

God's Big Picture

Luke 24:44-53



Seeing the parts and the whole

You can't make sense of the parts without understanding the whole
"bank": I took my money to the bank. Or I sat on the bank of the river.
"Losing an argument" to gain a friend
The death of Jesus. The birth of Jesus. Our lives

How to read a non-fiction book in 30 minutes and *actually* understand it

Don't: Read page 1, then 2, then 3...

Rather, read ...

the final chapter, then the last paragraph of each chapter, then the back and inside cover
THEN keep reading (if it is worth it)

How to understand the birth of Jesus

We have to understand the whole of Jesus' life
So read Jesus' conclusion in Luke 24
Then view each part of His life through His summary

Luke 24:44-53

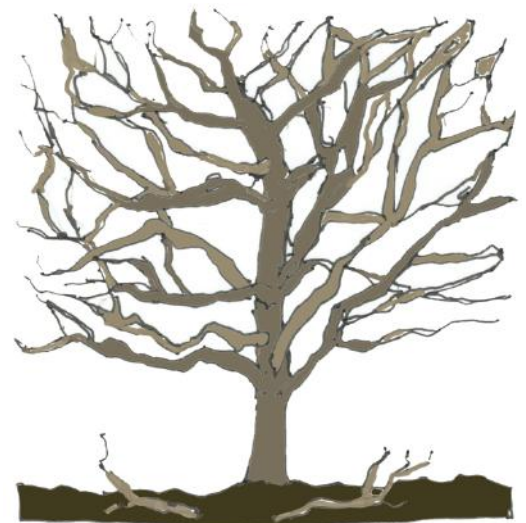
44-49:

Jesus fulfilled the whole of the Scriptures
What do the Scriptures say about Jesus?

- 1) the Messiah will suffer
- 2) and rise from the dead
- 3) and repentance for forgiveness will be preached in His name to all nations

50-53:

When Jesus left, they had great joy and they praised God
Because of how His departure fit in the big picture



The Big Idea

The birth of Jesus is an essential part of God's determined purpose to bring salvation to the peoples of all nations through Spirit-empowered witnesses

We rejoice in Jesus' birth because it brought about God's full plan of salvation to all peoples

You can't make sense of a part without knowing the whole

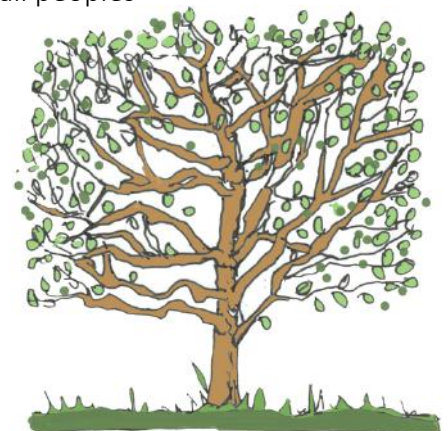
The big picture of human history in Christianity

Creation: a completely good world
Fall: the downward spiral
Redemption: the rescue
Re-creation: an even better world

The story of redemption through Jesus

Birth of Mighty God → Isaiah 9:6-7
Bringing good news to the needy → Isaiah 61:1-2
Suffering and dying to bring life → Isaiah 53:4-9
Yet He came to life again → Psalm 16:10
Forgiveness & repentance proclaimed to all nations → Genesis 12:1-3; Isaiah 49:6; Joel 2:28-32

The real reason to celebrate Jesus' birth is because He brought salvation to peoples of all nations



Application

Joyfully proclaim as witnesses the Good News that Jesus brings salvation to all peoples

Salvation to all peoples

Not...

- to certain languages or cultures or nations or tribes
- to the wealthy, educated, or successful
- to good people

He brings salvation to peoples of all nations who know their need (the "sick") and cry out to Jesus for rescue

There are no second-class citizens in Christ!

Joyfully

Each one of us is loved fully by God as His own

"Jesus loves me, this I know... I am weak, but He is strong"

"The Spirit himself testifies with our [my] spirit that we are God's children." Romans 8:16

Proclaim

The determined will of God: that this Good News is authoritatively proclaimed to the peoples of all nations

As witnesses

He sends His people to proclaim His grace (being loved by God when I deserve judgment)

As those who rejoice in firsthand knowledge

Levels of Speaking: Lying...Lifeless...Well-meaning...Witness

Witness: Speaking with the conviction of firsthand, life-altering experience

Proclaim as witnesses

Witness to God in worship

Witness to God's people in praise

Witness to the world in evangelism

Pray for the Spirit's conviction and power to be witnesses of God's grace in Jesus

Together

The Good News

The darker the world, the brighter the Light should shine!

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What is the Good News of the Gospel? In what way should it bring us life-altering joy?
2. "We can't make sense of the parts of our lives without understanding the whole." How might that idea show up in your own life? What is the big picture of your life? How does that affect our experience and understanding of the parts, especially the more challenging parts?
3. What does it mean to be a Spirit-empowered witness of the Good News of Jesus? How might it change things to speak as those who have firsthand, life-altering experience in the Gospel?
4. What are you doing, and what might you do, and what might we do, to join the Church's work to be Spirit-empowered witnesses to the world of the Good News in Jesus?

Conversation starter

What does Christmas mean to you? What does the song mean when it says, "Joy to the world"?