

WHO I AM – MY STORY IN 5 CHAPTERS

Sermon by Bill Johnston

October 15, 2017

Philippians 1:6 ...being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

1. THE _____ (_____) Luke 15:17-20

MOTIVATION: _____-BASED

GOD IS _____

Luke 15:17-20

2. THE _____ (_____) Jonah 1:1-3

MOTIVATION: _____-BASED

GOD IS _____

Psalm 139:7-10, Jonah 3:1

3. THE _____ (_____) Judges 6:7-12

MOTIVATION: _____-BASED

GOD IS _____

Judges 6:12

4. THE _____ (_____) Genesis 12:1-9

MOTIVATION: _____-BASED

GOD IS _____

Judges 6:10,12,16

5. THE _____ (_____) Acts 4:36

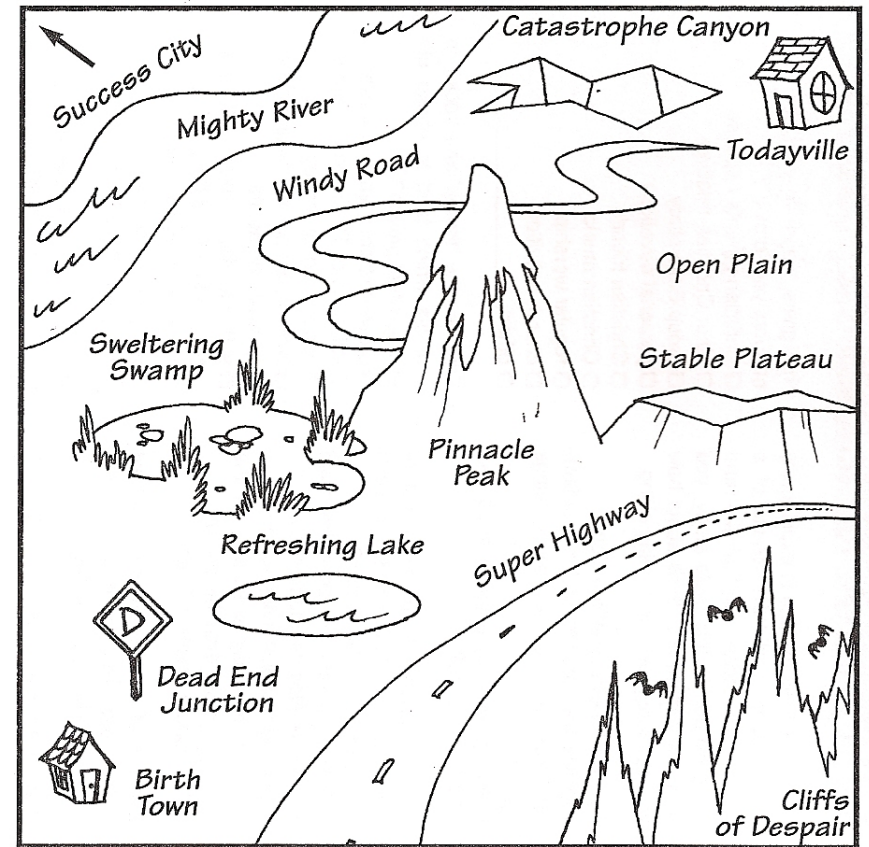
MOTIVATION: _____-BASED

GOD IS _____ AND _____

Acts 11:22-23, Luke 15:17a, 20a (NASB)

Life Map

Where have you been during your life? Where have your life's adventures taken you? Using the map below, draw the path of your life journey. What places did you visit? Some locations have been included on this map ("Pinnacle Peak," "Sweltering Swamp," etc.), but feel free to add your own. What kind of roads did you use? When did you cross over into new life areas or stages? When did you face struggles or successes? Start in Birthtown and trace your life's journey all the way to Todaysville, then take turns sharing the highlights of your life journey with your group.



WHO I AM – MY STORY IN 5 CHAPTERS

Sermon by Bill Johnston

October 15, 2017

Psalm 139:1-6,13-18 O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up.

You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home.

You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord.

You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand!

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex!

Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born.

Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!

And when I wake up, you are still with me!

Philippians 1:6 ...being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

1. THE ADVENTURER (PRODIGAL SON) Luke 15:17-20

MOTIVATION: PRIDE-BASED

GOD IS FORGIVING

Luke 15:17-20 When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.'" So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him.

2. THE RUNNER (JONAH) Jonah 1:1-3

MOTIVATION: FEAR-BASED

GOD IS PERSISTENT

Psalm 139:7-10 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

Jonah 3:1 Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you."

3. THE LOSER (GIDEON) Judges 6:7-12

MOTIVATION: FEAR-BASED

GOD IS TRUSTWORTHY

Judges 6:12 When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior."

4. THE LISTENER (ABRAHAM) Genesis 12:1-9

MOTIVATION: FAITH-BASED

GOD IS FAITHFUL

Judges 6:10,12,16 "I am the Lord your God ... the Lord is with you ... I will be with you."

5. THE ENCOURAGER (BARNABAS) Acts 4:36

MOTIVATION: GRACE-BASED

GOD IS ACCEPTING AND LOVING

Acts 11:22-23 ...When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

Luke 15:17a, Luke 20a (NASB) But when he came to his senses... he got up and came to his father.

WHO I AM – MY STORY IN 5 CHAPTERS

Sermon by Bill Johnston

October 15, 2017

Icebreaker/Introduction

The 'Life Map' activity is related to Bill's message as he shared some of his life story this week. This exercise is meant to give a graphic for talking about some of the significant events or seasons in our lives. Give time for participants to consider some of these ideas – point out that they don't need to fill in every area, or that they can create their own if they want, or that it isn't meant to necessarily be an ordered path. Take turns sharing some of your responses.

Ask if there was anything from this week's message that stood out – either a point that was made which really resonated with them, or perhaps a question or difficulty that came up for them.

Read [Psalm 139](#). Does anything from this passage stand out to you?

Bill said he is thankful that "who I am and what I do are directly related". Is that true for you? (ie. is the work you do related to your core gifts/character)?

Discuss Bill's statement about his journey being not so much a plan that was laid out for him but a path he continues to navigate. Can you identify with this?

1. THE ADVENTURER (PRODIGAL SON) [Luke 15:17-20](#)

MOTIVATION: PRIDE-BASED

GOD IS FORGIVING

Focuses on [Luke 15:17-20](#)

Have you had a time in your life when you would say you were more distant from God (perhaps focused on seeking pleasure like the prodigal son, or focused on yourself)? Do you think this is typical in our teenage years?

Bill said that God uses circumstances to form our lives. What circumstances would you say God has used in your life?

Can you think of a specific time when you felt particularly loved and accepted by God?

2. THE RUNNER (JONAH) [Jonah 1:1-3](#)

MOTIVATION: FEAR-BASED

GOD IS PERSISTENT

Focuses on [Psalm 139:7-10](#), [Jonah 3:1](#)

Have you ever experienced a time like Jonah, when you resisted something that you clearly know God was calling you to?

Have you ever argued with God?

What are some ways that people 'avoid God'? What are some ways that we do this ourselves?

3. THE LOSER (GIDEON) [Judges 6:7-12](#)

MOTIVATION: FEAR-BASED

GOD IS TRUSTWORTHY

Focuses on [Judges 6:12](#)

Bill said that when our motivation is fear-based we tend to be reactionary rather than responsive. What is the difference between these two?

Who is someone that you feel is super-confident? What do you think their confidence is based on?

What fears have you had to face in your life?

4. THE LISTENER (ABRAHAM) [Genesis 12:1-9](#)

MOTIVATION: FAITH-BASED

GOD IS FAITHFUL

Focuses on [Judges 6:10,12,16](#)

Bill pointed out that Abraham was called to 'going not knowing'. When have you had to trust God when you didn't have clear answers or direction?

Bill said that clarity and confidence come as we take steps forward, knowing that God is faithful? Can you recall a time when you felt a 'settled confidence' about a challenging situation you faced?

How do you listen to God? What role do other people play in your listening?

5. THE ENCOURAGER (BARNABAS) [Acts 4:36](#)

MOTIVATION: GRACE-BASED

GOD IS ACCEPTING AND LOVING

Focuses on [Acts 11:22-23](#), [Luke 15:17a, 20a \(NASB\)](#)

Bill said that Barnabas was called to be a cheerleader for the church. In what ways are you a cheerleader for your church? What are some ways that you can do this?

Who is someone that you can bring encouragement to this coming week? How can you specifically encourage them?

Bill pointed out that Barnabas also 'brought peace and harmony and blessing'. How are these a result of encouragement?

Bill said that every pivotal chapter (in his life/in our lives) is based on a choice that is made. He encouraged us to 'play the movie' – to consider our choices and where they will lead us. Are there some choices that you need to reconsider, or some new choices that you need to make?

Do you identify more strongly with one of the chapters? Why?