



3rd grade

GOD'S BIG STORY

We tend to think of the Bible as a single book. But it is actually a collection of 66 books, written by more than 40 different authors who lived at different times over a period of 1,500+ years. The authors of the Bible came from every walk of life – priests, prophets, kings and nomads. They wrote in different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) and in multiple literary styles: songs and poems, history, letters, speeches, lists of laws and collections of wisdom.

Yet in all this diversity, each part of the Bible connects to tell a singular story. It tells of a God who loves us and who will stop at nothing to fix all that is broken within us and within the world He created. Now that's a pretty great story!

God has fashioned the human brain to connect to stories. Think about your children, and how they lean forward when a good story is being told, even if it's one they've heard before. Children love to tell stories, too, whether they're recounting something funny that happened at lunchtime or imagining some grand make-believe adventure.

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Your child's perspective on the world will be impacted by the stories they consume. No doubt they'll collect stories from many sources: movies, television, books, drama, friends and family. But what if, in the mix with

all those other stories, their imaginations were captured by the stories of the Bible? Think of the lessons they could learn from...

- The faithful Noah, who built an ark and saved his family (and a lot of animals) from the flood that no one else saw coming.
- The dreamer Joseph, who was sold into slavery, but by God's direction would eventually become the second-in-command in Egypt.
- The strong-man Sampson, whose strength depended on the length of his hair, and who in the end learned to depend on God instead of his own strength.
- The loyal Ruth and Naomi, who leaned on each other for survival and found that God provided more than they ever could have fathomed.

Our lives are connected to something bigger that God is doing in the world.

This list could go on and on, and we haven't even broken into the New Testament and the wonderful stories of Jesus that we find there!

When we help kids discover God's story, we create in them what Reggie Joiner calls "a bigger story perspective" – the understanding that our lives are connected to something bigger that God is doing in the world. Kids begin to imagine a God who speaks to people, who protects those who are in trouble, and who asks individuals to dare great things in order to rescue others. And if God did all these things 3,000 years ago, then perhaps God wants to do the same with our lives today!