

SHARE *YOUR* **STORY** *NO FILTERS JUST FAITH*

**40-DAY DEVOTIONAL, JOURNAL
& SMALL GROUP GUIDE**
- PASTOR MARIO -

WEEK 1:

THE BEGINNING STORY - GOD, THE AUTHOR OF OUR STORIES

Our stories begin long before we take our first breath. Before we form words or memories, before we understand the world around us, our lives are already being written by the greatest Author of all—God. He is the ultimate storyteller, weaving together the events of our lives into a narrative that reflects His purpose, grace, and love.

Yet, from the very beginning, there has been contention surrounding our stories. The enemy has always sought to distort, silence, or erase the truth of who we are and who God has called us to be. We see this pattern throughout Scripture, from the deception in the Garden of Eden to the trials of Job, from the doubts of Moses to the struggles of Paul. The battle over identity, purpose, and faith is a recurring theme, reminding us that we are not just passive participants in our stories; we are in the midst of a divine conflict where God is working to redeem and restore every broken chapter.

This week, as we embark on the journey of exploring our own stories, we start at the beginning, God's authorship. We will wrestle with questions of identity, purpose, and the way God writes His truth into the pages of our lives. Through Scripture, reflection, and personal testimony, we will see that our stories are not random, nor are they simply a series of disconnected events. Every joy, every struggle, every moment of uncertainty is part of a greater narrative that God is unfolding.

If you have ever questioned whether your story matters, whether God is truly at work in your life, or whether the difficult chapters have meaning, this week's devotionals will challenge and encourage you.

As you engage with the truths in Days 1–7, remember this: **God is not just watching your life unfold, He is writing every page with intentionality, weaving a masterpiece of grace, redemption, and purpose. Your story matters because it is part of His greater story.**

Day 1:

The Power of Stories

REVELATION 12:11 (NLT)

¹¹ And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony.

Stories shape our world. They connect us, teach us, and inspire us. From the moment we are born, we become part of a story much greater than ourselves, God's story. Whether we realize it or not, our lives are narratives unfolding with each decision, triumph, and struggle. The Bible is filled with stories because God understands that storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to communicate truth, wisdom, and faith.

Why Stories Matter

Jesus himself used parables to teach. He could have given direct commands or lengthy theological discourses, but instead, He chose to tell stories. Why? Because stories engage our hearts as well as our minds. They make complex truths relatable and unforgettable. When we hear a story, we don't just process information—we experience it.

Think about a time when someone's testimony impacted you. Maybe it was a friend who shared how God provided during a difficult season or someone who overcame addiction and found freedom in Christ. These stories leave lasting impressions because they show faith in action. They remind us that God is present, working in the lives of His people.

Stories as Mirrors and Windows

Stories help us see ourselves and others in a new light. Some stories act as mirrors, reflecting our own experiences and emotions, helping us process what we've been through. When we hear about someone who struggled with doubt or fear,

we may recognize those same feelings in our own lives. These stories remind us that we are not alone in our challenges and that God is walking with us.

Other stories act as windows, giving us a glimpse into the lives of others and allowing us to develop empathy and understanding. They help us see the world from a different perspective, broadening our hearts and deepening our compassion. When we hear the testimony of someone from a different background or culture, it expands our appreciation of how God moves in diverse ways across the world.

The Bible is filled with both mirrors and windows. The story of Peter walking on water mirrors our own struggles with faith and doubt, while the parable of the Good Samaritan serves as a window into the heart of selfless love and mercy. Both types of stories are essential for growth, connection, and spiritual transformation.

Your Story Has Purpose

Every person's story matters because every life is part of God's grand narrative. You might feel like your story is too messy or unremarkable to share, but the truth is, there is power in every testimony. The very things you have been through, the victories and the struggles, can serve as a beacon of hope or a catalyst for change for someone else.

The enemy wants to silence us. He wants us to believe that our past disqualifies us from speaking about God's goodness. But Revelation 12:11 reminds us that we overcome by the blood of Jesus and by our testimony. Our stories are weapons against darkness. When we share them, we declare God's faithfulness and inspire others to trust in Him.

Stories Connect Us

Have you ever felt alone in your struggles? Like no one else could possibly understand what you're going through? That's one of the reasons why sharing our stories is so important. When we open up about our experiences, we find common ground with others. We realize we are not alone.

The early church thrived because believers shared their stories. They gathered in homes, broke bread together, and testified about what God had done in their

lives (Acts 2:42-47). Their testimonies strengthened one another and spread the Gospel far beyond what any one person could accomplish alone.

God is Writing Your Story

Even when life feels uncertain, God is in control. He is the Author of all things, and He is writing a story for your life that is full of purpose.

JEREMIAH 29:11 (NLT)

¹¹ “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

Sometimes, our stories take unexpected turns. We face heartbreak, failure, or seasons of waiting. But even in those moments, God is at work. Joseph’s story in the Bible is a perfect example. Sold into slavery by his brothers, falsely accused, and thrown into prison, his story seemed like one of suffering. Yet, in the end, God used every part of it for good. Joseph rose to a position of great influence and saved many lives (Genesis 50:20).

Your story is still being written. The challenges you face today could be the very testimony that helps someone else tomorrow. Trust that God is not finished with you yet.

How to Share Your Story

1. **Be Honest** – Authenticity is key. You don’t have to present a picture-perfect version of your life. People connect with real struggles and real victories.
2. **Focus on God’s Role** – Your story isn’t just about what you’ve done, but about what God has done in you. Highlight His faithfulness, grace, and transformation.
3. **Keep It Simple** – You don’t have to include every detail. Focus on the key moments that shaped your faith journey.
4. **Be Bold** – The enemy wants to keep you silent, but your testimony is powerful. Don’t be afraid to share how God has moved in your life.

5. **Trust the Impact** – You may never know how your story affects someone. Leave the results to God and trust that He will use your words to encourage others.

Reflection Questions

- What experiences in my life has shaped my faith?
- Have I ever hesitated to share my testimony? Why?
- How has someone else's story impacted me?
- What steps can I take this week to share my story with someone?

MEMORABLE QUOTE

Your story is not just about you; it's about God's faithfulness shining through your life.

A Prayer for Today

Father, thank You for being the Author of my story. Help me to trust that every chapter, both the joyful and the difficult, has a purpose. Give me the courage to share my testimony so that others may see Your goodness. Use my story to bring hope, healing, and encouragement to those around me. Let my life be a reflection of Your grace and love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Thought

God has given each of us a story to share. When we open our hearts and testify to His goodness, we build bridges of faith and encouragement. Today, embrace the power of your story, knowing that it has the potential to change lives and glorify God.

Your story matters. Share it boldly.

Day 2:

The Author of Every Story: Trusting God's Narrative

PSALM 37:23 (NLT)

²³ The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.

God, the Ultimate Storyteller

Every story has an author, and every author has a vision for the story they create. The Bible reveals that God is the ultimate storyteller, one who weaves together the intricate details of our lives with purpose and intention. Unlike human authors who create fiction, God authors real-life stories that display His love, grace, and sovereignty.

God's authorship is evident throughout Scripture. From Genesis to Revelation, we see His hand guiding, shaping, and redeeming lives. Consider Joseph, whose life seemed like a series of unfortunate events, betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment. But in hindsight, every moment was a chapter leading to a greater story of salvation and provision (Genesis 50:20).

When we recognize God as the author of our stories, we can trust that even the painful chapters serve a purpose. He is not just writing random events, He is crafting a masterpiece.

Embracing the Unexpected Twists

No great story is without conflict or unexpected twists. In literature, these moments create depth and transformation; in life, they strengthen our faith and dependence on God. Many of us struggle with the uncertainty of life's plot twists. We wonder why certain events unfold as they do, obstacles, challenges, roadblocks, loss, disappointments, detours, and delays.

However, God's Word reassures us that He is intentional with every twist in our journey. Proverbs 16:9 (NLT) states, "We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps." This means that even when life doesn't go according to our script, we can trust the divine Author who sees the whole picture.

Consider Job, a man who experienced immense suffering. If he had judged his story too soon, he would have believed it was a tragedy. But God was working behind the scenes, and in the end, Job's latter days were more blessed than his former ones (Job 42:12).

Your Life as a Living Testimony

Every testimony begins with a test. The stories we share, our victories, failures, struggles, and breakthroughs, are all part of a divine narrative designed to bring glory to God. Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians 3:2-3 that we are living letters, known and read by all.

Your story has value. Your experiences can encourage others, offering hope to those who are struggling. When you share how God has worked in your life, you are testifying to His faithfulness, just as the early church did in Acts. Revelation 12:11 (NLT) declares, "They have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony." Sharing our stories is not just personal; it's spiritual warfare against doubt and fear.

Surrendering the Pen to God

One of the hardest things to do is to relinquish control over our lives. We often want to dictate the direction of our story, deciding when and how things should unfold. But true faith requires handing over the pen to God, trusting that He knows what He is doing.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT) reminds us, "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." Even when we don't understand the next chapter, we can trust the Author's heart.

When we surrender our story to God, we stop striving and start abiding. We rest in His sovereignty, knowing that He writes better endings than we ever could.

Practical Application

- Reflect on past events in your life that seemed confusing or painful at the time but later revealed God's purpose.
- Write down your testimony and share it with someone who may be encouraged by your journey.
- Pray for a surrendered heart, asking God to help you trust Him with the unwritten pages of your future.

Reflection Questions

1. Can you recall a time when an unexpected turn in your life led to something greater than you imagined?
2. How does knowing God as the Author of your story change the way you view challenges?
3. In what areas do you struggle to surrender control to God? How can you take a step toward trusting Him more today?
4. How can your personal testimony inspire or encourage someone else?

MEMORABLE QUOTE

God is not just writing your story, He is perfecting it.

A Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father, I acknowledge You as the Author of my life. Thank You for crafting a story filled with purpose and grace. Help me to trust You with the twists and turns, knowing that You see the bigger picture. Give me faith to surrender my plans to You and the courage to share my testimony with others. May my life reflect Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Thought

Your life is not a series of random events; it is a divinely authored masterpiece. Trust the process, embrace the journey, and remember, every great story takes time to unfold. Keep your eyes on the Author, and He will make sure your story ends in victory.

Day 3:

Created to Tell – Made in His Image

GENESIS 1:26-27 (NLT)

²⁶ Then God said, ‘Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.’ ²⁷ So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

The Power of Being Made in His Image

One of the greatest truths in Scripture is that we are made in God’s image. From the beginning, God designed us not only to exist but to reflect His character, creativity, and love. Being created in His image means that we carry divine attributes, His ability to think, to reason, to love, and to create.

Think about this: When a sculptor creates a statue, they pour their vision and craftsmanship into it. The final piece reflects the mind and skill of the artist. In the same way, God, the ultimate Creator, designed us with purpose and intentionality. He placed His very nature within us, not only so we could experience life but so we could express Him to the world.

Our likeness to God gives us the capacity to know Him, to relate to Him, and to live out His purposes on earth. It also means we have the ability to share stories, His story, our story, and how the two intertwine.

Our Stories Reveal the Creator

Every person has a story, and our stories are not random. They are intricately woven by God to reflect His work in us. When we tell our stories, we reveal the goodness, grace, and faithfulness of God.

Consider the great men and women in Scripture, Moses, David, Esther, Paul, each of their lives told a story that pointed back to God's power and purpose. Their challenges, failures, victories, and faith journeys were recorded so that generations would know who God is.

You, too, have a story to tell. Whether it's a story of overcoming hardship, experiencing transformation, or simply walking in daily faith, your life reflects God's ongoing work.

The question is, are you willing to share it?

The Responsibility of Image-Bearers

As image-bearers, we have a responsibility. Our lives should reflect the character of the One who made us. This means our words, actions, and choices matter. It also means that our testimony, the story of how God is working in us, should be shared for His glory.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 (NLT), "In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father." Our lives are meant to be a light in a dark world, and sharing our stories of faith, redemption, and hope is one way to let that light shine.

When we recognize that we are made in God's image and that our stories hold power, we begin to live with greater purpose. We begin to see every moment, good or bad, as part of a greater narrative that God is writing.

Practical Application

1. **Reflect on Your Story** – Take time to write down key moments in your faith journey. How has God been faithful? Where has He brought you from?
2. **Share Your Story** – Start with close friends or a small group. Your testimony may encourage someone who is struggling.

3. **Live with Purpose** – Remember that you are a reflection of God. Strive to live in a way that points others to Him.
4. **Encourage Others to Share** – Ask a friend or family member about their story. Listening builds connections and strengthens faith.

Reflection Questions

1. What does it mean to me, personally, to be made in God's image?
2. How has God used my story to impact others?
3. Are there parts of my testimony that I've been hesitant to share? Why?
4. How can I use my daily life to reflect God's nature more clearly?

MEMORABLE QUOTE

Your story is God's masterpiece in the making, crafted to reflect His love, grace, and faithfulness.

A Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father, thank You for creating me in Your image. Help me to recognize the purpose in my story and the power of sharing it. Give me courage to testify of Your goodness, wisdom to reflect Your character, and faith to trust in Your plan. Use my life as a light that draws others closer to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Thought

Every moment of your life is a chapter in God's grand story. The victories, the struggles, and even the uncertainties are all part of a narrative that He is weaving together for good. Embrace your role as His image-bearer and storyteller. Someone needs to hear your story, because in it, they just might find the hope they've been searching for.

Day 4:

Biblical Stories That Shape Our Faith

ROMANS 15:4 (NLT)

⁴ Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.

The Power of Biblical Narratives

Throughout the Bible, God has used stories to reveal His character, teach important lessons, and strengthen the faith of His people. These stories are not just historical accounts; they are blueprints for how we should live, trust, and walk with God. From the bravery of David to the faithfulness of Ruth, biblical stories provide us with examples of perseverance, obedience, and divine intervention.

Stories in Scripture remind us that God has always been active in the lives of His people. When we read about Abraham's trust in God's promises, Moses' leadership, or Esther's courage, we find encouragement in knowing that the same God who worked through them is working in us today. These narratives serve as both inspiration and guidance, helping us navigate our own faith journeys.

Abraham: Trusting in God's Promises

One of the most profound biblical examples of faith is found in Abraham. God promised him that he would be the father of many nations, yet Abraham and his wife Sarah were well beyond childbearing years. Despite the impossibility of the situation, Abraham chose to trust God's word. His faith was credited to him as righteousness.

ROMANS 4:20-22 (NLT)

²⁰ Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.

²¹ He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises. ²² And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous.

Abraham's story teaches us that faith requires patience and trust, even when circumstances seem contrary to God's promises. There are times in our lives when we might not see immediate answers to our prayers, but just as God fulfilled His promise to Abraham, He remains faithful to His word in our lives.

Moses: Faith in God's Power

Moses' journey from exile to leader of Israel is a testament to God's transformative power. Initially reluctant and full of doubt, Moses questioned his own ability to lead. However, God assured him that His power would work through him.

EXODUS 3:11-12 (NLT)

¹¹ But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?"

¹² God answered, "I will be with you.

Moses' faith grew as he witnessed the miracles God performed, from the burning bush to the parting of the Red Sea. His story reminds us that God equips those He calls, and when we place our trust in Him, He will provide the strength we need to accomplish His will.

Esther: Courage to Stand for God

Esther's story is one of boldness and divine positioning. As a Jewish woman who became queen in Persia, she risked her life to save her people from destruction. When faced with fear, it was her cousin Mordecai that reminded her that her elevation may have been a divine destiny.

ESTHER 4:14 (NLT)

¹⁴ If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?

Her story encourages us to stand firm in our faith, even when it comes at great personal risk. God places us in specific situations and seasons for a purpose, and when we step out in courage, He works through us for His glory.

Peter: From Fear to Faith

Peter's journey is one of transformation. From denying Jesus three times to becoming one of the foundational leaders of the early church, Peter's faith was refined through failure and restoration. Jesus didn't discard Peter because of his moment of weakness; instead, He reaffirmed Peter's calling.

LUKE 22:31-32 (NLT)

³¹ "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. ³² But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers."

This story is a powerful reminder that our failures do not define us. God's grace is sufficient, and He uses our struggles to strengthen our faith. Just as Peter went on to preach boldly and lead many to Christ, God can redeem our past and use us for His kingdom.

Paul: A Life Transformed by Grace

Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus is one of the most dramatic stories of transformation in the Bible. Once a persecutor of Christians, Paul became one of the greatest missionaries, spreading the gospel across the known world. His life is a testimony to the power of God's grace and the radical change that faith can bring.

ACTS 9:1-4 (NLT)

¹ Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's followers.

³ As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?"

Paul's story challenges us to recognize that no one is beyond God's reach. No matter our past, God's grace is powerful enough to transform us and use us for His purpose.

Practical Application

- **Study Biblical Narratives:** Set aside time each week to read and reflect on a Bible story. Ask God to reveal lessons that apply to your life.
- **Share Your Story:** Just as biblical figures shared their testimonies, be open about how God has worked in your life.
- **Step Out in Faith:** Like Abraham, Moses, Esther, and Peter, trust God even when the path ahead is uncertain.
- **Embrace Transformation:** Allow God to shape your life as He did with Paul. Don't let past mistakes hold you back from His plans for you.

Reflection Questions

1. Which biblical story resonates most with my current faith journey, and why?
2. How has God used past struggles or failures to shape my faith?
3. Are there areas in my life where God is calling me to trust Him more deeply?
4. What steps can I take to courageously live out my faith like Esther or Moses?
5. How can I share my personal story to encourage others in their faith?

MEMORABLE QUOTE

The stories of the Bible are not just history, they are His stories, lessons of faith, trust and God's unchanging love.

A Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father, thank You for the stories in Scripture that teach us, encourage us, and strengthen our faith. Help us to trust You as Abraham did, to step out in obedience like Moses, to be courageous like Esther, to embrace grace like Peter, and to allow transformation like Paul. Give us boldness to share our stories so that others may see Your faithfulness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Thought

Biblical stories are more than ancient history; they are living testimonies of God's faithfulness, power, and grace. As you reflect on these stories, remember that your own journey is part of God's greater narrative. Be encouraged to trust Him, walk boldly in faith, and share the story He is writing in your life.

Day 5:

Recognizing God's Hand in Our Personal Story

PROVERBS 16:9 (NLT)

⁹ We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.

God, the Master Author

Every good story has an author, a storyteller who crafts each scene with intention and meaning. When we reflect on our lives, we must recognize that God is the master storyteller, weaving every moment together into a divine narrative. Even in the moments of confusion, pain, or uncertainty, He is actively at work, writing a story that glorifies Him and strengthens us.

When Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, it may have seemed like his story had taken a tragic turn. However, God was writing a greater narrative—one that positioned Joseph to save an entire nation from famine. What looked like betrayal and suffering was, in fact, a setup for divine purpose (Genesis 50:20). Similarly, our struggles are not wasted; they are chapters in a testimony of God's faithfulness.

Recognizing God's Hand in the Highs and Lows

Life is full of ups and downs, yet in every season, God is present. The challenge lies in recognizing His hand, even when His presence is not immediately evident. Consider the Israelites' journey through the wilderness. To them, their time in the desert may have felt like a punishment, yet God was leading them, providing for them, and shaping them into His chosen people.

Your personal story has similar themes, the closed doors, the unexpected detours, and even the painful moments, all used for God purposes. God often times permit unfavorable circumstances in our lives and leverages them for the

bigger picture. Ask yourself: how has God's guidance been present in both my triumphs and trials?

The Beauty of Redemption in Our Stories

One of the greatest assurances we have is that God is a redeemer. No matter what we have faced, mistakes, hardships, or moments of doubt, He can turn all things for good. Our past does not disqualify us; rather, it sets the stage for His grace to shine through.

Think about Peter, who denied Jesus three times. He must have felt unworthy and broken. Yet, Jesus restored him and used him mightily to build the early church. Jesus called him 'rock' in Matthew 16:18 (NLT), "Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means 'rock'), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it." Your failures and struggles do not define your story, God's redemption does.

Your Testimony as a Tool for Others

When we begin to see our lives through the lens of God's purpose, we understand that our stories are not just for us. They are meant to encourage, uplift, and lead others to Him. Revelation 12:11 (NLT) reminds us "And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony."

Your story has power. Your journey through loss, restoration, healing, or waiting can serve as a source of encouragement for someone else. Have you ever shared how God has worked in your life? You may not realize how impactful your testimony can be for someone who is facing a similar struggle.

Practical Application

Take time this week to write down key moments in your life where you have seen God's hand at work. Consider these questions:

- When was a time God protected me from a bad decision?
- How has God used difficult seasons to shape me?
- In what ways has He provided for me when I least expected it?

Once you've identified these moments, consider sharing one of them with a friend, family member, or in a small group. You never know who needs to hear how God has been faithful in your life.

Reflection Questions

1. What are some significant moments in my life where I now recognize God's hand at work?
2. Have there been times where I questioned God's plan, only to later see His purpose revealed?
3. How can I use my personal testimony to encourage someone who is struggling?
4. What biblical character's story resonates most with my own journey, and why?

MEMORABLE QUOTE

God is the master storyteller, and your life is a story of His grace, love, and redemption.

A Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father, thank You for being the author of my life. Even in moments of uncertainty, I trust that You are weaving a beautiful story. Help me to recognize Your hand in my journey and to see how every trial and triumph is working for my good. Give me the courage to share my testimony, that others may be encouraged and drawn closer to You. I surrender my story to You, knowing that in Your hands, it has purpose. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Thought

God's fingerprints are all over your story. The chapters you once questioned will one day become testimonies of His faithfulness. Trust the Author. He is not done writing your story yet.

Day 6:

Embracing the Journey: Trusting God with Our Story

PROVERBS 3:5-6 (NLT)

⁵Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. ⁶Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.

The Unfinished Story

Have you ever watched a movie or read a book that had an unexpected plot twist? Life often mirrors this experience. We imagine our story unfolding one way, only to encounter unexpected detours, heartbreaks, or challenges. Sometimes, we question whether our story is heading in the right direction, especially when things seem uncertain. But what if we understood that God, the Master Storyteller, is still writing our journey?

The Bible is filled with stories of people who had no idea how their circumstances would turn out. Joseph, for instance, found himself betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, and imprisoned unfairly. Yet, through every twist and turn, God was weaving a greater narrative, one that would ultimately save an entire nation.

The Trust Factor

Trusting God with our story means surrendering our need for immediate answers. It means believing that even when we don't see the full picture, God does.

Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts and not to rely solely on our own understanding. Human wisdom is limited, and we often

make decisions based on what we see and feel. But God sees beyond the present moment, He sees the beginning, middle, and end. When we seek His guidance, He aligns our steps with His divine purpose.

When the Road is Unclear

Many of us have faced moments where we felt stuck or confused about our next step. Maybe you've asked God, *"Why am I here? What is the purpose of this struggle?"* Even in those uncertain moments, God is still present. He specializes in leading us through seasons of unknowns and turning obstacles into opportunities.

The Israelites, after being freed from Egypt, didn't have a clear roadmap to the Promised Land. Yet, God guided them with a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night (Exodus 13:21-22). They didn't need to see miles ahead; they just needed to trust the next step. The same principle applies to us today, at times, God gives us enough guidance for the present moment, teaching us dependence on Him.

The Beauty of Letting Go

One of the greatest struggles in trusting God with our story is our desire to control the outcome. We fear failure, rejection, or loss. But God calls us to release our grip and trust Him. Jesus said, "If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it." (Matthew 16:25, NLT). True peace comes when we surrender our plans to God and allow Him to shape our story.

If we only embrace the parts of our story that make sense, we miss the beauty of what God is doing in the unseen. Paul, after facing countless trials, wrote, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7, NKJV). Faith is trusting that God is working behind the scenes, even when we can't see the full picture.

God's Story Through Us

Your story is more than just for you, it's a testimony of God's faithfulness. Someone needs to hear how you've overcome difficulties, how God has provided, and how He has been your anchor in the storm. When we share our struggles and victories, we inspire others to trust God with their own journey.

Revelation 12:11 (NLT) reminds us, “And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony.” Your testimony has power! When you embrace your journey and trust God with your story, you glorify Him and encourage those around you.

Practical Application

1. **Surrender Daily:** Start each day by asking God to lead your steps. Surrender your plans, anxieties, and dreams to Him.
2. **Keep a Testimony Journal:** Write down moments where you see God’s faithfulness. This will remind you of His goodness when you face challenges.
3. **Encourage Others:** Share your story with someone who may need encouragement. Your experiences can inspire faith in others.
4. **Pray for Trust:** Ask God to help you develop your faith, especially in areas where you struggle to let go.

Reflection Questions

1. Have I ever looked back on a difficult season and realized how God was working through it?
2. What areas of my life do I struggle to surrender to God’s plan?
3. How can I actively trust God with the unknown parts of my story?
4. Who in my life needs to hear my testimony? How can sharing my story impact them?

MEMORABLE QUOTE

God is the Author of your story; trust Him with every chapter, even the ones that don’t make sense yet.

A Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father, thank You for being the Author of my story. There are times when I don't understand where my life is going, but I choose to trust You. Help me to surrender my plans and fears, knowing that You are working all things together for my good. Strengthen my faith, guide my steps, and use my story to glorify You. May I find peace in Your perfect plan, knowing that You see the beginning and the end. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Thought

Your journey is unfolding exactly as it should. Even when life takes unexpected turns, God is in control. Embrace the process, trust Him with your story, and know that every chapter is a testimony of His faithfulness. No matter what you're going through, remember, God is not finished with your story yet!

Day 7:

Reflection & Prayer

EPHESIANS 2:10 (NLT)

¹⁰ For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Reflecting on the Journey

The past six days have taken us through a deep and personal journey of discovering, embracing, and sharing our stories. We've explored the power of our narratives, the struggles that shape us, and the redemptive hand of God weaving through every moment. Today, we pause. We look back to see how far we have come, not just as readers but as participants in this divine unfolding story.

Each lesson we have absorbed has been like a piece of a grand mosaic, and now we step back to view the bigger picture. It is in this moment of reflection that we often see new layers of meaning, fresh insights that we might have overlooked in the day-to-day readings.

The Unseen Threads

Consider for a moment the intricate work of a tapestry. From the front, it appears as a magnificent design, but flip it over, and all you see are knots and loose threads. This is often how we view our own stories, only seeing the tangled mess from the backside, not realizing that God is crafting something breathtaking on the other side.

Perhaps as you have walked through the previous six days, you have identified patterns in your own life, repeated struggles, moments of breakthrough, or places where you sense God's fingerprints. Reflection is a gift that allows us to

see what we could not see in the moment of our trials. We see that nothing was wasted; every thread, even the messy ones, had a purpose.

New Nuggets of Truth

Now that we have a broader view, let's unearth some fresh revelations:

1. **Your Story is Still Being Written.** Sometimes we are so focused on the past that we forget God is still actively working in our present. Every new day is another opportunity for Him to refine, restore, and redirect us. No matter how far we've come, there are more chapters ahead filled with growth, purpose, and divine assignments. *Philippians 1:6 (NLT)* reminds us that "God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns."
2. **Your Pain Has Purpose.** The struggles you thought would break you have, in fact, built you. Our trials serve as training grounds for perseverance, shaping our character and deepening our faith. Joseph in the Bible endured betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment, yet God used his pain to elevate him into a position of influence and salvation for many. Your suffering is not meaningless—it is a divine setup for a greater testimony.
3. **Your Voice Matters.** Even if you think no one will listen, there is someone who needs to hear your story. God places us in specific circles of influence for a reason. Your journey, with all its ups and downs, is uniquely designed to encourage, uplift, and guide someone else. Sharing your testimony can break chains, bring healing, and offer hope where there was none before.
4. **God is the Ultimate Author.** You are not writing your story alone. God's hand is upon every chapter, even the ones that seem unclear or unfinished. When things feel uncertain or chaotic, trust that He sees the entire narrative. Like a masterful storyteller, He knows how to bring redemption, restoration, and renewal in the most unexpected ways. *Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)* reminds us that *God's plans for us are good, giving us a future and a hope.*
5. **Transformation is a Process.** Change does not happen overnight. Just as a caterpillar undergoes metamorphosis before emerging as a butterfly, our faith journeys involve seasons of waiting, growth, and

refinement. God is patient with us, molding us day by day into the image of Christ.

ROMANS 12:2 (NLT)

² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Embrace the process, knowing that every step forward, no matter how small, brings you closer to His purpose for your life.

Practical Application

Now that we see the overall picture, let's take action:

- **Journal your reflections.** Go back through Days 1-6 and write down key insights that stood out to you. What new themes or patterns do you see?
- **Identify someone to share your story with.** It could be a friend, a small group, or even through social media. Your story has the power to impact lives.
- **Commit to a next step.** Is there a part of your story that you've been hesitant to embrace? Ask God for the courage to fully step into it.

Reflection Questions

1. Looking back at Days 1-6, what is one truth that resonated deeply with me?
2. How has my understanding of my own story shifted over the past week?
3. What new insights have I discovered about God's hand in my life?
4. In what ways can I take a step forward in sharing my story?

MEMORABLE QUOTE

Your story is a thread in God's grand tapestry—every twist, every knot, a part of His masterpiece.

A Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father, thank You for guiding me through this journey of reflection. I see now that every piece of my story has a purpose. Help me to embrace the lessons You have revealed, and give me the courage to share my journey with others. May my story bring You glory and draw others closer to You. I trust that You are still writing my future, and I surrender every chapter into Your hands. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Thought

Reflection is not about dwelling in the past but about gaining wisdom for the future. As you move forward, walk confidently knowing that your story is a testimony of God's faithfulness. You are His masterpiece, and He is not done with you yet.

SHARE YOUR STORY SMALL GROUP TEACHING

Week 1: The Beginning Story – God, the Author of Our Stories

Watch Week 1 Teaching Video: ShareYourStory.world/Teaching

Introduction

God's Role As The Story Author

1. _____ by God

JEREMIAH 1:5 (NLT)

⁵ “I knew you before I formed you in your mother’s womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations.”

2. _____ with Purpose

EPHESIANS 2:10 (NLT)

¹⁰ For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.

3. _____ for His Glory

ROMANS 8:28 (NLT)

²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them.

Conclusion

JEREMIAH 29:11 (NLT)

¹¹ “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

Teaching Notes

Small Group Discussion Questions:

- 1. What does it mean to you that God is the Author of your story?
- 2. How can recognizing God’s authorship help you trust Him in difficult seasons?
- 3. Can you share a time when something painful in your past was used for a greater purpose?
- 4. What part of your story do you feel God is calling you to share with others?
- 5. How does knowing that God has planned your life give you confidence for the future?
- 6. What is one action step you can take this week to live more boldly in the story God is writing for you?

Discussion Notes
