

# ONE STORY

ENCOUNTERING JESUS  
THROUGH THE BIBLE

TIM HOWEY, 2022

*One Story:  
Encountering Jesus Through the Bible*

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## WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK

I started down the path to writing this book because God didn't answer my prayer.

Some of the best new directions from God or new levels of brokenness happen when God tells us no.

When our church prayed and tried to raise funds to build a 1200-seat auditorium, God said no. That's how God guided us back to our original church planting strategy. (We are in a 20-year initiative to train and send 100 church planters and missionaries.)

When Cathy and I prayed and tried to adopt a baby girl from North Carolina, God said no. That's how God brought us to new levels of weakness and dependency on Jesus. (Four months later as I studied 2 Corinthians 2:7, God told me we would have a daughter someday named Mallon. Two and a half years after that, we adopted that girl's half-sister. Her name is Mallon.)

When Paul prayed and tried to keep ministering in Asia on his second missionary journey, God said no twice (Acts 16). That's how God guided him to cross the Aegean Sea and take the gospel to Europe.

When Jesus prayed about avoiding the cross, God said no (Matthew 26). That's how Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins, reconcile us to God, and give us His life and joy today.

When our church prayed and tried to hire a discipleship pastor in 2010, God said no. That's how I wrote the first OWNit365 Bible reading plan for our church: the Whole Bible Plan. Then I wrote the New Testament Plus plan. Then I wrote the Bible reading plan in this book: the One Story Plan.

I started down this path because God told me no.

I wrote this book for three reasons: (1) To help people see Jesus through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. (2) To give our church a tool for Bible-reading discipleship groups called “Huddles.” (3) To guide our church as we teach through the Bible in a year.

My prayer is that God will use this book to bring the Bible to life for you; that you’ll see how the Bible is interconnected; that you’ll see Jesus in every story; that you’ll grow in believing God loves you; and you’ll love Him more than anything.

With love,  
Tim

# WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT THE BIBLE

Jesus was Almighty God clothed in human flesh. Jesus proved He was God when He rose again from the dead. What Almighty God in human form said about the Bible matters.

Jesus believed the Bible. He talked about people as if they were real: Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Lot, Lot's wife, Jonah, etc. Jesus talked about events as if they happened: the Creation, Adam and Eve's marriage, Abel's murder, Noah's flood, Sodom's destruction, Moses' burning bush, Jonah swallowed, etc. Jesus told the Sadducees that their skepticism revealed they didn't know the power of God to fulfill His word (Matthew 22). Jesus told two disciples on the road to Emmaus that they were foolish not to believe all that the prophets said (Luke 24). Jesus, the God-man, believed the Bible.

Jesus also said the Bible was about Himself. Jesus told the Jews that the Scriptures testify of Him and Moses wrote about Him (John 5). Jesus showed the two disciples on the road to Emmaus how all the prophets in the Hebrew Bible talked about Him (Luke 24). Paul wrote that every Old Testament law and practice pictured Jesus: dietary laws, holiday laws, Sabbath laws (Colossians 2). Jesus, the God-man, said the Bible was about Himself.

The Bible is about a Person. Salvation is about a Person. Life is about a Person. Our message is about a Person: the Person of Christ.

When you read the Bible, you're reading about Jesus. The Bible is One Story: His Story.

## HOW I WOULD USE THIS BOOK

I would use this book as I was taught.

I encourage you to experiment with doing that too. That's what Jesus' disciples do. We teach others as we've been taught, so they teach others, so they teach others to the fourth generation spiritually (2 Timothy 2:2).

For Bible reading, I would start by praying that God opens my eyes spiritually then read the passages looking for three things: (1) Historically – What does the Bible say here? (2) Doctrinally – What does this passage teach me about God or the future? Every passage teaches us about Jesus. (3) Personally – What can I apply to my life today? I would try to do six readings a week and not beat myself up when I miss a day. That's Bible reading.

For prayer, once a week I would look back at my calendar, task list, and Bible readings over the last week to make a "thank God list." Then I would look forward on my calendar and task list to record events, decisions, deadlines, or progress needed over the next week to make a prayer list. I would try to pray my "thank God list" and prayer list six times a week and not beat myself up when I miss a day. That's prayer.

My rhythm would hopefully be to pray and read six days a week and reflect and make new lists on the seventh day while not beating myself up when I missed.

My advice to you would be to try this. If it works for you, great. God wired you this way. If it doesn't work for you, great. God wired you a different way. The most important goal for you is to connect with Jesus how you're wired through prayer and Bible reading on a regular basis.

May you continually refresh your mind and heart with His word and love and enjoy Jesus more than anything.

## ETERNITY PAST — GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN FROM BEFORE TIME BEGAN

Before the universe existed, before there was such a thing as time, there was just God: only God. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit existed together, uncreated, in a love-filled relationship. Then Jesus, who is the image of the invisible God, created the universe for His own pleasure and purposes. You were created for God's own pleasure and purposes.

*For by Him [Jesus] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. (Colossians 1:16)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 1:1-5
- John 1:1-18
- Colossians 1:15-19

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do's?  
Jesus is...?

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1

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## THE CREATION — GOD CREATES THE UNIVERSE

# 2

## READING

Jesus, as God the Son, spoke the universe into existence. He said, “Let there be light... space... earth...” Then God the Father, Son, and Spirit all agreed and said, “Let Us make man in Our image.” Do you realize every person bears God’s image? Today Jesus sits at the right hand of God and is the only true Heir of all things. You are a part of Jesus’ inheritance.

*And: “You, Lord [Jesus], in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. (Hebrews 1:10)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 1
- Hebrews 11:1-3
- Hebrews 1:10-12

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do’s?  
Jesus is...?

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## THE GARDEN — GOD’S PLAN FOR MARRIAGE

Jesus created humans to be unique: to bear God’s image. Since God is a relationship (Father, Son, Spirit), He created humans for relationship (with God and people). You were created for relationships. The first relationship God created was marriage: one man and one woman for life. Jesus created marriage as a picture to the world of His love-filled relationship with the Church.

*This [marriage] is a great mystery,  
but I speak concerning Christ and  
the church. (Ephesians 5:32)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 2
- Matthew 19:3-6
- Ephesians 5:28-33

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do’s?  
Jesus is...?

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## THE FALL — EVE’S DECEPTION, ADAM’S SIN, AND MANKIND’S CURSE

# 4

## READING

The Garden was life as God intended. God and people lived in perfect unity through God’s love. But Satan lied. “You can have a life without God.” Eve was deceived and sinned. Adam was not deceived. He knew and sinned. You are tempted to sin too. Sin divides, ruins, and kills things. Adam’s disobedience brought death. Pause and thank God that Jesus’ obedience offers life.

*For if by the one man’s [Adam’s] offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:17)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 3
- 2 Corinthians 11:2-3
- Romans 5:12-21

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do’s?  
Jesus is...?

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## CAIN AND ABEL — ABEL'S FAITH AND SACRIFICE VS. CAIN'S JEALOUSY AND HATRED

What did Adam and Eve talk about with their kids? They talked about God, the Garden, and their sin. Mom and dad shared how God accepted them because an innocent being was sacrificed (which foreshadowed the cross). Abel believed God about the innocent sacrifice. Cain tried to earn God's acceptance with his good works. Do you believe in Jesus' sacrifice for you?

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READING

*By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. (Hebrews 11:4)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 4
- Hebrews 11:4
- 1 John 3:10-15

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do's?  
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## ENOCH — ENOCH'S FAITH IN GOD AND MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

# 6

## READING

In a few generations, the world stopped following God. Enoch walked with God and called his generation to return to God. One day, as Enoch walked with God, he vanished. God took him to heaven. What does it mean to walk with Jesus? Jesus picks your direction for you. Your role is to love Him, keep your eyes on Him constantly, and stay close to Him wherever He leads you.

*By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. (Hebrews 11:5)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 5:18-24
- Hebrews 11:5-6
- Jude 14-19

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do's?  
Jesus is...?

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# 7

## REFLECTION AND PRAYER

**Look Back at Last Week** – List what God did and what God taught you over the last week. This is your “thank God list” for next week.

**Look Forward to Next Week** – List what events, decisions, deadlines, or progress needs to happen in the next week. This is your prayer list for next week.

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## NOAH AND THE FLOOD — NOAH'S FAITH AND DELIVERANCE FROM THE FLOOD

# 8

## READING

When the world was corrupt and violent, God offered Noah grace (i.e. Jesus' undeserved love). God said it would rain when it never had. Noah believed God more than history, experts, or even himself. By faith, Noah and his family built a boat. Neighbors likely ridiculed them but God saved them. Like Noah, you are called to believe and obey God even when no one else does.

*By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (Hebrews 11:7)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 6
- Genesis 7
- Hebrews 11:7

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do's?  
Jesus is...?

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## NOAH AND THE FLOOD — GOD’S JUDGMENT OF SIN AND JESUS’ SECOND COMING

Noah was building a large boat when it had never rained. People likely thought, “Noah is crazy.” But they went on with their lives. They planned their weddings, raised their kids, and built their careers. No one believed judgment was coming until it came. Jesus said His return to this world would be a complete surprise. You, like Noah, are called to believe God and not be surprised.

*But as the days of Noah were, so also  
will the coming of the Son of Man  
[Jesus] be. (Matthew 24:37)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 8
- Genesis 9
- Matthew 24:36-44

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do’s?  
Jesus is...?

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# 10

READING

## THE TOWER OF BABEL — LANGUAGE UNITES PEOPLE AGAINST GOD OR FOR GOD

The Tower of Babel was about society coming together to create unity without God. “Together we can fix this. Together we can.” God protected the people from their sinful hearts by confusing their languages and scattering them. Today God uses the stars to declare His power and glory in every language. Today Jesus wants you to tell people that unity is only possible through Him.

*“...we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.” So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?” (Acts 2:11-12)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Genesis 11:1-9
- Psalms 19:1-4
- Acts 2:1-21

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do's?  
Jesus is...?

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## JOB AND SATAN — JOB'S SUFFERING AND EXAMPLE OF PATIENCE

Job lost almost everything: his business, his life savings, his kids, and his health. Pause for a moment to imagine how you'd feel if you lost almost everything. Job agonized, cried out to God, and questioned God. But he never cursed God. In Job, you see how to cling to Jesus in faith and wait patiently on Him in your suffering. Believe the truth that God has compassion for you.

*My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. (James 5:10)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Job 1
- Job 2
- James 5:9-11

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do's?  
Jesus is...?

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# 12

## READING

### JOB AND ELIPHAZ — JOB'S SUFFERING AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS FROM HIS FRIENDS

Job's friends started well. For seven days, they sat with their friend in silence. Then Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar took turns accusing Job. Eventually Elihu accused him too. "What sin have you committed, Job? You can't be innocent." Job was innocent. Job reveals that it's okay for us to complain to God and question God when we are suffering. Jesus hears you and cares.

*Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, And whom God has hedged in? For my sighing comes before I eat, And my groanings pour out like water. (Job 3:23-24)*

#### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Job 3
- Job 4
- Ezekiel 14:12-14

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do's? Jesus is...?

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## JOB AND ELIHU — JOB'S SUFFERING AND JOB'S FORESHADOWING OF CHRIST'S SUFFERING

Job suffered terribly but didn't realize that God was allowing him to be a prophetic picture of Jesus on the cross. Job cried out to God about things Jesus would experience: being innocent; falsely accused; struck on the cheek; delivered to the ungodly; weeping; bleeding; and dying. When you read Job, you're reading about what Jesus experienced on the cross for you.

*They gape at me with their mouth, They strike me reproachfully on the cheek, They gather together against me. God has delivered me to the ungodly, And turned me over to the hands of the wicked. (Job 16:10-11)*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS:

- Job 16
- Job 32
- Matthew 26:62-68

Questions? Learnings? Praises? Prayers? To Do's?  
Jesus is...?

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# 13

READING

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# 14

## REFLECTION AND PRAYER

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