

Big STORY



October 10 & 11

Received

John Fuller, Senior Pastor

Introduction

Over the past few weeks, we have looked at the big story of the Bible - God's loving pursuit of us. The Bible is a collection of sixty-six books written by forty different authors over a period of fifteen hundred years. Within its pages plans unfold and themes resonate. God loves us, and once we are filled with the truth of what God is really like, it spills out to those around us. This week we dig into Luke 2 and see how receiving the gift God promised to His people changes everything.

Discussion

1. **Read Galatians 2:20**, and put it in your own words. In our earthly lives, we assume gifts are earned for accomplishments or received because of good deeds. How is this inconsistent with God's plan, His truth?
2. **Review Luke 2:21-38**. Simeon and Anna spent their entire lives waiting, praying and devoting themselves to God. Certainly they faced moments of doubt that God would do as He said. How do you cope when God fails to do what you expect? What can we learn from Simeon and Anna?
3. Looking back at the moment when you crossed the Faith Line, what was the most difficult aspect of accepting what God was offering to you? If you have not yet crossed the Faith Line, what is holding you back from accepting God's offer?
4. **Read Romans 6**, and reflect personally, as a Christ follower, what receiving this promised gift has meant to you. How has it changed your thoughts and actions about life and death?

Think About It

In November 2005, Johnson and Johnson released their advertising slogan "A Baby Changes Everything," put together by the Campbell Ewald Advertising Agency. Anyone who has experienced a new baby in the family can relate to this statement either as parents themselves or observers of the new parents. Routines change, priorities shift and responsibility mounts, but underneath all of this is love and joy. Much is the same for someone who has received the promised gift of God's love. Receiving changes your perspective on death and how you live your life. It adds to your routine, shifts priorities and leaves you with a new feeling of responsibility for others. However, within all this, God's love and joy abounds.

Do Something

1. God's story is not a simple story of cause and effect. It is many things coming together after running parallel for, in many instances, generations. Share with someone this week an instance where you have seen the pieces of God's plan for your life coming together.
2. As a group, make plans to bless someone this week. As Christ followers, there is no greater way to illustrate the change within us than to spill the love we have been filled with onto someone else.
3. Pray about investing in the life of someone who has not stepped over the Faith Line. Invite them to a fall activity that is already on your calendar!