

1 PETER

MINISERIES

The True Story

▶ EPISODE 1:

The True Story, Introduction





Foundational Principle:

The Bible, the True Story of the Whole World, contains four overarching themes that help the follower and the curious discover their place in God's story.

- Creation
- Rebellion
- Redemption
- Restoration



Watch:



BibleProject

[What is the Bible?¹](#)

Have you ever noticed how our lives, in general, are shaped by stories? Stories connect us to the history of our families, spark our imagination, and lend meaning to our circumstances and, ultimately, our purpose. The longer we live and the more adventures we have, the more connections we make through our circumstances. Stories also connect us to people around us—as we get to know our neighbors, friends, and coworkers we often look for places of commonality and meaning through which we often develop lifelong friendships.

Together, Pam, Melanie, Yamit and I share a passion for engaging in conversations that go below the surface of our circumstances and reach into hearts. Our stories have converged at a significant moment in time that we believe holds great opportunity for the spread of the good news. We found that people are willing and even hungry to learn about God and the Bible. Might that be you, too?

During this time we also decided to expand our reach to those taking part in Jay's CrossFit Box and Pam's community event called LIFT. This was really encouraging! We invited all kinds of people from a variety of different backgrounds to join us in our study of 1 Peter and we all welcomed the opportunity to learn in community. They learned from us, and we learned from them. They seemed curious. Are you curious?

What compels you to join this miniseries discussion?

The True Story of the Whole World

This miniseries is anchored and framed by the Bible, which we believe tells the True Story of the Whole World. It's not just a nice religious story, or one among many religious myths, or even the best story out there, we believe it's the True Story. The True Story is comprehensive and because of this, it provides meaning for all of history and for our lives, too. The best way to understand this reality is by getting to know Jesus Christ.

The past few years have been challenging. Uncertainty has raised all kinds of questions related to life and death, meaning and purpose, and this includes what we believe—like is God real or even necessary?

In order to discover more about the grand story going on all around us, our desire is to help you look at the True Story through the lens of four prominent themes that are woven throughout its text. Throughout this study, we are going to help you connect the four themes from the first book of the Bible, Genesis, to the last book, Revelation.

Creation, Rebellion, Redemption, and Restoration



CREATION

Perfect Relationship

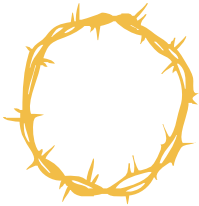
The story of the Bible begins with God as the great King speaking into being everything from nothing and pronouncing it “very good.” God and man were in a perfect relationship.



REBELLION

Fractured Relationship

Adam and Eve chose to rebel against God’s authority (often described as the “Fall” or “sin”) and their decision to do things their way instead of God’s way has affected God’s creation and all of humanity (including us) ever since. Understanding this rebellion begins to answer the question, “What is wrong with our world?”



REDEMPTION

Reconciled Relationship

Humans have lived in a fractured world ever since the rebellion, and although we try different things to escape or numb the pain of brokenness, nothing sticks. King Jesus, God’s one and only Son, has invited us to turn from doing things our way to trust in God. Having lived in perfect obedience to His Father God, Jesus rescued us from the penalty and power of sin. It’s through believing in His death, burial, and resurrection that we are finally reconciled to God, given a brand new identity, and sent on mission as agents of restoration in the world. Peter reminds us that Jesus Christ is our living hope and the source of our brand new identity.



RESTORATION

Renewed Relationship

Jesus is alive and reigns as King over all His creation and is seated at God’s right hand in heaven today. This means that because of Jesus, it is possible to experience restoration and transformation in our relationship with God, ourselves, others, and even creation right now. At the same time, we look forward with great hope to God’s complete restoration of all things. One day, Jesus will come again in glory and usher in the new heavens and new earth. Peter encourages us to keep this promised future in mind in the midst of life’s ups and downs.



Reminder:
Please watch:



BibleProject

[The Story of the Bible²](#)



Maybe you're wondering where 1 Peter fits into the True Story.

Time and again, God disperses and scatters His people from places of familiarity to unfamiliarity, from the comfort of home to places foreign. Wherever we find ourselves, God calls us to “neighbor” among people whose way of life and beliefs, cultures, and languages are completely different from ours. The book of 1 Peter is found near the end of the second half of the True Story.

Peter wrote this particular letter around AD 55 to a group of believers described as the *Diaspora*. They were expelled from Rome by the Emperor Claudius and dispersed to a variety of other locations within the Roman Empire (modern day Turkey). Since there was no Wi-Fi in the first century, this letter, often described as a “circular,” passed from city to city and church to church so that everyone had a chance to hear from Peter. Here he describes these followers of Jesus as “chosen exiles,” “sojourners and strangers.”



Imagine what it might be like to be forced from your hometown and country and relocated to a completely different part of the world.



Imagine setting up home in unfamiliar cities and towns, learning to speak a whole new language, and being exposed to unusual and unsettling religious beliefs.



Maybe you have experienced this before. Share your experience with the group.

The contents of the letter lend insight to their disorientation. **Their sense of order had unraveled.** They struggled to find their identity, and their faith in God was being tested.

**Was God still there? Did He know they were struggling and suffering?
How did knowing Jesus Christ make any difference in the midst of
these challenging circumstances?**

We learn from Peter's letter that some were scrutinized by their neighbors, treated unfairly by their employers, mocked and bullied by their acquaintances. To top it off, they struggled to love each other. They found it hard to get along with their spouses and faced conflict with their families and friends. Everything was off-kilter. Sound familiar?

The recipients of this letter, sojourners far from home, teetered on the brink of losing their identity. But notice that Peter, right from the beginning of his letter, describes these Jesus followers as *chosen* exiles. He reminds them that they have, in fact, been chosen by God the Father to live in new countries as members of the family of God and as gospel witnesses in the world.





Now, fast forward to today—it’s your turn. Let’s look at 1 Peter a little bit.

- Read or listen to 1 Peter on your own or as a group. Pay close attention to these passages: 1 Peter 1:1–3; 2:9–10; 2:18–24; 3:15; 5:12
- With the passages above in mind:
 - What do you learn about God and the True Story of the Whole World?
 - How would you describe the people to whom Peter is writing?

Exploring Your Story

Our lives are shaped by story and if we listen closely enough, we can identify various narratives tucked into the fabric of our society and culture. Some of these stories ring true to us personally, but many are false and can leave us feeling isolated, afraid, or empty. Sometimes it’s hard to tell the difference.

Peter has a way of illuminating false narratives and countering fake news with the good news—the all-encompassing truth of the gospel. Peter brings God right into the middle of our lives and confronts the lies we’ve been believing about ourselves, others, and God. You are not alone and in future episodes, we will explore the big concepts of identity, hope, suffering as well as the person of Jesus.

As you reflect on what we began exploring in this lesson, what’s the narrative that you listen to the most? How does it compare with the True Story?

Keep these questions in mind as you engage in the “shrink and think” activity below. Our hope is that it will help you review comforting truths you’ve considered today and then share your learnings with others.

Shrink & Think

This “shrink and think” exercise is to help you summarize what you’ve learned about God, yourself, and others from this episode.

1. Factual Insights
This step helps you to look at the big picture and the facts in this episode
From this lesson, what do you learn about

- The four themes of True Story
- God in the True Story
- You as you relate to the True Story?

2. Revealing Relevance
This step helps you to pinpoint what in the lesson has been most revealing or relevant for you

Why does learning about the themes of the True Story matter?

3. Summary Statement (10-12 words)
This steps helps you shrink your observations into a short, shareable sentence or summary

Combine the factual insights about God and the True Story into a one or two sentence summary.

4. Apply It
This last step helps you to apply what you’ve learned

What’s different in your narrative from what God says about you and humankind in the True Story?

What does it mean to know you are loved like the recipients in Peter’s letter?

Final Reflection

As you consider what you've learned about God, yourself, and others in this lesson, where do you see elements of the four themes of the True Story connecting with your own story?

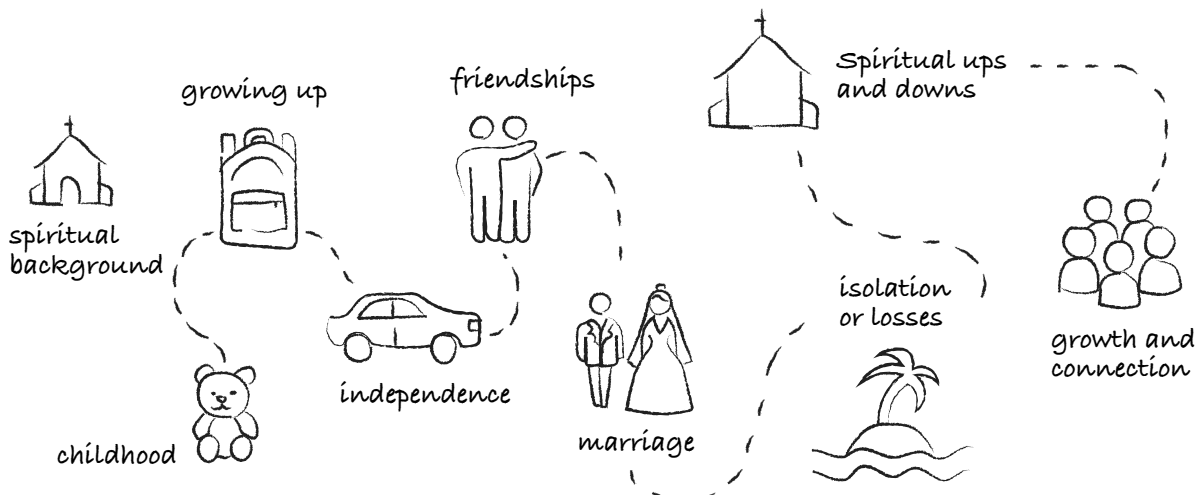
- Knowing that we all experience fractured relationships, where might this be affecting your current relationship with God or others?
- How does the possibility of restored relationships bring you delight? Give you hope?



Your Own Journey

Try to sketch out a LIFE MAP. Include a little about your Heritage History, Highlights, Hard times, Heroes and where you've seen or experienced the Hand of God.

Make it as simple or detailed as you like.



Going Deeper:



- [*The 30 Minute Bible: God's Story for Everyone*](#)²
- [*The True Story of the Whole World: Finding Your Place in the Biblical Drama*](#)³

Endnotes:

1. "What is the Bible?" BibleProject, accessed January 2, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak06MSETeo4>.
2. "The Story of the Bible," BibleProject, accessed October 12, 2022, <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-story-of-the-bible/>.
3. Craig G. Bartholomew and Paige P. Vanosky, *The 30 Minute Bible: God's Story for Everyone* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 2021).
4. Michael W. Goheen and Craig G. Bartholomew, *The True Story of the Whole World: Finding Your Place in the Biblical Drama* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2021).