

God's Story is Our Story: The Blessing of Biblical Theology

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We teach biblical theology because the Bible expects us to rest our faith on the Bible's story of God's salvation (e.g., Ps. 33). The Bible comes to us in story form exhibiting all the features of the storytellers' craft, plot, tension, conflict, resolution. The biblical story is not myth or fairy tales, but a true account of history told in story form to be told, retold, and passed on from one generation to another. This story format should be reflected in our teaching, preaching, child raising, and Christian fellowship.

The biblical story begins with creation (plot), continues with the fall into sin (tension) and the redemption provided by God (conflict), and culminates in the new eternal creation (resolution) held out for those who believe (so creation, fall, redemption, glory). This is the story of the Bible; one that a redemptive-historical biblical theology seeks to draw out and explain to increase our faith in God's work of salvation in Jesus Christ. "Look what God has done!" (Ps 46:8-10, 66:5-7, 77:10-12, 105:1-2).

Unless this story is understood in its dynamic unfolding over time and history, we will tend to treat the Bible as a random collection of texts with no coherent meaning for our lives or for our salvation. We must hold on to *the consent of the parts and the scope of the whole* WCF, I.V.). The whole story must be known and understood if we are to understand the significant of any part of the story since each part contributes to the whole and the whole explains each part; the whole story being the context for any one aspect of the story (Luke 24:13-32). This redemptive story is for every believer to read, understand and take to heart (Acts 17:2-3, 10-12).

We can treat the Bible as merely a manual for discipleship, or as a guide for Christian ethics, or as a collection of proof texts, or as examples to follow, or as a collection of moralistic imperatives, etc. All these can be used with good effect by Christian people, but what the Bible claims for itself is something different; namely the story of God's unfolding plan of salvation accomplished over time for the saving of his people. Facts stay lodged in the brain, but stories speak to the heart. So, knowledge of the biblical story will take us with burning hearts to our relationship with God through Jesus Christ, strengthened and enriched beyond measure (Luke 24:32).

Within this biblical story, we find a place for our own story. Here in God's big story of creation and new creation is the anchor for our own story. As we grapple daily with the tension of living simultaneously between this evil age and the eternal age to come, we cannot lose sight of the story that God is telling us; a story that will strengthen our faith and grow in us a heart of worship for our Lord and Saviour. Therefore, encourage one another with these words (1 Thessalonians 4:1).