the Story*, by John Cunningham
- *The Big Story*, by Justin Buzzard
- *Finding God in the Movies*, by Barsotti & Johnston
- *The Stories We Tell and Faithmapping*, by Mike Cospers
- *To Be Told*, by Dan Allender
- *Telling His Story by Telling Yours*, by Joe Maschhoff