

# new life news

January 2016

## Preaching "The Story"

The Bible is a complicated book.

It was written by something like 30 different men over a span of several thousand years. And yet behind those men is a single author-God himself. It covers in some detail 2,000+ years of human history including innumerable events and people. Some of it is in chronological order and some of it not. But it encompasses the totality of history from the creation of the earth until its ultimate destruction and replacement with a new one. It is written primarily in 2 languages; Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament both of which need to be translated into English so that we can read it. It contains several different forms or genres of writings. Many parts are written as straight history, other are poetry or prophecy. Some parts are letters written to groups or individuals.

From a history point of view, there is a wealth of information about individuals and cultures and cities and nations and governments and customs and industries. Over and over archaeology has found the Bible to be a book of surpassing historical accuracy. People, places, and positions described in the Bible have all been questioned by contemporary historians, only to be repeatedly confirmed by other sources.

From a religious or theological point of view there is a whole religion (some would say 2, Judaism and Christianity) described. God is revealed both his character and his actions. And mankind's interactions with this God are prescribed first through the law of Moses and then through the teaching of Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament.

And then there is the issue of how the Bible came to be. Where did the individual writings come from? Who decided which writings to include? To exclude? What criteria did they use for these decisions? How were these writings maintained over the years? Did they change over time and if not how was their continuity ensured?

The Bible is a complicated book.

Yet through the Bible is woven a single thread that unites and encompasses the whole thing. This thread tells a single ongoing story. Not a story in the sense of something made up to entertain. But a story in the sense of a connected series of events and decisions and relationships that go together to communicate a deep and profound truth. This thread that is woven through the Bible from the beginning to the end is the story of God and how He interacts with people. **At its heart the Bible is a story about God. He is the main character.** Men and women cover the pages of the Bible, but what is truly important is how God relates to and interacts with them.

This year our goal at New Life is to engage the Bible. We will have special opportunities to focus on many of the different aspects that are described above (Bible History, Where did the Bible come from, translation issues, how to study the Bible, etc.). These opportunities will take different forms—maybe a Sunday School class or a Devoted 242 or a written pamphlet or something else. The Sunday morning sermon, however, will be focused on following the thread woven through the Bible. We will use "The Story" as a basis and will endeavor to not simply cover the events as though we were studying history, but to draw out the interactions of God with people so that we can more fully understand his nature and his salvation and his calling on our lives. Are you ready to jump in? Let's go then and may God guide our journey!

# Kyle's Korner

We will be starting up our theme on Scripture this month. As you have probably already heard we will be using *The Story* as the platform for this theme, allowing it to take us chronologically through Scripture, giving us a clear view of the great work that God was doing to save us. The sermons will be drawn from chapters in *The Story*, but parents of middle and high school age students need to know that the book will be used in Sunday School as well.

Upon looking at the table of contents of the book it is easy to see that it is divided up into thirty one chapters. Each week at Sunday School the lesson will be drawn from the week's chapter that is the sermon theme. It is best if students can read ahead so that they have a grasp as to what the material will be covering before they get to class. There is no way to cover all the material in any given chapter in one week's Sunday School class, so it is important that they spend time reading through it on their own. Each week the teacher will make sure that students know what chapter they are to be reading so that everyone is on the same page.

Another way that I am hoping to emphasize Scripture in the youth ministry this year is to encourage a memorization plan for the students. This will take place during Sunday night youth group. Students will have an opportunity to share memorized passages with their group leader. Passages will be given a certain number of points. There will also be some rewards to give some motivation toward memorizing. There will be two scales: one for individual prizes and one for the whole group. Both the memorization list and the point/reward list will be sent home with your student from Sunday Night.

I am looking forward to this new year. It will be exciting to see how God will use *The Story* to help us become more acquainted with Him through His Word.

Blessings,  
Kyle



# The Story/Scripture & Worship

We are excited about beginning our new series “The Story” this year. For thirty-one weeks we will experience God through His own words by inviting and allowing Him to change our lives. This year we want to grow in our knowledge of and interaction with scripture so that we can better know God and draw near to Him, share His love with the world, and stay strong in the face of opposition.

In addition we also want to increase our biblical literacy as a congregation by reading through “The Story” and including corporate scripture reading as part of Sunday gathering. We want to provide short-term teaching opportunities about basic bible knowledge, study skills, and patterns for interpretation. We also desire to provide information on the background and development of the scriptural canon while teaching about the trustworthiness and value of the bible in our daily lives.

In our worship gatherings we want to emphasize the importance of scripture in several ways. First, we want to treasure God’s Word. As we experience God through daily study and application of scripture we will fill our hearts and minds with the greatest truth in history. Second, we want to sing God’s Word teaching and learning biblical theology through the music that we sing and allow the Word to dwell in us richly as we worship together. Third, we want to be intentional about reading God’s Word aloud. We want to experience the Word of God together as His Church as well as during our personal quiet times. Fourth, we want to show God’s Word by making scripture more visible through various media so that we are continually being filled with biblical truth. Finally, we want to pray God’s Word by reciting scripture in our prayers as well as communicate God’s love language as we talk with our Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit.

We also want to make you aware that some of the music selections for our weekly worship gathering will be taken from the songs suggested by The Story materials. While we will strive to keep a blended approach in our musical worship, we want to sing together some of these amazing songs taken from scripture and write them on our hearts. You can go to the following website and listen to some great music that we may sing together in worship of our God. <http://blog.worshiptogether.com/the-story-song-suggestions>

We hope that you are as excited about settling to read a good book while experiencing the story once again. We pray that you will listen for God’s call on your life, as He helps you write your own story influenced by His Holy Word.

## Jason's Jam



I'm so excited to begin our adventure through The Story in the coming year. The Story has provided great activities and curriculum that will go right along with the adults. This will encourage family discussion throughout each week as the whole family will be exploring the same points in The Story. The Children will doing their curriculum in Jr. Church and Sunday school for the younger kids. We will also be starting a Sunday evening program for age's k-5<sup>th</sup> that will be filled with worship, crafts, activity, and discussion. I am so excited to get started and I hope you and your family are too.




A line from Liming  
for Seniors

Wow, our God is so good to us. What a blessing He gives us every day. We sure need to tell Him our appreciation.

The church is starting a great study of the Word of God called "The Story". We have not been left out. I have written a devotion for every week of the series. They are simple little guides to keep us praying. They are not hard and are only for the seniors. If you do not get one at church, please give me a call and I will deliver it to you.

I sure love our seniors

A happy Christian,  
Steve



*January Birthdays*

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- 2 - Reta Hamilton
  - 6 - Adalyn & Kayden Litt
  - 8 - Allison Kunz
  - 9 - Bob Jones
  - 10 - Mary Swihart
  - 12 - Shirley Nichols
  - 14 - Steve Ehret, Brooklyn Williams
  - 15 - Lisa Bushong, Tommie Roseberry, Marilyn Ward
  - 16 - Keith Brokaw
  - 17 - Marjean Hickerson, Pat Noe
  - 18 - Kenny Carroll
  - 19 - Steve Beal, Marlin Hamilton
  - 21 - Beverly Shaffer, Gabi & Mia Twedt
  - 22 - Cherie Culler
  - 24 - Larry Arnold, Chris Fox, Troy Hamilton, Veronica Basye,
  - 25 - Judy Dickerson, Scott Maglott,
  - 26 - David Bushong
  - 28 - Charley Frontz, Dave McGugin,
  - 30 - Kayla Clawson
  - 31 - Phil Johnson, Logan Slone
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