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“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.”

[Corrie Ten Boom]

ICEBREAKER

Share about a time when someone invited you to be part of something (i.e. team, group, event). What impact did that have on you?

BEGIN WITH PRAYER

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

*“We wait for the Lord; he is our help and shield.
For our hearts rejoice in him because we trust in his holy name.
May your faithful love rest on us, Lord, for we put our hope in you.”*

[Psalm 33:20-22]

BIG IDEA

God is the author of a better story and invites us to JOIN His story with confidence and hope.

PASSAGES

- Luke 1:1-4
- Acts 1:1-3

DISCUSSION

1. Describe the first time in your life that you clearly remember hearing the invitation to be part of God’s better story? How did you respond to that invitation? How was your life different afterwards (or not)?
2. *“God Himself is authoring (telling) a story.”* How have you participated in God’s story over the past year? What may have prevented you from fully participating in His story for your life?
3. *“We choose the story we tell ourselves.”* Just like Theophilus, we all tell ourselves a story, yet we need to be aware of some things that might affect that story. How have you seen the following things affect the story you have told yourself about God, others, and yourself?
 - The story the **world** offers us.
 - The story our **fears** suggest to us.
 - The story our **pleasures** offer us.
 - The story our **past** gives us.
4. *“God offers us an invitation: join His better story as it unfolds.”* As you consider the stories the things above have offered you, how does God’s BETTER story combat those? In other words, how does

what God offers us lead to the fullness of life compared to those “false” stories?

5. *“We have a new point of reference: Jesus The story includes us but is not primarily about us.”* What emotions rise to the surface when you ponder that God has chosen you to be part of His story? How might he be inviting you to respond to that emotion?
6. *“Surrender leads to significance, and the better story invites surrender to Jesus, full of love, truth, grace, power, and authority!”* What area of life needs to be surrendered to Jesus today? How can his love, truth, grace, power, and authority affect the areas of your life that need to be healed?
7. *“We must learn to reframe our story into His better story.”* What is your “everyday, on the ground” understanding of God’s involvement in your life? (Unexpected, unwelcomed, unplanned? Surprises, blessings, coincidences?) How could reframing your story into His better story transform your life so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God?
8. Let’s be honest and vulnerable with one another. Which of these lists do you typically identify with? Which do you want to identify with?
 - LESSER Story= victim, controlling, hopeless, bitter, blaming
 - BETTER Story= participant, submitted, hopeful, better, trusting

STEP OF OBEDIENCE

The good news of God’s better story is that EVERY day is an opportunity to begin (again)! In fact, Lamentations 3:22-23 tells us, “Because of the Lord’s faithful love we do not perish, for his mercies never end. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness!”

Remember ... our next steps come from the story we most believe and most tell ourselves. Based on the Holy Spirit’s prompting today, **what is a step of obedience that you can take?**

PRAYER FOCUS

Welcome, welcome, welcome.

We welcome everything that comes to us today because we know it’s for our healing.

We welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons, situations, and conditions.

We let go of our desire for power and control.

We let go of our desire for affection, esteem, approval, and pleasure.

We let go of our desire for survival and security.

We let go of our desire to change any situation, condition, person, or ourselves.

We are open to the love and presence of God and God’s action within. Amen

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE *Optional*

Welcoming Prayer is an invitation to welcome everything, knowing that everything that happens to us is something we can learn and grow from. It also helps us consent to God’s presence and action in our physical and emotional reactions to anything that happens to us and around us. Give it a try!

- [Welcoming Prayer](https://rockbridge.cc/welcoming-prayer) or rockbridge.cc/welcoming-prayer