

## Exploring Theology Session 2 – Video 3 Transcript

00:01 we go. So this is the third video for the, for session two of exploring theology. Who are we? Just to recap, in case there's been a bit of a gap between video two and video three for you, and you've taken some time to let this kind of settle in, we've been looking at how we tell our story with a sense

00:19 of who are we when we're looking at our, those various aspects of our identity, and then how we weave those together, what we keep, what we don't keep, what we lose, what we deliberately don't incorporate into our story, and the way that our stories give us a sense of, uh, uh, uh, identity, that it's

00:36 something that we create. When we talk about making ourselves, um, especially in our time and place, yes, we can't auto-generate ourselves in the sense that we are born to to our parents.

00:47 We are born at a specific. It's a specific time and place and so on and so forth. Very much so in the way that we, uh, we do make ourselves in the sense of how we create our identities.

00:56 This is very something, very much something that is, um, prevalent in our part of the world, in our time and space.

01:03 Um, and you see this very clearly with, um, social media, um, and how you craft a profile and you present.

01:12 In a certain aspect of yourself, um, and you leave out the bloopers and the bits that are much more serious, perhaps, and so on.

01:20 You don't include. Um, so, somebody who's managed to encapsulate, um, uh, some of this in a, in a, in a very sharp kind of way, is, um, a guy called Stanley Howa.

01:33 So I'm just going to introduce you to, uh, Stanley. Um, with the next slide.

01:39 here you go, here's Stanley, uhm, in one of his more cheerful photos. Uhm, he's, uh, he's an interesting chap, Stanley Halas.

01:48 He's, uhm, from Texas, uh, in the States, and he, uhm, he's, he's the son of a bricklayer. And he, too, learnt the trade of being a bricklayer.

02:02 Uh, as a young lad. And, um, then through a sequence of events, ended up much to his surprise. Uhm, there's a, uh, very good, um, uh, biography that he, uh, autobiography that he wrote called, uh, Hannah's Child.

02:23 I'll stick a link in the, in the notes for this one. Um, uh, he ended up becoming a, uh, a Christian ethicist, so someone who works out what it is to live a good life, and helps us with some of the moral quandaries that we face in life.

02:44 And to think those through from a Christian perspective. So, Christian ethics understood as it were as a, a subset of Christian theology.

02:53 Um, anyway, he's quite a, um, uh, uh, quite a character, as I say. Um, he's quite tough on the church, he loves the church, but he's quite tough on the church, and oftentimes when he's asked, he'll be quite critical, um, in his talks and his lectures and so on and so forth.

03:14 And you, Usually at the end of the, um, at the end of the, uh, talk he'll, um, uh, somebody, you'll have the question and answer session from the, from the audience, and they'll say, Dr. Hallus, you've been very, very tough about the church and everything, and what is the one thing that you would recommend

03:28 that we do do, um, positively to, as our first step in order to improve the life of who we are as the church and so on.

03:37 And he'll sort of lean into the micro-ve Okay, And he's got this guy pitch kind of squintly voice, you know, say, he'll look at the, look at the audience and say, don't lie.

03:43 So don't lie. Um, so yeah, he's, he's a character. Um, well worth checking out, he's on YouTube. Um, you always will see videos and lectures of him.

03:54 Anyway, enough information introducing, um, uh, Stanley, um, and, The next cat's going to be named Stanley, by the way. So just to give you an idea of how highly I rate Mr. Howe, Dr. Howe us.

04:09 Um, so this is the, uh, quote, um, from, um, Howe us. And, uh, you'll see how it ties in, um, with what we've been doing.

04:18 So he says, we live at a time when we believe we should have no story. Except the story we chose when we had no story.

04:36 I'm going to read that again. We live at a time when we believe we should have no story. Except the story we chose when we had no story.

04:49 Now because of the repetition of story and so on. And so forth and a little bit with the syntax. It's it's quite a complicated sentence in some senses, but in essence what he's talking about, um, is that, um, uh, in our time, which we could describe in various ways, modernity, late modernity, post-modernity

05:08 , um, this idea of there being overarching stories, which give coherence, uh, and which we are just born into and so on, that you know, there's been a big, there's been a big pushback.

05:21 And so in our culture, um, uh, especially it's the kind of understanding over however many years has been just like, well we get to choose the story that we're a part of.

05:30 We get to actually author our own story. My story is the story that I've chosen. Um, and you see this, um, this, uh, it's a story that's a that gives, uh, allows us to, uh, give full expression to our identity.

05:43 And, uh, you see this, um, this happening over and over that, um, the, the, uh, in films and so on and so forth.

05:52 Say you take a Disney film like Frozen, the idea that there is a tradition which you are meant to enter into and, and be a part no, I am to be me type of thing.

06:00 I am to be the author of my own story. Umm, it, it, it happens all over the place. And, and it's very much, and the idea being that there is no story, it's for us to create our own story and that we get to choose that story.

06:16 Um, of course, in many ways, this is just another story that's being told. The story that there is no story, but this is what's going on.

06:23 And, and how else makes the point that this is, this understanding. It is what we call freedom. This idea that we get to live and fashion our lives and make our lives and make the story of our lives.

06:37 It's the one that we choose and we create. It's not something that is, uhm, imposed upon us, as it were.

06:46 So we live at a time when we believe we should have no story, except the story. We chose when we had no story.

06:53 So that's Stanley's kind of take on what we're talking about here. And so the question then becomes, what's the relationship between, um, God's story and ours?

07:07 Because God's identity and ours, working on this idea that our identities are expressed through story, primarily because that's the way we weave into a narrative, all these little elements that constitute our identities.

07:22 But how do these stories, God's story and ours, what's the relationship between them? Because implicit in some senses is that there's a tension, um, viewed from a certain perspective.

07:34 It's just like, well, you know, if, if there's God's story and there's is our story. Um, how can those two stories coexist?

07:41 Um, and, and, you know, if we start to live our story in God's story, then to what degree does our story cease- cease to be our story?

07:53 And in fact, becomes God's story. And what happens to our sense of autonomy? Our ability to live our lives on the basis that we choose?

08:03 It's one of the important things in, uh, our, uh, our culture at the moment is this sense of choice, this sense of freedom.

08:10 So the question becomes, what's the relationship between God's story and ours? How interwoven do we want this, um, story to be?

08:20 If you think about a tapestry with all the different colours and so on and so forth that go into making a tapestry and, and make the- the panel.

08:27 The pattern, everything, and there are these God colours. How- how- how do the God colours start to shape the pattern of the tapestry?

08:35 Or do we want- yes, well we can have a little bit of the God colour in our tapestry, but we want the- we want the pat- the pattern as it were of our lives, the story of our lives to go back to the story, uh, idea.

08:46 Uh, we want it to be mainly ours. We can have a little bit of God go- so flip it around- we're talking about main characters, key characters, and cameos in our stories to say, well, are we, uh, a character within God's story or is God a character within our story?

09:00 So, um, the- the question in that sense then becomes, what is the story? What's the story? And whose story is it?

09:11 Is it God's story? Or is it ours? Or is it both? So, we're going to, um, explore this a little bit in this final, um, video, this, uh, of a session three.

09:37 Of, uh, I think it's gonna be the final video, we'll see. Um, of how we hold together. And then what's the relationship between these stories?

09:45 So, first of all, we're gonna go back to, um, Robert Jensen. Um, because I want to just scoot back over that a little bit.

09:53 You may have talked a little bit more about Robert Jensen in your session, um, when, when you met for the first session.

09:59 Um, um, he's the guy if you remember Robert Jensen. There we go. There's, there's, there's gents. And he's the guy who wrote this sentence.

10:07 God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead having before raised Israel from Egypt. I use this as an example of a plot summary of, of the Scriptures.

10:17 Uh, of, of God's story, rather. Of God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead having before raised Israel from Egypt.

10:26 Now, the thing I want to just- Draw out, and this is where you can see these sort of two aspects that we've been looking at coming together.

10:32 That in this, there are the characters. So, there's God, there's Jesus, and there's Israel. God Jesus and Israel. Then you've got the place.

10:41 You've got Egypt. There are places. Egypt. And there are events. The raising of Jesus, and before that, the raising of Egypt.

10:50 So, God raised Jesus from the dead- before having before raised Israel from Egypt. And these events are related. The one makes sense of the other.

11:00 Um, in other words, there's a relationship between them that stretches across time. And, um, notice that, uh, uh, Jensen is using the word raising before, having before raising.

11:15 Raised. God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead having before raised Israel from Egypt. The words that we would normally use, I think we talked about it last time, when we would talk about raising, uh, Israel from Egypt.

11:28 We'd normally call that the Exodus. Um, and in, in, uh, in fact, in the Gospel according to Luke. Um, when we talk about, uh, eh, in.

11:39 In Jesus, in the, what's called the transfiguration, when he's suddenly bathed in light, and, and, and, um, Peter, uh, and John, and they, they see him as, as, as it worked.

11:53 Their, their understanding of him is, is, is suddenly changed, and, and, and, and as they see him there, and he, and, and Jesus is there with Moses, and with, um.

12:04 Elijah, and in that moment, the word that, um, they, they have, they have a chat. Um, Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, and what they're chatting about is the Exodus.

12:13 That's, they're talking about Jesus' Exodus, that he's going to achieve at, um, uh, in Jerusalem. So, um, that's the word that's, that's used, and we translated it as departure, but it's- the word that's used as Exodus.

12:29 Um, so that's one way of thinking about Jesus, what's going to happen in Jerusalem with his death and resurrection, that it's an Exodus.

12:37 Um, and, uh, when it comes, you'll have noticed if you've been to services around, um, Good Friday and Easter Day, that much of the Old Testament, um, that we turn to, is to do with the Exodus, to do with the Passover and the Exodus.

12:52 Um, so that's one way of thinking about it, but Jensen, and then, is saying what we want to think about the Exodus through the lens of resurrection.

13:01 Um, because Jesus, uh, God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead having before, raised Israel from Egypt. So, uh, the Exodus is a form of resurrection, is the way, is how

he's weaving these two kind of bits of- language together, these two events together through language rather, and by doing so, he's

13:22 making these connections to think about Jesus' resurrection as an Exodus, as the Exodus, and to think about Israel being raised from Egypt as resurrection.

13:37 So, the two events are interpreting each other I love it. And they both are definitive for who God is. Umm, the other thing that we want to, I just want to draw your attention to, is this, looking back.

14:04 Get this phrase, God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead, having before raised Israel from Egypt. Umm, if we're to understand who God is, we can't not speak of Jesus.

14:18 Jesus is, um, definitive for who God is. Umm, God's identity is, intimately related to whoever Jesus is, and what has happened to, uh, Jesus.

14:37 So there's this relationship between God and Jesus, which is definitive for, um, whoever God is. Um, in some senses, um, in some way, who Jesus is, Defines who God is.

14:54 The temptation here is to create a distance between God and Jesus.

15:06 And here, in this sentence, the way that Jensen has framed it, he's not allowing, um, this, uh, the, this distance.

15:17 It's, if we're to speak of God, we, we, we are, uh, as to whoever God is. God is whoever. If we're to speak of God, we have to speak of Jesus.

15:26 Um, and vice versa. If we're to speak of whoever Jesus is, then we need to speak of God because whoever Jesus is, is, he is the one who's been raised from the dead.

15:36 And who raised him from the dead? Well, God. And, which God? The- God who before raised Israel from Egypt. So they're both, in both directions, um, the relationship there is, uh, defines the one defines the other.

15:56 if this story is true, if these events have happened, if the raising of Jesus has happened, uhm, then we live in the same space-time continuum.

16:10 We are just further down the line. And so, that story of God doing this encompasses the, the, the universe, it's the world that we live in, as well, and thereby, uhm, encompasses us.

16:23 Uhm, now, whereas God chooses to do this, we, we don't choose to enter into this story. This, this is, this is where, uhm, a part, I think, there is this tension of just like, well, hang on, especially in our culture, we're just like, hang on, this is our story to decide how we, we, we live.

16:40 This is what we're told at the moment, you know. We get to choose. We choose our story, what have you, and if, if Jesus has been raised from the dead and all that then flows from that, then, uhm, how does our story fit into this?

16:56 Uhm, are, are we no longer, uhm, as it were, authors of our own story? Is it, is it, what's happening here?

17:03 Is it our story? What's the relationship between them? Is there competition between our two stories type of thing? Can they both coexist?

17:08 In what way can they coexist? In what way does our story weave into God's story? What way does God's story weave into our story?

17:14 And so on. Uhm, which is all in a way in a sense of to do with our being creatures, that we push back against being creatures.

17:24 We, we, we, you know, it's another way of thinking about this, this business with the stories. I think we may come back to talking about that in a little bit.

17:30 Uhm, but there, so there's, there's already a story going on, uhm, whether we like it or not. And, uhm, there's something specific that's happened here, this, this raising that we're talking about.

17:42 The raising of Jesus from the dead, the raising of Israel from Egypt. So, God is very much involved in activities that are happening in, I mean, these are very particular, uhm, events, obviously, but it's not that God stands outside of, uh, creation in that sense.

18:01 It's not that God is not involved in creation and that's something that, a way of thinking about God that, uhm, has been very, sort of, become very significant over the last three, four hundred years.

18:11 It's referred to as Deism, D-E-I-S-M. Uhm, very much in, shaped by the enlightenment, uhm, which was the intellectual movement over, uhm, uhm, uh, back, uhm, back in the eighteenth century.

18:24 And this understanding that if there is a God then God is well away and doesn't have anything to do with us, uhm, it's set things up, you know, got things ticking and, and off it went, creation there you go, over to you type of thing, uhm, and, and stands back.

18:40 and this isn't a God that's presented in the scriptures, it's a God who's very much so with all of this, um, with the events, with the places, with the relationship, this is all recognizing that this is very important, be it God's identity, being it our identity.

18:56 So if I just scoot along, yep, that's the Stanley Howes quote again. So I want us to just think briefly about these things for about five minutes, at this point of your life.

19:05 What are the most, what are your most important relationships? If relation- Being in relationship is just so important in terms of our identity, in terms of who we are.

19:15 At this moment in your life, what are the most important relationships? And secondly and relatedly, um, what are the most important places in your life?

19:29 Now, at this point of your life, what are the- there may be places that were really important- important in the past, but now, what are the most important places in your life?

19:38 Have to think about that for- about five minutes, and then we'll continue as we move into the final section of our session of- uh, as part of session three.

24:37 so now we're going to, uhm, draw this, uhm, together for our final part of, uh, this second session, the third video for the second session.

24:46 Uhm, so we're going to draw together these two parts, who is God and who are we? And one of the ways that we can, uhm, talk about this, and we've alluded to already, is talking about us as being creatures.

25:00 We've acknowledged previously our creatureliness, uhm, and, uhm, if you think, go back to the very beginning of our passage, so, it's, uhm, of our, back to the beginning of our passage, back to the beginning of our session.

25:14 So, if, uh, we, we started with this passage from Genesis, uhm, so God created humankind in the image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.

25:26 So, here, uh, the scriptures are talking about us as being created, uhm, as our being creatures, and, uh, this image of God in Latin is, uhm, known as Imago Dei, and it's a, it's a very important, uhm, sort of building block in terms of understanding God.

25:46 Understanding and, and, uh, we, all sorts of different layers of meaning to what's going on here. But the fundamental relationship here that the scriptures are talking about is in terms of us being, uhm, creator and creation, that we are created, and this is something to a very large degree, I think,

26:06 that we push back against, as I say, we don't really want to think about ourselves as beings. Uhm, we want to think about ourselves as being the authors of our own lives, and, uhm, so, in terms of a theological thing that we're, whenever we're sort of thinking things through, uhm, always bring this to

26:24 bear, just thinking, okay, I'm just going to think about this particular issue, whatever it may be, but I'm going to look at it through the lens of our being creatures, and God being the creator.

26:34 Uhm, what does that have to say to, to, to this? Okay, so that's, that's one way that we can think about it.



26:41 The other, the other way, that this, this business of our being creatures is very much there in the Nicene Creed, which is one of the historic creeds of the Church, shared by the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, and, and all the main denominations.

26:54 Uhm, it's one of the unifying creeds of the Church. And it begins, we believe, in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

27:10 Uhm, but it's, uh, we're in relationship with God. God has made us. God has made everything. Everything is in relationship to God.

27:22 Because God has created everything. And remember what I was saying a moment ago about that deist understanding of God. It's not that God is far off from creation, having set it, set it going and everything.

27:33 God is intimately involved in every moment of creation. Uhm, if, if sustaining it in its every, uhm, second. And everything that we can see and everything that we can't see.

27:45 that, you know, look around you in your room, everything that's there, it, it is, it is all part of creation.

27:53 And everything that we can't see, you think about the, the, the depths of the galaxies and, and, and, and, and just, it's mind-boggling.

28:03 All of this is created by God and we are a part of it. We don't stand outside of it as creatures, we are.

28:10 Creatures within creation. This is what things like that. So our relationship is one of creator to, uhm, uh, to creature, uhm, from God to us. Uhm, then these stories that, that you have, that we have of God's story and our story, then it's like, well, in the Eucharistic prayer, one of the Eucharistic

28:31 prayers that some of us may use, uhm, some of us may know from church, church on a Sunday, this is our story, this is our song, Hosanna in the highest.

28:39 This is to be celebrated, this relationship, uhm, between God and us as creator and creation. And that our story and, uh, God's story and our story, are interwoven to the degree that we can say that this is our story.

28:57 Uhm, uhm, uhm, that, uh, that who we are is intimately bound up with who, uh, Jesus is. And note, uhm, as a theological source, the importance of, uhm, uh, an act of worship here and what we say in worship.

29:12 And then, just to bring this together a little bit, God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead. This is Jensen's quote again, having before raised Israel from Egypt.

29:20 And soon enough, you will know this by heart, uhm, that is my ultimate goal, of course, in all of this. Uhm, that, uh, that God's identity is bound up with our world.

29:31 And, uhm, and, uh, with Jesus, and before that with, uhm, eh, raising Israel from Egypt. And the world and relationships and all this, this is where we live.

29:43 This is the stuff of our lives. We just, we, we, we just live in the, we live in the city.

29:46 It's same story, we're just a little bit, uhm, further along, uhm, in the story. And these stories, our stories and God's story, they're interwoven like a tapestry.

29:56 Uhm, to speak of one, we need to speak of the other. In the sense that to speak of whoever God is, we need to speak of, uh, uh, of, uh, of someone called Jesus, who's been raised from the dead.

30:06 And before that, uhm, this God raised, uhm, Israel. A people called Israel from Egypt, uhm, so, yeah, uhm, it's all interweaved in that sense.

30:17 Now, uhm, the question then, uhm, develops because this is where it's interesting because, uh, sometimes it's almost as if we're more comfortable talking about God as if God is independent.

30:34 And in one very important sense, obviously, the relationship between creator and creature is one of dependence of creation on creator.

30:43 But in terms of identifying who God is, God is, this Jesus is essential for identifying who God is. Uhm, and so, if we're to speak of God, we need to speak of God.

30:58 of an aspect of creation, uhm, specifically this human being. Yes, more can be said, and Jesus is more in the, in the creeds and everything, that Jesus is more than simply a human being, but Jesus is nonetheless very much a human being.

31:14 And so we need to be able to speak of God in a way that's coherent whilst speaking of Jesus. And so, uhm, the other underpinning thing here is this connection of, when it comes to the story of our lives, which are in the same space-time continuum as the events of Jesus' being, Jesus being raised from

31:34 the dead, where is God? This is one of the most important questions that we can ask. When it comes to the story of our lives, where is God?

31:44 So, uhm, think back, uhm, to the story that, that, that, that, that, you know, that, that you, you mapped out for the film of your life, uhm, the characters and the locations.

31:55 Have a think about where is God in your story. Okay, let's take a few minutes to do that and then I'm just gonna pop another, uhm, couple of questions and as we draw this, this part of session two to a close.

32:10 So, as we always be scribbling these things down in your notebook, go back to what you were writing earlier about the film and just, just bring in, you know, where's, think about that tapestry idea about where's the color of God's threads in, in, in, in, in, in, in yours and, and realizing that actually

32:28 our threads are being woven into God's big, bigger tapestry as it were, but from our perspective. So, thank you. Anyway, rabbity, rabbity, uhm, have a think.

32:39 Okay, let's move on to the next related question, which is this.

37:57 In what ways do our individual stories identify God? If you think about going back to the Jensen quote, the understanding is that to speak, to identify whoever God is, we need to turn and speak of Jesus.

38:09 So, uhm, the question is, the question then is, in what ways do our individual stories identify God? Uhm, so, to put it another way, if someone were to look at your life, or the story of your life, what would it tell them about God's character?

38:29 If they were to look at what's happened in your life, and the story of your life, what would it tell them about who God is?

38:38 Have a go at that question, it's, it's not an easy one, so, have a go, and, uhm, scribble down some thoughts, and let's see where that takes you.

38:50 And just, just to say that if you're, if you're finding this tricky, uhm, rather than think about your own life, think about somebody else's, who you know, uhm, and think, uhm, you know, think about their life and, and think, okay, the story of their life, this, this is what, looking at their life, this

39:46 tells me, this, this, their life tells me tells me this about God. Or, along those lines, if you find it difficult to think about how your God might, your life might identify God, or how someone looking at your life, the story of your life, uhm, might tell somebody about the character of, of God, think

40:06 about someone else's life, rather than your own, and see if that, uhm, takes you further. The hymn that's coming to my mind as we do this is this little light of mine I'm gonna let, this little light of mine I'm going to let it shine.

40:43 It's that, it's that kind of idea. As your light shines, how has it shone in your life in the ways that then tell other people about the light of God?

40:55 Okay, these are not easy questions, so if you're finding them tricky, don't worry, we're only at session two of this course.

43:49 Hopefully by the end of the course, then, if you were to come back to these questions, you'd go like, ah, I have a better understanding of how I might approach them.

43:56 Remember, in the water, splashing about, occasionally you're going to go onto the surface and go, what the heck, I don't, you know, that's all totally fine.

44:04 Uhm, and so one final question at this point is, how do our stories fit into God's story? So, spend a couple of minutes just pondering how your story fits into God's story.

46:13 always, it's a question of, uhm, learning how to, learning how to think in this way, yes, but learning how to speak in, in a certain way, learning how to speak, uhm, of, of, of, learning how to speak of both God and us and so how do we learn to speak of both God and us?

46:41 It's not necessarily something that comes easy, I mean, you know, uhm, you, you may have found that in trying to answer these questions and explore them, uhm, it's just like, well, how do I actually talk about it?

46:52 And, and how do we, so how do we learn how to speak of, how do we learn to speak of how God's story and our stories in.

47:01 to weave? How do we learn how to do that? Uhm, that's, that's, uhm, that's the question. Uhm, in a way that is non-competitive, that we don't feel threatened by our story being interwoven with God's story and God's story being interwoven in ours, uhm, that we don't, as it were, we have this desire to

47:26 rebel and push away from it and say, no, this is my story, not your story, God's type of thing, uhm, uhm, which, uhm, is often what can happen, uhm, in many ways.

47:39 So, how do we learn to speak of both God and us, and specifically, how do we learn to speak of how God's story and our story is interweaved, which is going to take us to Session 3, where that we.

47:49 look at why the Bible is important. So, next, the question for next time is, uhm, why is the Bible important, and, uhm, just to say that this has been, this has been a tricky, uhm, session, this one, uhm, and I think that hopefully as we then go through Sessions 3, 4, and 5, uhm, after this, you'll,

48:12 you'll, you'll see how God's how the, uh, what we've been doing in this one, in terms of God's story, and then especially our story, how they then begin to make more sense as we go through the remaining sessions.

48:25 So, uhm, we're gonna start, uhm, next time, uhm, um, as we were, as it were going forward with this, and we're gonna be looking at the question, why is the Bible important?

48:35 So, let me draw to a close with- what we've been doing so far, and just run through a quick summary of what- of the ground we've covered over the course of these three videos.

48:47 Firstly, we play- we, uh, prayed. We glued. We prayed through a passage of scripture. If you remember going back to a vagus of fontus?

48:57 Yes, in fact, I've- I've changed- I- I swapped things round. We looked at two more definitions of theology. No, we didn't.

49:01 We looked- to those definitions first, and then we, uhm, prayed through a passage of scripture, because both with the Catherine Sonderegga and with the vagus of fontus, uhm, it was recognizing the importance of worship, that our theological activity is an act of worship, and that he- not he- the one who

49:19 prays, uh, truly is a theologian, and the theologian is one who truly prays. Thank you. Um, and, uh, so those were the two- and so off the basis is that we, uhm, we- we then looked at, uh, passage of scripture, and we used, like, to, uh, divina, that four- four-fold method of reading, meditating, praying

49:40 , and contemplating, and we will do some more of that in the later sessions. We then looked at what identifies us in different contexts.

49:48 We were thinking about- legal identification to begin with, and- and then we were moving on to thinking about how our, uh, our work colleagues and our neighbors, our friends, our close friends, our loved ones, and then how God, how well- how they know us, what identify- in their eyes what identifies

50:07 us. Then we imagined our lives as if they were a film. And we- and this is a way of just- sort of, like, developing this story idea that we narrate our lives.

50:17 We can have all these different isolated parts and events and aspects to our identity, but how do we weave them into a coherent whole?

50:26 And, um, I was using, um, one story form, which is that of film. And so we looked at it, um, in that, and by doing so we were exploring how difficult it would be if we were- to pull out or take out all the other characters and all the locations.

50:41 So we were recognising the importance of relationships and places when it comes to the story of our lives and to answer the question, who are we?

50:51 It's very difficult to answer the question, who are we in the absence of talking about those we are in relationship with and the places where we live.

51:01 And there- And we, uh, talked about our being created and, um, to what degree do we make ourselves? And to what degree do we create our own identities?

51:13 We can't auto-generate ourselves. We are creatures in that sense. We-we-we are made. Um, but, uh, but we do have, uh, fashion our own identities.

51:24 We looked at the, um, uh, sta- And Lee Howe asked quote about, uh, being a people with, uh, who-who's only story is that we get to choose the story we had when we had no story type of thing.

51:35 And, um, so we're creating our own identities. And that's very much something that we do in our age, especially with our online presences.

51:43 But it's something that we've always done with, be it CVs or round robins or things like that, where we tell stories about ourselves.

51:50 Not in terms of telling fibs, but in terms of just editing things and how we go about doing it. So we're very much involved in fashioning our own lives.

51:58 And that is a very key aspect for our sense of freedom as an individual, very much in our part of the culture in our day and age.

52:05 And yet, then there's that question of the tension between our story and God's story. And so then the question is, how do God's story and- Ah, story.

52:15 How do they interweave? And I moved away at points from the story analogy to thinking about a tapestry of all the different colours in a tapestry.

52:26 And how the threads are interwoven. And that sort of lends itself to this nice idea of just like thinking, are we being woven into God's tapestry, or are we sort of saying God's a wove?

52:38 God can be woven into art tapestry type of thing. Well, what's the overarching story that shapes the life that we live.

52:46 Um, and so that's, uh, how can we speak of God in that way? And, um, and how, so how can we, how can we learn how to speak of, uh, of, of God's identity and our identity, God's story, ah, our story.

53:02 How can we, uh, talk about how they learn how to speak of the way that they interweave and that they are deeply, uh, connected.

53:10 How do we learn how to do that? And that leads us into our next session when we talk about why is the Bible important.

53:17 So that's going to be next time. But before we do that, before we wrap up this session, um, thank you for listening.

53:23 This has been great. Um, I'm, I'm looking for- I'm looking forward to seeing you all again. Please bring your notebooks where you've been jotting things down and everything ready to discuss some of this stuff together with the others in your group.

53:35 As we continue to explore as a delightful act of worship of God, um, and learning how to think and live, um, theologically.

53:45 So, um, only write and proper that we, um, close with our prayer. And so- So, um, the prayer that we're gonna close with is the one that we began with.

53:55 Just wraps it up nice to you this way. So here we go. And I'm gonna say the prayer, I'd encourage you to say it out loud with me.

54:02 As I say, it's there on the screen. And then, um, that's the end of session two. And I look forward to seeing you, um, for when we meet and gather very soon.

54:13 Here we go. So let us pray. Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you.

54:30 Pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself. And so bring us at last to your heavenly- city, where we shall see you face to face.

54:42 We pray this through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

54:59 Amen. There There we go. Thank you Thanks very much, and look forward to seeing you soon. As always, any questions, what have you, just drop me an email and, uhm, yeah.

55:12 See you soon. Take care. Bye bye.

55:16 we go, Columbo-like, just when you thought it was over. No, just to say that I didn't mention that there were the resources.

55:23 So there are the recommended and optional resources, just in the same way as there were at the end of Session 1. There's a PDF on the same webpage where you're watching these videos.

55:32 You'll be able to see and download the recommended and optional resources for Session 2. A couple of videos. Some podcasts, an article or two to read, that kind of thing.

55:44 And, yeah, as you have time in advance of when we meet for Session 2, check those out. And, yeah, there we go.

55:52 I promise. We're done. There we go. Bye now.