

“Called and Commissioned”

STORY OF MY LIFE Sermon Series | Week One | Newbreak Church

March 7th, 2021

This week is about the big story! We all play a role in reconciling the world back to God. Starting with the foundation that we are called to participate in the calling of others, we can be inspired that we have a part to play in the “God story” of others.

For more insights relating to this week’s sermon, see <https://newbreak.church/blog/>. We post a new blog every Sunday which coincides with the sermon passage or theme from that day.

Start Here

- What makes a good story, a good story?
- What is your favorite part of a good movie? (Character setup, Cinematography, Conflict, Climax, Resolution)

Think Deeper by Reading 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

As you read through these verses keep these questions in mind:

- What value does this chapter add to what we understand about God?
- What are some of the things that stand out to you when you read the passage?

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

Point 1 – God gives us a new identity, which shapes our plotline in God’s story.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV)

Sometimes we need to be shaken to our core; reminded of the reality that “in Christ” we are a new creation. Admittedly, this may sound odd. “I don’t feel so *new*,” we might say to ourselves. And that is okay! Because *this* statement about our identity is a declaration, which means it is not contingent on how we feel or even how we perform.

God works in us in a counter-intuitive way. He reverse-engineers our transformation, starting with the end declaration. Imagine standing next to an architect as he surveys a plot of land which has yet to be broken. And then, to your great surprise, he says: “Isn’t it beautiful? It is a masterpiece!” As puzzled as you might be, you will realize that an architect doesn’t see things the way that you and I do. He sees the end even at the beginning, and every phase in-between. So too, **God—being the true Architect—sees us as we are right now with the full glory of what we will become.** And so the journey of our faith is the art of becoming what we already are in His eyes. For us, it’s not merely the potential God sees, it is the promise of what He is willing and working in us, slowly but surely coming to fruition!

With this profoundly new identity comes a radical reorientation of who we are and what our purpose is. We realize that life is about so much more than going to work, paying bills, and day-dreaming about our next vacation. Our new identity “in Christ” means that we have a new worldview, new values, new priorities, and newfound purpose!

We get to be storytellers of the greatest story—the very story we ourselves play a part in!

- Have you ever seen potential in someone that they didn’t see in themselves? How did you try to tell them about what you see in them? Did they believe it? Do you believe it when people tell you something similar?
- **We are storytellers of the greatest story!** Describe this truth. How do you see your role as a Christian as a “storyteller”? What aspects of being a “storyteller” are natural for you? What aspects push you beyond your comfort zone?
- When is the last time you told your God-story to someone? How did it go? Were people receptive?

—ADDITIONAL INSIGHT—

Why do we love watching movies? For entertainment? Sure. But beyond that, we love movies because we love a good story. Even if our life story does not correlate one-to-one with the character(s) in the film, we still create connections. We find a way to relate their story to our own.

The same is true with the gospel story! No movie, no matter the budget or the elite cast, can top the story of the Bible. Yet, I bet many of us find that statement hard to believe. We need a story that unites us, and the gospel provides that. It is the good news that is not restricted to a particular culture, background, or race, and its rapid spread across the diverse Roman empire in the first few centuries A.D. proved it! The story of God and humanity, our hiding and God's seeking of us, and the climax of the story coming to a head in Christ ... no story could top it!

Maybe we need to grapple with the cover-to-cover narrative of Scripture. And maybe we need the gospel story to resound in our lives in a fresh way?

While we highly recommend immersing yourself more into the text of Scripture, we also have another complementary suggestion. *The Chosen* T.V. series is an ambitious project with season 1 available to watch for free and season 2 coming out in a matter of months. It is a series on the life of Jesus and it is awe-inspiring in how it stays true to the historical and cultural context of the gospels. You can find more information and how to watch *The Chosen* with this link: <https://studios.vidangel.com/the-chosen>

Point 2 – We get to be part of God's great “comeback” story.

[God] gave us the ministry of reconciliation...We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:18, 20, NIV)

What is more important to God than to reconcile people back to Himself? Nothing! Yet, by His desire and design, He wants us to play a role in this supremely important mission. God “gave us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:18). The verb “gave” in Greek denotes the idea of entrusting something to someone. In other words, God is trusting us to partner with Him in the most important task of sharing the story of God's reconciling act with anyone and everyone!

Think about it this way: God values relationship over efficiency. In other words, God would rather advance His plan slower, by partnering with us, than snapping His fingers and having it done *yesterday*. (We took a queue from Him when we decided that one of Newbreak's values would be to “Do it together!”) Consider also that God doesn't change our hearts against our will. He is not a dictator. He is a loving Savior who woos us toward Him if we accept the invitation into a relationship.

And although this relationship has many, *many* privileges and blessings, it also has responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is to share the story of Jesus by word and deed to anyone and everyone; something we will be discussing more practically in the subsequent weeks.

- What are some privileges to being in a relationship with God? What are some responsibilities in your relationship with God?
- 2 Corinthians 5 refers to Christians as “ambassadors.” How does this analogy help us understand our role?
- What is the most difficult part of being an ambassador for Christ in our world today? Why?
- Who do we think is beyond receiving God’s reconciliation? How can we pray for a heart of compassion toward them?

—ADDITIONAL INSIGHT—

Here are three helpful ways to connect to the story of Jesus.

→ **Tell the story of all Jesus has done.**

Being a storyteller means we get to tell the biblical story. Remember, the grand narrative of the Bible isn't a fictitious myth with a moral lesson; it is history—told through the lens of God's rescuing agenda. We re-read the Bible over and over, studying and soaking in its message because it is the message of our salvation through Jesus. The more we get God's stories into us, the more they can flow out of us.

→ **Tell the story of all Jesus is doing.**

Our faith is not merely anaphoric—it's not only backward-pointing. Though no events in human history trump the importance of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, there is still a lot he is doing in our world today. Furthermore, there is a ton he is doing in and through each and every one of us every day! Learning to tell the stories of what Jesus is doing in our present lives assumes we are taking a posture of following his Spirit's leading. One thing is certain, "following the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives" ([Galatians 5:25](#)) will lead to a life of purpose!

→ **Tell the story of all Jesus will do.**

One of the most encouraging things about the story of reconciliation is that the best is yet to come. The grand intention of Jesus's return is to establish "a new heaven and a new earth" ([Revelation 21:1-22:5](#)). We get to share how the reconciling plan of God will conclude with the summing up of all things under Christ our Lord ([Ephesians 1:10](#)). This means that we get to be the most hopeful people on the planet, who are the storytellers of the best news that could ever be conceived.

All of this is best shared in the context of conversational relationships. In other words, we get to narrate the gospel conversationally, instead of it being something we all preach in front of a crowd. May our words and our actions reflect the great story.

How are you going to be a storyteller of Jesus's story?

—SUMMARY—

As we begin a series on sharing our "God Story," we started with the foundation that we are entrusted with the story of reconciliation. This means that God wants us to share with anyone and everyone His plan to unite all things back to a proper relationship with Him.

So we are challenged to take to heart how:

- 1) God gives us a new identity, which shapes our plotline in God's story.
- 2) We get to be part of God's great "comeback" story.

—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

1. How are you going to think differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?
2. What is one thing you are going to change in your life in light of the sermon?
3. BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids?