



Links Players

The Unavoidable Story

In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth. (Genesis 1:1, ESV).

Throughout the ages, great storytellers have rarely lacked an audience. What was true then remains true now. Walk into many locker rooms, and invariably you will hear someone with the gift of gab holding forth on some topic of interest. If they are truly gifted, it can be spellbinding.

Imagine, if you will, being invited to a dinner party to listen to Bobby Jones reminisce about winning what was equivalent to The Grand Slam for his generation. Jones' feat of winning the U.S. Open, U.S. Amateur Championship, British Open, and British Amateur Championship, all in a single year, is one of the sport's greatest accomplishments. The year was 1930. Hearing him give a first-person account would have been nothing short of magical.

Christine Hennebury gets it right when she writes, "Storytelling is not just entertainment. It's a fundamental part of being human." But what does that mean? Are stories something we concoct to hide the meaninglessness of our lives? Or can stories tell us something true about ourselves and the world we inhabit?

When God chose to reveal himself and his purposes for mankind, he chose to tell a story. As it turns out, God's story is the true story of the world. Of course, this grand narrative of mankind's beginning, purpose, failure, and destiny took thousands of years to write. Where is this story found? Scripture!

This fact is why, among other considerations, Scripture is constantly under attack. It alone is the "authorized biography" of God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Furthermore, in the pages of sacred writ, humanity discovers its *raison d'être* (reason for existence). That is, we find our place in History

At a minimum, for any story to accurately account for the riddle of our existence, it must answer the following questions: How did the universe begin? What is man? What is ethically right? What is wrong with the world? Where does humanity find redemption? Where is the world headed? And, what happens after death?

Even those academics who deny the reality of one true story of the world eventually admit they cannot avoid creating another story to replace the one they work so hard to deny. In other words, mankind cannot avoid its need for a story.

What is true of great stories is true of the greatest story, the story in which we find ourselves. Life has meaning precisely because it is authored by the Creator and Redeemer of the world. In this story, the hero is Jesus! Attempting to re-write the story of the world to make oneself the hero is futile.

Prayer – Holy Spirit, we ask you to open our eyes to the "greatest story ever told."

READING - Genesis 1-3.

OPENING QUESTIONS: What is the best golf story you've ever heard? Consider exchanging a few golf stories among yourselves.

1. What does **Genesis 1** teach us about the origin of the Universe and Mankind? What theory/story is the leading rival to the explanation found in Genesis? What are some of the implications of affirming the former and denying the latter? .

2. What does **Genesis 1:26-28** teach us about humanity's original nature and purpose? Are these two issues—humanity's nature and humanity's purpose—still in effect? Discuss the implications bearing God's image. Discuss the responsibility of being his "stewards."

3. What does **Genesis 3** teach us about "the Fall?" In what ways does Genesis 3 help us understand ourselves and the brokenness of our world?
