

GO FISH: Part 1

Week 1: *Why we fish.*

Text: Develop the major themes of the Bible in order to frame the story/narrative of God.

Idea: This message is all about rediscovering our missionary identity as the people of God by reconnecting with the story of God recorded in the Bible.

Possible Set-List:

-*Tear Down the Walls* - Hillsong United

-*With Everything* - Hillsong

-*Awakening* - Chris Tomlin / Reuben Morgan (Hillsong)

-*Come On (My Soul)* – Rend Collective Experiment

Introduction: This morning we begin a brand new series called “Go Fish”. Over the next three weeks we are going to explore the **why**, **where** and **how** of mission.

The Bible is the most printed, best-selling book in history, and the runner up isn't even close.

- Over 7.5 billion Bibles have been printed and distributed since the beginning of the 19th century,¹ and every year the number increases by at least another 100 million.
- That's just about 275,000 a day and more than 3 Bibles being printed, purchased or distributed every second!

¹ <http://www.biblestudy.org/beginner/why-are-there-so-many-bibles-in-the-world.html>

And what's so mind blowing about the Bible is that its' message is so debated. What is it all about? What is it trying to say? What is the metanarrative, the big idea of all the books and letters? Is it a story about God? Is it a story about man? Is it the history of a tiny middle-eastern nation called Israel? Is it 2 completely different collections of books that a small group of Jewish rebels in the 1st century wrongly tried to harmonize?

And how should we read the Bible? Should we read it as a book of hope, as a book of moral ethics or as a self-help guide? Is it about us and how we get to heaven? Does it give us purpose? Is the message even about us at all? Is the metanarrative's purpose to tell us about who God is and what He's like? Is its' message a collection of teachings or sayings from Jewish leaders called prophets ending with rabbi Jesus and his disciples?

Our answer to these questions matter! Our answer to these questions is what separates Christians from skeptics, agnostics, pluralists, relativists, atheists, Muslims, Jews, Hindus and every other worldview that exists.

And while we can say that, "Yes, the Bible is a book about man." Or, "Yes, the Bible tells us about God." Or, "Yes, it is a collection of teachings." Or, "Yes, it tells the story of the Jewish people." Or, "Yes, it focuses on the teachings of rabbis, the greatest of whom was Jesus of Nazareth." Ultimately, the Bible tells the story of the **One true God who created everything, loves mankind, and who is on mission to reconcile all things back to Himself through the person and work of Jesus Christ.** (Introduction by Steve Zarrilli)

3 reasons why we fish OR 3 reasons why we do mission:

In order to answer this question we have to go on a journey. The Bible is a lot like a mosaic. A mosaic is a work of art with tiny and seemingly unrelated pieces of material (glass, pottery) all coming together to tell a greater story. In the same way the Bible is beautiful mosaic. When we step back we soon discover that all the pieces come together to tell a greater story. This morning we are going to attempt to all step back and see the greater story.

1. Humans have walked away from God (Isaiah 53:5)

The story begins all the way back in the book of Genesis. God created man unique (in His own image). He had a special relationship with humans. Genesis 2:15 says, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Adam and Eve enjoyed an intimate relationship with God, a beautiful Garden to live in and fulfilling work to engage in.

As this beautiful and awe-inspiring love story unfolds in the book of Genesis we soon discover that the unthinkable happens. God's own creation, the humans He had lovingly created in His image rebel against Him ushering devastating and unthinkable consequences into the world. Genesis 3:23, *"So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life."*

Death, violence, separation, and wickedness fill the earth and defile the image of God in man. Genesis 6:5, "The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all of the time."

The story unfolds and God continues to remain involved and concerned with the affairs of His creation.

He establishes a covenant with a man name Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). He promises to bless all the peoples of the world through the seed of Abraham.

We discover that God chooses his people by grace (not by any merit of their own) (Deuteronomy 7:7-9)

God rescues His people from slavery/oppression (Exodus 3:7)

God gives the law/sacrificial system to show Israel how to live with him as their God (Deuteronomy 30:19)

Israel was to be a people who display God's glory to the nations
(Isaiah 49:6)

**They rebel again and live in their own ways (the definition of sin)--
-doing what was right in their own eyes.** This cycle continues
throughout the Old Testament (Isaiah 53:6; Judges 21:25; Jeremiah
2:12)

Transition: *"Though the majority of the Old Testament focuses on God's
work with the Jewish people, spaced strategically throughout are windows
to God's larger redemptive plan with outsiders."* -Hugh Halter

2. God hasn't given up on humanity (John 3:16): *He sends a Savior!*

"Like the first sprout of a beautiful tulip emerging from the dark, cold
days of winter, God's story of blessing pokes out of the ground again."
(Hugh Halter) The cold and dark days of winter = 400 years of silence!

"To speak of the incarnation missionally is to link who Jesus was, what
Jesus did, and how he did it, in one great event that defines all that it
means to be Christian." -Darrell Guder

At just the right time God puts his plan of reconciliation and redemption
into action. **Jesus is born of a virgin** (fully human and fully God)
(Matthew 1:22; John 1:1,14). He is **baptized** (identified with sinful
humanity) (Matthew 3:13), **led by the Spirit** (Matthew 4:1), **tempted**
(Matthew 4:10), **lived a perfect life** (He did what Adam didn't do by
overcoming the tempter and living a life of faith/trust), became a
substitutionary atonement (John 1:29), offers **forgiveness of sins**
(Luke 5:20), was crucified, raised from the dead, and declares Himself to
be **Lord over all** (Matthew 28:18-20).

Transition: *"Are you beginning to see how these stories fit together?
God's plan to bless, reach, include, adopt, reclaim, and redeem has not
been abandoned or forgotten. It is about to touch down in every
neighborhood, village, and town."* -Hugh Halter

**3. God is inviting us to join Him on mission (2 Corinthians 5:18-21,
1 Peter 2:9)**

Jesus commissions his disciples to join Him on this incredible mission of reconciliation and restoration (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20). His church will be made up of men and women from every tribe, tongue, people, and language (Revelation 5:9). The church has been commissioned to bring the blessing (gospel) of God to all the peoples of the earth in fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3). The disciples of Christ wait for the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 1:14), the Holy Spirit is sent to empower the church for the mission (Acts 1:8), the gospel is proclaimed (Acts 2:36), the church multiplies, is scattered, and the gospel message spreads throughout the known world awaiting the return of King Jesus who bring full and final judgment and restoration.

Conclusion: Do you see it? Can you step back and see the greater picture? The beautiful mosaic that is the Word of God in its fullness. Do you see what God is calling us to be as HIS church? Do you see that you are a part of the on going story of God? **We are a church on mission because we serve a God on mission.** God is calling us to join Him on the incredible mission to reconcile all things back to Himself through Christ!

“But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.” 1 Peter 2:9

“The church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, and sermons...are simply a waste of time. God became a Man for no other purpose.” -C. S. Lewis
