

God's Grand Story pt 16: Jesus – the Hero of the Story!

Intro: Stefan Duerksen Lead Pastor

1. Church-Wide Prayer: BABY DEDICATION- led by P. Martin

Intro: Jesus – the Hero of our Story!

Have you ever heard of a trust exercise? Essentially you have two people facing the same direction. The one in front falls back, stiff as a board, and trusts that the person behind them will catch them! Depending on how far back they are standing, determines how strong the person needs to be to catch the other person. It's often done as a team building exercise!

1. **If you just told me WHAT to DO...** fall backwards and nothing else. I wouldn't listen! Nope! Why would I do that and risk injury? WHO is behind me? Are they capable? I would feel FEAR.
2. **If you told me it was my wife...** I would then trust her intentions... but wouldn't fully let go... why? Though I know her – I also know she isn't that strong! And I am quite broken and wouldn't want to risk it!
3. **If you told me my son** was behind me? I'd fall in an instant. I know him. I trust him. AND I know he is ABLE to catch his Dad!

We spent two weeks going through Mt 24 & 25 and looked at Jesus' answer to the question on what will be signs of his coming and the end of the age and then moved right into his instruction for believers to "stay awake".

- **We looked at WHAT is coming and OUR PART – what we are supposed to DO...**
- It would be easy to hear about the signs of the End of the Age and Jesus' expectation for our response and FEEL – "fear, anxiety, worry and think our response has to do entirely with avoiding judgement"
- I would challenge if that were our response – we are living in category 1 or 2
 - **ONE:** You know WHAT & the DO's – but feel totally overwhelmed. You don't know how YOU are going to do it! SO you are paralyzed in fear or you numb and ignore it!
 - **TWO:** You know WHAT, the DO's & have a relationship with Jesus... But struggle TRUSTING him to carry you through!
 - **THREE:** You see what is coming, and know it is beyond your ability! You feel that fear swell up in you but it draws you into the Presence of Jesus where you find strength and assurance to face the day! You see the expectation and recognize it is a warning about judgement but also an INVITATION into drawing near to Jesus! To truly love people! To model and share Jesus with a lost and broken world and to covenantal faithfulness! You also know that it depends more on Jesus than on you... so you keep saying, "YES" and you continue to walk as a person of peace in the midst of trials!

TODAY the focus is on WHO we are TRUSTING IN – who stands behind us!

A. Keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus – the Hero of the Story!

Acts 17:26-31 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ... The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

- How do I stay awake? SEEK GOD!
- How do I endure in faith? SEEK GOD!
- How do I face my fears? SEEK GOD!
- How do I deal with my brokenness and sin? SEEK GOD!!
- AND HE IS ACTUALLY NOT FAR FROM EACH ONE OF US! Do you TRUST him in that?

If you don't know Jesus – let me introduce you to him today!

Believers. Do you DREAD him returning? Do you think about it at all? Are you ANTICIPATING it?

1 Peter 1:13 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

**We are not supposed to focus solely on what Jesus DID, but on what he is going to DO! 2nd coming!
BOTH/AND not EITHER/OR**

Philippians 3:13-15, 18-20 But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you... For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ..., with minds set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

- Paul said "MATURE CHRISTIANS" think this way! This is one of the MARKs of maturing as a believer! We focus MORE on Jesus and his 2nd coming!

The primary focus of SCRIPTURE is NOT about the WHAT – not just a 'how to guide'

The primary focus of SCRIPTURE is about the WHO. JESUS IS THE WHO.

Luke 24:13-33 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had

hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.”

And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem.

Jesus opened their eyes to see where he was throughout the Grand Story!

I am going to give a feeble attempt to do the same!

We have already seen in the Grand Story – how God’s Covenant Promises from GENESIS on – ALL pointed to a MESSIAH - SERPENT CRUSHER!

You can see the prophetic promises pointing towards the INCARNATE Jesus on the Earth!

- He is the baby born of a virgin – fulfillment of Isaiah prophecy
- He is the Son of God & Son of Man! Divine – Seed – King!
- He is the suffering servant – died for our sins
- He was raised from the dead!
- He went back to heaven
- He is coming back to reign as a Conquering King

BUT THAT’S NOT ALL! A couple of phrases I hear, “The OT is about an angry God – the NT is about JESUS” or, “Anything in the OT that doesn’t line up with JESUS – just delete.”

Today we are going to look at where the Preincarnate Jesus showed up! And what He was doing throughout the Grand Story! NOT JUST AWAITING his arrival in the Gospels!

B. Jesus is God and has always been who He is!

Jesus BEFORE Creation

Jude 1:25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, **before all time and now and forever.** Amen.

2 Timothy 1:8-10 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord.. who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus

- **Jesus has always been who He is – he has never changed or improved.**

Jesus at Creation – Jesus is GOD

John 1:1-3, 14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Hebrews 1:1-3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Colossians 1:15-22 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

- **Jesus created ALL things**
- **All things were created FOR Jesus**
- **Jesus holds all things together – let that sink in!**
- **Jesus is the Leader of the Church**
- **Jesus is the first to be resurrected**
- **Jesus owns EVERYTHING**
- **Jesus is the fullness of God**
- **Jesus is the exact imprint of God**
- **Jesus made the ONLY way to redeem us & creation - through his blood on the cross**
- **Jesus HOLDS all of creation together...**

C. Jesus was active in the Old Testament!

- **Jesus is, "I AM" Moses met God who introduced himself as "I AM". I AM is JESUS!!**
 - **Exodus 3:13-14** Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I am who I am." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I am has sent me to you.'
 - **John 8:57-58** So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

- **Hebrews 11:26** He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.
- **John 5:46** if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for Moses wrote of ME.
- **Jesus was the Redeemer who delivered Israel from Egyptian Slavery!**
- **Jesus was the God who Judged Israel in the Wilderness! & in the story of Balaam at Moab!**
 - **Jude 1:5** Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.
- **Jesus was the ROCK in the Wilderness!**
- **He provided for his people! EVEN THOUGH THEY COMPLAINED!**
 - **1 Corinthians 10:1-9** For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.” We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents,
- **Jesus led the Israelites into the Promised Land!**
 - **Joshua 5:13-15** When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?” And he said, “No; but I am the commander of the army of the Lord. Now I have come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, “What does my lord say to his servant?” And the commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, “Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.
 - Sound familiar? YES! Same thing that was said to MOSES!
- **The King in Isaiah 6 was JESUS!**
 - **John 12:41** Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him.
- **The Son of Man Daniel saw riding on the clouds was JESUS!!**
 - **Matthew 24** – we just looked at that!

D. STEPS: read the entire Bible! Deepen your understanding of Jesus this summer

Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior? PRAY & receive Him as Lord & Savior!

BELIEVERS: Do you truly TRUST Jesus in your life & hardship? with the future?

STEPS: Commit to reading through your entire Bible - E.g. Bible Recap YouVersion

STEPS: Join one of our discipleship groups this summer! The Way! email eunicem@mysouthland.com

AFTER SERVICE PRAYER – PRAYER ROOM – 9AM and 11AM

MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!

SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2024

Cruise ship → → → → → Battleship

1. **Life on Mission** (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus
2. **Next Gen** (Ps 78:7-8): Encounters with Jesus, strong mental health, boldness & belonging
3. **Israel & Persecuted Church** (Lk 21:13): Faith, fortitude & wisdom “to not waste the opportunity to share the Gospel”
4. **Heart of Prayer** (Ps 27:4): Every generation to find Jesus & learn to bring their needs to Him in prayer
5. **Church Renewal**: Directors for India and other new countries & many global disciple makers