**“My Story” – Week 1 (God’s Story)**

**January 22-23, 2022**

We are going to kick off this series in a unique way. It’s called “My Story” and before we begin each message, we’re going to hear someone’s story…in fact, you’ll be hearing stories from some of your leaders! We wanted to give you an example of what sharing your story is all about.

**(Teacher’s Note: Bring up 1-2 adult or high school leaders to briefly share their testimony. Ask them leading questions like, “How were you introduced to Jesus?” or “Tell me about what led you to make the decision to follow Christ,” etc. Keep it brief!)**

There is nothing like a good story. I mean, when you hear a good story for the first time; whether it’s epic, funny, serious, sad…you are so focused on what the details are. You want to know who the characters or people are. Maybe you start to put yourself into the story.

**You just heard a story/some stories from your leader(s) about how God has changed them. Many of you have had your life changed by God as well, but I want to ask you something…and it will be something that I will ask you often over the next several weeks…WHAT’S YOUR STORY?**

Today, we are starting a brand new series called “My Story” that will be 3 weeks long. It’s a series that is designed to help us as Christians share our faith by telling our story. Each week will focus on a different story: God’s story, my story, and their story. However, in order to get this started on the right foot, we really need to know what God’s story is. Not just any god…the God of the Bible.

**Let’s jump right into our THP for today! Here it is: God’s story is all about relationships!**

God’s story is all about His interactions with people. God loves people…He loves all of His creation. In the very first story in the Bible, we learn in Genesis 3 that God actually walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We see that God talked to them. He talked to people like Noah, Abraham, and Jacob in the Old Testament. God wanted to have a relationship with them.

**That same God wants to have a relationship with you and with me. He wants to walk with us in this life just like He did with Adam and Eve in the garden. He wants to speak to us just like the people in the Bible. It’s not a fairy tale; this is a real story with real people!**

Unfortunately, the relationship between humans and God was broken because of sin. We did not follow God’s commands and therefore we disobeyed Him. While that created some separation between us and God, He promised to send a Savior to fix what was broken and to live the life of obedience that we were unable to live. Ever since then, the Bible has been all about helping people find their way back to God.

**(Teacher’s Note: Share a story where you tried to earn someone’s favor or trust back after you had wronged them.)**

Even though we blew it, and for thousands of years throughout the Old Testament, people tried to earn God’s favor and good relationship back, God gave us a gift: His Son, Jesus Christ. The best news about Jesus was that he showed us that God still accepted us and loved us even though we messed up. We didn’t need to earn anything from him. It was given to us freely as a gift!

We have talked many times about God being a God of second chances, but I want to serve a God like that because it means He wants to have a relationship with us in the good AND the bad of our lives.

Do you want to have a relationship with that God? Do you want your life to be a part of His story? Do you want to participate in God’s ongoing story? Just like our THP says, “God’s story is all about relationships.” He isn’t this far away God – He is closer than our very breath. He’s a great listener and He just wants us to talk to Him.

In fact, this God is a BIG God! There aren’t enough amazing adjectives to describe Him. One New Testament writer says this about Jesus in John 21:25: *“Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.”*

**John is saying that there are so many amazing things about God. There are countless stories of Him changing people’s lives and there aren’t enough books to fill up and write about it.**

Here’s the other cool thing…God’s story is still being written! He is still changing lives all over the world, and someday, Jesus Christ will come back and all the evil in the world will be gone. We will worship Him and be with Him for eternity just like it was meant to be in the Garden of Eden. Everything will be fixed and everyone who has put their faith in Christ and has a relationship with him (from every time period in history and everywhere in the world) will be with Jesus forever!

As we move into our group discussion time today, I want you to think about what your relationship with God is like. Would you like it to be better? Do you want to know more about God’s story? If our THP is true – that **God’s story is all about relationships** – the most important relationship you will ever have in this life will be the one you have with God. Let’s pray!