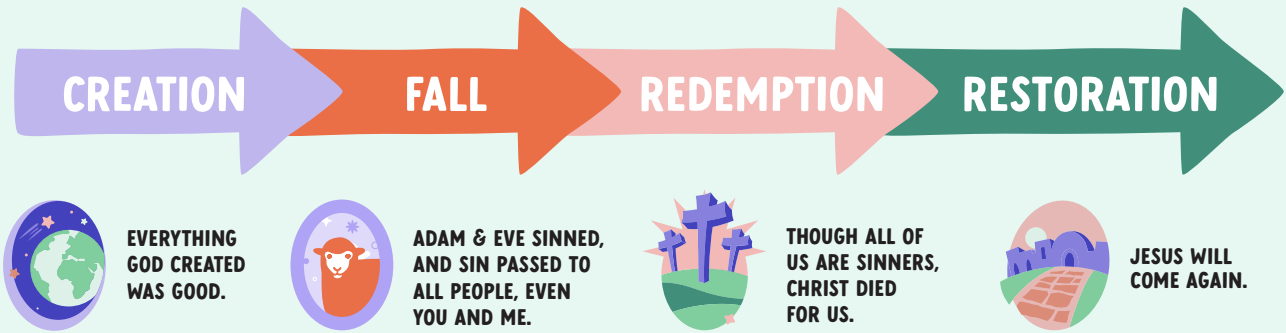


GOD'S BIG STORY



FIND IT IN THE BIBLE: MATTHEW

This week's story comes from the book of Matthew. Matthew is the first of four books known as the Gospels. The author of this book is likely Matthew, the tax collector who became a follower of Jesus. The book of Matthew gives readers a perspective on the life of Jesus and confirms He is the Messiah.

READ



The Gospel writers include several accounts of Jesus calling His disciples to follow Him.

- Matthew 4:18-22
- Mark 1:16-20, 2:13-17, 3:13-21
- Luke 5:1-11, 27-32, 6:12-16
- John 1:35-42, 1:43-51

Take some time to read through these stories.

- What do you notice about how Jesus calls the different disciples?
- How does each disciple respond?

OT-NT CONNECTION

There are several examples of discipleship in the Old Testament. Consider the stories of Moses and Joshua (Exodus), Eli and Samuel (1 Samuel 3) and Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 19). How did God use these men to tell others about Him?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT JESUS "CALLS" US?

When Jesus calls someone to follow Him, most people don't hear a voice like the first disciples did. God may use the words of Scripture or the witness of a friend to "call" someone to faith in Him. No matter how God calls us, we all have to make a decision when He does.

Without Jesus, we are stuck in the darkness of our sin. God calls us out of darkness and into His light when He makes the plan of salvation through Jesus clear to us. Faith in Jesus is the only way for us to have a relationship with God and follow Him.

SHOULDN'T I STOP SINNING BEFORE I FOLLOW JESUS?

Everyone on Earth is a sinner (Romans 3:10, 23), even disciples of Jesus. God calls us to come as we are to accept His free gift of grace. There is nothing we can do to earn or deserve it.

When we choose to trust in Jesus, it is only through His power that we are made clean from our sins (Hebrews 9:14) and only through the Holy Spirit that we can fight the temptation to sin (1 Corinthians 10:13, Galatians 5:16-17).

You can't stop sinning before you choose to follow Jesus, so put your trust in Him today!

JOURNAL



Write a quick story or script patterned after Matthew 4:18-20. Write your story as if YOU were the disciple Jesus called. (It doesn't have to be long! Matthew only uses 53 words!)