



# Let Me Tell You a Story

December 2, 2018

# What Makes Us Us?

- Is it **behavior**? Some believe what sets Christians apart is a moral code that comes from the Bible
- Is it **beliefs**? Some suggest what sets us apart are the doctrines we embrace and espouse

## The Gospel's Delighting Heart

“Once the following of Jesus becomes a strain and a dour, odious task, a job (‘somebody’s got to do it’), it’s lost its way. Once discipleship morphs into the deadly serious and unsmilingly grim, would it not be safe to say that we’ve wandered far from the gospel’s delighting heart?”

[Boyle, Gregory. *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship* (p. 9). Simon & Schuster. © 2017. Kindle Edition.]

# What Makes Us Us?

- Moral behavior and clear thinking that aligns with truth are unquestionably vital aspects of our experience as apprentices of Jesus
- As important as they are, neither beliefs nor behaviors are primary—**belonging** is
- What sets us apart is this fundamental argument of Scripture: *if Jesus is the image of the eternal God and if the fullness of God dwells in him fully, then we will not find fullness in anything or anywhere or anyone else*

## What is This Fullness?

- It is the experience of coming into this reality: all the Father has ever wanted is for us to know that we are sons and daughters, and that his story is where we will find our own
- Your life story only makes sense in God's story
- This is the way we find our way to the Father's heart—we enter through his story and discover where his story meets ours

# Whose Story Are You In?

- Luke 21:25-28
- It's a grim bit of forecasting by Jesus and how we read it will depend entirely on whose story we're in
- All people begin each day living in God's story or someone else's
- The essential thing is to know: whose story are you living in?

# Whose Story Are You In?

- Satan is a deceiver, a liar, and the story he tells us about us is always false and it never accords with God's story
- **John 8:44b** PHILLIPS TRANSLATION  
“He always was a murderer, and has never dealt with the truth, since the truth will have nothing to do with him. Whenever he tells a lie, he speaks in character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

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# A Community of Belonging

- What I knew: all the Father ever really wanted was for her to be a daughter and find that her life story only makes sense in His story
- Why it was effortless to invite her here? Because her behavior and beliefs would not define her, she wouldn't be judged here, she'd be safe here
- She could belong because we experience church as a community of inclusive belonging and tenderness



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