

9. Romans: God's Story

So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.' Genesis 32.30

...to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, Who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. Romans 9.5

Taking the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled.... Matthew 14.19-20

Amidst all the chaos and disorder of history, history is still _____ story! God's Story is the story of a loving and faithful God breaking into the chaos and disorder of this world, and reaching out to a hard-hearted, stubborn, and stiff-necked people, a people who insist on having and doing things our way, much to our own sorrow and suffering. It is into this sin-riddled world that Jesus was born!

Jacob _____ God's Story. He appealed to the God of his fathers, and reminded God (he had the audacity to remind God), Who was now his God, of the Promise God had made to his fathers. With that memory of God, Jacob prayed for deliverance.

Our faith is a faith rooted and grounded in history, the history of the patriarchs, of the nation of Israel, of the prophets, and of God's Christ and His Church, a history of glory and shame! A history of grace upon grace upon grace ultimately revealed on a Cross and confirmed in an Empty Tomb. This is _____ Story!

Jacob's story is our story! To enter into God's Story eventually means _____ too will wrestle with God, for there is much to surrender if we are to prevail and know our new identity in Christ and our new destiny as His messengers.

Matthew wants us to know that _____ Story is rooted and grounded in God's Story going back through history!

Every time we come to Christ's Table we are remembering God's Story, first for the ancient Hebrews from bondage in Egypt celebrated every year in the Passover, then through Christ on the Cross, the One Who sets us _____ from the bondage of sin.

God's Story goes back to the beginning of time and extends into all eternity. God invites us to _____ our stories to His Story, here and now. So, as this congregation prepares to begin a new chapter in its story, and Paula and I prepare to begin a new chapter in ours, our Lord invites us all to remember His Story, remembering that the Christ of faith is the Jesus of history! This is our comfort and our hope!