

ONCE UPON A TIME, THE EPIC OF EPICS BEGAN . . .

Genesis 1 to Revelation 22

HAVE YOU HEARD THE STORY ABOUT . . . ?

GOD'S REDEMPTIVE STORY IN THE MAKING IS THE BIBLE'S MAIN THEME

Biblical Theology attempts to understand how the 66 books of the Bible reveals "God's divine activity" as it unfolds in history. This branch of theology aims to tell the whole story of God in the whole Bible and how God's story holds an authoritative claim on our lives since His story is all about His glory displayed through our salvation.

Systematic Theology and Biblical Theology complement each other. Systematic Theology seeks to explain the Bible's teaching on certain specific doctrines, one at a time, whereas Biblical Theology seeks to understand the progressive unfolding of God's revelation throughout history.

Systematic Theology is *static* in that it seeks to provide a final statement of what we believe as Christians. Biblical Theology, on the other hand, is *dynamic* because it describes the process by which God's revelation unfolds and continues to unfold towards God's final revelation in heaven.

OUR SOVEREIGN GOD, THE MASTERFUL SCREENWRITER

"Only God's revelation could maintain a drama that stretches over thousands of years as though they were days or hours. Only God's revelation can build a story where the end is anticipated from the beginning, and where the guiding principle is not chance or fate, but promise. Human authors may build fiction around a plot they have devised, but only God can shape history to a real and ultimate purpose."

—Dr. Edmund Clowney, Westminster Theological Seminary

GOD'S STORY: ACT ONE; SCENES ONE AND TWO

Genesis 3:15. *"God will put enmity between Satan and woman, between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise you on the head and you will bruise him on the heel."*

Galatians 4:4-5. *"But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."*

AND GOD'S EPIC STORY CONTINUES . . . THROUGH US

SOME QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DEVOTION:

1. The Bible is a book that contains many, many stories. Can you think of 10 Bible stories? How about 20? (If you'd like to play a quick game with someone or on your own, try to list as many Bible stories you can in 45 seconds. Ready? Go!!)
2. The Bible is full of stories but the Bible itself contains the overarching story of God's redemptive history. From what you remember of the Bible, starting from Genesis, how much can you recall the Bible's narrative? Write out as much as you can and don't be afraid to take a peek at your Bible if you need help filling the gaps.
3. Reread Dr. Edmund Clowney's quote on the opposite page. What does this quote mean to you? Have you ever thought of the Bible or God's plan in this way? Circle or underline any parts that intrigues you and explain why.
4. Here's a challenge question. As much as you know of the Bible's unfolding story, how might the story of your own spiritual life mirror that of the Bible? (For example: Have you felt as if you were in bondage, like Israel, and cried out to God for to be set free? Have you ever had any sort of Red Sea experience where you felt hopeless but God "parted the waters" for you? Have you ever felt you were in a state of exile, being separated from your home? Etc.)
5. In the space below, make a graph of your life, starting from birth. For the highpoints in your life, graph above the line, and for the lowpoints, graph below the line. (You should have some higher highs and some lower lows.) As you graph, label each of your points. Do you notice any patterns in your life? When were the times we sensed that God was with you? When were the times you felt far from God? Do you see a possible story taking shape from your life?

Highs

Birth

Lows