

DEEP SIX STUDY

September 12th, 2021

The Story Project – “True Story”

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS (You can view the full message on Facebook or at live.capecodchurch.com/live)

Opening: This weekend we begin The Story Project, an 8-week series telling the story of the Bible – and our story. Stories are how we describe things of interest to us, and the Bible is one story from start to finish – a true story, and a good story. But we can get so caught up in *what* happens in the story that we miss (or don't think about) the *why* – but understanding the *why* of the Bible's story changes everything.

1. The Gift of Life (John 3:16; John 10:10)

- There is one big Story that tells the “why” of everything – and it's laid out in the pages of the 66 books we call the Bible. It's a good story (“the *gospel*”), and it's a true story. But if we focus too much on the *what* of the story (or the “what do we have to *do*?”), we can miss the point. The *why* of The Story means everything – and it's beautiful!
- Famously, John 3:16 captures the story succinctly, including the *what* (God loves the world and gave his Son for it), the “what do we *do* with that” (“believe”), and also the *why*: *so he can give us “eternal” (full, abundant) life*. That's what God has wanted for us from the beginning.

2. The Plan From the Beginning (John 1:1-5)

- The Story can be seen to take place in four acts, starting in Genesis and continuing all the way to Revelation: Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration. John – Jesus' disciple and the writer of the 4th account of Jesus' life – tells us that Jesus is there throughout the entire Story.
- After Creation, God gave us (humanity) two choices, symbolized by two trees in the Garden of Eden. The Tree of Life offered the opportunity to trust God and his life-giving goodness. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil offered the choice *not* to trust God's goodness, to deny his authority, and to decide what is right and wrong on our own. We chose poorly...
- The Story is all about God's persistent, loving desire to overcome our poor choice and to give us the life he intended for us in the first place. Jesus made that possible through his death and resurrection, giving us the opportunity to choose to trust God once again, and to receive life.

3. When You See It...

- When you understand the *why* – when you come face to face with the beauty and truth of God's life-giving story – it's ALL you can see. You see it in every page of the Bible, and you see it all around you in those who are living it out. And if you let it, it will change you forever.
- There are other stories out there – other versions of what life is all about. But like the difference between the natural, created beauty of nature and the artificial “creation” of a place like Las Vegas, only one is real. Once you understand the *why* – once you catch a glimpse of the beauty and truth of the One True Story – you'll never be satisfied with anything else!

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week's message. Verses from NLT unless otherwise noted.

Genesis 2:9; John 6:35; John 8:12; John 11:25-26; Romans 8:11; 1 John 5:13; Revelation 22:1-2

Video of the Week: [The Story of The Bible](#) by the Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Where and when did you first hear the story of the Bible? Was the Bible presented to you as one continuous story, or as isolated stories/episodes without much connection? Explain your answer.
2. As the message mentioned, stories offer us three questions to consider: 1. What happened? 2. What am I supposed to *do* with that? 3. Why was the story told? Of those three, what would you say you've focused most on as you've encountered the Bible's story in the past? Explain your answer.
3. Reread John 3:16 and John 10:10. How would you describe the "gift of life" that God offers us through Jesus? What does it mean to have "eternal," "abundant" and "full" life?
4. God offered two choices to humanity in the Garden of Eden, symbolized by two trees (the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil). In what ways are each of us faced with those two choices today (every day)?
5. The Bible includes some odd episodes and sub-stories that don't seem to fit into the theme of The Story that the message talked about (i.e., God's desire to give us abundant life) – places where you might ask, "why is *that* in the Bible?" Do you think those "odd" parts contradict the idea of the Bible being one continuous story of God's goodness and love? Why or why not?
6. As we embark on this 8-week journey about the story of the Bible (and how we as a church can tell that story in a new way), what is one topic or area that you hope is addressed? Why that topic?