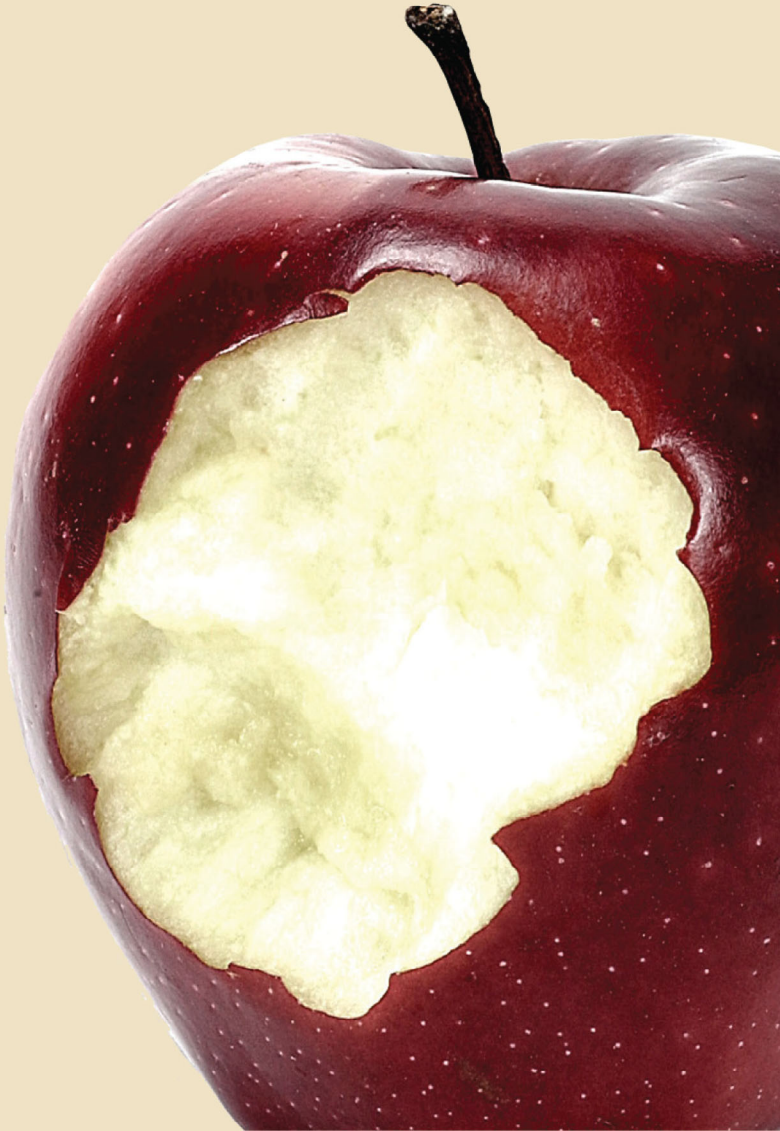
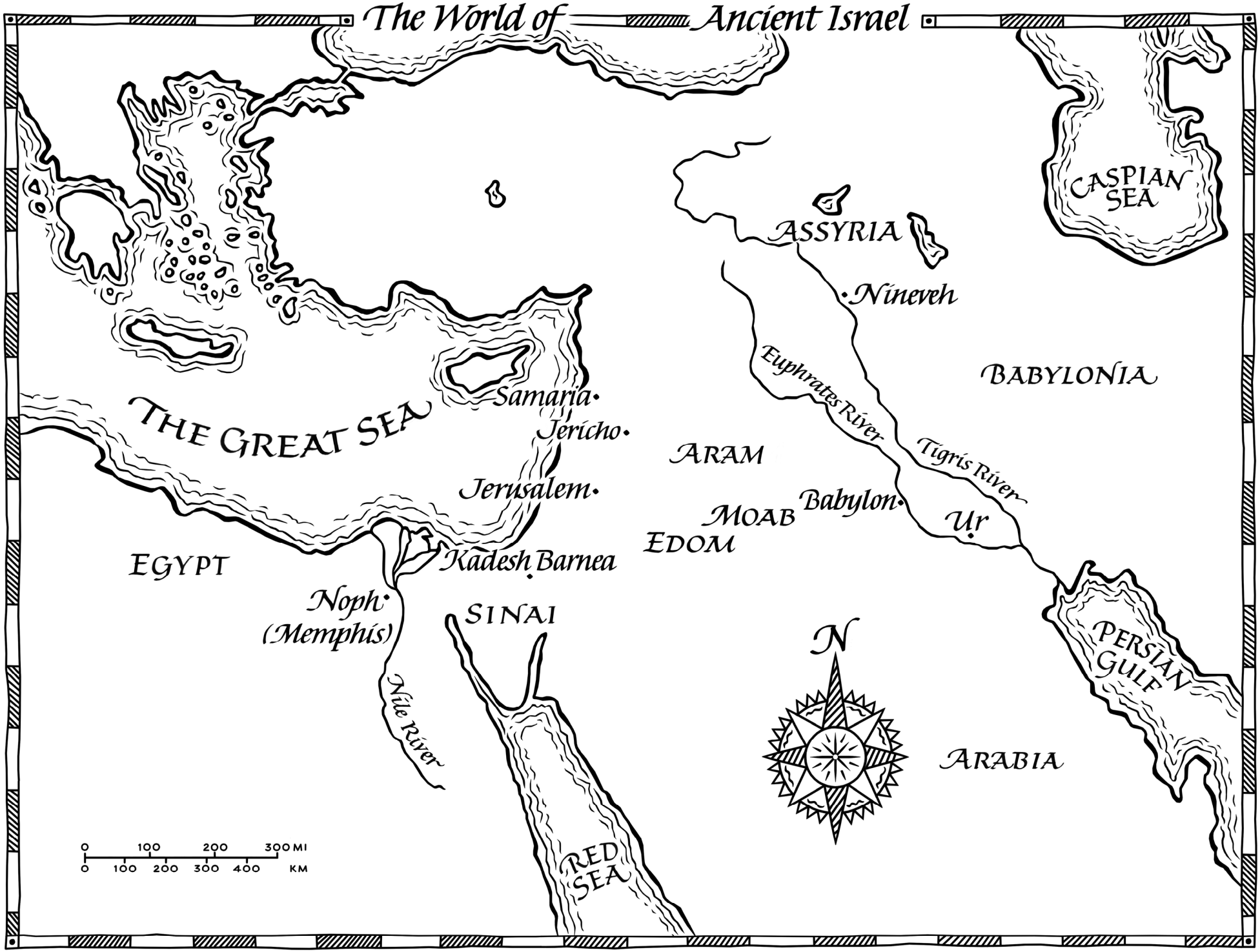
CREATION
FALL
FLOOD
BABEL
ABRAHAM
JOSEPH
MOSES
JOSHUA
SAUL, DAVID, SOLOMON
KINGDOM DIVIDES
NORTH: ISRAEL
SOUTH: JUDAH
FALL
FALL
RETURN
JESUS' BIRTH
JESUS IN TEMPLE (AGE 12)
JESUS' BAPTISM
CRUCIFIXION & RESURRECTION
BIRTH OF CHURCH
PETER
PAUL'S CONVERSION
PAUL'S JOURNEYS
DEATH OF PETER AND PAUL
JOHN EXILED TO PATMOS
JOHN WRITES REVELATION
US!
2ND COMING
GREAT WHITE THRONE
? ? ? ?
2166 BC
1526 BC
1406 BC
1000 BC
930 BC
722 BC
586 BC
538 BC
400 BC
5 BC
7 AD
26 AD
30 AD
35 AD
67 AD
95 AD
2000 AD
ETERNITY
GENESIS 1–11
GENESIS 11
MALACHI
MATTHEW
JOHN
ACTS
JUDE
REVELATION

THE STORY

READ THE STORY. EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE.




The World of Ancient Israel
CASPIAN SEA
ASSYRIA
Nineveh
BABYLONIA
Euphrates River
Tigris River
THE GREAT SEA
Samaria
Jericho
ARAM
Jerusalem
Babylon
Ur
MOAB
EDOM
EGYPT
Kadesh Barnea
Noph (Memphis)
SINAI
Nile River
PERSIAN GULF
N
ARABIA
RED SEA
0 100 200 300 MI
0 100 200 300 400 KM

In this guidelines document, you will find the following important explanations:

- **Special Features:** the contents of the Special Features documents and how to use them.
- **Teaching Principles:** how the sermons are built, and important principles to incorporate when teaching through *The Story.*
- **Sermon Video Library:** which of Frazee and Lucado's 31 sermons are included in our online video library.

Special Features for Sermons

The Special Features documents contain the following types of sermon helps that were extracted from the messages preached by Randy Frazee and Max Lucado for the 31 weeks of The Story. The ideas they incorporated into their messages can be adapted and used when putting together your sermons. These ideas are organized topically, so it will be helpful to work with them in conjunction with the sermon outlines in order to see the sequence of the points in each message.

NOTE: *Randy Frazee taught through the Old Testament, and Max Lucado taught the New Testament. On two of the weeks, Randy and Max covered for each other, so Week 19 is a Max Lucado sermon, and Week 29 is a Randy Frazee sermon.*

Illustrations (stories, humor)

If Max or Randy used a story, a joke, a clever turn of words, or gave a gripping illustration of a concept, it is provided for you in this section. In some cases the complete story is related in the Sermon Outline, which is posted to Online Resource Library on the Weekend Services page.

Visual Features (visuals, audience engagement)

This section contains any of the ideas Randy or Max did where they introduced a visual object lesson, or did something to get the audience involved, such as projecting an image onto the screen, writing something on a flip chart, boiling a frog, having people draw on the maps inside their books, or prompting them to verbally respond. To support you in re-creating the visuals, you are provided with the following resources:

1. **Maps:** The maps from the inside of the book are provided as .jpg files so you can project them on a screen an pre-draw on them what you want people to draw in their books. The maps are posted to the Online Resource Library on the Weekend Services page.
2. **Scriptures:** In order to locate the text of the scripture you want to project on a screen, use the Specific Verse Reference Lists, posted to the Online Resource Library on the Weekend Services page. This "pastor's cheat-sheet" sequentially lists the detailed verse references as they appear in each chapter of The Story, and they are live-linked to Bible Gateway so you can copy the actual verse text into your media file, or verify the verse reference so you can refer to it during your sermon.

3. **Handouts:** When a handout was distributed at Oak Hills Church, a copy of the handout is provided in the Sermon Features folder for your reference. You may duplicate it, or re-create it using updated graphics and logos from the Church Campaign Resource DVD.

Upper Story/Lower Story

Throughout the sermon series, and throughout the curriculum lesson plans for children, youth and adults, the concept of the upper story and lower story is a running theme. To help you draw out this important concept and communicate how it is seen in each chapter, the upper story/lower story connection is explained. Often the upper story/lower story explanation forms the review for the whole series, helping people catch up with where this week's message fits in if they are just joining you.

Much of the Upper Story/Lower Story material is taught by Randy Frazee in the adult curriculum DVD. The adult curriculum video lessons were based on his original teaching in these sermons, so be aware that ***there will be overlap*** *between those videos and the Upper Story/Lower Story segments of these sermon features documents.*

Applications

Sometimes in the middle of the message, always at the end, are points where the message shifts from teaching to conviction, from didactic to personal. These application points are summarized in this last section.

Teaching Principles

In putting these sermons together for The Story, Randy Frazee and Max Lucado implemented some important teaching principles that you should be aware of as you prepare your own messages.

Point, Place, People, Plot, Point Restated

In every message of Randy and Max's you can find these elements. They formed the basic building blocks for the sermons so that Randy and Max could be consistent between them in how their sermons were built. Sometimes in the Sermon Features documents the 'point' or the 'place' will be identified.

Don't assume familiarity

Don't assume people know the Bible story you're about to tell. Just because it's familiar to you doesn't mean it's familiar to even the seasoned Christians in your congregation. Randy repeatedly did this in the first few weeks, prefacing a point by saying, "You know the story…" and finally several people asked him to stop saying that, because more often than not, they **didn't** know the story.

Reinforce *The Story*

Because you are leading your church through a spiritual growth experience based on a special edition of the Bible, it is important to reinforce its value and usefulness to each person's journey as you teach through it.

- **Refer to *The Story.*** When citing passages in the text, refer to the page and paragraph in *The Story*, as well as the scripture reference ("On Page 1 in *The Story,* or Genesis 1:1…"). This will probably feel cumbersome, but it is important to send people to their copy of *The Story* to find the text. Many people will bring both *The Story* and their Bible to church, so be sure to provide both references so people can follow along in both places. Seeing the passage in both *The Story* and the Bible is a great way to get people to see their Bible in a fresh new way.

- **Read from *The Story***. Whenever possible, read your text directly from your copy of *The Story*. Nothing reinforces the value of this book like the pastor using it to preach from. If you cross-reference a passage from a different part of the Bible, it is not necessary to locate the cross-reference text in *The Story* also.

Video Sermon Library

There is a video sermon library on the Weekend Services page of the Online Resource Library that contains messages taught by selected ministers, to give you ideas as you put together your own sermons. Randy Frazee and Max Lucado gave permission for half of their messages to be included in this library. They are using their sermons as the basis for their co-authored book based on The Story*, so they need to protect their sermon content to a certain degree, but they have generously allowed us to share some of their sermon videos with other pastors.*

To access the library, CLICK HERE, then access this private album by entering the password, ***TheStory****.*

Here are the messages from Oak Hills Church that were chosen to include in the video sermon library.

Introduction:	Deal or No Deal
Chapter 1	Creation: The Beginning of Life as We Know It
Chapter 3	Joseph: From Slave to Deputy Pharaoh
Chapter 4	Deliverance
Chapter 11	From Shepherd to King
Chapter 13	The King Who Had It All
Chapter 14	A Kingdom Torn in Two
Chapter 15	God's Messengers
Chapter 16	The Beginning of the End
Chapter 19	The Return Home
Chapter 21	Rebuilding the Walls
Chapter 22	The Birth of the King
Chapter 25	Jesus, the Son of God
Chapter 26	The Hour of Darkness
Chapter 29	Paul's Mission
Chapter 30	Paul's Final Days

Chapter 1

Creation: The Beginning of Life as We Know It

Illustrations (stories, humor)

Creation of woman: "It says that God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep and he pulled out his brains and made the woman. That's the way my wife's version reads."

There is a parallel between our **40 Days of Prayer** for God to change us through *The Story* – "praying up a storm" – and the storm of Noah's day that God used to restore his relationship with mankind because he wanted so deeply to be with him.

> *The Oak Hills template for 40 Days of Prayer, implemented during the forty days leading into The Story, is posted in the Online Resource Library, on the Bulletin Board, under Preparation.*

Special Features (visuals, audience engagement)

Place: On the map in the front inside cover of *The Story*, draw a tree between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers to represent the Garden of Eden.

Place: Later in the message when talking about Noah, on the map in the front inside cover of *The Story*, draw an ark where it says Assyria.

> *The Old Testament map from the inside cover of The Story is provided as a .jpg file in the Maps folder on the Weekend Services page of the Online Resource Library.*

Upper Story/Lower Story

Much of the following material is taught by Randy Frazee in the adult curriculum DVD. The adult curriculum video lessons were based on his original teaching in these sermons, so be aware that ***there will be overlap*** *between those videos and the Upper Story/Lower Story segments of these sermon features documents.*

God created the world with the grand vision of dwelling together with us in the world. It is God's supreme passion to be with you. God gave us freedom of choice. Adam and Eve chose

out of the freedom of their will to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thus ruining God's vision of dwelling together with us. Sin was deposited permanently into the nature of Adam and Eve, a deadly virus separating them from a holy God. God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and set angels to guard it, in order to keep them from the Tree of Life, which would sustain life forever. Without access to this tree, they would eventually die. We think God is being cruel by letting us die. But it's actually an act of God's grace to keep us from being able to sustain our life forever in a state of sin and hatred. Man's choice resulted in separation from God, and it broke his heart. The 'rest of the story,' the entire Bible, tells us of the relentless pursuit of God and the extent to which he will go in order to get us back.

The flood is God's first attempt to go to great measures to get us back. But it doesn't work because it doesn't deal with sin. Sin goes onto the ark with Noah, and it disembarks with him (Genesis 9, *not* in *The Story*).

Application

Point: *You* are the point of *The Story*. When God replaced Adam and Eve's fig leaves with garments of skin, he gave us a clue as to how far he would go to fulfill his supreme desire to restore a relationship with us. Even when we are ashamed and feeling vulnerable, he covers us in order to restore our relationship with him, but covering us requires the shedding of blood. We are invited to soak in the fact that the God of the universe wants to be with us more than anything on earth, literally.

THE STORY
Prologue – Week 1
The One Story of God
August 6-7, 2016

Appearing on the Big Screen…

The **Bible** is like a **mural** that tells a single **story**.

But…the **Bible** doesn't read like a **story**.

> Have mercy on me, O God,
> according to your unfailing love;
> according to your great compassion
> blot out my transgressions.
>
> Wash away all my iniquity
> and cleanse me from my sin.
>
> *Psalm 51:1-2 NIV*

Once you see the **story, it will change your life.**

> So Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Levitical priests, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. **10** Then Moses commanded them: "At the end of every seven years, in the year for canceling debts, during the Festival of Tabernacles, **11** when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this law before them in their hearing. **12** Assemble the people—men, women and children, and the foreigners residing in your towns—so they can listen and learn to fear the Lord your God and follow carefully all the words of this law. **13** Their children, who do not know this law, must hear it and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."
>
> *Deuteronomy 31:9-13 NIV*

THE STORY
Prologue – Week 1
The One Story of God

Randy Frazee
Oak Hills Church, San Antonio, TX
August 6-7, 2016

To view The Story Prologue Week 1 sermon video, CLICK HERE.

Opener

Bible knowledge testing questions:

1. What time of day was Adam born? *Just a little before Eve.*
2. Why didn't Cain bring an acceptable offering to the Lord? *Because he wasn't Abel.*
3. What kind of man was Boaz before he got married? *Ruthless.*

Here's a serious question…

4. What is the one and only manmade thing in heaven? *The scars in Jesus' hands and feet.*

How many would say "I would like to understand the Bible better"?
I congratulate you! The Bible contains the very words of God. Understanding the Bible unlocks the secrets to give you access to the most amazing life possible, the one God wants you to have.

How many would be willing to say "I would like to understand the Bible better, but I find it challenging"? You are not alone. My job is to help you over this next ministry season to gain personal access to the Word of God so that what you want you can actually grab hold of.

I think a little virtual trip to two famous works of art might give us some insight into how the most powerful book in the world is also one of the toughest for us to get our arms around.

Introduction: The Art Gallery & The Mural

First, our plane takes us to Paris, France, to the renowned Louvre Museum. You are excited to see paintings by Rembrandt, van Gogh and Monet but you are the most eager to gaze at arguably the most famous painting of all time – The Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci– worth an estimated $700 million dollars.

Show the painting of the Mona Lisa

© Randy Frazee
Oak Hills Church, San Antonio, TX

When you first enter the room you are stunned at how small the painting actually is. Based on the legend of the painting you expected it to be two stories high. But, it is only 20"x30" – about the size of an oven door.

As you probe deeper into the story behind Ms. Lisa you discover she was born on June 15, 1479 during the Italian Renaissance. Her husband was a wealthy Florentine merchant who supposedly commissioned the painting for their home to celebrate the birth of their second son, Andrea.

You then catch a flight to Rome, grab a taxi, and use your best Italian to ask the driver to take you to the Vatican. You walk across the magnificent plaza and enter the Sistine Chapel to see arguably the second most famous painting in the world – The Creation of Adam by Michelangelo.

Show the fresco of the Creation of Adam (cropped to make it PG!)

The strong finger of God is reaching out to give life to the limp finger of Adam.

Both paintings are stunning, and interestingly, Da Vinci and Michelangelo were painted them at the same time. But there is one very obvious difference. The Mona Lisa is sitting in a room (recently renovated for $6 million) all by itself completely isolated from the other paintings. The story of Mona's life is completely disconnected to the stories behind the other paintings in the building.

But The Creation of Adam is connected to paintings of over 300 characters, like Noah and Jacob, Moses and David, Abraham and Ruth.

Show 2 pictures of the entire ceiling

The Louvre is an art gallery. The Sistine Chapel is a mural that tells one grand story of redemption.

The One Story of God

The **Bible** is like a **mural** that tells a single **story**.

But…the **Bible** doesn't read like a **story**.

I have here in my hand a copy of a novel I read entitled *At Home in Mitford* by Jan Karon. It is a story and reads like a story. It starts at the beginning and goes in chronological order until the end, about a man named Father Tim.

© Randy Frazee

The Bible is a story but it is not organized quite like a story. If you have your Bibles, let me show you how the Bible is arranged, and why it might be a bit frustrating for you. Turn to the Table of Contents. If you don't have one with you, I have reproduced it here.

Refer to poster listing the books of the Old Testament in sequence, placed on an easel.

Here's how the 39 books of the Old Testament are organized:

- **The Law** – The first five books in your Bible are the Pentateuch (*penta* means "five") Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. As you read through Genesis, it's a chronological history, as is Exodus, Leviticus is a bit tough, Numbers goes along in order, then you get to Deuteronomy, and you realize Moses is repeating himself. The name "Deuteronomy" is a compound word "Deuter" meaning second; Nomos meaning law. It is the second of the law or a repetition of stories you already read about in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Good to know.

- **The Historical Books** – The next twelve books in your Bible from Joshua to Esther are the historical books and read pretty much in chronological order until you get halfway in and land on 1 Kings. 1 Kings begins with the story of Solomon's reign over the united Israel and describes the demise of Solomon and the dividing of the nation into two weaker nations – Israel to the north and Judah to the south. The book of 2 Kings goes back and forth between the kings and prophets to the north and the kings and prophets to the south all the way up to their destruction and exiles. This is starting to get confusing because of the names mothers were giving their kids back then – Jeroboam, Rehoboam, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin. Then when you get to 1 Chronicles you think the story is going to go on, but we're back to the story of Solomon again! Except then in 2 Chronicles this time it leaves out all the kings to the north that were mentioned in 2 Kings, because they are not the remnant that God is going to use to bring us Jesus.

- **Poetry books** – Next you come to the five books of poetry from Job to Song of Songs, and they are not necessarily in chronological order. Now, Job's story is believed to have taken place somewhere back around the time of Abraham which is back in the first book of the Bible – Genesis. These books contain writings by David and Solomon, primarily, and there's even a psalm by Moses. Let me give you an example of how confusing this all can be if you are not literate in the Bible. Back in 2 Samuel 11, King David has an affair with Bathsheba, gets her pregnant, then has her husband Uriah killed. In the next chapter David is confronted by the prophet Nathan and David confesses his sin. His full confession to God is not found in 2 Samuel but all the way over in Psalms 51.

  > Have mercy on me, O God,
  > according to your unfailing love;
  > according to your great compassion
  > blot out my transgressions.

© Randy Frazee
Oak Hills Church, San Antonio, TX

Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.

Psalm 51:1-2 NIV

- **The Prophetic Books** – the last 17 books of the Old Testament are prophetic books, but they are talking about things that happened at the beginning of the Old Testament, so you have to learn how they all line up, and here's a hint: they don't go in chronological order. The first 5 prophetic books are called the *Major Prophets* and rest are called the *Minor Prophets*. Does anyone know the difference between the Major and Minor Prophets? The major prophet's books are longer – that's it. (That's my expensive seminary education being put to good use!) So, the last major prophet is Daniel. We just studied his life which took place during the **southern kingdom's** exile to Babylon. The next book in your Table of Contents is Hosea – the first minor prophet. His story takes us back 145 years before the Daniel, and he is prophesying to the **northern kingdom** of Israel before they were overtaken by the Assyrians. If this is getting confusing, I am accomplishing my purpose! And I haven't even gotten to the New Testament yet.

Refer to poster listing the books of the New Testament in sequence, placed on a second easel.

Surely the New Testament has to get easier, right? Not so much.

- **Gospels** – Now we turn the page to the 27 New Testament books. The first four are the gospels or the story of the life of Jesus. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all tell the same story of Jesus over three times but from their point of view. Then you get to the book of John, and it seems as though things are all out of order. It's not that John has it wrong, it's that he recalls the life of Jesus in a topical fashion, to prove a very important point.

- **Acts** – We have one history book in the New Testament and that is the book of Acts. It tells the story of the church from ascension of Jesus back to heaven to about AD 63. When we come to the end of this book we turn the page and come to the book of Romans.

- **Epistles** – Romans, logically, should pick up where Acts left off. What do you think? Not so much. That would be too easy. Romans is a letter to the church of Rome and not a history book. It is the first of 21 letters written to churches or individuals. Do you think they are arranged in chronological order? That would have been helpful, but of course, they're not. They're arranged by author. The first 13 are from Paul. The next 8 letters are by various authors.

- **Prophecy** – that last book is the only prophecy book in the New Testament, the book of Revelation.

© Randy Frazee
Oak Hills Church, San Antonio, TX

Actually, the first two New Testament books to be written are James and Galatians. Matthew was actually one of the last books written. Someone shoot me now!

Do you see why people *revere* the Bible but don't *read* it?
Can you imagine if I took the book *At Home in Mitford* and mixed up all the chapters and said, "Good luck reading this and finding the story!" But God wants you to read it…and he wants you to see the one story he has been telling since the beginning of time.

The Story Will Change Your Life

Once you **see the story it will change your life**.

This is what The Story experience is all about. It is meant to unravel all of this and allow some of you for the first time to see the one story God has been telling. It is an abridged chronology of the Bible. It is not designed to replace the Bible, but to be a gateway to the Bible. It moves things around so it reads like a novel. It does things like move the heartfelt confession of David's Psalm 51 and puts it right after Nathan confronts him in 2 Samuel 12, so you see the broken and contrite heart of King David right after he is caught red-handed in his sin.

Seeing God's story, the mural is very important to God.

Turn in your Bibles to Deuteronomy 31. Moses comes to the end of his life and gathers Israel together. He first passes the mantle of leadership to Joshua and then he establishes a very important pattern for them to follow to ensure their success.

Look at verses 9-13 –

> So Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Levitical priests, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. **10** Then Moses commanded them: "At the end of every seven years, in the year for canceling debts, during the Festival of Tabernacles, **11** when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this law before them in their hearing. **12** Assemble the people—men, women and children, and the foreigners residing in your towns—so they can listen and learn to fear the Lord your God and follow carefully all the words of this law. **13** Their children, who do not know this law, must hear it and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."
>
> Deuteronomy 31:9-13 NIV

Every seven years Israel was to get together, men, women, children and even outsiders, to read through the law. Why? Not just so they would become smarter, but so that they would *live* the story. The phrase that's used is to "fear God," which simply means that you need to know the story God is writing so you will see what he is up to, and you will be compelled to take him more seriously. A huge concern for Moses is making sure the next generation

© Randy Frazee

understands the story. Moses knew they were only one generation away from losing their identity and going back into captivity.

I have heard a few people say, "We are doing The Story again? Why, we did that eight years ago." My response – "I am sorry we didn't do it again last year when the seven years were up. Please forgive me." We are doing The Story again, because God wants his people to know his story. We are doing the story again because there are people here, about two-thirds, who weren't here eight years ago and they desperately need to know God's story. We are doing it again because there are children who weren't born eight years ago and they desperately need to know God's story. And we know this to be true: if our children don't know the story, and live the story, there's no hope for this nation to turn around.

But not only that, each time you read the story, it doesn't change, but you have. Here's how the Scripture works as a living book: every time you go back to it, you are going to experience fresh discoveries, unlocking secrets you couldn't see then, that will lead you into the life God wants for you.

I was golfing with a friend who said to me, "Randy, my wife and I read a lot of books. When we read a novel, we're done with it. But the church is interesting; 2.2 billion people gather together every week for two thousand years, and you keep talking about the same book. Haven't you figured it out yet? Tell me honestly: are you truly seeing anything new in that book after all these years?" I told him, "It just so happens I came across something new this morning, something I had read many times before but I saw something new today, and I am excited about this discovery and what it means!" That's the power of the Word of God.

I think it is interesting that Moses decreed that the reading of the Law would coincide with the year they cancelled all of the debts. I don't think this is accidental. You see, when you see the one story of God from beginning to end, what you are going to discover is just how far God has gone to get you back. You were overwhelmed in a pile of spiritual debt that was leading you straight to hell. But God through Christ came and cancelled all of your debts and credited your spiritual bank account with the righteousness of Christ so that through a personal decision of faith to believe in him you are destined for Heaven and God's wealth. You will see that the Gospel story didn't begin in Matthew, it began in Genesis, and you will see from The Story the great lengths to which God has gone to get us back.

This will be my sixth time through The Story, and personally, I am more excited about this time than any of the others. I think God is going to show me something I have never seen before, something that will take my life to a new level. Jesus said, the Word of God is like a seed, planted in the soil of the heart. If the seed falls on hard soil, it doesn't grow, but if the seed falls on soft soil, it is implanted, and it produces fruit upon fruit. The deciding factor for whether or not The Story will be a good experience for you is not the factor of doing it again, but the condition of your heart. Soften up your heart and prepare for something God has not revealed to you yet, and be changed for the better.

PRAY