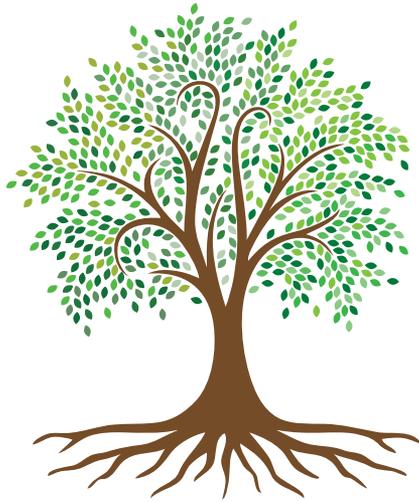


The  
Jesus  
Story



and  
Your  
Story



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# Before You Begin

## *A word to the Reader*

**The Jesus Story** offers a larger framework for understanding and living the Christian life. The intent of *The Jesus Story* is to let you know that God has embedded your story into His story.

### **The Jesus Story highlights four essential truths:**

- *The good news of God's grace*
- *Becoming like Jesus*
- *Belonging to the family of God*
- *Partnering with God in his mission*

### **The Jesus Story is easy to read and discuss:**

- *The four narratives are divided into smaller sections.*
- *Supporting Bible verses are included.*
- *"Making it Personal" helps you apply the story to yourself.*

## *A word to the Leader*

It's best to discuss *The Jesus Story* in a small group. Your timetable will depend on your group's size and how often you meet. Resist the urge to rush. Remember, Jesus taught people not lessons.

### **Here are some suggestions:**

- *Make sure everyone has their own copy.*
- *To set the tone, read aloud "The Jesus Story and Your Story."*
- *Read each narrative one section at a time. Read the section straight through. Allow different people to read aloud one or two paragraphs.*
- *After each individual section, refer to the corresponding Bible verses. Have several people read aloud these verses.*
- *Begin discussing. Ask each person to share the sentences in the narrative that touched them most deeply. Once everyone has shared, ask each person what Bible verse was most meaningful to them. Encourage people to ask questions if an idea is new or unclear. Continue this approach through all four narratives.*
- *After each narrative has been discussed read "Making it Personal." Ask each person to share the part that applied most to their life.*
- *Questions will surface that *The Jesus Story* does not address. Acknowledge these questions but stay focused on the subject at hand.*
- *The entire story unfolds slowly and naturally. Avoid jumping ahead.*

### **The Jesus Story is for ordinary people at all stages of faith:**

- *Ministry leaders wanting a practical resource*
- *Seasoned believers looking for clarity and direction*
- *New believers needing foundational training*

# The Jesus Story and Your Story

*If there's a story,  
there's a storyteller.  
In the Bible, the storyteller  
is God himself. There are lots  
of stories in the Bible, but  
these stories all point  
to the main story  
— The Jesus Story.*



## ▼ The Jesus Story

*is a true story.  
It's a rescue story,  
a transformation story,  
a one another story and  
an expanding story.  
It's a story of hope.*

## ▼ The Jesus Story

*is about who Jesus is  
and what he accomplished  
on your behalf.*

## ▼ The Jesus Story

*is about God's grace.  
This grace offers a personal  
relationship with the  
living God.*

## ▼ The Jesus Story

*shows you that you  
don't have to become a better  
person or do a lot of good  
things for God to love you.*

## ▼ The Jesus Story

*shows you that your  
past doesn't define your  
future — not if Jesus  
gets involved.*

*Jesus loves you,  
knows you,  
and is for you.*

*He knew you would be  
reading this. He is speaking  
to your heart right now.*

*He wants you to discover  
how He has embedded your  
story into His story.*

*Let the **Jesus Story**  
change **Your Story**.*

# Rescue Story

## God's World

**The Jesus Story** is a story that begins by introducing the one and only living God — the God who rescues us.

In the Bible we discover that before there was anything, God existed. He alone created and he alone sustains all that exists. This is where The Jesus Story begins. God is here and was here first.

God exists whether we believe in him or not. He has no origin and never changes. Because he is eternal, no one will ever outlive him. Since time has no effect on him, he has no past or future.

God created the first two humans — a man named Adam and a woman named Eve — to be in relationship with him forever and resemble his likeness. God made this possible by creating them in his image and breathing his Spirit into them. God's Spirit is indispensable. Just as a flashlight requires a battery to give light, we need God's Spirit to produce

his likeness. God made all people for this special purpose.

The Jesus Story begins as a beautiful love story between God and man. Their relationship consisted of the lovingkindness of God and the trust of Adam and Eve. God watched over them, took care of them and blessed them. Adam and Eve personally knew their creator.

Likewise, God also loves us and wants us to know him. Although we can't know everything, God has revealed many things about who he is, what he's like and what is true about himself.

God is tender and compassionate. His goodness and mercy make him slow to anger and quick to forgive. He is drawn to the poor and needy. He cares about those who are hurting, helpless and feel hopeless.

God is just and fair. He is perfect and has never done anything wrong. He is the owner, savior and judge of all the earth. God's wisdom, love and power are limitless.

As **Creator** of all he is also **Lord** of all. He knows everything and consults no one. God does whatever he wants. God sees what everyone does and knows everything that's happening.

God always speaks the truth. He never guesses or offers an opinion. God's perfect character defines the difference between right and wrong, good and evil.

God is good and his steadfast love endures forever. He is faithful, trustworthy and always keeps his promises.

The Jesus Story informs us that we are living our lives in someone else's universe. We accept these truths not because we fully understand them or can prove them, but because God himself revealed them. Faith is always required. We could never discover these truths on our own.



### So how does God want you to respond?

*Thank God for loving you and being your creator.*

*God made you in his image and wants you to feel a sense of dignity.*

*Acknowledge His greatness and praise him for his love, power and wisdom. Thank him for being all you really need.*

# Rescue Story

## God's Plan

**The Jesus Story** is the good news that God has a rescue plan. God's rescue plan points us to his love for all people no matter who they are or what they've done.

Unfortunately, the perfect love story didn't last. God has a horrible enemy. Satan (also called the devil), opposes God and is determined to damage his people and ruin his world. Satan lied to Adam and Eve hoping to destroy their confidence in God's love.

They believed this lie and sinned against God. Sin is turning away from God and going your own way. Sin dishonors God, defiles your heart and generates feelings of shame. Sin leads down a path of self-destruction whether you initially realize it or not.

The end result of Adam and Eve's sin was devastating. Man's nature was altered. This fallen condition has spread

to every person and is inherited at birth. The world is not right. Now, all people are flawed with often selfish and evil intentions. Each of us has the capacity to inflict harm on others.

We are all separated from God and this severed relationship is our greatest problem. Unless we are rescued, we will die in our sins and spend forever in a place where there is no mercy and no exit. The bad news is that all people stand guilty before God. Our **Creator** is now our **Judge**. The good news is that God's rescue plan is based on grace.

Grace treats people better than they deserve by giving them what they don't deserve. God forgives sinners by transferring their guilt to Jesus.

### Why don't people feel their need for grace? Because grace assumes four truths that people are slow to accept:

▼  
**People are not basically good.**

*Everyone's heart is morally flawed. This is not the way most people see themselves. Only those with a sense of their own sinfulness will feel the need for grace.*

▼  
**God is morally just and must punish sin.**

*In a moral world, evil arouses anger. God's anger is the right reaction to something very wrong. People today often tolerate sin and wrongdoing. God won't do that. He cannot ignore sin and still be true to his perfect character.*

▼  
**People are powerless to mend their relationship with God.**

*Regardless of how hard they may try, it is impossible to be forgiven by being good and doing good things. No one can repay God.*

▼  
**God is totally free to do with us what he wants.**

*He could decide to condemn everyone. He's not obligated to have mercy or pardon anyone. The only thing that determines the future of the human race is what God decides to do.*

Sin results in both physical and spiritual death, and death destroys hope. But amazingly, The Jesus Story doesn't end there. God has a loving rescue plan to get his children back and his plan comes as a complete surprise. It's actually shocking news. God decided to pardon sinners by punishing Jesus.



### So how does God want you to respond?

*God is for you. Thank God for loving you as you are. Realize that God is merciful and forgiving. Acknowledge your sinfulness and recognize your need for a savior. Humble yourself and pray, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner."*

# Rescue Story

## God's Son

**The Jesus Story** is the good news that God is for us. God sent Jesus to complete his rescue plan. Jesus is God, who came in person to rescue people from every nation on earth.

After Adam and Eve sinned, God promised to defeat Satan and undo the damage sin caused. Centuries came and went. Throughout the years God repeatedly sent messengers, called prophets, to encourage people and remind them that a savior would be coming.

At the right time, God miraculously brought Jesus into the world through a virgin named Mary. Jesus is God in the flesh. His title, Immanuel, means "God with us." Jesus came to restore our relationship with God. He lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died. He did what we could not do for ourselves.

Consider *your* life for just a moment. What if Jesus hadn't come for *you*? What hope would *you* have without his sacrifice?

"Gospel" mean good news. The good news of God's grace announces that our **Creator** has become our **Savior**. The good news is that God rescues people by his grace. The gospel message — the life, death and resurrection of Jesus — is the centerpiece of the Bible.

Jesus' sinless life, shed blood on the cross and resurrection from the dead thoroughly defeated Satan, sin and death. Jesus took our place and bore our sins on the cross. Jesus paid a debt he didn't owe. He sees us for who we really are and loves us anyway.

After Jesus was crucified his followers lost hope. Death had won. Hope had died. Jesus was gone and nobody expected him to come back. But God raised Jesus from

the dead and he physically appeared to his disciples. He showed them his nail-pierced hands and they were convinced it was really him. Jesus is alive. Hope is restored. The death and resurrection of Jesus are the foundation of the Christian faith.

The gospel offers a personal relationship with the living God. This is a free gift we receive, not something we earn. Salvation comes by faith — the personal conviction and belief that Jesus is Lord. A person is saved by what he believes, not what he does. Only those who trust in Jesus are declared forgiven by God.

This is what The Jesus Story is all about. All people are trapped in sin and need to be rescued. No one can rescue himself. Through Jesus, God's plan saves sinners by faith alone. Because of who he is and what he has done for us, Jesus is our savior — our hero. He deserves our unceasing gratitude, deepest affection, complete obedience and unconditional loyalty.



### So how does God want you to respond?

*Come to Jesus just as you are and confess, repent and believe.*

**Confessing** is agreeing with God. Confessing is admitting your sin – what you've done and what you've become. **Repenting** is changing your way of thinking and going a different direction. Repenting is turning away from sin and turning toward God with a broken heart.

**Believing** is looking to Jesus and trusting that his death paid the penalty for your sins.

*If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that*

*God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Everyone who puts*

*their trust in Jesus will be saved. Thank God for rescuing you.*



# Rescue Story

## *Making it Personal*

There is one true God  
and He wants to be your God.  
He is your loving heavenly Father.  
Satan is your horrible enemy.  
He is full of hate and always lies.

God loves you and wants  
to bless you. Satan only wants  
to use you. God desires a relationship  
with you and values your love  
more than anything.

But sin has altered your heart  
and damaged your life. Worst of all  
it has separated you from God.  
Your sin is the bad news you have  
to accept — and confess. You might  
not see it at first, but your sin is your  
greatest problem — one you cannot  
fix on your own. Don't be afraid.  
God is not mad at you. He is for you.

Your sins — no matter how big  
or how many — do not disqualify you  
from receiving God's love. He accepts  
you just as you are. Jesus became  
what you are so that you could  
find what you need in him.

When you come to God, he meets  
you with mercy and grace. God loves  
you and sent Jesus to rescue you.  
Jesus understands your weaknesses  
and identifies with what you are  
going through. He faced the same  
temptations you are facing, yet was  
without sin. From his birth to his  
death you notice his compassion  
and patience. You see a Savior  
who didn't come to judge or  
condemn — but one who  
came to give you hope.

The cross is the good news.  
The cross proves that God is willing  
to do whatever is necessary to fix  
what sin has broken. Jesus paid for  
what he did not do so that you could

get what you did not earn. Jesus did  
everything as your substitute.  
Everything he did was  
on your behalf.

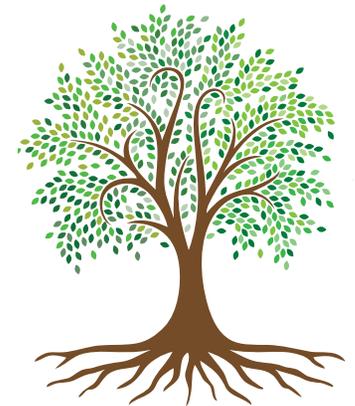
What does the cross of Christ  
mean to you? God's plan was for  
Jesus to enter this broken world,  
suffer its brokenness, live a  
completely sinless life in every way,  
and then die on a cross — on your  
behalf. There was simply no other  
way for you to be forgiven  
and accepted by God.

Do you need the cross?  
A self-righteous person doesn't  
need a Savior. The center of God's  
rescue plan is not your personal  
goodness. No matter who you

are there's one question that  
won't go away: "What can wash  
away my sin?" The answer is:  
"Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

Stop and consider the depth  
of God's love. Consider what he gave  
up for you. Consider what he has  
done on your behalf.

Jesus is the one you need — for this  
life and the life to come.



*Can you see how His Story  
connects to Your Story?*

# Transformation Story

## *God's Spirit – Agent of Change*

**The Jesus Story** is the good news that rescuing people is just the beginning. God's Son saves. God's Spirit transforms. God's Spirit makes you a child of God and that changes your identity.

From eternity, God has lived as one God in three distinct persons. The first person is *God the Father*, our creator. The second person is *Jesus the Son*, our savior. The third person is *The Holy Spirit*, our indwelling counselor and guide. The four phrases: *God in you*, *Jesus in you*, *Christ in you* and the *Holy Spirit in you*, are used interchangeably in the Bible. They all describe the same thing — God himself indwelling man. But who is the Holy Spirit? What should we know about him?

▼  
**The Holy Spirit is God** coming in person to live in your heart.

▼  
**The Holy Spirit is invisible.** He has no color, size, weight or body.

▼  
**The Holy Spirit is a divine person** who speaks, feels and empowers.

▼  
**The Holy Spirit lovingly pursues you and convicts you of your sin.**

▼  
**The Holy Spirit applies to your heart what Jesus said and did.**

▼  
**The Holy Spirit leads and guides your life.**

▼  
**The Holy Spirit is always with you.** You're never alone.

The Jesus Story is about the role the Holy Spirit plays in your life. God's Spirit in your heart immediately changes your identity. He creates a new person where another person has been. From that moment, God's ongoing agenda is to shape us into exactly who he made us to be and prepare us for the unique work he's called each of us to do.

The Holy Spirit has always been interested in you. He is always drawing you to himself and trying to get your attention. His initial role is to convict you of your sin and

help you see your need for a savior. He opens your spiritual eyes and shows you that going your own way doesn't work. He personally invites you to turn to God and trust Jesus. If you humbly open your heart when you read the Bible, you'll hear his voice. Personal encounters with him happen every day.

The Jesus Story is about new birth. Our first birth is physical, but the second one is spiritual. When God's Spirit comes into our hearts we are spiritually born again and adopted into God's family. The Holy Spirit's role is to assure you that you are a forgiven child of God.

This is your new identity. A Christian is a person who has God for his father. None of us are naturally born into God's family. Our second birth comes from heaven above, not by being born into a religious family, knowing Christian people, or being devoted to the things of God.

The Jesus Story is about new life. God is in the business of bringing spiritually dead people back to life. When God's Spirit comes into our hearts we are spiritually raised from the dead. As certain as God raised Jesus from the dead, the gospel offers new life here and now, and eternal life in heaven after we die. *Dead* is what we were. *Alive* is what we are now and forever. Our new identity guarantees our future.



### **So how does God want you to respond?**

*Thank God for pursuing you, giving you a second birth and making you spiritually alive. Thank him for confirming your new identity as his child. Realize that God's heart-shaping activity has a purpose.*

# Transformation Story

## *God's Spirit – Out with the Old*

**The Jesus Story** is the good news that God's Spirit has the power to transform the *old you*. In light of our new identity as his children, God can change the way we think, what we want and the way we live.

Spiritual formation is the gradual, lifelong process of going from what you used to be to being more like Jesus. This is a slow process because what we are has been formed in us by the corrupt influences of the world, the devil and our own sinful choices. Becoming a follower of Jesus does not instantly or automatically change this. In addition, stronger will power can't alter our old disposition. But God can.

In the storyline of the Bible, the condition of the human heart is a recurring theme. Because of sin, everyone has a flawed human nature composed of self-centered desires and tendencies. The Bible describes this as our *self*. The root of our sins is called *self*. It is not something we do, but something we are. That's why we don't easily recognize it.

To Jesus, *self* represents another "god" — an idol of the heart. An idol is something that replaces God. An idol is anything more fundamental than God to our sense of identity and meaning in life. Some idols are easy to spot: money, sex, work, family and things. Other idols are less visible: the desire for control, comfort, pleasure, approval and power. Idols are often good things we turn into ultimate things. They deceive us into thinking that there is something we must have, and if we can't have it, nothing else can satisfy. It's something that feels necessary to our happiness. These god-substitutes must be addressed.

If getting rid of heart idols were mainly a matter of behavior, the solution would be to learn Bible principles and put them into practice. But *self* must be dismantled and dethroned. *Self* must be crucified. The cross meant death for Jesus, and for us it means yielding our rights and surrendering control. God is bringing us to the end

of ourselves. A man on a cross has made no further plans. God is getting rid of the parts of us that fight against him. He wants to put to death the *old you*.

Our job is to cooperate. So how do you cooperate with God? Trust that God knows everything and still loves you. Secure in your new identity as a child of God, cultivate a humble and repentant heart.

If you have put something ahead of God, in prayer, name the thing you have built your life around other than him. If you have looked to people, achievements or your financial status to meet your deepest longings, acknowledge that only Jesus can fully satisfy. If you are playing with sin and flirting with the darkness,

don't wait until you self-destruct and harm your closest relationships. Whatever it is, if you know it doesn't please God, confess it, get help and turn around.

A powerful example of life transformation is found in the words of a recovering alcoholic. His simple testimony was, "The reason I believe Jesus turned water into wine is because in my house he changed beer into furniture." The Holy Spirit has the power to transform the old you.



### **So how does God want you to respond?**

*Thank God for exposing the god-substitutes in your life.*

*Cooperate with Him. Do not grieve his heart or resist his will. Yield your rights to God so that people can better see the nature of Jesus in your life. Ask God to show you how to turn from your heart idols. Seek help from a mature friend.*

# Transformation Story

## *God's Spirit – In with the New*

**The Jesus Story** is the good news that God's Spirit has the power to create a *new you*. In light of our new identity as his children, God can create in us a new mindset, new desires and a new way to live.

What makes a follower of Jesus a new person is the presence of God's Spirit in his heart. The Christian life is Christ in you — nothing more, nothing less and nothing else. It is much more than a list of rules or a set of principles to help us become better people. At its core, Christianity is a living person, *living in* a living person. Somebody, *living in* somebody. Jesus *in* us. The presence of God's Spirit is what makes followers of Jesus different from unbelievers.

To live as God intended, human beings must be inhabited by God himself. A flashlight requires a battery, a pen requires ink, and a glove requires a hand. Something inside is needed. That's how they are made. In the same way, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is indispensable. That's how God made

us. It is God's Spirit in our hearts that enables us to think and act like Jesus.

Since Jesus makes our heart his home, an important step toward becoming like Christ is being conscious of his presence. Jesus doesn't live in us just to observe us. He lives in us to fill us with himself. Think of your life as a hotel with many rooms. Does Jesus have the key to every room? No room can be off limits. Jesus wants to occupy all of them. Being filled with the Spirit enables Jesus to gain possession of your whole personality. Slowly, his desires become your desires. Day by day, you are getting more of Jesus and he is getting more of you.

Jesus has moved in and is reclaiming his throne. Like a surgeon, he's operating. A *self-led life* is being replaced by a *Spirit-led life*. Less pride, indifference and harshness. More humility, love and kindness. Less of you and more of Jesus. A *new you* is being spiritually formed.

Our job is to cooperate. So how do you cooperate with God? Trust that God knows everything and still loves you. Secure in your new identity as a child of God, accept Christ as your life. When Christ is your life, you will...

▼  
**Rejoice** in all that Jesus has done and offers you.

▼  
Instinctively **set** your mind on things above.

▼  
Naturally **want** to read the Bible and hear God's voice.

▼  
Continually **ask** God to fill you with his Spirit.

▼  
Do everything **in his name** and for his **sake**.

▼  
**Surrender** to him everything you naturally call your own — your rights, marriage, children, time, money, career — **everything**.

When Jesus has access to everything, your life becomes an exciting daily adventure and the Holy Spirit dwells unhindered in the *new you*.



### **So how does God want you to respond?**

*Open your whole heart to Jesus. Rejoice in the love that God has poured into your heart. Offer him all that you have. Make Jesus your treasure; make him the most important thing in your life.*

# Transformation Story

## *Making it Personal*

The only true God is...  
*a generous Father,*  
*a self-giving Son, and*  
*a life-changing Spirit.*

You were created to enjoy the eternal loving fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Sin causes people to be unwilling — unwilling to listen, submit and obey. But God is relentless. He never stops thinking of you, looking for you, drawing you. First, His Holy Spirit convicts you of your sin. He opens your eyes to what you are and convinces you that you need a Savior. Then, He opens your heart to pay attention to the story of Jesus. When you believe the Holy Spirit comes into your heart.

Your heart is Christ's home. Jesus lives in your heart through the Holy Spirit. This is something that you can't explain, but something you know is real. When Jesus enters your heart he redefines who you are. Deep within you, the Holy Spirit assures you that you are a deeply loved, highly valued child of God.

Like a medical X-ray that shows images of what is inside your body, the Holy Spirit exposes and reveals what is inside your heart. You begin to recognize the self-ism of sin. You see how self-oriented your thoughts and desires really are. He shows you that your old self functions like another god — a heart-idol that captures, defines and controls you. To want something isn't always evil. Desire for a good thing can become a bad thing when it becomes a ruling thing.

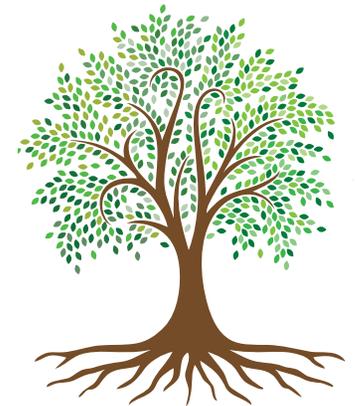
What you finally realize is that you've been searching for life and love in all the wrong places. You were looking to something other than God to satisfy the deepest longings of your heart. The Holy Spirit begins his transforming work by identifying the things your heart desires more than God.

Your life is like a hotel with many rooms. When the Holy Spirit enters your heart he wants access to all of them. He begins to remove and replace. He gets rid of what does not please God so he can fill you with what does — his thoughts, desires and motives.

God's refining process is sometimes painful. But the end result is striking: less of you and more of Jesus.

The Spirit of God is a gift that brings about a shift. The Holy Spirit begins to shift your focus off of yourself and on to Jesus. The *old you* was all about what you wanted. The *new you* is all about Jesus. Life transformation won't happen overnight, but it will happen.

God is changing the one thing you could never change on your own — *yourself*.



*Can you see how His Story connects to Your Story?*

# One Another Story

## *God's Family – Building Relationships*

**The Jesus Story** is the good news that God's rescued people have a new relationship with one another. These people are being transformed by the Holy Spirit and belong to God's spiritual family.

The Jesus Story is a family story. In the Bible, the gospel was revealed to a man named Abraham. God made a covenant with Abraham and promised him that through his family all of the families on earth would be blessed. Jesus fulfilled this promise.

As Abraham's descendant, Jesus is a blessing to all nations through his death and resurrection. Anybody from any culture who has faith in Jesus is welcomed into God's covenant family.

In God's family love matters. Loving God and loving people are inseparable. God notices how we treat one another. We can't say that we love God and treat people poorly.

God's family is composed of people who love well, make others feel

welcome, celebrate joyful events, and provide emotional support to those who are discouraged.

God's family is real and genuine. It's a safe place to be vulnerable. Forgiven, yet imperfect people grow by being honest about their struggles. In God's family there's nothing to prove and no shame in asking for help. We can admit being hurt, angry and disillusioned.

God's family is a place where people understand the power of temptation and can freely confess their failures. It's a place where those who get stuck in sin are lovingly pursued and gently restored. It's a place where people can find healing and hope.

Members of God's family are disciples of Jesus. Discipleship is for everyone, not just the super-religious. Every disciple starts out as a consumer

and grows into a servant. Disciples are *learners* and disciple-makers are *models*. Discipleship is learning the lifestyle of Jesus and then modeling a life filled with faith, hope and love.

Discipleship is experiencing the love of Jesus and learning a new way of life. It is learning how to yield your rights to God as Jesus did. It is learning how to pray, love others and please God. Discipleship is learning to live your life like Jesus lived his.

God's family is mission focused. Making disciple-makers is the family business. People develop best in an equipping community. God's family is relational

and purposeful. Like Jesus, we accept people as they are, challenge them to obey, and equip them to reproduce.

God's family is called to love, not fit in with the world. Historically, God's people have seen themselves as outsiders. Followers of Jesus are often misunderstood by friends and persecuted by enemies. But Jesus taught that our love for one another would convince our non-religious friends that the gospel is true.



### **So how does God want you to respond?**

*God is for you. Thank God for adopting you into his family. Make loving God and one another a priority. Embrace the family business of disciple-making. Remember that this world is not your home.*

# One Another Story

## *God's Family – Working Together*

**The Jesus Story** is the good news that God has made us members of his church, the body of Christ on earth. God's church works to build up one another and form engaging relationships with those who do not yet believe.

Relationships define the church. The word *church* never refers to a building or a meeting, but always to people in relationship with God and each other. People cannot be transformed in isolation. We need loving, truth-telling relationships to help us mature. The analogy of a human body describes how the church operates:

Our physical body is composed of various parts which support the activities our head wants to accomplish. The parts of our physical body are unique and have different roles (eyes, ears, stomach, lungs, etc.). Some parts are visible and others are not. All are essential.

The same principle is true in the church. Jesus is the head and we are his body. Jesus is still doing what he did years ago. The change is that Jesus is using a different body. Today, he speaks through our lips and works through our hands. Jesus died for us, lives in us and now does his work through us.

God's family is a united family. We guard against comparing ourselves with one another and preferring one leader over another. The church is not a competition or a popularity contest. All members are valued, appreciated and have equal worth. We are simply servants of Jesus.

Regardless of our role or title, the church centers around Jesus. Any attitude or action that creates division in the church weakens its unity and hinders its witness to those who do not belong to God's household.

God's family is compassionate and generous to those who seem unlovable or undesirable. This includes non-believers, strangers and even enemies. Jesus was aware of the needs of people regardless of who they were. When serving others, being aware is more important than being smart. God's family does not view anyone as unworthy. We remember our condition before Jesus rescued us. We accept one another as Christ has accepted us.

God's family works together. Every member in the body of Christ has a unique way to contribute.

This is by God's design. The church functions best when the diversity of gifts and talents is valued. No one can do everything and no one is self-sufficient. By using our unique gifts to serve, we grow in our love for one another and become a blessing to the world.



### **So how does God want you to respond?**

*Thank God for adding you to his church and giving you an important role. Participate in a local Bible believing church. Develop and use your spiritual gifts. Honor Jesus as the head of the church and trust him to know how to use you. Celebrate the role of every member and avoid comparing yourself to others.*

# One Another Story

## *Making it Personal*

When you placed your faith in Jesus you were included in God's family. You now belong to a spiritual family comprised of people from all around the world. Your heavenly Father views you as his totally forgiven, fully accepted and permanently adopted child.

Love is the DNA of God's family. Loving others is the greatest spiritual achievement there is. People need love. As you realize God's great love for you, your love for others grows. How you love is more important than what you know. You show your love for God by loving people. Belonging to God's family provides the motivation you need to accept one another as Christ accepted you.

Forgiveness is a core value in God's family. When you see that Jesus didn't hold your sin against you, the importance of showing mercy to others becomes clearer. The unwillingness to forgive grieves God's heart.

Disciples who disciple others is the culture of God's family. Success is succession. The priority is people development. Jesus created this culture by selecting teachable men and spending time with them in a variety of life settings. They heard his teaching, saw his love and witnessed his power. They learned who he was and why he came. Finally, Jesus commissioned them to pass their relationship with God on to others. This is what Jesus wants you to learn how to do. Here's how:

Feed your soul. Consistently and carefully read God's Word. Ask Jesus to guide you to an open, humble and teachable person. Do things together. Encourage each other. Share your

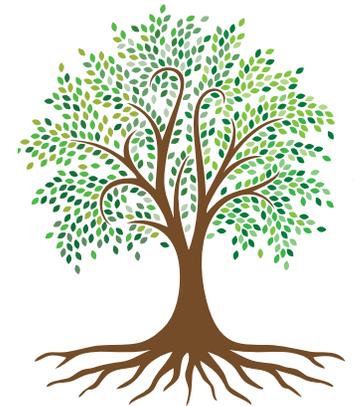
struggles. Pray together. In the soil of Christ-devoted relationships, people grow. From the start, prepare to multiply. Success is succession.

The church is the body of Christ on earth. As a member of his body, Jesus works through your hands and speaks through your lips. But the church functions best when its members work together. Teamwork is what the church is all about.

The tendency to compare yourself with other people is natural. But God uniquely gifted you to be *you*. Be content with who you are and respect the spiritual gifts of others.

Your role in the church may be hidden and obscure. Others may serve in the spotlight. Submit your status to Jesus and let him determine where and how to use you.

The Lord added you to his body to be a blessing to the church and an influence in the world. Your non-Christian friends might not have any interest in God. But when they see the tangible love in Christ's family and the supportive teamwork in Christ's body, Jesus will open their hearts.



*Can you see how His Story connects to Your Story?*

# Expanding Story

## *God's Kingdom*

**The Jesus Story** — a rescue story, a transformation story, a one another story — is that all? No, The Jesus Story is the good news that God's kingdom multiplies and expands throughout the whole world. God uses his rescued, transformed family to continue a worldwide movement that has a vision to reach every nation on earth.

Jesus envisioned a kingdom on earth like the one in heaven. This kingdom exists wherever Jesus is king. Bringing the kingdom of God to earth was the purpose of his life. Through loving God supremely and loving others sacrificially, followers of Jesus make the kingdom of God their top priority.

Jesus proclaimed the good news of God's kingdom. This message saves, transforms and creates a community with a mission. In The Jesus Story, the progressive, personal invitation for every follower of Jesus is *sonship*, then *discipleship* and finally *partnership*.

The mission of God's kingdom touches every area of life. It is composed of relational servants, not religious celebrities. This means that all jobs matter. There are no second-class roles in God's kingdom. Whether you are leading a large company or parenting one child, you play a vital role in the kingdom of God.

Followers of Jesus care about forgiveness of sin and also poverty, disease and ignorance. They demonstrate God's character by showing acts of kindness toward people who are suffering. They understand the skeptic who says, "Don't tell me I have a friend in Jesus, until I have a friend in you." Non-believers are drawn to Jesus when they see kingdom values lived out.

The kingdom of God multiplies through relationships devoted to multiplying. While Jesus attracted large crowds, he spent most of his time with an inner circle of three, a spiritual family of twelve and a ministry team of seventy which he personally trained.

The kingdom of God multiplies through "fourth-soil people." Jesus revealed this strategy in the Parable of the Sower. He explained that God's word is like seeds which were broadly sown and fell on four different types of soil. The four soils represent the hearts of four types of people and their individual responses to God's word. The first person had no interest, the second lacked endurance,

and the third was too distracted. Only the "fourth-soil person" received the word of God into his heart and reproduced. Jesus was instructing his disciples to become and to always look for "fourth-soil people."

The Jesus Story is about an expanding kingdom with a two-fold approach: First, combine the good news of salvation by grace with loving deeds that show God's character. Second, spread the word of God everywhere and intentionally look for "fourth-soil people."



### **So how does God want you to respond?**

*Thank God for the people who have sown the word of God into your heart and developed your faith. Recognize that God is actively working in every part of the world and in every segment of society. Live so that others can see kingdom values in you.*

*Look for "fourth-soil people" and invest in their lives.*

# Expanding Story

## *God's Guidance*

**The Jesus Story** is the good news that God's work expands because he has a purpose, plan and place for every person. God has given us his Son, his Spirit and a special assignment.

God sent Abraham to a land he had never seen. Joseph was sent to Egypt to provide for his family. Moses was sent to deliver Israel out of slavery. Philip was sent to find an Ethiopian in the desert. Peter was sent to a military officer. Paul and Barnabas were sent to Asia. The people whom God sent didn't fully understand what was happening, but they knew that God was behind it.

God guides people into the new and different. It is often unexpected and uncomfortable. Yet it is always initiated by God himself. In the Bible, there is no record of any God-fearing person who chose the life he wanted and then informed God of his decision.

It wasn't Noah's idea to build an ark. It wasn't Moses' idea to return to Egypt

or David's idea to be the king of Israel. It wasn't Jeremiah's idea to be a prophet or Mary's idea to be the mother of the Son of God. When we surrender our lives to God, we discover that none of us are the leading character in the story of our life.

Jesus was sent by the Father and led by the Holy Spirit. He put everything on the table and submitted himself to the agenda of his Father. He was fully aware of who sent him and why he was sent.

God governs the world he created. We were born at a certain time and place. We are all shaped by our culture, the language we speak, our unique personality, physical features, skin color and family history. All of this is determined by God.

God respects our cultural background. It creates a natural access to certain

people and this access is what God's guidance is all about. Everyone has a unique entrance to their immediate family, relatives, close friends, work associates and neighbors. At any time God can guide us to someone who is searching. He can arrange events to get us where he wants us to be, even when we don't know he is doing it. God guides those who know him to those who don't.

There is no end to the frustration you'll feel when you make *you* the mission of your life. As long as you keep making your life about *you*, you'll experience one round of emptiness

after another. The radical solution is to give up your life. Surrendering control of our lives — the thing we fear most — is the key. The cure for an empty life is to find a mission that's bigger than you. Jesus has the life and mission you're looking for. In the same way you gave Jesus your past sins, now give him your future plans.



### **So how does God want you to respond?**

*Ask God to guide you. Recognize that God is behind the story of your life. Confidently go where he sends you and do the work he assigns you to do. Die to your dream of being a success and live to the dream of being a blessing. Trust God with the outcome.*

# Expanding Story

## God's Power

**The Jesus Story** is a story of power. It is God's power that rescues sinners and transforms believers. It is God's power that joins us together in his family. Likewise, The Jesus Story is the good news that God empowers his people to continue his work in the world.

On earth Jesus' power came from the presence of God's Spirit and prayer. To resist temptation and deliver those who were oppressed by the devil, Jesus was filled, led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. His miracles demonstrated God's power over sin, diseases, demons, nature and death. He emphasized that his Father was living in him and working through him. Peter also declared that the mighty works Jesus performed were miracles which God did through him.

The disciples never asked Jesus to teach them how to preach, only how to pray. Prayer is asking God to intervene.

Prayer is God's means by which his children ask for and receive supernatural power in their time of need. Prayer is depending on God, not yourself.

After his resurrection, Jesus told his disciples to go and make disciples. But first, he insisted that they wait for power from heaven. To make disciples of all nations would require supernatural power. As someone once said, "It's not the lofty sails that move the ship, but the unseen wind." Ten days after Jesus returned to heaven an outpouring of God's Spirit came. The gospel was preached, the church was born and through God's power three thousand souls were saved.

Jesus is willing and able to provide his followers supernatural strength. He is exalted with all power at the right

hand of God and eager to continue his work through us. By God's Spirit, he works through us just as the Father worked through him.

We often assume that what we do for Jesus is what matters. But what really counts is what the Holy Spirit can do through a life given exclusively to him. The ministry of Jesus is what he does through us, not what we do for him. The privilege is ours, but the power is his.

We can all relate to the farmer who said, "On my land the wheelbarrow only goes as far as I push it." But doing God's work is different. Individual effort and personal motivation are not enough. Training, skill and experience

cannot replace the power of God. Whatever we are not praying about we are doing ourselves.

We seek God's power most when we come face to face with a problem we can't handle. We rarely ask for help unless we need it. But our personal limitations point us to rely on God's power. For God, no problem is too big, no heart is too hard and no illness is too advanced. God can do anything.



### So how does God want you to respond?

*Thank God for making his power available. Realize that all problems are the same size to God. Offer yourself to God and ask him to do his work through you. Recognize that you have immediate and direct access to God. Boldly ask for anything in the name of Jesus.*

# Expanding Story

## *Making it Personal*

The kingdom of God exists wherever Jesus is reigning and making things new. God brought you out of darkness and into the light — into the kingdom of God. Jesus is the King and your heart is his throne. The King of the universe is now King over you.

God wrote your story ages before you took your first breath. God knows how your story began and how it will end. The fact that your story would intersect with his story was inevitable. Jesus' willingness to endure suffering and death for you unleashes the grace you need to lay down your life for his kingdom and his glory.

At the heart of God's kingdom is a disciple-making movement composed of people just like you. His vision is to make disciples in every unreached people group on earth. His plan is to use ordinary people to get the job done. Whether Jesus sends you overseas or across the street doesn't matter. He knows where you fit in his disciple-making movement. Every disciple has a specific calling from God.

Since God is active in every segment of society, where you live and work matters. This is where Jesus has sent you and placed you. You have been blessed by God to be a blessing to the people you routinely contact every day. Unbelievers are drawn to Jesus when they see his values lived out in your life.

Jesus guides. You may not be aware of it, but God is preparing you to connect with someone who

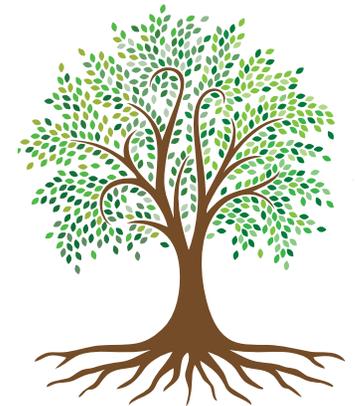
is searching for him. This is something you could never do on your own. God's providential timing reminds you that his story is bigger than yours. His guidance takes precedence over how you think the story of your life should unfold.

Only God has the power to fulfill his purpose for your life. There is no power or magic in your natural abilities. God's plan is accomplished by supernatural power not human resources. The empty tomb of Jesus is your guarantee that nothing is impossible for God.

The source of God's power is the presence of the Holy Spirit. God promises you immediate, direct and unlimited access to his throne of grace through prayer.

Can you imagine a greater privilege? Many of the things God does in your life will be a direct answer to your prayers. The privilege is yours — the power is his.

You don't need to worry about how your story will end. Jesus is in charge. He will complete the work he began. You can trust the man who died for you.



*Can you see how His Story connects to Your Story?*

# Your Story

## *In a world...*

*...that is broken and does not function as God intended...*

*...where life can be difficult and discouraging...*

*...where the selfishness of sin is everywhere...*

*...you need a hope-giving Savior.*

## *Thank God...*

*that Jesus came from heaven to earth*

*to save sinners and give you hope.*

## *Rejoice...*

*because grace introduces*

*the actual Author of the story of your life —*

*the Author who graciously took your story*

*and connected it to the story He wrote*

*before you were born.*



## *Remember the cross and rejoice in...*

*the **sovereignty** of God for **choosing** you,*

*the **mercy** of God for **pardoning** you,*

*the **patience** of God for **bearing** with you,*

*and the **faithfulness** of God for **sustaining** you.*

*May God  
use your story  
for His glory.*



## Rescue Story

### God's World

▼  
**Hebrews 11:6**  
*Without faith it is impossible to please him for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and rewards those who seek him.*

▼  
**Jeremiah 10:10**  
*But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King.*

▼  
**Acts 17:24-25**  
*The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands; rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.*

▼  
**Exodus 34:6-7**  
*The LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished. (NIV)*

▼  
**Malachi 3:6**  
*I the LORD do not change.*

▼  
**Daniel 4:35**  
*He does as he pleases. No one can say to him: "What have you done?" (NIV)*

▼  
**Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7**  
*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" . . . so God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. (NIV)*

▼  
**Psalm 113:3-6**  
*From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the LORD is to be praised! The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens! Who is like the LORD our God, who is seated on high, who looks far down on the heavens and the earth?*

## Rescue Story

### God's Plan

▼  
**Genesis 5:1-3**  
*When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image and named him Seth.*

▼  
**Romans 3:23**  
*All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*

▼  
**Romans 6:23**  
*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

▼  
**Acts 2:23-24**  
*This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.*

▼  
**Ephesians 2:4-5; 8-9**  
*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved . . . For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not of your own doing; it is a gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

▼  
**Titus 3:3-5**  
*For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy.*

▼  
**1 Peter 2:10**  
*Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*



## Rescue Story

### God's Son

#### John 3:16

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

#### I Timothy 1:15

*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*

#### Mark 10:45

*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many.*

#### II Corinthians 5:21

*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

#### Romans 5:1

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

#### Romans 8:1

*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

#### Romans 8:31

*If God is for us, who can be against us?*

#### Acts 16:30-31

*Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."*

#### I Corinthians 15:3-4

*That Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.*

#### Colossians 2:13-14

*And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.*

## Transformation Story

### God's Spirit — Agent of Change

#### II Corinthians 5:17

*If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

#### John 14:16-17

*I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

#### John 16:8

*And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness and judgment.*

#### Psalms 139:13

*For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.*

#### Jeremiah 1:5

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you.*

#### Galatians 1:15

*But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace... (NIV)*

#### John 1:12-13

*But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

#### Romans 5:5

*God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*

#### Romans 8:10

*If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.*

#### Romans 8:16

*The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.*



## Transformation Story

### *God's Spirit — Out with the Old*

#### ▼ Jeremiah 17:9

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*

#### ▼ Colossians 3:5-9

*Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices.*

#### ▼ I John 2:16

*For all that is in the world — the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life — is not from the Father but is from the world.*

#### ▼ Luke 9:23-25

*If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.*

#### ▼ Galatians 5:24

*And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

#### ▼ Galatians 6:14

*Far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.*

#### ▼ I Corinthians 10:12-13

*No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*

#### ▼ I John 5:21

*Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*

## Transformation Story

### *God's Spirit — In with the New*

#### ▼ II Corinthians 13:5

*Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you? (NIV)*

#### ▼ Galatians 2:20

*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.*

#### ▼ Colossians 3:2-4

*Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

#### ▼ Romans 12:2

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God.*

#### ▼ Ephesians 4:23-24

*Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

#### ▼ II Corinthians 3:18

*And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

#### ▼ Colossians 3:12

*Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.*

#### ▼ Ephesians 5:18

*Be filled with the Spirit.*

#### ▼ Romans 10:17

*Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

#### ▼ Matthew 4:4

*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.*



## One Another Story

### God's Family — Building Relationships

#### Galatians 3:7-8

Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."

#### Romans 15:7

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. (NIV)

#### Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

#### Ephesians 4:32

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

#### Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom.

#### I Thessalonians 5:11

Encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

#### James 5:16

Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another.

#### Galatians 6:1

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.

#### John 13:34-35

Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

#### I John 3:16

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

## One Another Story

### God's Family — Working Together

#### I Corinthians 12:12-27

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ . . . God has arranged the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. As it is, there are many parts, but one body . . . God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. (NIV)

#### I Corinthians 1:10

I appeal to you brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you . . .

#### I Corinthians 3:5

What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed . . . I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

#### Philippians 2:3

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

#### Ephesians 4:15-16

Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

#### I Peter 4:10-11

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies.



## Expanding Story

### God's Kingdom

#### ▼ Mark 1:14-15

Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

#### ▼ Luke 4:43

He said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."

#### ▼ Matthew 6:9-10

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

#### ▼ Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

#### ▼ Matthew 24:14

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

#### ▼ Matthew 25:34-36

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.

#### ▼ Colossians 3:17

Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.

#### ▼ Matthew 13:23

What was sown on the good soil is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.

#### ▼ II Timothy 2:2

What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

## Expanding Story

### God's Guidance

#### ▼ Psalm 139:16

All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. (NIV)

#### ▼ Acts 17:26-27

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him.

#### ▼ Genesis 12:1-2

The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you."

#### ▼ Exodus 3:10

I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.

#### ▼ Acts 10:19-20

The Spirit said to Peter, "Behold, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them."

#### ▼ Acts 13:2

The Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

#### ▼ Luke 1:30-31

The angel said, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus."

#### ▼ Romans 12:1

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.







Let His  
Story  
Change  
Your  
Story

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