

Week eight – Living the Story

You Are Here



You Are Here tells the story of the Bible in its own words. It comes in eight parts, and is meant to be read aloud and shared with friends.

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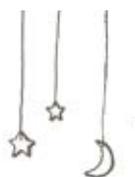
Introduction

We've just spent the last six weeks following the story of the Bible. This week is all about making sense of what we have heard, and finding our place in the narrative.

There are two sections to this session.

- 1 Part one re-visits the 12 words that you came up with on week one, so you can see how your understanding of the story has changed.
- 2 Part two asks how we let the story shape our lives, and how we let the Bible infuse our imaginations.

You will know what will work best in your community, so feel free to use as much or as little of the material as you like, tweaking the activities and questions to suit your context.



Part one – reviewing the story

In week one of *You Are Here*, you took on the challenge of summarising the story of the whole Bible in just 12 words. Get out the lists that you made and read through them again.

In groups of two or three, talk through your choices. How do you feel about your twelve words? Having read the story, would you pick different ones? What would you change?

Review the 12 words on the *You Are Here* workbook. Do they resonate with the story you have read together? Does any one word capture your imagination?

Coming back together as a larger group, think about whether your view of the Bible's story has changed.

Look back at the notes you have made over the last six weeks. Can you summarise in a sentence or two? What is the story that the Bible tells?

Light
Trees
Nomad
Tribes
Scatterlings
Promises
Earthed
Sacrifice
Unbreakable
Wildfire
Salt
Home





Part two – living the story

The Bible's story is our story. It tells us where we came from and where we are going. It gives purpose to our lives as we find our place in something greater than we are. Although it starts out as small as a mustard seed, God's Story grows into something that encompasses all the others.

Activity 1: competing stories

The world is full of other stories that distract us and compete for our imagination and our loyalty. These stories are all around us and we may not be aware of them, so take some time to name them and analyse them.

What are the stories that our culture tells

- About where we come from?
- About where we are going?
- About what makes a good life?

Who tells these stories, and where?

What kind of imagery is used?

Who are the heroes in these stories?

Who are we encouraged to look up to?

Who are the villains?

Who is despised or excluded, and why?

How does the Story of the Bible confront the prevailing stories of our culture?

Perhaps one prevailing story of our culture is progress, human achievement and personal success. Unfortunately, you can be a winner in this world and be a loser in the only reality that matters. In God's kingdom the first are last, and the meek inherit the earth. Victory belongs to those who surrender, and good things come to those who seek the best for others.

Our imagination is very easily captivated by the stories the world tells, the promises of personal happiness and comfort rather than seeking first the kingdom of God.

How can we use the imagery of the Bible to keep reminding ourselves of that greater story?

What examples, parables and pictures from the Bible inspire you to live out God's priorities?





Activity 2: homecoming

For most of us, Christmas is the biggest event on the church calendar. It's a festival that we celebrate as families and households, as churches and communities, and even as a nation – it's a bank holiday after all, and the Queen gives a speech. Now imagine for a moment that Christmas had never been invented.

What if the biggest event in the church calendar was something totally different - a festival called 'homecoming'? What if the key passages were in Revelation, rather than the first chapters of the gospels? What if instead of looking back to Jesus' birth, we looked ahead to his second coming?

In groups of two or three, imagine an annual festival as big as Christmas, that celebrates Jesus' return.

- What traditions would you have?
- What would families do?
- How would the church celebrate together?
- Imagine you were sending a Homecoming card instead of a Christmas card – what images would they have?

Feed back to the main group. If you like what you've come up with, pick a date for a celebration.

What are some other ways of remembering and re-telling the story together?

