

Living in God's Big Story

City Church
Worcester

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Since the Bible is a mosaic of priceless gems, you will be enriched even if you extract a jewel here and there, but to behold its divine beauty, you must contemplate the mosaic as a whole.

Spurgeon

To impact...

- What we know and think about God
- How we live as God's people
- How we engage with the world

A library

- History
- Poetry
- Prophecy
- Wisdom
- Gospels
- Letters
- Apocalyptic

God's big story

'The Bible is not a mere jumble of history, poetry, lessons in morality and theology, comforting promises, guiding principles and commands: it is a fundamentally coherent whole. Every part of the Bible - each event, book, character, command, prophecy and poem – can only be and must be understood in the context of the one story-line.'

Drama of Scripture – Goheen and Bartholomew

God's big story

The story of a perfect world gone wrong, and a God who never gives up on it or on the people He created, and who will one day restore what He has created to perfection.

Act 1: Creation

- In the beginning – GOD
- His creation
- Humans the pinnacle
 - Relationship
 - Responsibility

Act 2: Crisis

- Rebellion – making our own choices - independent
- Damage to our relationships with God and each other
- We can't fix it
- Sent away

Act 3: Calling

- Covenant with Abraham
 - People
 - Presence
 - Place
 - *'All peoples on earth will be blessed through you'*
- Ongoing failure – finally exile
- But a hint – The Messiah

Act 4: Christ

- Promised Messiah
- The Kingdom
 - His miracles show power
 - His teaching show the hallmarks
 - His death wins the victory
 - His resurrection confirms the arrival of the new kingdom: God has broken through

Act 5: Church

- Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit
- Call on the church to go to all peoples:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ (Acts 1:8)

Act 6: Consumation

- The end – but not the end
- Jesus, who controls history, returns to the earth
- Satan is defeated
- Resurrection of those who follow Jesus
- Creation will be renewed

God's dwelling-place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God (Rev 21:1)

So – Who are we as Church?

- Family
- New Israel
- Body
- Temple
- Community

Living in the 'now and not yet'

- Living in Act 5
 - Act 4 has happened – Kingdom established
 - Act 6 to come – Return of the King
- We are new creations – 2 Cor 5:17
- But not yet complete – 1 John 3:2
- A battle in our lives

Spirit is our power

- Firstfruits
- Divine infection
- Gal 5:16
- Life in Christ = Life in the Spirit

We need to live in community

- 'One another' – 59 times
- God is after a PEOPLE
- Bearing fruit (Galatians 5:22)
- Forgiven and forgiving community
- Community that builds up each other (Eph 4:15-16)

We live in this story

- Allow the story to shape us
- We are characters in it
 - Living in view of the world
 - Learning kingdom ways
 - Awaiting Act 6 of the story
- We should
 - Embody love, hope, truth, grace
 - Carry His presence into the world
 - Expect to see the world being renewed

So

- Live with the Spirit
- Never give up...
- Choose and stick