

# story

Week 1 Member Guide

## SERMON RECAP: WHAT DID THE TEXT MEAN? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

In the message this week from Genesis 1 and 2, we learned that God's story is intertwined with our story. We discovered three primary truths:

- Our story begins with God
- Our story is designed by God
- Our story should reflect God

## THE TEXT: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME?

As children, we get really excited about the story of Santa Claus during Christmas! What are some of the reasons we get so excited about Santa?

As fun as Santa can be, many of us unknowingly relate to God in the same way. We think that if we are "good" (however we want to define it), then God will bless us with his gifts. If we're not good, then...it's a grumpy God and a lump of coal!

Did you know recent studies have shown that 82 percent of Americans believe, "God helps those who help themselves," is an actual Bible verse? Those identified as born-again Christians did better—by only one percent! A majority of adults from these studies also believe that the Bible teaches that the most important purpose in life is taking care of one's family.

We can't begin to accurately understand our story until we understand the uniqueness of God as he has revealed himself in the truth of His Word. Our story is all part of His story! A.W. Tozer wrote: *"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."*

Break up into groups of 5-6 and identify some of the unique attributes of God and then discuss their implications for our lives.

### Activity:

God is Eternal: *He has always existed and always will.*

Read **Psalm 90:1-12** and then **Colossians 1:15-17** together

- What can we learn from Psalm 90 about God's eternity compared to ours?
- What does Colossians 1 tell us about Christ's eternity?

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- How aware are you that your days are numbered? How does your level of awareness affect the way you worship God? The way you love and serve others?
  - If people are where we make eternal investments, which of your relationships most need your attention?

God is Self-Sufficient: *He has everything he needs in Himself.*

Read **Psalm 50:7-12** and then **Acts 17:24-25**

- Why is it so important for us to realize that God is completely self-sufficient?
- What have you been tempted to believe that God needs from you?
- Which area of your life are you least likely to pray for? Least likely to ask for help from others for? This could indicate an area where you are embracing self-sufficiency rather than God-dependency.

God is Omnipresent: *He is everywhere at all times.*

Read **Isaiah 66:1** and then **Psalm 139:7-10**

- How would you describe omnipresence from the passages?
- With what relationships are you most likely to imitate God's omnipresence with over-involvement?
- How often do you feel distant from God? How does his actual omnipresence comfort you personally?
- How does this change the way you think about private sins in your life? What should confession look like?

God is Sovereign: He has complete control of everything.

Read **Isaiah 14:24** and **Daniel 4:35**.

- There are four areas of our lives we generally try to control: 1) appearance/health, 2) possessions, 3) relationships, and 4) circumstances. Which of these do you try to control the most? Which is not an issue for you?
- What is your worst-case scenario for this area? How can God's sovereignty release you from freedom from anxiety?
- How does our Western culture, which prioritizes our rights as individuals, make it so difficult to embrace God's sovereignty over our lives?

Pray together as a group, for everyone individually and any needs expressed during the discussion.

## STUDY

To learn more about the attributes of God, here are some good books to read individually or as a group:

***The Story of Reality***, by Greg Koukl

***None Like Him***, by Jen Wilkin

***The Knowledge of The Holy***, by A.W. Tozer

***Knowing God***, by J.I. Packer

## DIGGING DEEPER

Family Faith Talk: God & Me

*Use this faith talk to pass along the truth what you discussed in Life Group to your family.*

**Prepare This:** First, get a piece of paper or a small whiteboard. Draw a line down the middle, separating it into two columns. On top of the first column write "God." On top of the second column write "me."

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**Do This:** Challenge your family to write some descriptions of God in the first column and then write how you are different in the second. Teach your kids some of the terms you discussed in Life Group using language appropriate for their age (see below for help for younger children).

**Say This:** God is very different than us, but that's a good thing! He created us, helps us, hears our prayers, and writes the stories of our lives. Because He is different than us, we can trust Him to lead and guide us perfectly. Let's pray as a family that as God writes our story, we can be faithful to trust the life He creates for us.

**Pray**

*Child-Friendly Language for God's Unique Characteristics:*

**Eternal**—God's life never started and will never end. He has always been here and always will be here. Like a circle, He has no beginning or end.

**Self-sufficient**—God has every single thing He needs. People need food, water, shelter, oxygen to breathe, and other things to survive, but God has everything He needs already.

**Omnipresent**—God is everywhere at all times! Over there? Yep. Over there? You bet.

**Sovereign**—God is in control of everything!