

The Garden and The City - The Sacred Story (Oct 6, 2024)

Scripture References: Luke 24:25-27, Genesis 1:1, Revelation 22:1-5

- What point in this message was most impactful for you? How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
 - What is one of your favorite stories (book, tv show, movie, etc)? And, why do you enjoy it?
 - “The story you live in is the story you live out.” In what ways have you observed or experienced this to be true?
 - Is viewing the bible as one cohesive story new for you? What are other common views of the bible? How does one’s view of the bible impact how it’s lived out?
 - What are common “wrong” stories you have observed in yourself or others? What makes us so prone to believe them?
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The Garden and The City - The Sacred Story Pt. 2 (Oct 13, 2024)

Scripture Reference: Luke 24:25-27, Genesis 1:1, Revelation 22:1-5

- What resonated most from the sermon? What encouraged and/or challenged you?
 - Luke 24:21 shares the weight of disappointment in their words, “we had hoped”. We all have parts of our stories that ended with unrealized potential. In what ways, has Jesus brought strength and healing to those parts of your story? How does the gospel give us hope for those seemingly failed realities?
 - Just like in Luke 24, God has a pattern of pursuing and engaging people to help reveal areas of their heart that are sinful or harmful. How does such a pursuit reveal his love, compassion and faithfulness? Can you share 1-2 things that Jesus has revealed and is helping you grow in?
 - As you consider the overall story of the bible, what brings you hope or joy? In what ways, is it reframing how you understand the bible or the gospel?
 - What have you experienced that helped you better understand and embrace the Sacred Story of the Bible for your life?
 - How is this Sacred Story good news for those far from Jesus? How is it encouraging for those hurting? How is it hopeful for those despairing?
 - How can your community group pray for you as you seek to grow in living out the Sacred Story of the Bible?
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The Garden and The City - Who Am I Really? The Journey of Identity (Oct 20, 2024)

Scripture Reference: Genesis 1:26–27, Colossians 3:9–10

- God says, “very good”, after creating humanity. One of things it highlights is His delight in humanity. Do you believe that God views you with a sense of delight? Why or why not?
- Sin distorts the image of God in us but doesn’t destroy it. How is this encouraging? How is it discouraging?
- In what ways have your experiences defined your identity more than God?
- Why is it so critical to derive our identity from God vs from within ourselves? How have you elevated yourself over God in defining your identity? What impact has this had on you?

- The bible says that living as our true self (i.e. as the image of God and identity in Christ) brings about joy, peace and flourishing. How has this been true for you? In what ways do you still find this challenging?
 - What point in this message was most impactful for you? How did this message challenge, change or affirm your thinking?
 - Though made in the image of God, we often develop and cling to false stories of our identity due to childhood experiences, societal pressures and a misunderstanding of God's love. From your experience, how do these factors contribute to these developments? What lies do we often internalize that reinforce these false stories?
 - Jesus died to restore the image of God in you. Where in your life have you experienced that restoration? How did Jesus change and restore you?
 - Where do you most struggle to view yourself as the image of God?
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The Garden and The City - Rediscovering Delight (Oct 27, 2024)

Scripture Reference: John 4:1-14

- In Genesis 1-2, God declared His creation 'good' and designed humans for joy and fulfillment in the Garden. How does this original design for delight contrast with the world's pursuit of happiness today?
 - How did the Fall (Genesis 3) affect humanity's ability to experience true delight? How does sin distort our desires and lead us to seek satisfaction in lesser things? Where have you experienced this in your life?
 - In John 4, Jesus promises an experience that would relieve you of ever thirsting again. How does Jesus' Living Water bring eternal satisfaction? In your experience with Jesus, has this been true for you? If so, how? If not, why not?
 - How does our understanding of human delight impact the way we share the gospel with others?
 - In church, the concept of desire has at times been viewed as primarily negative. Why do you think that's been the case? How does such a view effect the Christian experience? Where has God had to redeem/balance your view of a particular kind of desire?
 - In looking at Luke 15 (The Parables of the Lost Sheep, Coin, and Son), how do these parables illustrate the joy that God experiences when someone repents and returns to Him? How does this connect to our own experience of delighting in God?
 - What point in this message was most impactful for you? How did this message challenge, change or affirm your thinking?
 - What are some practical ways you can cultivate a lifestyle of delighting in God?
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The Garden and The City - The Story & The Vote (Nov 3, 2024)

Scripture Reference: 1 Peter 2:9-17

- How does the love, truth, compassion and conviction of the gospel help Christians frame our political engagement?
- How can Christians avoid letting their political identity overshadow their identity in Christ, especially in a politically charged environment?
- Confident Pluralism is defined as a way of living together despite our differences that allows for

- the coexistence of genuine differences without requiring anyone to suppress or minimize their firmly held convictions. What are common realities that make confident pluralism hard? How can the idea of confident pluralism help Christians navigate political disagreements with fellow believers?
 - What are some practical ways Christians can demonstrate grace, empathy, and a willingness to listen in conversations about politics?
 - What are some specific ways that our church can foster unity and understanding in the midst of political diversity?
 - As Christians, we are considered "sojourners and exiles" in our lives before eternity. How does this inform our understanding of civic duty and political participation?
 - How can the reality of Jesus still reigning as King bring comfort and hope to us who may feel anxious or discouraged by the state of politics?
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The Garden and The City - Echoes of Abundance (Nov 10, 2024)

Scripture Reference: Genesis 2:8-9, John 3:16, Revelation 21:3-7

- How does the creation story in Genesis 1-2 illustrate God's overflowing generosity?
 - Because Eve chose to believe a false story about God's generosity (i.e. God is a stingy withholder), sin entered and has profoundly impacted everything. What false stories are you prone to believe about God's generosity? And, how have they impacted you and your life?
 - Despite humanity's rebellion and failure, God has continued to be generous towards us. Can you think of examples from Scripture or your own life that demonstrate this truth?
 - What does it mean for you that Jesus, the "jewel of the Father's heart," was given for your sake? How does this deepen your understanding of God's generosity? In what ways should this motivate you to be more generous?
 - Read 2 Corinthians 8:9. What does it mean that those in Christ have become rich? What are some of those "riches" that resonate most with you and why?
 - What are some practical ways we can cultivate a spirit of generosity in our own lives?
 - In what ways do you share about God's generosity to others? What impact can it have on those who are skeptical or struggling?
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The Garden and The City - The Dignity of Calloused Hands (Nov 17, 2024)

Scripture Reference: Genesis 1:26-28; Revelation 21:1-2, 22:1-3

- What are some specific ways your current work, hobbies, or volunteer activities allow you to use your unique gifts and talents to serve others and contribute to the world around you?
- Genesis displays that work is a blessing, not a curse. How has sin affected our relationship with work? How has your own view of work been shaped by societal or cultural narratives?
- How can we reclaim the original goodness of work?
- In what ways is your current work/vocation stirring joy in your life? In what ways is it discouraging?
- What is the relationship between our identity in Christ and our vocation, and how can we ensure that our work flows out of our true identity?
- How can we find a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction in our work, even if our jobs/responsibilities are not inherently glamorous or prestigious?
- What is one specific action you can take this week to apply this sermon to your own life and work?

- We are called to see our work as a means to love and serve others, regardless of the specific tasks involved.
 - How can you view the mundane or challenging aspects of your work as opportunities to demonstrate Christ's love to those around you?
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