

## Reading Tracks

### TRACK ONE

Follow along with basics of the story in a short selection of readings this week..

Monday: Mark 1:29-31

Tuesday: Acts 1:1-9

Wednesday: Matthew 28:17-20

Thursday: Matthew 5:13-16

Friday: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Saturday: Isaiah 49:1-6

### TRACK TWO

Get a little bigger perspective by reading assigned sections from *The Story* © 2011 by Zondervan.

Read pages 353-355 this week.

### TRACK THREE

Get the whole story by reading through most of the Bible in longer sections.

In your Bible, read John 1-4 this week.

## This Week's Scripture Memory Verse

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16

## Next Week in Worship

**Next week's message:** *A Plan to Die*

**Next week's readings:** Mark 8:31-38

Jesus invested his time, energy, and legacy in the building of a community of His disciples. Although He taught them clearly that He would die on a cross, they couldn't understand why and even tried to stop Him. As *The Big God Story* continues next week, we will look at why Jesus' plan to die confused His disciples and what His death means for us now.



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# Group Discussion

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**Connect** Tell your group about your favorite book and why you like it so much.

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**Learn** Jesus never wrote a book to teach the world His way. In our study today we'll be learning about a few of the ways that Christian communities play this role instead. To get started, brainstorm some answers to this question: For what purpose(s) do people write books...and how is the Christian community like or unlike these purposes? (For a similar example in the Bible, **read 2 Corinthians 3:1-3**. The apostle Paul explained that he didn't need letters of recommendation to vouch for His work, the Christian community in Corinth was his letter.)

Although we do have the four Gospels now to tell us about Jesus, remember that these were written by the church for the purpose of strengthening churches. In addition to what you brainstormed in the first question, consider the following:

- A book would communicate its author's teaching. **Read the famous words of Jesus in Matthew 28:16-20**. As disciples of Jesus, we are given His authority and commissioned to teach everything He has commanded us. What are the best ways for us to do this? How is our task like or unlike that of a book in this way?
- A book would make its author famous. **Read Matthew 5:14-16 and Acts 1:7-8**. How do Christians spread or magnify the reputation of Jesus? How is our task like or unlike that of a book in this way?

If you've been in your group or a part of First Lutheran this year, you've been a part of learning the Big God Story, the story of God in the Bible and your life. If you had to describe this story to someone in a couple sentences, like describing a popular book, how would you describe it? Could this help you imagine how you might better live out your life as the book Jesus is writing?

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**Apply** Think about your own journey with Christ as a book or a story. Now think of a word or phrase that describes your own story so far – or that describes what you think God wants to write in your story next. Can you do something this week to help that come true?

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**Pray** Perhaps you've heard the Christian expression, "You may be the only Bible some people read." That may be a little frightening, but it's true and it's consistent with what we've learned from the Bible about the role of Christians in the world. Pray this week for the people who form their impressions of Christ based on you, your family, or your church.