

Why the Bible?

Opening Image

- What would you say is the overarching story of the Bible?
 - **Sermon Series of the Overarching Story of the Bible (May 11, 2014 - June 1, 2014)**
 - The Story of Creation
 - The Story of the Fall
 - The Story of Redemption
 - The Story of Renewal
 - I forgot that I preached this series until going over my record of sermons for the year.
 - I remember enjoying the series when we were doing it.
 - **The Purpose of the Sermon**
 - Should you remember a sermon series I preached 5 months ago?
 - How about a year ago? Or even longer?
 - Studying the Bible is not to gain information to remember weeks/months/years from now.
 - Studying the Bible is to explore them in our lives today.
 - **May 11 - How is the Story of Creation expressed in my life?**
 - **Should it be?**
 - **What do I need to do to express it in my life?**
 - May 18 - Story of the Fall
 - May 25 - Story of Redemption
 - June 1 - Story of Renewal
 - **The Work of the Sermon**
 - There are some sermons that you will connect to, and there will be some sermons that you connect to less.
 - There will be some of my sermons that may make no sense to you.
 - I hope that each of you hear God speak through our Sunday morning gathering in worship - through the music, our prayers, scripture readings, and my sermon.
 - And we will hear God differently each week.
 - And God will use different components of the worship service to speak to you.
 - As Baptists, we place high value on the Bible and our study of the Bible
 - Sermon: 20 minutes - 1/3 of the worship service
 - **Center of the Church's Focus**
 - The Catholic Church - The Communion Table
 - The Baptist Traditions - The Pulpit
 - The Communion Table is Underneath
 - Let's explore why we value the Bible so much.

Read the Text - 2 Timothy 3:16-17, NLT

- **16** All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.
17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

Read the Text - 2 Timothy 3:16-17, NLT

- Teaching and Equipping
 - Corrects us when we are wrong
 - Teaches us to do what is right
 - Prepares and equips us to do every good work
 - Still, we have to be open to being corrected and taught, so that can be prepared and equipped.
 - We can read the Bible to read something or we can read the Bible to grow and learn.
- **v. 16** - "All Scripture is inspired by God and ..."
 - These words have been traditionally attributed to the Apostle Paul in the middle of the 1st century.
 - 1st Century Scripture
 - The Torah (Pentateuch) and the Prophets
 - **Most of the Old Testament but excluding the Writings**
 - Paul's understanding of the Scriptures does not include the Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, nor Ezra and Nehemiah or 1 and 2 Chronicles.
 - Paul's understanding of the Scriptures does not include the New Testament because at this time it has not been fully written or gathered together.
 - **So, part of our work is to consider the author's intent in these verses and our intent.**
 - When we say, "All Scripture is inspired by God," we are thinking of something different than what the original author intended.
 - This is ok because we think of inspiration by God in connection to the Bible being written and being gathered.
 - We also think of God's inspiration with us today, helping us interpret the Bible for today's time and context.
 - It's helpful to explore how we understand what the biblical authors were doing, and what we are doing today in applying passages of scriptures into our lives today.

Biblical Illiteracy (<http://www.christianpost.com/news/biblical-illiteracy-in-us-at-crisis-point-says-bible-expert-121626/>)

- We say we value the Scriptures and agree with this text that *"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. [That] it corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. [And] God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work."*
 - **But we all also have difficulty applying it to our lives.**
- 2014 "The State of the Bible" report by Barna Group and the American Bible Society
 - 81% consider themselves highly, moderately, or somewhat knowledgeable about the Bible
 - 43% were able to name the first five books of the Bible - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy
 - 2013 Report - only half knew that John the Baptist was not one of the 12 apostles

- Dr. Kenneth Berding, professor of New Testament at Biola's Talbot School of Theology
 - **One Student** - Saul of the New Testament is different than King Saul of the Old Testament
 - **Another Student** - Joshua, son of Nun: his father is "Nun" or a member of a Catholic community of women.
 - Berding believes, "*[M]any Americans don't consider the Bible to be authoritative, that is, they don't consider the Bible to place a claim on their lives," he lamented. "They may consider the Bible to be important in a general sort of way, but this is a far cry from believing that God has communicated His will through this book and therefore it is binding upon your actions."*
- 2014 "The State of the Bible" report by Barna Group and the American Bible Society
 - Bible Ownership - 88%
 - Americans read the Bible once a week or more - 37%
 - Americans who never read the Bible - 26%
 - **Why do so many claim to value the Bible and yet do not read it in their lives?**
 - **Because it takes work and sometimes we don't do things that take a lot of work.**
 - Especially, when so much of other aspects in our lives take a lot of work.
 - And many of us already think we know enough about the Bible because we grew up in the church.
 - Another reason we don't read the Bible because there are so many different ways to read it.
 - **Various Denominations Have Different Interpretations**
 - The Church of Christ is convinced that instrumental music should not be used in worship.
 - The Pentecostals are convinced that speaking in tongues should still be practiced in church.
 - The Baptists are convinced that once you are saved, you are always saved.
 - The Catholics are convinced that priests should not marry.
 - The Presbyterians are convinced that predestination is a central doctrine.
 - The Methodists are convinced that infants should be baptized.
 - And the Disciples of Christ are convinced that you should have the Lord's Supper every Sunday.

Reading the Bible Again

- So, what can we do in response?
 - **Embrace the complexity of interpretations and value different perspectives.**
 - **Nicholas King once stated,** "The Bible is an orchestra-and-choir with many different sounds, from which God (as conductor) aims to produce a perfect harmony. If you concentrate simply on the triangle or the violas, then you will not hear the divinely intended sound of the whole."
 - Concentrating on the triangle in an orchestra is like what I did in college
 - 8-Page Paper on 1 Corinthians 14:33-36
 - At times, it is could to focus intently on a particular passage of scripture.
 - We do so every Sunday morning.
 - But we must look at the Bible as a whole to discover God's perfect harmony.
 - And then we see how the uniqueness of each instrument makes the beautiful sound of the whole orchestra.

- Sunday Night Discipleship
 - **David J. Lose. *Making Sense of Scripture*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Press, 2009.**
 - On Sunday nights we are making sense of scripture to apply them in our lives as a divinely inspired orchestra and choir.
 - Then we value the unique sounds of the triangle or violas because we see how they contribute the whole sound of the orchestra and choir.
 - The Bible becomes a confession of stories that portray God's interaction with the world throughout time and God's interaction with the world today when we become characters in God's continuing story.
 - In your Bible Study, do you hold a healthy tension of focusing on a particular passage of scripture and focusing on the overarching stories of the Bible?
 - And seeing how they build upon each other?

Image - **Go Down**

- Danny and Tammy's Photo Album - Pictures
 - Trips Tammy and I took our first few years of marriage.
 - My First NFL Football Game with my brother
 - Family pictures when Cayden was born
 - Paul's arrival back home after his Tour of Duty in Iraq
 - My Childhood Home and My Adolescence Home
 - Tammy's First Classroom as a Teacher
 - Tammy and I attending the Indianapolis 500
 - Tony and I working with our grandfather on the lawnmower with the snowblower attachments.
 - Tammy's Classroom for reading intervention that was actually a closet with a table and chairs.
- Pictures Tell A Story
 - And the many verses in the Bible tell a story.
 - As you explore the characters of God's stories in the Bible, you are invited to become a character in God's story.
 - By accepting God's story as you own story.

Closing Prayer