

PODCAST REFLECTION GUIDE

Episode 2: The Stories That Shape Us



Opening Reflection

Take a slow, deep breath and invite God into this time.

“Lord, help me to embrace the beauty of who You are and the Story You have written that includes me. May it continue to take my breath away!”

Part 1: Listening Reflection

As you listened to this episode, what stood out most to you?

What great stories has God used to engage your heart in a way that pointed to His Larger Story?

Part 2: Do vs. Done

Complete the sentences honestly:

The Gospel is a Story. I believe the Gospel is a story about....

_____ What ***I must do*** for God to be accepted and loved by Him.

_____ What ***God has already done for me***, because He loved me so.

What contributed to your seeing the Gospel this way?

Does your head and heart tell the same story about what the Gospel is?

Part 3: Exploring the Power of Story

Every great story that has ever moved you borrowed its power from the Gospel story. This episode discussed two reasons why good stories can be so powerful.

Which reason fascinates you the most?

_____ Bypasses our brain's defenses and engages our heart before we realize it

_____ The left and right hemispheres of the brain are activated and begin to synchronize

What kinds of stories resonate with you with this kind of impact?

Part 4: Your Story Matters

We heal (the head and heart merges; the left and right hemispheres of the brain reconnect and agree) when what we *know* to be true (ie. "I am loved") begins to match what we *feel* internally.

Reflect gently:

- What is one belief you know to be true in your head but have yet to feel it internally?
- Why do you think that is so?

Write whatever comes to mind without judging it.

Part 5: Experiencing Truth

In this episode, Anita alluded to the biblical understanding of healing as defined by Paul in I Thessalonians 5:23, MSG.

Read these verses slowly and prayerfully:

I Thess. 5:23 *“May God Himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together—spirit, soul, and body—and keep you fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ.”*

James 1:8 *“...being a double-minded [split-souled] man, unstable in all his ways.”*

Ephesians 1:3 *“Long before He laid down earth’s foundations, He had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of His love, to be made whole and holy by His love.”*

Reflection

Where in your life do you feel divided, disconnected, or incomplete—and what would it look like to let God’s love begin making you whole there?

Part 6: A Guided Prayer

Read slowly and pause where needed.

Jesus,

I was already in Your mind before You ever created one thing and it overwhelms me to think You loved me even then.

You know my story completely—the places where I have been conditioned to earn and achieve, rather than cherish and receive.

Would You gently show me that Your love is too great to be earned or deserved but is such an act of extravagant grace?

Teach me to experience Your love—not only in my thoughts, but in the deepest places of my heart.

Help me to begin to comprehend the length, the depth, the breadth and the height of Your love, though it is too great to understand fully.

*Thank you that I am fully known and fully loved by You.
Amen.*

Part 7: Closing Reflection

Sit quietly for a moment with this statement:

*“Long before God made anything, God had already settled on **me** as the focus of His love.”*

What happens inside you as you read those words?

This Week's Invitation

Rather than trying harder to please God and love Him more, practice simply becoming aware of just how much He loves you and all He has done to demonstrate His lavish love to you.