

# The Bible is a Story

The Bible is not just a list of rules to obey, stories to be inspired by, or morals to live your life by. Sure, the Bible contains rules, stories, and morality, but it is so much more than just these things. It is the true story of the world. It is a divine drama. It is a dramatic six-act play.

In their book *The Drama of Scripture*, Mike Goheen and Craig Bartholomew offer a clarifying warning:

*“Many of us have read the Bible as if it were merely a mosaic of little bits—theological bits, moral bits, historical-critical bits, sermon bits, devotional bits. But when we read the Bible in such a fragmented way, we ignore its divine author’s intention to shape our lives through its story. All human communities live out of some story that provides a context for understanding the meaning of history and gives shape and direction to their lives. If we allow the Bible to become fragmented, it is in danger of being absorbed into whatever other story is shaping our culture, and it will thus cease to shape our lives as it should. Idolatry has twisted the dominant cultural story of the secular Western world. If as believers we allow this story (rather than the Bible) to become the foundation of our thought and action, then our lives will manifest not the truths of Scripture, but the lies of an idolatrous culture. Hence, the unity of Scripture is no minor matter: a fragmented Bible may actually produce theologically orthodox, morally upright, warmly pious idol worshippers!”*

We long to read our Bible correctly and live our lives faithfully. Bible tells one story from beginning to end, the true story of the whole world. As we grow I Gospel Fluency as we read the Bible, we’re growing in living the True Story?

## CREATION

**What would the world look like if it were the way it is supposed to be?**

**The story begins with one God who created everything and everything he made was good, right and perfect. He placed humans in a garden at the center of His creation. God called these people to be servants who would reflect his goodness as they lovingly cultivated the world under God’s loving care and protection.**

## REBELLION

**If God created the world good, right and perfect, why is there so much evil, wrong, and brokenness?**

**Rather than trusting God’s goodness and greatness, the humans chose to rebel against God, serving themselves instead of God. The consequences were massive as the entire creation fell under a curse. Sin, like a parasite, entered into God’s good creation and began eating away. God’s good creation fell further and further into despair. The people who were supposed to lovingly cultivate went further into hatred and violence and selfishness.**

## PROMISE

**What would God do to sort out this mess?**

**God promised to deal with the problem of sin and death that were infecting His good creation. He called one family to be his servants demonstrating and declaring His good reign. This family became a great nation charged to carry this blessing to every other**

nation. He rescued... them over and over and over again. But they continually rebelled until finally God let them go. Years turned into decades, decades turned into centuries. The people dreamed and hoped for the day when God would return, and all creation would be restored.

## **REDEMPTION**

Would God ever return and fulfill his promises? When and how and through whom would God rescue his people and his creation?

Jesus was God's servant who would straighten out the mess, rescue his people, and carry the blessing to all the other nations. If Jesus was the one to save, that meant the other powers weren't and they didn't like that. Jesus was killed on a cross, bearing the sin of the world in his flesh. But two days later, Jesus was raised to life. The long awaited restoration had dawned!

## **CHURCH**

If the restoration meant that everything was again good, right and perfect, why is there still so much evil, wrong, and brokenness?

The story wasn't over yet. That the killed and raised Jesus was King over all the earth was good news and must be announced to the whole world. Jesus sent his followers out into the world to be servants who would demonstrate and declare this good news. They were to live together as a foretaste of what has already dawned and will soon be fully revealed.

## **RESTORATION**

But isn't the end of the story that we go up to heaven and live forever?

Jesus will return one day at the end of the story. He will put an end to all the evil, wrong and brokenness once and for all, finally and fully. He will win. He will rule. And the humans will finally be able to serve the creation and reflect God's goodness and greatness to the world again forever.