

## **Seeing the Lord of the Word in the Word of the Lord**

*Introduction*

Luke 24:28-35

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### **Introduction**

Reading the OT is not something that the majority of Christians say is one of their favorite past times. I have never heard of someone saying that they spent their evening in reading through all the genealogies of the OT and just could help but jump up and down with excitement. Most of us give the OT a cursory reading and don't really spend a lot of time trying to understand books like Leviticus, Numbers, Daniel, and so on. We may read them from time to time but if we are honest many times we don't see the relevance to our lives today.

That is not to say that there aren't any people in this room that do enjoy the OT. There are people who spend lots of time in the OT, and if that is you praise the Lord. On a wider scale believers tend to skip through the OT.

I believe the reason for this is that we read the OT in an incorrect way. That we read it as a part of the Bible that is no longer relevant to Christians today and doesn't really require us to study it. How unfortunate that is.

The OT is one part of a two part book. If we simply read the NT we only read part of the story. If we simply read the OT then we only read part of the story. The testaments taken apart from each other leave us with an incomplete Bible. The OT and the NT must be taken together. They form the ultimate meta-narrative.

It is my conviction that when we read the OT in the context of the overall story of redemptive history, seeing God makes promises and point towards the coming of His Son, then the OT will be a part of the Bible that helps us be conformed into the image of Christ.

### **Context of Passage: Setting the Stage**

We pick up in the Gospel of Luke after Jesus has already been crucified, buried, and is now risen. Jesus had spent the last three years preparing His followers for what was to come. He was handed over to the Romans; they tried and condemned Him to death on the Cross. By the order of Pontius Pilate Jesus would be crucified.

The ladies who followed Jesus have prepared to visit the tomb of Jesus and probably anoint His body. When they arrive at the tomb they find it empty. The stone has been rolled away, the linen cloth that Jesus would have been wrapped in was sitting there, and two men (angels) announce to them that Jesus lives!

The ladies immediately rush back to tell the others what had happened. But the others did not believe them. The NKJV of the Bible says their words were like “idle tales” to the eleven. Peter however, *“arose and ran to the tomb.” (24:12)*

You find the followers of Jesus being dejected, perplexed, and trying to comprehend what exactly was happening. Their world is spiraling out of control and they are searching for answers. Their King, the Savior of Israel, their Friend and Teacher is now dead and His body could not be found. No doubt this is a troublesome time for those who had come to follow Jesus.

**Text: Situation**

Two of the disciples, probably just followers, were walking together towards Emmaus. This town is historically identified as a place that was about 7 or 8 miles from Jerusalem. The Bible says they were walking and:

*“They talked together of all these things which had happened.” (vs. 14)*

You have these two men who had probably left all they had to come and follow Christ during His earthly ministry. To become of a follower of Christ in the early days of the church meant losing maybe your family, job, land, livestock, and so on. But these men had accepted that cost and now were left to wonder what they had done!!

As they are walking and discussing these things Jesus comes alongside of them and asks them what they are discussing.

*“So it was while they conversed and reasoned that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.” (vs. 15)*

While He is walking with them they were unable to recognize who Jesus was. The way the sentence is worded originally points to God has the One who had kept the disciples from recognizing the Lord. This gives Him a great opportunity to probe them with a question, get them thinking, and then explain to them what was happening.

Jesus opens up with a question that really surprises them!

*“And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?”*

It is in that question that He sets the stage for what He will say in a moment. The disciples are taken by surprise. All the things that have happened over the last few days have been of such magnitude that it is almost impossible that there would be someone who hadn't heard of the events that had transpired. They say to Jesus;

*“Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?” (vs. 18)*

Surely this man has to be the only person who hadn't heard of these events. Nevertheless, they begin to share with Jesus everything that had happened. They had hoped it would be this Jesus who would restore the kingdom of Israel, what now would happen. Now, Jesus had been crucified, buried, and His body was missing!

The men were depressed, dejected, and confused! But it is here in their time of distress that Jesus opens the Scriptures to them.

### **Text: The Rebuke and the Correction**

*“Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” (vs. 25-26)*

Jesus calls them out! They had missed everything that had been said by the prophets. It was them that God used to point to the coming One and how He would suffer and die for the church, defeating death through the resurrection! He immediately begins to walk them through the Scriptures and show them Himself!

*“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” (vs. 27)*

Jesus has to start all the way back with Moses and begin to walk them through the OT and explain to them how those pages pointed towards Him. That it was Jesus that the OT was preparing the world for and it was Jesus that the world had missed! **Jesus is saying “Don't miss the ME in those pages! If you do then you miss the point of the story!”**

In John 5:39 Jesus tells the Jews that even though they searched the Scriptures for eternal life they had missed it.

*“You search the Scriptures (OT), for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.” (John 5:39)*

It was the Jews that studied the OT to find eternal life, yet they missed where the OT Scriptures pointed, namely to Jesus. Eternal life is found in the Promised One, the one whom Moses wrote about in Deuteronomy 18.

*“The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from you midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.....I will raise up for them a Prophet like*

*you from among their brethren, and will put My word in His mouth, and He shall speak to the mall the I command Him.” (Deut 18:15; 18)*

We cannot give the OT a cursory reading today just as they shouldn't have in the Biblical times. When reading the OT we must be careful to read it within the context of the entire narrative. We have the benefit of the NT, so there is no excuse for us missing Christ in the pages of redemptive History called the Old Testament.

Some will wonder why it is important to make sure and see Jesus in the OT. Why not just keep doing what we are doing? Read a story, pull the nice moral principles out of it and apply it then move on, that is what we do now. But that is not what the writers of Scripture did, and it is a dangerous way to read the OT because it is not the intended way of reading the OT.

Over the next 6 weeks we are going to look at some different passages in the OT and begin to see Christ in those texts. As we do, I believe, it will cause your hearts to burn with more passion for Jesus just as it caused the Emmaus road disciples hearts to burn within them.

Let me give you three reasons why we must see Christ in the OT.

### **1. Jesus says it is about Him!**

*“Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.” (Luke 24:27)*

When Jesus sits these guys down He immediately begins to walk them through the OT and show them how they pointed towards Him.

*“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.” (John 5:39)*

Jesus is speaking to the Jews, probably the Pharisees who were known for their study of the Old Testament Scriptures. They looked to the law and its regulations and sought the things they must do to inherit eternal life. They looked at the festivals, the sacrifices, the laws and regulations and thought it was in those things that eternal life would be gained!

But just as the apostle Paul tells us in Colossians, those things are mere “SHADOWS” of the reality that was coming. All those things pointed towards Christ. So Jesus can say that although they searched the OT looking for eternal life they missed it because they missed the One whom the OT pointed to, namely Jesus!

We are quick to judge the Pharisees aren't we! Those guys should have seen that the OT was pointing towards Jesus, how could they not see what was going on. We think that way and we pass judgment on these guys. But let's look at ourselves first.

We have the rest of the story! We have the NT Scriptures and can see how things come together. And still when we read the OT we fail to see Jesus. If Jesus indicts the Pharisees for missing Him in the OT, even without the NT, then how much more will we be indicted if we miss seeing Jesus in the pages of the OT canon?

We must see Jesus in the OT because Jesus says it is about Him!

## 2. To guard us from falling into a meaningless Moralism.

Earlier I have said that we could continue to read the OT and pull the moral principles out of it and leave it at that. That is an option and it is something that most evangelicals do today. We look at the story of David, the story of Solomon, and others and we pull the moralistic principles out of the story but stop short of the cross of Christ. That is a dangerous way of reading, teaching, and preaching the OT!

When we look at the life of David many Bible teachers will tell you to imitate David when he does the right things and do not imitate David when he does the wrong things. They reduce David to a mere example for us to follow, nothing more. But is that the way we are to picture the characters in the OT? I believe not.

It is true that we are to remember the example of godliness that the OT saints have left us. We are to follow their example in righteousness. **I am not at all saying that is not a valid implication of some OT text.** What I am saying, is if we start with these moralistic principles and then end with them, never pointing to the Cross then we fall short of the intended meaning of the text itself. Let me give you an example:

Take king David for example. Here is a man that the Bible says is "after God's own heart." He is a good example in some places for us to follow. But in other places David is not a good example, the affair with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah being two examples. So, if we reduce David to an example for us to follow then we miss the gospel of Christ.

Even if we follow the example of David and do good things, that alone does not restore us to a right relationship with God. We are born separated and need someone to provide atonement for our sins! It is not by following the

example of David that we find that. It is in the person and work of Jesus Christ, whom David is pointing us to.

David is a type of Christ that falls short, but nonetheless points to the One who is to come. Jonathan Akin has said that, "if we are going to preach the OT as purely moralistic principles then we might as well preach Aesops fables. The tortoise was patient and came out ahead so we need to be patient."

We must see Jesus in the OT because failing to do so reduces the OT to pure moralism that stops short of the Cross of Jesus Christ, and in so doing makes the OT meaningless children stories.

### **3. Because the OT is Christian Scripture.**

This simple means that the OT was written for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many today view the OT as something that is only relevant for the Jews. However, the OT was written as part of a larger story that includes the NT. The OT is setting the stage, watching as God makes promises to His people and then moving into the NT watching as the promises are kept. The OT is written about the Head of the church and must be applied to Him and to His body today.

We see Christ in the OT because it is the OT that points towards the head of the Christian church.

### **Conclusion**

Over the next six weeks we are going to see how all this works. We are going to look at some different passages in the OT and watch as they point us to the Christ who would come and redeem His church. It is probably a different way of looking at the OT than most of us are use to, so I pray that it challenges you, and as it made the Emmaus road disciples hearts burn it will set you on fire for Christ as well.

We must make sure and see Jesus in those pages of Scripture. Failure to do so will reduce the Bible to pure moralism and moralism will leave us dead in our sins. Only the cross of Christ can bring us into a relationship with God. Jesus has told us it is about Him and the OT is just as much Christian scripture as the NT. May we find Jesus on every page.

### **Challenge**

When Jesus talked to the Emmaus road disciples their hearts burned within them. They were in the presence of the creative Word of God. The Savior and Lord of the church, the master teacher was giving them a personal Bible study lesson. There was an

intimate moment shared with the Lord. If you are here this morning and are wondering what all the fuss about seeing Christ in the OT is all about and your not really finding it to be a big deal, my question is to you, "Have you meet Christ at all?" Is there a fire that burns in your heart for Jesus Christ. If not, maybe it is because you have never encountered this Jesus. To have a relationship with Jesus then the Bible tells us to simply turn from our sin and surrender in faith to Jesus as Savior and Lord.