

GOD'S STORY

God's story is called the Gospel. Gospel simply means good news. The Gospel is the thread that runs throughout the Bible. As a believer, it is our hope, joy, peace, and foundation. It's simple enough for a child, yet profound enough for a theologian. It's what we believe with all our hearts and out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. It can be summarized in 4 simple parts: God, Man, Jesus, Response. It goes something like this...

GOD | ROMANS 1:18-20

The eternal God of the universe simply spoke the universe into creation. Man and woman were at the height of his creation and were made to have a relationship with him and to glorify God as his image bearers.

MAN | ROMANS 1:21-23, 3:23, 6:23

But man and woman sinned when they thought they could be like God by eating fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Since then, all mankind has inherited the sinful nature of their parents as it's passed down, not to mention sinned themselves.

JESUS | ROMANS 3:23-26, 5:8-10, 8:1

But God promised he would make a way for man to be forgiven since the first sin and he fulfilled his promise through Jesus, the Son of God. He left heaven for earth on the greatest mission ever. He was born without sin by the virgin Mary, lived a perfect sinless life, died in our place and took the punishment for our sin, but rose from the dead, overcoming the power of sin and death, and ascended back into heaven with God where he awaits the time when he will return to bring all those who have believed to be with him in heaven.

RESPONSE | ROMANS 10:9-13

But he will only save those who respond in faith and belief in this good news, this gospel. We believe that there is nothing we could do or not do, nothing we could say or think that would enable us to be reconciled to God for our sin. Only by the grace of God can we be saved through faith which is a gift from God. And when we believe, we are given new life in Christ and eternal life with Christ.

SIMPLE VERSION

GOD spoke the universe into creation and specially made man in his image. But the first **MAN** and every man sinned against God and broke our relationship forever. But God sent **JESUS** from heaven to earth to die in our place so sin would be punished but we might be saved. Then Jesus rose from the dead and returned to heaven to prepare a place for those who would **RESPOND** in faith. By believing in this good news you can be saved by grace through faith.

WRITE GOD'S STORY

Take some time to write out God's story **in your own words**. Use the examples and scriptures above to help you. Don't worry too much about covering everything, just the main thing! Write as if you were telling someone about Christ for the first time. Then write out a simple version to be shared in **1 minute**. Be ready to share this with the elders.

GOD

MAN

JESUS

RESPONSE

SIMPLE VERSION

MY STORY

When God's story, the Gospel, changes your life, it becomes your story. Your story is sometimes called a testimony as you share how you came to believe God's story and how it impacted your life. Your story has 4 main parts: My story before Jesus, God's story in Jesus, God's Story became my story, and My story with Jesus. Your story should be flexible enough to share in 1 minute with a stranger or 1 hour over coffee with a friend. Be ready to share your testimony with the elders.

MY STORY BEFORE JESUS | "WHEN I WAS YOUNGER..."

Share some details about your life before you became a believer. If you were saved out of a rough background full of sin and hard times, don't focus too much on details as we want to give most of the attention to Jesus. If you were truly saved at an early age then you may not have much to focus on here. Simply describe your life and acknowledge you knew you had sinned against God and were far from him.

GOD'S STORY IN JESUS | "THEN I REALIZED..."

Then share your simple version of God's Story as this is your opportunity to share the Gospel with those you are talking with. Give them what Paul said was most important...Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose on the third day. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 ESV)

GOD'S STORY BECAME MY STORY | "GOD SAVED ME WHEN..."

Now share how and when you responded to the grace of Jesus by faith and belief in the Gospel. Give some detail about how old you were, where you were at, and what was happening in your life at that time. Make sure you focus on how God saved you based on what He did, not anything that you did.

MY STORY WITH JESUS | "SINCE THEN MY LIFE HAS CHANGED..."

There should be some dramatic changes from your life before faith in Jesus and your life with faith in Jesus. Share about some of those areas and give God the glory. Don't give a false representation that all your fears, temptations, problems, and sin are gone. Be honest about the difficulties of living by faith, but share the hope you have in Christ to overcome those difficulties. Describe what it looks like for you to grow as you follow Christ.

DATE ____/____/____

NAME _____

ELDER _____

Once you've completed this Second Nature Lifestyle and Second Nature Life Stories, email bryan@TheFieldsChurch.net or contact one of the elders to schedule a Follow Up. There you will simply discuss the Second Nature Life Stories and Lifestyle homework and sign the Statement of Faith and Membership Covenant. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask!