



### Take Home: The Story

Put simply, The Story is a narrative approach to reading scripture. It divides the Bible into six Acts—Creation, Fall, Promise, Redemption, Church, and Restoration. Let’s take a closer look at each of these Acts:

- 1) **Creation**—This story begins where all good stories start: In the beginning. And the beginning of this Story tells the beginning of everything. It tells us how God created the universe and everything in it. Including life. Including us. And he made it all very good. And part of that goodness was our ability to have a relationship with God.
- 2) **Fall**—Unfortunately, creation’s good beginning didn’t last very long, and neither did our relationship with God. As Genesis 3 tells us, human being rebelled against God. We fell into sin, and our sin messed up our relationship with God. Suddenly, we have a problem.
- 3) **Promise**—It was a pretty big problem. Especially since we couldn’t fix it on our own. Only God could. But he made us a promise; he promised that he would send a savior who could stand in the gap between us and God, fix our broken relationship, and make things perfect again. Throughout the rest of scripture, we see God keeping that promise.
- 4) **Redemption**—God’s savior had come. Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of God’s promise. He was the Messiah who would heal our relationship with God, redeem us, and give us new life. He was God come to live among us, so we could live with God once again. Through his life, death, and resurrection, Jesus bridged the gap between us and God, saved us from our sins, and restored our relationship with God.
- 5) **Church**—Once we’re saved by faith in Christ, we join God’s chosen people: The Church. And as God’s chosen people, as his Church, we’re called to carry God’s Story into the rest of the world. We live as Christ’s hands and feet by sharing the Story of what God has done and living it out. And through all that, we become transformed, renewed people.
- 6) **Restoration**—Eventually all of creation will be transformed. Just as we’ve been renewed, redeemed, and recreated as God’s people, everything else will be restored to the way God meant it to be too. God will cleanse his creation, and make it the way it was supposed to be from the beginning. That’s how the story ends. It ends like it began: With a very good world made by God.

## Understanding the Story

The goal here is simple. Rather than seeing the Bible as a bunch of disconnected books that don't have much to do with each other, we want to read it as one book telling the same Story of God's work in the world and our part in it.

In order to do that, though, it helps to keep a few questions in mind as we read the Bible. Think of this like a Bible Study Guide that you can use on any passage in the Bible. Ask yourself:

- 1) **Which Act(s) of The Story is this?** Creation? Fall? Promise? Redemption? Church? Restoration? How does that help me understand what I'm reading?
- 2) **Who wrote this book of the Bible?**
- 3) **Why?**
- 4) **Who was it written to?**
- 5) **What kind of writing is this?** Poetry? History? Gospel? A letter? Prophecy? Wisdom? Law? Psalm? Apocalyptic? How does that change how I should read this passage?
- 6) **When was this passage written?**
- 7) **What was God trying to tell his people back then?**
- 8) **What's different between then and now?**
- 9) **How does this passage fit into the message of other passages around it?**
- 10) **What other passages in the Bible can I think of that connect to this one or talk about the same things?**
- 11) **What is God trying to tell us today?** What do *I want* this passage to mean? What does it *really mean*?