

Biblical Theology Core Seminar: Session 10 Workshop #1

Worldly wisdom will always tempt us as Bible teachers and students to read and teach the Bible looking for how-tos. “Okay, I’ve read my daily passage, what’s the take away lesson for how I live better?” Surely there is a time and place for commands and how-tos. But what we really need is a Holy Spirit-charged gospel announcement, the message, the good news. Kevin DeYoung has put it well: “The secret of the gospel is that we actually do more when we hear less about all we need to do for God and hear more about all that God has already done for us.”

What that means is that we should always consider how a text points us to Christ, or at least some aspect of the gospel.

This is what Jesus tells us in Luke 24:

Luke 24:44–47 (ESV)

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

He says the same in John 5:

John 5:39–40 (ESV)

³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.

What we’re going to do this morning is look at several texts and consider how they get us to Christ. With each text, we’re going to ask several questions:

1. *What is the point of the text?*
2. *Where does this text fall in the biblical storyline?* We look backward in the story and we look forward. We want to figure out what covenantal administration we're under, because the answer to that helps us figure out what continuities and discontinuities exist between the text and our own time.
3. *How does this text point to Christ?*
 - a. Typology: David, temple, sacrifice. These are divinely ordained persons, institutions, or events which God intends to point us to Christ (need NT warrant to designate a type)
 - b. Theme: God's mercy, God's love, our sin, call to praise
 - c. Storyline: for example, if telling the story of exile, I'll just trace it to the return from exile, the insufficiency of that return, and then the promise of Christ.
 - d. God/man/Christ/response: suppose you're reading the condemnation of Israel in Jeremiah. Use these as reflections to teach us about our own sin, which we can do because we know that, aside from being God's special covenant people, Israel stands in for humanity. They are a parable for us.
 - e. New Testament makes the link
4. How do I read this text *through* Christ? In other words, what does it mean for us? How do we apply it?

TEST DRIVE

1. *The seventh commandment (Exod. 20:14)*

- **What's the point?** You shouldn't commit adultery.
- **Where does it fall in the biblical storyline?** Under the Mosaic administration. This is the law God gave to Israel to obey him and to exemplify a true God-imaging humanity.
- **How does it point to Christ?** Matthew 5:17 tells us he fulfilled the law in its entirety. That is, his life and teaching realized its full intent. Which, among other things, means He kept the laws commands. Jesus never committed adultery. His teaching also clarifies this command for us. So in Matthew 5:27, he says, "*You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*"

- **What do I read this through Christ? What does it mean for us?** First, Jesus never lusted, but we have. Second, we need forgiveness. Third, we need to follow in his way. See Hebrews 13:4 (ESV) ⁴ *Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.* And Romans 13:9 (ESV) ⁹ *For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* Fourth, we need to help one another follow in his way. Galatians 6:1-2: *“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness....Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.”*
- The margin notes in your Bible should prove extremely helpful. My margin notes had several OT references, then Matt. 5:27, Heb. 13:4, and Rom. 13:9.

2. David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17)

- **What’s the point?** Israel needs an appointed man of God’s choosing who trusted God in order to rescue them from their enemies.
- **Where does it fall in the biblical storyline?** Story of Israel. After the Mosaic law and the establishing of the land. God’s people were geographically bound and bound together in one nation state. Their enemies were other nations. But also look back one chapter, where we see the rejection of Saul and the anointing of David as eventual king. Read 1 Samuel 16:1 (ESV) ¹ *The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.”*
Plus, we see David has God’s Spirit on him in a special way. Read 1 Samuel 16:13 (ESV) ¹³ *Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.*
- **How does it point to Christ?** David is a type of Christ—an unlikely but anointed king. The New Testament tells us again and again he is the Son of David.
- **How do I read this through Christ?** It’s not that I need faith to defeat the Goliaths in my life. It’s that I need a David to defeat the Goliath’s in my life, and the good news is, I have one: Jesus.

3. Psalm 1

- **What's the point?** There are two ways to live, and the way of faithfulness to God's word is the way of blessing.
- **Where does it fall in the biblical storyline?** Looking backward we see that from the beginning, God's son has been called to obey God's Word and so find blessing (Gen. 2:15-17). But again and again, the son has disobeyed and therefore known God's judgment. We see this in Adam, Israel, David, and Solomon, just to name a few. Ezekiel 19:10-14 (in margin notes) compares Israel not to a tree but a vine that originally bore fruit but then withers in the desert.
- **How does it point to Christ?** Jesus Christ is the one truly blessed man of Psalm 1, who meditated on God's Word day and night and so brought fruitfulness to the nations. He provides the Edenic blessings of a fruit-yielding tree (Mat 3:13-17; 17:1-13). John calls him a vine and says we must be united to him to grow and bear fruit.
- **What do I read this through Christ? What does it mean for us?** There is a since in which I read this Psalm with three separate lenses simultaneously, one corresponding with "man/Christ/response."
 - Lens 1: me in my created and fallen or nature state. Blessed is the man who does these things. Yes, that is entirely true. I must aspire to such blessings. But the thing is, I know I've failed. The promise of verse 5 and judgment applies to me.
 - Lens 2: Christ has done this.
 - Lens 3: He is the vine, I am the branches, I am going to abide in him and follow after him.
 - Lens 4: We the church are the community of people who have found refuge in Christ, and who now obey God's Word and walk in the way of righteousness. We put off the old and put on the new. In that sense, this passage points to the necessity of church discipline, which excludes the unrepentant from the assembly in anticipation of the last day. As Peter says, "it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God" (1 Peter 4:17).
- In short, recognizing that Christ is the blessed man keeps us from preaching a merely moralistic sermon on Psalm 1.