

THE STORIES WE TELL: HUMANS ARE STORYTELLERS

VIDEO ONE

Humans are storytellers.

From the make-believe games we played as children, to the Netflix series we watch and books we read today. As humans, we're captivated by, and soaked in, *stories*.

But stories don't just remain in the world of fiction. They're knit into how we live our lives.

We gather with friends, telling tales of our weeks just gone, of old school days, of things going on in the world.

In these early weeks of term – we'll exchange stories of life back home, we'll hear stories in lectures about how the world works.

To know someone well is to know their story. To have heard where they're from, what they've experienced.

We sense that for someone's story to be discounted or overlooked is deeply wrong.

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You'd think in a culture as advanced as our own we'd have moved on from the ways of our ancestors, who gathered around fires, sharing tales.

And yet the time we spend on Instagram, YouTube and Tik Tok seems to suggest – we can't do away with stories.

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But why?

In a world that seems large and chaotic, stories help us to find meaning.

Stories give us patterns that help us understand who we are, where we're going, what's wrong with the world, and what the solution is.

They help us to express what we most want... and fear.

Poet Amanda Gorman writes that stories show that we are '*a single race looking for reasons, searching for purpose, seeking to find ourselves.*'

And this is what gives stories their power.

Stories form communities – it's a powerful thing to have a shared sense of who you are, of where you're from. When shared stories reveal that we have the same hopes and fears, friendships form. The powerful moment of 'You too?' draws us together.

And stories have the power to motivate us too. You'll alter your behaviour if a story has shown you a vision of what your future life could look like. Stories can even ignite our passion to fix global issues.

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But here's the question: this need to tell stories...

Is it something that we've just learned as a species as we've evolved? Do we tell stories as a way of making-up a sense of meaning and purpose in a world that doesn't have any?

Or, do the stories we tell, tell us something about reality?

What if our desire to tell stories and find meaning, points us to the fact that we are living in a bigger true story. Where we do matter. Where there is a beginning and an end. Where there is a problem, but also a solution. Where there's an Author who wants us to know Him.

And could it be that, in discovering this big story, we make sense of our own stories - discovering the Living God, and ourselves, again.