



## The Stories We Tell

### Class 5, May 27 – Sharing Stories

*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.*

**Recap:** The Bible is a big story, or metanarrative, whose plot line (Creation, Fall, Rescue, Restoration) underscores God’s grace. This is best shown by Jesus’ rescue of sinners and redemption of the world. By God’s grace, we participate in this ongoing story. While our lives reflect the fallen nature of the world – that shalom has been shattered, this should cause us to seek salvation and shalom in Christ. The lives of Christians should tell a story that reflects the salvation of Christ and the impact of God’s grace, along with the restoration that God is bringing in the midst of the complex realities of life.

*“Everyone has a story. Put another way, everyone’s life is a story. But most people don’t know how to read their life in a way that reveals their story. They miss the deeper meaning in their life, and they have little sense of how God has written their story to reveal himself and his own story.” (Dan Allender)*

**Sharing our stories helps make sense of the world and addresses metaphysical questions we ask:**

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?

*“We are designed for good. We are damaged by evil. We are restored for better. We are sent to heal.”*

Dr. James Choung, evangelist

**Sharing your stories is a chance to witness to God’s work in your life:**

**Acts 1:8** – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

**Testimony** speaks of my experience (not necessarily about transcendent truth). It tells a story of why one loves the Lord, but it doesn’t have to explain why the Lord loves him or her.

**Questions to reflect on as you share your story:**

- Before you came to faith in Jesus, what was your life like and where did you seek answers?
- What were the circumstances of your life that caused you to consider and trust in Christ?
- What truth of the gospel story has particularly impacted your faith?
- Are there any internalized messages that have made it hard to trust God?
- How have you seen God meet your needs or impact the story of your life?
- Are there any defining moments or recurring patterns that impact the way you see life?
- Are there any current challenges where you are trusting God to work?

*“A person who listens empathically and responsively as someone else tells his or her story is able to validate the storyteller and, through questions and musing, arouse that individual’s curiosity so he or she will consider alternative ways to imagine his or her story.” (Curt Thompson, Anatomy of the Soul)*

**Final Class, June 3 – Sharing Your Story:** an informal opportunity to share and hear from others in the class. I encourage you to consider and ask the questions above of yourself and each other.