

LifeWay Explore the Bible Series for May 27: He lives eternally: Carry on

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When the Apostle Paul sought to remind the believers in Corinth of the basics of the gospel, he summarized the good news by saying, “Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Paul stressed the gospel message was “in accordance with the Scriptures.” When the New Testament writers refer to “the Scriptures,” they are speaking of the Hebrew Bible, our Old Testament. Paul insisted the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection was testified to in the Old Testament.

Jesus makes the same point in the lesson passage for today. First, while on the road to Emmaus, he encountered two men who were stirred up by the rumors of the crucified Jesus being raised to life. Jesus said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” (Luke 24:25-26). Then we read in the very next verse: “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (v. 27).

Later in the passage, when Jesus appears to his disciples, he said to them, “Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (v. 44). Then in verse 45, “he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,” and concludes by summarizing the gospel of his death and resurrection (vv. 46-49).

Jesus understood that the whole Bible is about him. The Jews of Jesus' day divided the Old Testament into three sections: the Pentateuch (the first five books of our Bibles), the Prophets (which included what we consider the historical books), and then the Psalms (which would include all the wisdom literature, like Proverbs and Job). So by referring to these three sections in 24:44, he essentially is claiming the entire Old Testament is written about him.

Earlier in his life, Jesus had said this same thing to the Pharisees. In John 5:39-40, he said, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me."

In the introduction to his letter to the Romans, Paul wrote of "the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son ..." (Romans 1:1-3).

Peter understood the Bible in the same way. He wrote, "Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories" (1 Peter 1:10-11). In other words, the Holy Spirit inspired the authors of Scripture to write about the gospel.

It is instructive for us to consider that one of the first things Jesus did with his disciples between his resurrection and ascension was go through the Bible, teaching them how to read it as foretelling the gospel story. Luke says this is what it means to "understand the Scriptures" (v. 45).

Is this how you read the Bible? Do you see the gospel message on every page? The story of Jesus is a thread that makes its way through every passage in every book of the Bible.

In Genesis 3, Adam disobeys the Lord and deserves death. He unsuccessfully attempts to cover himself and hide from God. But God, in his

mercy, kills an animal and covers him with the skin of the innocent sacrifice. That's Jesus.

In Genesis 6-8, the world is filled with wickedness and deserves judgment. God warns Noah, commands him to build an ark and tells him when to get in. While wrath in the form of rain sweeps away sinful man, Noah and his family are safe inside the ark. Similarly, we are safe from God's wrath only in Christ.

In Genesis 15, Abraham "believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). Paul said in Romans 4 those words were written for us, so we would understand Abraham was saved because he believed God's promise. That promise was fulfilled in Jesus. Abraham was saved by grace through faith in Jesus, just as we are.

In Genesis 22, Abraham is commanded to offer Isaac to God as a sacrifice. Abraham was willing to obey even though he didn't understand why. Imagine the horror of that image—Isaac, the beloved son, bound on the altar beneath his father, who had his knife raised and ready to strike. Yet God stepped in and provided the sacrifice at the last moment. The true Sacrifice, Jesus, would require God the Father to do exactly what he rescued Abraham from doing—killing his own son.

I could go on and on. Every story in the Bible is about Jesus. From Moses to David to Elijah to Jonah, Jesus is the real main character. When we start reading the Bible like this, we start to understand it at a level far deeper than before. We find the Scriptures are not just a practical guide to living, but they are a revelation of God himself. From start to finish, they introduce us to the God who reveals himself most fully in Jesus Christ.

This is how Jesus read the Bible. It's how he taught his disciples to read the Bible. We should do the same.