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PREACHING CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
AT BRUNER'S CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH,
HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY

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David Mitchell Crowe

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PREACHING CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
AT BRUNER'S CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH,
HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY

David Mitchell Crowe

Read and Approved by:

Dr. Robert S. Plummer (Faculty Supervisor)

Dr. Adam W. Greenway

Date _____

To Ginny,

My love, and my best friend,
and to our amazing four sons, Elijah,
Jonah, Gabriel, and Malachi.

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PREFACE

I could not have completed this project without the prayers, support, and help of many others. First, I want to thank my wife, Ginny, who sacrificially labored with the family for an unknown number of Saturdays to free up time for me to write. She is my greatest encouragement in life and ministry, and I would be an absolute wreck without her friendship and guidance. I am thankful for the gift that she is to me.

Second, I want to thank our sons Elijah, Jonah, Gabriel, and Malachi. Our boys bring joy to our life daily, and we have enjoyed seeing them grow in their faith. I am thankful for their prayers and encouragement to me as I journeyed through this project.

Third, I want to thank my church family for their support and encouragement to me as I endured the work for this project. Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church is a joy to serve, and I thank God for calling me to such a gracious and patient congregation.

Fourth, I want to thank the faculty and friends at SBTS. I am especially thankful for my supervisor, Dr. Rob Plummer, for his guidance as I went through this project. I am also thankful for my good friend Dr. Andrew Dyer for his consistent encouragement to me as I went through this project. Andrew helped to point me towards the Doctor of Ministry program, and his weekly calls have been a constant blessing.

Finally, I want to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, without whom I could do nothing. I am grateful that this project has brought me closer to Him.

David Mitchell Crowe

Harrodsburg, Kentucky

May, 2012

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to improve my proficiency in preaching Christ in the Old Testament at Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church, Harrodsburg, Kentucky.

Goals

This project accomplished three goals essential to preaching Christ in the Old Testament at Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church, Harrodsburg, Kentucky. The first goal of this project was to increase my personal understanding of preaching Christ from the Old Testament. As I explored the various means and methods of how to properly preach Christ from the Old Testament, my desire was to learn how to faithfully apply that knowledge in my own preaching.

The second goal of this project was to strengthen my expository preaching of Christ in Old Testament texts through the analysis and feedback of preaching through various texts of the Old Testament. I sought feedback from a team of church members, asking them to assess the clarity of Christ within the text in light of the sermon preached.

The third goal of this project was to help educate the members of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church in how to properly discover Christ in Old Testament texts. I especially desired for the congregation to see the Old Testament as Christian Scripture. My hope was that such information would increase their desire to read the Old Testament, and further increase their love for God and His Word.

Context of Ministry

Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church is located five miles west of the town of Harrodsburg, Kentucky. Harrodsburg is a rural town surrounded by lush farmland and beautiful rolling hills. The people of Harrodsburg are primarily blue-collar workers, serving either in the factories of Harrodsburg or commuting to the surrounding cities. Harrodsburg is a forty-five minute drive southwest of Lexington, Kentucky, a thirty-minute drive south from Frankfort, Kentucky, and a ten-minute drive north of Danville, Kentucky. Located in Mercer County, Harrodsburg boasts a strong religious community with a friendly small-town atmosphere.

Demographic Information

The main area of outreach for Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church is the city of Harrodsburg, Kentucky. Harrodsburg has a population of 20,157 people and is projected to grow 3.1 percent during 2010-2015.¹ There are twenty Southern Baptist churches in Mercer County, making Southern Baptists the largest denomination represented. Only 23 percent of the population of Harrodsburg has no involvement in a church, compared to a national average of 35 percent. Only 13 percent of the residents of Harrodsburg possess a college degree, which is almost half the national average of 24 percent. Another stark difference between Harrodsburg and the national average is that only 9 percent of its population is non-Anglo, compared to the national average of 34 percent. The average household income of the residents of Harrodsburg is \$51,884.

¹Unless otherwise noted, all demographic information has been obtained from Percept Group "10 Basic Facts about the people in 40330" [on-line]; accessed 26 February 2009; available from <http://www.link2lead.com/MyCommunity/10Facts.aspx?Report=S>: Internet.

Church History

Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church has faithfully proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ since 1879. The church is named after the man who helped to start the church, David Bruner (1811-1906).² David Bruner had been the pastor of the nearby Deep Creek Baptist Church for twenty-two years. Bruner followed God's call to become the pastor of a small mission church located in Rose Hill, Kentucky. With his passion for visitation and Spirit-filled preaching, Bruner was able to see this mission church grow into a healthy congregation.

Bruner's godly character was well known throughout the county. Upon his death, the local newspaper wrote of him,

For more than fifty years he was the most prominent devine [sic] in the West End, and in his long and Godly life he has married over 4,000 couples and baptized and buried equally as many. He was a man whose feet were always willing to go at the call of distress; whose hands were always ready to minister unto 'the least of these, my brethren.' Many sick beds he has eased, and many souls speeded well on that last long journey, which he himself has now taken. Few men have left behind such a record of a life well spent, so nobly and so unselfishly.³

After Bruner's death, many of his eleven children stayed in the Rose Hill area. Some of Bruner's great grandchildren are still members of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church today.

Current State of Ministry

Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church is blessed to have a full staff and a beautiful facility to assist the church in its mission to reach the people of Harrodsburg. The church has four full-time staff positions – the senior pastor, Hispanic pastor, secretary, and

²“David Bruner” [on-line]; accessed 24 February 2012; available from <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=79908888>

³“Early Mercer County Kentucky Ancestors” [on-line]; accessed 14 March 2009; available from <http://worldconnect.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=mercer&id=I17219>

janitor. The part-time staff consists of a worship leader, children's/youth minister, and the church treasurer. The sanctuary comfortably holds 250 people and contains an impressive dual video screen projection system and multiple cameras to film the services.

Having existed for 130 years, Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church does not fit the typical profile for a church of its age or size. Though the church has a small attendance, it has a big heart for the world. With just over 200 people in average attendance, the church annually donates more than \$100,000 a year to missions. Bruner's Chapel gives 24 percent of its annual budget through the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Bruner's Chapel also has a heart for planting new churches. The church is currently involved (2009) in two church plants. One of those churches is Mountain Community Fellowship in Paintsville, Kentucky. Mountain Community Fellowship is one of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's High Impact Church plants. Bruner's Chapel gives \$10,000 annually to assist this young congregation. The other church plant is Iglesia Bautista Immanuel, which is a Hispanic congregation in Harrodsburg, Kentucky. In addition to providing some of the operating funds for this mission church, Bruner's Chapel also pays the salary for Miguel Gonzales, the pastor for this congregation.

Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church has healthy figures in the area of conversion growth. God has blessed the church to see more than seventy baptisms between the years of 2007-2011. In 2008 alone, Bruner's Chapel saw 30 baptisms. More than one-third of these baptisms were individuals over the age of twenty.

Aside from its missions involvement, Bruner's Chapel is also widely known throughout the city of Harrodsburg as a church with a passion for evangelism, ministry to the poor, and strong community involvement. The church's evangelistic program revolves around four main outreach events per year: a fall festival, a free yard sale, an Easter egg hunt, and Vacation Bible School.

Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church has averaged 230 in worship attendance and 189 in Sunday school attendance since 1977. The church is currently experiencing a transition in its average attendance due to the deaths of church members and members moving away from Harrodsburg.

With the church in transition, there are a number of positive factors that give it great potential for the future. Along with a high baptism rate in recent years, there has been a tremendous increase in births in the church. There have been sixteen babies born into the church between 2008 and 2010. The number of births has significantly shifted the median age of the church to levels below forty years old.

Previous Pastors of Bruner's Chapel

To better understand the current state of Bruner's Chapel, one needs to review the pastorates of the previous five pastors. Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church has had an incredible legacy of biblical preachers. Starting in 1976, Arnold Moon became the pastor of the church. Moon was a passionate conservative preacher who was known for his great humor and heart in the pulpit. Many current members have mentioned how he would often break out into singing an old hymn during his preaching. His five-year stay at the church provided a healthy atmosphere of solid Bible preaching and encouragement.

In 1981, Bob White became the pastor of Bruner's Chapel. White has been described as an introverted pastor who did not have Moon's people skills. Though he was the pastor for six years, not much is known about any programs he pioneered or advancements that were made. Though the attendance held firm during his tenure, he is seldom mentioned by the current membership.

Pastor Don Reed followed Bob White in 1988. Reed was a hard working pastor who exercised the most extensive church visitation of any pastor before him or since. He visited with every member of the church bi-annually by scheduling fifteen-

minute visits. Of all the recent pastors who have served in Bruner's Chapel, Reed has the highest respect. Nothing negative has ever been mentioned about his tenure. Reed shares a record with a pastor from the 1940s as being the pastor who has held the longest tenure with the church: eight years. Reed is currently serving as the director of missions for the Elkhorn Baptist Association in Lexington, Kentucky.

Larry Redding followed Reed's pastorate in 1997. Redding was a soft-spoken pastor who helped to establish the Hispanic Mission of Bruner's Chapel. Redding worked hard to follow in the footsteps of Don Reed, but struggled to keep up with the expected number of visits that Don had established. Though his pastorate was successful and fruitful, Redding's pastorate lasted only five years, as he accepted a call to a church in North Carolina.

Redding's successor was an authoritarian leader, and his leadership style was not well received by many within the church.⁴ Though he was aggressive in his leadership style, many have also mentioned that he was an excellent preacher and had wonderful people skills. This pastor helped to establish the church visitation program G.R.O.W., but was unable to sustain a long-term interest in the program. He also helped to initiate some church renovations that have served the church well.

The greatest contribution of this pastor was the formation of an expansion committee to help the church with its lack of adequate parking and facility space. This pastor's view toward relocating the church angered many of the church's leadership and resulted in a spirit of distrust and animosity towards his ideas. In 2006, Bruner's Chapel's membership was shocked by the moral failure of this pastor. The pastor was immediately forced to resign when it was discovered that he was having an affair.

⁴Due to a moral failure of the pastor who followed Redding, I will withhold his name to preserve anonymity.

During September of 2007, I was called as the pastor of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church. Having stepped into a difficult situation, I have been amazed at the overall unity of the church and its determination to move forward and to heal from what has taken place. Though the church has been in transition, there has been much fruit and spiritual growth during my tenure.

I came to Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church after serving for six years as a student and associate pastor in Kentucky and Nevada. God called me into the senior pastorate when I was given the opportunity to preach in a midweek service to adults. Serving alongside me is my wife, Ginny, and my four sons, Elijah, Jonah, Gabriel, and Malachi.

Rationale

The first rationale for this project was that Christ himself tells us that the Old Testament is about himself. Jesus told the crowds that saw him heal a lame man, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life" (John 5:39-40). In the same context, Jesus adds, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). Luke writes how Jesus showed the Emmaus Road disciples why the Christ must suffer and die, "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). Leon Morris explains of this passage,

The picture we get is of the Old Testament as pointing to Jesus in all its parts. Luke gives no indication of which passages the Lord chose, but he makes it clear that the whole Old Testament was involved. We should perhaps understand this not as the selection of a number of proof-texts, but rather as showing that throughout the Old

Testament a consistent divine purpose is worked out, a purpose that in the end meant and must mean the cross.⁵

These examples from Jesus demand that we seek him and faithfully preach him from the Old Testament.

The second rationale for this project was that Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:2 to “preach the word,” and in the context of that command we know he was referring to the Old Testament.⁶ Immediately before this command, Paul urged Timothy to teach others the “sacred writings” that he had known since he was a youth (2 Tim. 3:15). Ligon Duncan writes,

Now those sacred writings that Timothy had known since the very days of his youth were not the Gospels or the Epistles or the book of Revelation. They were the Old Testament Scriptures, from Genesis to Malachi, which he had known since the days of his youth.⁷

Therefore the apostolic commission to “preach the word” contextually encourages that we also should preach the Old Testament Scriptures.

The third rationale for preaching Christ in the Old Testament was that the Old Testament takes up more than 75 percent of our Bibles, but it is seldom preached in today’s pulpits. Though statistics are hard to obtain, Sidney Greidanus observes, “from reports of several denominations it is safe to conclude that fewer than 20 percent of the sermons the average church member hears are based on an Old Testament text.”⁸ If Christ is present in the Old Testament, and if the Old Testament takes up the vast

⁵Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 358.

⁶J. Ligon Duncan, “Preaching Christ from the Old Testament,” in *Preaching the Cross*, ed. Mark Dever (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 41.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 15.

majority of our canon, Christians should preach just as consistently from its pages as they do the New Testament. The observation that the Old Testament is not commonly preached in contemporary pulpits highlights a glaring weakness in modern preaching. This project sought to establish an ease in presenting Christ faithfully from the Old Testament so that a balance in preaching from the Old Testament and the New Testament could be better achieved.

The fourth rationale for this project was that poor methods still abound for preaching Christ from an Old Testament text. Some preachers today still use the same allegorical approach of preaching Christ from the Old Testament as the early church fathers. Sidney Greidnus observes, “Although the method is largely discredited today, preachers desperately trying to cross the gap with a worthwhile contemporary message are still known to fall back on it.”⁹ One problem with allegorical preaching is that it is not as concerned with the original authors intended meaning of a passage as much as it is with the crafty imagination of the preacher. This project sought to help Christians identify both the improper and proper methods for preaching Christ from an Old Testament text.

The fifth rationale for this project was that proper methods to preach Christ are available to be taught and utilized. Modern scholars have highlighted a number of proper ways to emphasize Christ from an Old Testament passage, with many of these methods being demonstrated for us by a New Testament author. These principles provide Christians with a plethora of exciting ways to see Jesus in an Old Testament passage. As Ligon Duncan challenges, “We ought to be able to preach Christ naturally and exegetically from all of the Old Testament.”¹⁰ This project sought to explore these methods and to explain their effectiveness for the modern pulpit.

⁹Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 160.

¹⁰Duncan, *Preaching the Cross*, 47.

The sixth and final rationale for this project was that one cannot understand the New Testament, and specifically the person and work of Christ without a proper understanding of the Old Testament. Greidanus observes, “The New Testament is filled with many . . . images and concepts whose meaning we cannot know without the Old Testament.”¹¹ For example, the work and meaning of the cross cannot be fully appreciated without the Old Testament explanation of the Day of Atonement in the book of Leviticus. Since central themes of Christology are understandable within an Old Testament context, modern pastors must not neglect to preach from these foundational texts. This project sought to help Christians better understand the Old Testament and, specifically, what the Old Testament tells us about the nature, work and person of Jesus.

Definitions and Limitations

It is surprising that most definitions of preaching do not mention Jesus. Even Bryan Chapell, in his book *Christ Centered Preaching*, defines expository preaching as follows:

A sermon that explores any biblical concept is in the broadest sense ‘expository,’ but the technical definition of an expository sermon requires that it expound Scripture by deriving from a specific text main points and subpoints that disclose the thought of the author, cover the scope of the passage, and are applied to the lives of the listeners.¹²

Chapell’s definition, although useful, stops short of emphasizing the one to whom all sermons must point.

Greg Heisler does an exceptional service including Jesus in his definition, and his definition is the one used in this project. Heisler defines expository preaching as:

The Spirit-empowered proclamation of biblical truth derived from the illuminating guidance of the Holy Spirit by means of a verse-by-verse exposition of the Spirit-inspired text, with a view to applying the text by means of the convicting power of

¹¹Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 29.

¹²Brian Chapell, *Christ Centered Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 128-29.

the Holy Spirit, first to the preacher's heart, and then to the hearts of those who hear, culminating in an authentic and powerful witness to the living Word, Jesus Christ, and obedient, Spirit-filled living.¹³

Heisler's definition encourages pastors to make the goal of each sermon to provide a powerful witness to Jesus, resulting in obedient living. This project explored effective ways to present this powerful witness faithfully from the Old Testament.

This project also relied upon the principles of preaching as supported in Dennis Johnson's book, *Him We Proclaim*. Johnson's definition of preaching also incorporates a strong emphasis on Jesus,

Preaching must be *Christ centered*, must interpret biblical texts in their *redemptive-historical contexts*, must aim for *change*, must proclaim the *doctrinal center* of the Reformation (grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone, God's glory alone) with passion and personal application, and must speak in a language that connects with the *unchurched* in our culture, shattering their stereotypes of Christianity and bringing them face to face with Christ, who meets sinner's real needs – felt and unfelt.¹⁴

The length of this project was fifteen weeks. The fifteen weeks consisted of a twelve-week sermon series on Christ in the Old Testament, and a three-week discussion with a focus group. A limitation of this project was that it was possible during the fifteen-week project to determine the lasting impact of the project.

One delimitation for this project concerned the participants for the project. I chose to present the material for the twelve-week sermon series to the individuals who attend Bruner's Chapel's Sunday evening worship service. This service provided the greatest opportunity to reach the core leadership of the church.

Another delimitation was a seven-member focus group that provided feedback on the project. I chose for this focus group to consist of a diverse cross section of

¹³Greg Heisler, *Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit's Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery* (Nashville: Broadman, 2007), 21.

¹⁴Dennis E. Johnson, *Him We Proclaim* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2007), 54, emphasis original.

leadership and membership from my church. I selected two deacons, two Sunday school teachers, a senior citizen, a college student, and a teenager to serve in the focus group. This group was comprised of three women and four men. I chose them based on their faithful attendance during the Sunday night worship service, and for their diversity in representing the greater church family. This focus group met for three-weeks: one week before the project, and two weeks after the project to provide feedback on the preaching and on the project.

Research Methodology

The first goal of this project was to increase my personal knowledge of preaching Christ from the Old Testament. Throughout the project I read through a number of books and articles as well as listened to seminars on this topic. This project dissertation reveals what I have learned throughout the course of my research.

The second goal of this project was that I would strengthen my expository preaching of Christ in Old Testament texts through the analysis and feedback of preaching through various texts of the Old Testament. To measure the progress for this goal, a team of 7 members of my congregation was selected to fill out a preaching survey for each sermon delivered during the project. This survey asked them to address how faithfully the sermon was to the biblical text. These surveys were collected and studied each week for assessment and improvement.

The third goal of this project was to help educate the members of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church in how to properly discover Christ in Old Testament texts. At the beginning of the project, a survey was given to the church to test how well they could identify common terms utilized in discovering Christ in an Old Testament text. This survey asked them to connect common terms with their definitions and also asked a few questions to determine their interest in the Old Testament. At the end of the project, the

exact same survey was given to the congregation. The scores from both sets of surveys were compared to determine if the project helped the congregation learn the necessary terms and skills involved in interpreting Christ in an Old Testament passage.

Conclusion

As God has called me to serve as the pastor of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church, I saw this project fulfilling a great need within my church. Since arriving at the church, many adults have mentioned how they find reading the Old Testament to be boring. Others have confessed unfamiliarity with the history of the exile and other major themes of the Old Testament. My own preaching has not focused as much on the Old Testament as it has on the New. As I struggled to preach faithfully from the Old Testament, and as my congregation struggled to read it, this project aimed to help both needs.

Preaching Christ from the Old Testament does not have to involve doing injustice to the authorial intent of a biblical text. Also, preaching where Jesus is present in the passage should not have to add to the tedium of the congregation's interest in the Old Testament, but should instead increase their interest. The desire for this project was to prove that Preaching Christ in the Old Testament could be done in an effective manner that was both faithful to the text and fruitful for the congregation.

CHAPTER 2
A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS
FOR PREACHING CHRIST IN THE
OLD TESTAMENT

Where should one begin when desiring to learn how to preach Christ from the Old Testament? While searching through Old Testament texts with a trained eye is ideal, many are uncertain of what to look for. Thankfully, the New Testament supplies an abundant storehouse of inspired models of how to find Christ in the Old Testament. As David Murray emphasizes, “Starting with the New Testament is the most important step of all if we are to rightly preach Christ from the Old Testament.”¹

Since the New Testament provides copious examples for how to preach Jesus from the Old Testament, it is therein that one must begin their study. Ligon Duncan stresses, “It is important for us to grasp that so much of the New Testament is a hermeneutical manual to help Christian preachers understand how to preach and apply the Old Testament.”² In the Gospels, the recorded sermons of Jesus himself show him quoting the Old Testament and mentioning how all of the Scriptures testify of him. From the recorded sermons of Peter and Paul in the book of Acts, to the myriad of ways the gospel writers present Jesus in their writings, the New Testament is full of references, quotes, and allusions that concern Jesus from the Old Testament Scriptures. The New

¹David Murray, “Bright Shadows: Preaching Christ from the Old Testament,” *Puritan Reformed Journal* 1 (2009): 26.

²Ligon Duncan, “Preaching Christ from the Old Testament,” in *Preaching the Cross*, ed. Mark Dever (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 42.

Testament authors clearly use the Old Testament as the primary support for proclaiming Jesus as the promised Messiah.

While space does not afford an exhaustive study of the New Testament's use of the Old, a general overview of the major passages and methods in the gospels and epistles that address the use of the Old Testament sufficed for the purpose of this study. Because the focus of this project is preaching Christ in the Old Testament, the primary focus of this study here is the preaching of Jesus, the gospel writer's use of the Old Testament to present Jesus, the preaching of the apostles, and last, the writings of the apostles.

The Gospel's Use of Jesus in the Old Testament

This chapter examines the sermons of Jesus and the gospel writers' use of the Old Testament to present Christ. There are many recorded sermons of Jesus available in the gospels. Within these sermons, Jesus makes summary statements about the Old Testament and shows how he is the fulfillment of their writings. As Jesus himself demonstrates how he fulfills Old Testament prophecies throughout his preaching, one can learn much today from his methods.

In addition to the recorded sermons of Jesus in the Gospels, the writers themselves used the Old Testament in a plethora of ways to make their case for one placing their faith in Jesus. Throughout their writings the authors attach Old Testament passages to the important moments of Jesus' life and ministry. While an array of literary devices, such as allusion and typology, are used to present Jesus as the promised Messiah, there is much debate over many passages and whether or not they qualify as a true reference to an Old Testament passage. As Merrill Tenney remarks,

Identification of quotations is not always easy. Seldom did the authors give the exact derivation of the texts that they quoted, and still less often did they quote verbatim. Very frequently they made only a casual allusion, so that one may not always be certain whether the writer intended to recall a specific passage or whether he were simply using general biblical language that had become part of ordinary

parlance. Scriptural references can be generally classified under three heads: citations, which are almost exact verbally and which are definitely referred to a given author; quotations, which are sufficiently close to the original to leave no doubt concerning their derivation, but which are not attributed explicitly to a definite source; and allusions, which are often so loosely constructed that only one or two words out of a sentence parallel the biblical text.³

While the exact number of Old Testament references within the Gospels is debated, Tenney attributes 63 references to Mark, 90 to Luke, 124 to John, and 129 to Matthew.⁴

Jesus' Preaching in Matthew's Gospel

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is an excellent place to begin an investigation into how Christ himself regarded the Old Testament. The longest recorded sermon of Jesus is found in the pages of Matthew's Gospel. One relevant passage to this study is found in Matthew 5:17-18, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished."

Jesus mentions the Old Testament Scriptures as the Law and the Prophets. Blomberg writes, "Both the Law and the Prophets together (v. 17) and the Law by itself (v. 18) were standard Jewish ways of referring to the entire Hebrew Scriptures (our Old Testament)."⁵ Further, Jesus indicates that he is fulfilling all that was written in the Old Testament. As D. A. Carson observes,

Jesus fulfills the entire Old Testament in many ways. Because they point toward him, he has certainly not come to abolish them. Rather, he has come to fulfill them in a rich diversity of ways . . . Jesus does not conceive of his life and

³Merril C. Tenney, "The Old Testament and the Fourth Gospel," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 120 (1963): 301.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 2001), 103.

ministry in terms of *opposition* to the Old Testament, but in terms of *bringing to fruition* that toward which it points.⁶

This passage helps to interpret the rest of the sermon as Jesus repeats six times, “you have heard it said . . . but I say to you” Jesus’ sermon goes on to use the Old Testament and, as he interprets a command, he circumscribes it with broader considerations.⁷ Jesus therefore does not remove the old laws, but he fulfills them and furthers them. This text provides a foundational hermeneutic whereby, as Blomberg observes, “Every Old Testament text must be viewed in light of Jesus’ person and ministry and the changes introduced by the new covenant he inaugurated.”⁸

In another passage found in Matthew 13, Jesus addresses the disciples about his use of parables. In a fascinating text placed right between the parable of the sower (13:1-10) and that parable’s interpretation (13:18-23), Jesus tells his disciples why he speaks in parables. In Matthew 13:11-17, Jesus tells them that they have been given to know the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to the unbelievers it has not been given. In Matthew 13:14, Jesus quotes the Old Testament, “Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: ‘You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive’” Here, Jesus declares that the words of Isaiah are now being fulfilled. Blomberg explains,

The word for “fulfill” here (*anaplēroō*) is different from before, the only time in the New Testament this verb is used with reference to Scripture. Verse 14a probably means *the prophecy of Isaiah applies to them*—i.e., the pattern of behavior in

⁶D. A. Carson, *Sermon on the Mount* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982), 37, emphasis original.

⁷D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Regency Reference Library, 1984), 148. Carson further points out that Jesus is not criticizing the Old Testament but the understanding of the Old Testament that many of his hearers adopted. Carson further adds, “This is especially true of vv. 22, and 43, where part of what was ‘heard’ certainly does not come from the OT.”

⁸Blomberg, *Matthew*, 104.

Isaiah's time is repeating itself and being completed in Jesus' day among those who reject him.⁹

In Matthew 13:17, Jesus closes his defense of using parables by saying, "Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it." Blomberg mentions, "Jesus' followers are indeed privileged because they are living in the age of the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises that even the greatest of God's faithful people of old longed to see."¹⁰

A third passage where Jesus speaks of the Old Testament to support his actions is found in Matthew 26. In the narrative where Peter cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, Jesus told Peter to put his sword back in its place. If needed, Jesus had the power to call on legions of angels to deliver them. Jesus continued to say in Matthew 26:54, "But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?" Jesus clearly saw his approaching passion as a direct fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture. Verse 56 explains, "But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Carson explains, ". . . Jesus' stance regarding his own death is grounded on the fact that the 'Scriptures' must be fulfilled."¹¹

Matthew's Use of the Old Testament

Of all the Gospel writers, Matthew uses the Old Testament in his writing the most. As he was primarily writing to the Jews, Matthew employs every possible method of using the Old Testament in his book to highlight the claims of Jesus as the Messiah. So thorough is Matthew in his usage that his Gospel best serves as a guide for all who desire to use the Old Testament to present Jesus. Sidney Greidanus highlights seven different

⁹Ibid., 217, emphasis original.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Carson, *Matthew*, 548.

ways in which the New Testament authors, including Matthew, use the Old Testament to present Jesus. The following are brief observations of these seven different methods from Matthew in presenting Christ from the Old Testament.

Redemptive-historical method. The redemptive-historical method of presenting Jesus from the Old Testament views an Old Testament passage within the total biblical story of redemption. As Sidney Greidanus explains,

The Bible sketches how God's history with the world progresses from His good creation (Gen. 1), to the human fall into sin, to God's plan of redemption through the Seed of the woman (3:15), to Christ (the Gospels), to the new Creation (Rev. 22). In other words the Bible sketches a continuous redemptive history with Christ at its center. In preaching an Old Testament historical narrative, therefore, we need to pay attention to the progression in redemptive history from this Old Testament event to the climax of God's redemptive acts in Jesus' first and second comings. We learn to see the Old Testament narratives not merely as biographies of interesting characters but as parts of the national history of Israel, which in turn is part of the history of the coming kingdom of God and its King, Jesus Christ.¹²

In Matthew 1:1, Matthew begins his Gospel by relating the birth of Jesus in its redemptive history through the promises given to Abraham and David. Greidanus states, "Matthew traces Jesus' roots all the way back to Abraham because with him God first established his covenant of grace, including the promises of offspring, land, and being a blessing to all families of the earth (Gen 12:2-3; 17:8; 22:17-18)."¹³ Matthew also connects the story of Jesus back to the Covenant that God gave King David in 2 Samuel 7. Blomberg further explains, "Matthew's names for Jesus present him as the fulfillment of the hopes and prophecies of Israel but also as one who will extend God's blessings to Gentiles."¹⁴ Carson and Beale clarify the redemptive-historical significance of the title

¹²Sidney Greidanus, "Preaching Christ from the Old Testament," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 161 (2004): 10,12.

¹³Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 59.

that Matthew gives Jesus, “That Jesus is the Christ identifies him as the Jewish Messiah, the longed-for Savior of Israel.”¹⁵ All of these are expressions of Matthew’s use of the redemptive-historical method.

Promise-fulfillment method. D. A. Carson defines the promise-fulfillment method, “God’s promises in the Old Testament gradually fill up until they reach their final fulfillment in Jesus Christ.”¹⁶ Throughout Matthew’s Gospel, the author quotes the Old Testament to show how Jesus is the direct fulfillment of its prophecies. Greidanus explains, “Not only is Jesus’ birth seen as a fulfillment of Old Testament promises, but also His preaching and miracles, His suffering and death, His resurrection and ascension, and His outpouring of the Spirit fulfill promises given in the Old Testament.”¹⁷

An early example of Matthew’s use of promise-fulfillment is found in Matthew 2:1-6. Here, Matthew shows how the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem fulfilled an Old Testament prophecy from Micah 5:2. Carson describes the context of the Micah text as follows:

Micah prophesied in the eighth century BC, warning both Israel and Judah of impending judgment. As so often happens with the OT prophets, short- and long-range prophecies are starkly juxtaposed. Micah 4:6–13 alternates between predictions of the more distant return from exile (4:6–8, 13) and of more imminent judgment (4:9–12). Micah 5 begins with this latter theme (v. 1), but the rest of the chapter returns to the more distant future, promising a ruler who will shepherd his flock in the Lord’s strength and majesty and bring peace to the land (vv. 2–5a).¹⁸

¹⁴Blomberg, *Matthew*, 53.

¹⁵G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids; Baker Academic; Nottingham, UK: Apollos, 2007), 3.

¹⁶Greidanus, “Preaching Christ from the Old Testament,” 12.

¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁸Carson, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 5-6.

With more references to the Old Testament than the other Gospels, Matthew utilizes the method of promise-fulfillment more than any other Gospel writer.

New Testament references. Sidney Greidanus defines New Testament references as simply “verses that quote or allude to the Old Testament.”¹⁹ While many of these references could fit under the same category as promise-fulfillment, there are some occasions where the New Testament author quotes the Old Testament as a way to illustrate a point.

In Matthew 4:4, where Jesus is being tempted by Satan, Jesus says, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” In this passage, Jesus is clearly quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, where Moses is recalling the period of the Israelites’ wandering in the wilderness. Instead of quoting from the Old Testament as a way to show a fulfillment of some prophecy, Carson explains rather, “Jesus is distilling the timeless spiritual or moral principle contained in the text of Deuteronomy and applying it to his temptation.”²⁰

Longitudinal themes. Longitudinal themes, according to D. A. Carson, refer “to themes that can be traced through the Scriptures from the Old Testament to the New.”²¹ An example of this is seen in Matthew 1:23, “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel (which means, God with us).” Quoting from Isaiah 7:14, Matthew highlights a longitudinal theme found all throughout the Bible: the theme of God’s presence with us. Compared to the other themes found in the Old Testament, Carson asserts, “No greater blessing can be conceived than for God to

¹⁹Greidanus, “Preaching Christ from the Old Testament,” 12.

²⁰Carson, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 15.

²¹*Ibid.*, 11.

dwell with his people (Isa 60:18–20; Ezek 48:35; Rev 21:23).”²² Since every major Old Testament theme leads to Christ, the New Testament writings are filled with longitudinal themes.

Typology. Robert Sloan defines typology as a “method of interpretation whereby a larger level of correspondence is established between persons and events.”²³

Graham Cole further defines typology,

the idea that persons (e.g., Moses), events (e.g., the exodus), and institutions (e.g., the temple) can—in the plan of God—prefigure a later stage in that plan and provide the conceptuality necessary for understanding the divine intent (e.g., the coming of Christ to be the new Moses, to effect the new exodus, and to be the new temple).²⁴

In Matthew 2:13-15, Matthew utilizes the method of typology to show how Jesus fled for safety into Egypt and then was called out just like the exodus of Israel in the Old Testament, through quoting Hosea 11:1. While much has been written about Matthew’s use of this passage, Robert Plummer summarizes the background of this difficult text as follows:

God’s deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt (Exod. 1-15) foreshadowed his bringing them back from Assyrian exile (Hos. 11:1-12). Moreover, if, on the basis of God’s unwavering promise, he did not allow Israel, his chosen “Son,” to perish in slavery or exile (Exod. 4:22-23), how much more, when the unique Son (Jesus) faces the danger of death and exile, God the Father preserves him and brings him back into the Promised Land (Matt. 2:13-15). Otherwise, how can the Son fulfill his mission to the lost sheep of Israel (Matt. 10:6; 15:24)? Seeing such divine intentionality in God’s increasingly climatic historical interventions is called typological interpretation.²⁵

²²Carson, *Matthew*, 80.

²³Robert B. Sloan, “The New Testament Use of the Old Testament,” in *Reclaiming the Prophetic Mantle: Preaching the Old Testament Faithfully*, ed. George L. Klein (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 135.

²⁴Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 289.

²⁵Robert L. Plummer, *40 Questions about Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 165.

Analogy. The use of analogy within the New Testament is an emphasis in shared similarities. Greidanus explains, “Analogy exposes parallels between what God taught Israel and what Christ teaches the church; what God promised Israel and what Christ promises us; what God demanded of Israel (the Law) and what Christ demands of us.”²⁶

One use of analogy that can be explored in Matthew’s Gospel is found in Matthew 11:10, where Jesus says of John the Baptist, “This is he of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’” Beal dissects the reference as follows, “The first clause quotes Exod. 23:20; the second, Mal. 3:1.”²⁷ The context of the Exodus text concerns God sending his angel to guard the children of Israel as they proceeded from Mount Sinai, to prepare the way for them to take possession of the Promised Land. The Malachi text speaks of God acting to redeem his people Israel through sending a human being who will prepare his way. Matthew quotes Jesus’ analogous use of this passage to mean that John the Baptist had prepared the way for him.

Contrast. Contrast is used by New Testament authors as a way to highlight the difference that Jesus made on the Old Testament law and systems. Greidanus explains, “Because of the progression in the histories of redemption and revelation, the message of the Old Testament text may sometimes stand in contrast to the message of the New Testament.”²⁸ He further writes,

For example the Old Testament demanded animal sacrifices to atone for sin, but the New Testament drops this demand. The Old Testament required circumcision as a sign of covenant membership, but the first church council releases people from

²⁶Greidanus, “Preaching Christ from the Old Testament,” 11.

²⁷Carson, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 38.

²⁸Greidanus, “Preaching Christ from the Old Testament,” 13.

undergoing this painful rite (Acts 15). The Old Testament demanded the celebration of Passover, but Jesus turns this feast into the Lord's Supper. The Old Testament commanded God's people to celebrate the Sabbath on the seventh day, but the early church shifts the day of rest to the first day of the week. These and more contrasts came about because of Jesus' death on Good Friday and His resurrection on Easter Sunday. It is possible, therefore, to preach Christ by the way of contrast.²⁹

In the Sermon on the Mount, the method of contrast is seen clearly in Jesus' preaching from the Decalogue. In Matthew 5:21-22, Jesus says, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment." Jesus expounds on the command not to murder to include anger towards one's brother. Leon Morris explains,

It is not correct to say that he replaces the law with his own commands, for in no case does he relax a provision of the law. Rather, he shows that, rightly understood, the law goes much further than his hearers had reckoned. For them it was enough not to put somebody to death; for Jesus that was just the beginning. He goes to the cause of murder and includes being angry in the scope of the command.³⁰

Throughout Matthew 5:21-48, Matthew writes of Jesus repeatedly mentioning an Old Testament command and then expounding on that command by a way of contrast.

While a full exploration of Matthew's use of the Old Testament would fill volumes of work, these examples should provide a healthy overview to his methods that are found throughout his Gospel. The authors of the other Gospels and of the other New Testament books use these methods throughout their work.

Jesus' Preaching in Mark's Gospel

The first statement of Jesus in the book of Mark highlights the importance of the Old Testament in his ministry. Mark 1:14-15 reads, "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled,

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 114.

and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” James Edwards highlights the importance of this text,

[Mark 1:14-15 is] a synopsis of Jesus and his message, v. 14 providing the historical setting and v. 15 its interpretation. Mark is able to summarize the whole of Jesus’ life and teaching in a single concept, “the kingdom of God” (1:15). The kingdom of God takes its initial shape from Israel’s concept of God as king (Exod 15:18; 1 Sam 12:12; Ps 5:2). As creator of the world, God is exalted above his creatures, rules in majestic splendor, mocks gods of wood and stone, and brings kingdoms to naught. The reign of God was initially manifested in Israel’s history in the exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai, but it would be supremely manifested in the advent of a future Messiah, whose reign would usher in the eternal and heavenly reign of God.³¹

Another place in Mark where Jesus interacts with the Old Testament is in Mark 9. Following the Transfiguration, Jesus is asked in Mark 9:11 by his disciples, “Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” Jesus responds in verse 12 by saying, “Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?” Jesus refers to an Old Testament passage from Malachi about the coming of Elijah, and takes an opportunity to share about his coming suffering. As Edwards explains,

Jesus indeed affirms Elijah’s role of restoration. “ ‘To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things.’ ” The hope of the disciples, in other words, is ultimately correct. But something equally essential must happen *before* the final restoration on the Day of Yahweh. There is another testimony in Scripture, less welcome but no less important. It is raised in a counterquestion of Jesus in 9:12b. If the restoration of righteousness and peace for which all people long is immediate and impending, then why do the Scriptures testify that a righteous suffering figure must necessarily precede the final restoration of the Day of the Lord?³²

While Mark quotes elsewhere from the Old Testament, his only other direct reference to a fulfilled prophecy in Jesus happens on the night he was crucified. On the eve of the last supper, Mark mentions Jesus referring to a prophecy in Zechariah that

³¹James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 45-46.

³²*Ibid.*, 274, emphasis original.

would be fulfilled that very night. And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered’ (Mark 14:27; Zech 13:7).” That night, the disciples were scattered like sheep without a shepherd when Jesus was arrested and put to death.

Mark’s Use of the Old Testament

Of the four Gospel writers, Mark uses the Old Testament the least in his presentation of the life and ministry of Jesus. Because Mark was writing primarily to the Gentiles, he does not quote as frequently from the Old Testament as Matthew, who was writing primarily to the Jews. For example, Mark does not begin his Gospel with a genealogy to link Jesus with the Jewish patriarchs, but instead begins with the Baptism of Jesus.

Mark begins his Gospel with a clear reference from Isaiah, prophesying the arrival of John the Baptist (Mark 1:2-3; Isa 40:3). While Mark mentions that his quote is from Isaiah, part of his quote comes from Malachi and Exodus (Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20). The Isaiah quote, coming from Isaiah 40:3, is found in the prologue of the second section of Isaiah (40-55) that addresses the end of the Babylonian exile. Carson explains how, in its context, the passage calls for the “preparation of the way for Yahweh’s return to his people so that all flesh might know his glory—the real presence of the invisible God.”³³ Mark’s use of this text for John the Baptist is a clear statement that all flesh would see the glory of God in the person of Jesus. That Mark has this in mind is made evident in his quote in 1:15 of Jesus saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” Since Mark’s further use of the Old Testament has been explored earlier, an examination of Luke’s Gospel is in order.

Jesus’ Preaching in Luke’s Gospel

³³Carson, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 114.

Luke's recorded sermons of Jesus also draw heavily from the Old Testament. In his first recorded sermon preached in his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus reads from Isaiah 61:1-2 and then mentions, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:18-21). Clearly Jesus was applying the Isaiah text to his own ministry and, in a way that no one else could do, proclaiming that he was the actual fulfillment of the passage. As Greidanus explains,

Notice that the fulfillment had to do with Jesus of Nazareth: the Spirit of the Lord was on him; he proclaimed good news to the poor; he healed the sick; he brought in the Year of Jubilee. According to Jesus, the Old Testament witnessed to him long before he was born.³⁴

In chapter 20, Luke addresses the Jewish rejection of Jesus through Jesus' use of the parable of the wicked tenants. In verses 17 and 18, Jesus finishes his parable by quoting Daniel, Psalms, and Isaiah, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone? Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him." Darrell Bock observes, "Jesus, as the beloved Son, is rejected by the nation but accepted by God as having the place of honor."³⁵ Luke utilizes typology in his reference, as Bock notes, "Luke's use of the psalm's imagery is typological and prophetic. The picture is of the king and his faithful followers who face rejection but meet with God's acceptance and exaltation. Jesus is such a rejected but exalted figure."³⁶

In the same chapter, Jesus also deals apologetically with a question of whose son is the Messiah: David's son or God's son? Jesus quotes from Psalm 110 to address the question that many of Luke's readers were probably asking. Robert Stein observes,

³⁴Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 56.

³⁵Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 2:1603.

³⁶Ibid.

“For Luke and the other Evangelists, this incident taught that the Messiah was indeed the Son of David, but he was more.”³⁷ One can learn from this text that Jesus was greater than David, and even David’s Lord.

In his final recorded sermon in the book of Luke 24:44-49, Jesus says, “everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” In this statement, Jesus is referring to the entirety of the Old Testament and how it bears witness to himself. As Sidney Greidanus expounds from this passage,

And what does it reveal about Jesus? At a minimum, it speaks of his suffering, his resurrection, and his teaching. Jesus says, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”³⁸

Greidanus observes how this summary statement from Luke makes clear that “not just a few isolated messianic prophecies, but the whole Old Testament bears witness to Jesus.”³⁹

Another important text where Jesus is seen to be showing others that he is the focus of the Old Testament Scriptures is Luke 24:27. “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” Robert Stein explains how some interpret the phrase, “in all the Scriptures” to mean the “Law and the Prophets.”⁴⁰ Stein further explains, “the term ‘all’ is another example of Luke’s fondness for exaggeration, for time would not have permitted Jesus to refer to ‘all’ the Scriptures that referred to him.”⁴¹ But I. Howard Marshall writes, “more

³⁷Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman, 2001), 505.

³⁸Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 56.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Stein, *Luke*, 612.

⁴¹Stein, *Luke*, 612.

probably it means that he searched in *all* the Scriptures, but starting from (i.e. principally from) the law and the prophets.”⁴² Though Jesus did not have the time to speak of all the passages in the Old Testament that make a reference to himself, he no doubt spent considerable time going through the major themes of the Old Testament that pointed to himself.

In addition to Luke 24:27, there are a number of passages in Luke’s writings where he stresses how all of Scripture testifies of Jesus (Luke 24:45; Acts 17:2, 11; 18:24, 28).⁴³ Each of these Lukan texts strongly supports applying a Christ centered hermeneutic when addressing an Old Testament passage.

Luke’s Use of the Old Testament

Similar to Mark, the Gospel author Luke uses more of a general means of referencing Jesus from the Old Testament. Luke, who is a Gentile himself, writes his Gospel to the Gentiles. Most of the Old Testament references in Luke’s Gospel are found in the words spoken by Jesus rather than in Luke’s narration. However, Luke’s Gospel does subtly address the messianic claim of Jesus throughout his narration.

Writing primarily to the Gentiles, Luke traces the genealogy of Jesus all the way back to Adam. After concluding his account with Adam, Luke then mentions that Jesus is the Son of God (Luke 1:38). Darrell Bock points out the importance of this connection, that it “indicates Jesus’ relationship to all humankind as their representative.”⁴⁴ While the genealogy relies fully on the Old Testament, Luke’s purpose

⁴²I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Exeter, England: Paternoster Press, 1978), 897, emphasis original.

⁴³Bock, *Luke*, 2:1918.

⁴⁴Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 1:348.

in going further back than Matthew's genealogy that begins with Abraham is to present Christ as the savior for all mankind. Darrel Bock writes,

Jesus' genealogy in 3:23–38 ties all humankind into one unit. Their fate is wrapped up in Jesus. His ministry, as seen from heaven, represents the focal point of history. The introduction of the genealogy right before the commencement of his ministry serves to highlight the scope of Jesus' concern for humans. It points to his universal perspective. Jesus is not some isolated minister to Israel; he does not merely minister to a tiny nation of subjected people seeking political deliverance from a dominating Rome. Rather, he is the culmination of a line of descendants stretching back through the great men of promise like Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. The lineage confirms his position and suggests his ministry's comprehensive character. In him, the entire hope of the OT is inseparably and eternally bound. In him, as well, the fate of all divinely created humans is bound together.⁴⁵

Luke also places a number of key phrases throughout his narration that highlight the fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture in the ministry of Jesus. Greidanus observes how Luke uses the phrases such as “time of Israel” (1:54-55, 68), “time of prophecy” (1:70; 24:25-27, 44-45) and the “time of fulfillment” (1:1; 24:44) to speak of the era that Jesus was fulfilling.⁴⁶ Luke, like the other gospel writers, presents his evidence for Christ from the foundation of the Old Testament canon.

Jesus' Preaching in John's Gospel

John's Gospel affords a few instances where Jesus clearly uses the Old Testament to reveal his position as Messiah. In John 5:46 Jesus speaks of how Moses wrote about him, “If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.” There are a few divergent interpretations as to what Jesus may have meant here. Carson explains,

The reference in 5:46 to Moses writing about Jesus may allude to the first five books of the OT (attributed to Moses) or to the prediction of a “prophet like Moses” in Deut. 18:15 (cf. John 1:21; 6:14; 7:40), or both. Alternatively, the reference is not to the Pentateuch or to the “prophet like Moses,” but to “a certain way of reading the

⁴⁵Ibid., 360.

⁴⁶Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 60.

books of Moses” (Carson 1991: 266). The reason that Moses, as the lawgiver, would accuse the Jews was that he, as the lawgiver, knew the law’s true purpose. Rather than being an end in itself, the law served to point to Christ (cf. Matt. 5:17–20; see Carson 1991: 266).⁴⁷

Also in John’s Gospel, John 5:39-40 is another passage where Jesus mentions that the Old Testament Scriptures bear witness about himself. John 5:39-40 reads, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.” Here, Jesus clearly mentions how the Old Testament bears witness about himself. Carson writes,

Jesus’ assertion in 5:39 that the Scriptures testify to him is one of five instances in this Gospel where Scripture or a given OT writer is said to refer to Christ although no specific passage is adduced (cf. 1:45; 2:22; 5:45–46; 20:9). D. A. Carson (1991: 263) rightly contends that what is at issue here is that Scripture is presented as providing “a comprehensive hermeneutical key”: “By predictive prophecy, by type, by revelatory event and by anticipatory statute, what we call the Old Testament is understood to point to Christ, his ministry, his teaching, his death and resurrection.”⁴⁸

One of the most dramatic statements from Jesus in John’s Gospel is when he reveals himself clearly to be the God of the Old Testament. In John 8:53, Jesus is speaking to a group of non-believing Jews when they clearly ask him, “Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?” Jesus responded,

Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad." So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. (John 8:57-59)

Unpacking the statements of Jesus one at a time, Christ mentions how Abraham rejoiced that he would see the day of Jesus. Andreas Köstenberger observes,

⁴⁷Carson, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 443, emphasis original.

⁴⁸Ibid.

“To say that Abraham saw the Messiah was neither new nor offensive to Jewish teachers; it was its application to Jesus that was unbelievable.”⁴⁹

The second statement which carries more emotion with his hearers was Jesus’ assertion that “before Abraham was, I am.” Köstenberger clearly observes,

The statement “Before Abraham came into being, I am” contrasts an allusion to Abraham’s birth with a reference to Jesus’ eternal existence, focused on his incarnation (Ridderbos 1997: 322–23). Jesus’ language here echoes God’s self-identification to Moses in Exod. 3:14. Thus, Jesus does not merely claim preexistence—otherwise he could have said, “before Abraham was born, I *was*”—but deity.⁵⁰

John’s Use of Jesus and the Old Testament

John’s use of the Old Testament is more subtle and creative than the other gospel writers. The exact number of references to the Old Testament in John is debatable, for it is occasionally difficult to determine what is a reference and what is not. Sometimes the connections from John’s Gospel to the Old Testament are clear and directly stated. At other times the references are more commonly allusions that are more indirect and less obvious. Both the direct citations and indirect allusions support John’s primary thesis, that Jesus is the promised Son of God.

John’s Gospel draws from throughout the Old Testament canon as he presents Jesus. John quotes the most from the Psalms, with at least 12 references clearly coming from the Psalms. His next favorite book appears to be Isaiah, where John cites from the book at least six times. Tenney explains,

Every book of the Pentateuch is represented in the Fourth Gospel, and the prophets Daniel (12:2), Malachi (4:5), and Zechariah (9:9; 12:10), as well as Isaiah, appear in quotations or allusions. All three divisions of the Old Testament canon,

⁴⁹Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 271-72.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 273.

the law, the prophets, and the Psalms, were utilized in interpreting the work of Christ.⁵¹

In reading through John's direct citations from the Old Testament, one notices an important factor in how the Scripture is presented. In the first half of the Johannine corpus, up to the middle of chapter 12, the Scriptures are simply cited with the comment "it is written" (John 2:17; 6:31, 45; 8:17; 12:14). In the second half of John's Gospel the Scriptures are often cited with the claim, "This was to fulfill the Scriptures" (John 12:38; 19:24). However, this latter usage becomes particularly prominent during the Passion Narrative, indicating that fulfillment is an important theological theme for the evangelist.

From the very first words in John's Gospel, there can be no doubt as to the author's intent: John wishes to link the revelation of God in Jesus Christ to the revelation of God in the Old Testament. John's starting words, "In the beginning," causes readers to reflect on the starting words in the book of Genesis.

Johannine commentators have discovered possible allusions to the Old Testament in the ministry of Jesus that, while they are veiled, are still worth mentioning. An allusion is most commonly understood in literature as an indirect reference which is based on the assumption that the reader will understand from where the comment came. John's allusions require the reader to be familiar with the Old Testament or a portion of the Old Testament used to convey the hidden meaning of his words.

An example of John's use of an allusion would be Jesus' miracle of turning the water into wine in John 2. Some commentators see merit in the fact that Jesus used ceremonial cleansing jars to place his new wine as a possible veiled message of Jesus' improving on the old system. As Carson notes, "Their purpose provides a clue to one of the meanings of the story: the water represents the old order of Jewish law and custom,

⁵¹Tenney, "The Old Testament and the Fourth Gospel," 304.

which Jesus was to replace with something better.”⁵² Köstenberger likewise observes, “The mention of Jewish purification (required by the law) may subtly reinforce the contrast drawn by the evangelist between the law given through Moses and the new messianic provision by Jesus.”⁵³

In addition to allusion, John highlights the role of Jesus in fulfilling many Longitudinal Themes of the Old Testament through his use of Jesus’ “I am” statements. John places seven “I am” statements of Jesus throughout his Gospel, hearkening to Exodus 3:14 where Yahweh reveals himself to Moses as “I AM.” Each of these “I am” sayings fulfills an Old Testament theme, festival, or hope. For example, Jesus’ statement in John 6:35, “I am the bread of life,” is a response to the daily manna that the children of Israel had to gather in the wilderness. In contrast to the need for a steady supply of bread as in the case of the manna in the wilderness, Jesus makes clear that people do not need to receive his bread repeatedly (cf. 13:9–10).⁵⁴ In addition, Jesus’ statement in John 8:12, Köstenberger explains how the phrase, “I am the light of the world,”

may be part of a “wilderness theme,” alluding to God’s presence with the Israelites as a pillar of fire. In the OT, God himself (Ps. 27:1; 36:9) as well as his word (or “law”; Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23) are called a “light.” “Light” imagery is also applied to the end-time Servant of the Lord (Isa. 49:6; cf. 42:6) and to the Lord’s own presence in the midst of his people in the last days. Here, “light” terminology is applied to Tabernacles symbolism (cf. *m. Sukkah* 5.2–4).⁵⁵

In addition to what has been mentioned earlier, there are numerous summary statements where John stresses that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Beginning in John 1:45 where John writes of Philip’s testimony to Nathanael, “We have

⁵²D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 173.

⁵³Köstenberger, *John*, 97.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 210.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 253.

found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” John foreshadows the coming resurrection in John 2:22 where he mentions, “When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.” And then following the resurrection where John writes of shock of the empty tomb in John 20:9, “for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.”

Finally, John’s direct references to the Old Testament appear in just a few places in his Gospel. In his writing of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, John shows how Jesus sitting on the donkey was a direct fulfillment of Zechariah’s prophecy. John addresses the question of unbelief in chapter 12 by quoting from Isaiah 6 and 53. The final reference to the Old Testament where John identifies its fulfillment in Jesus is shared during Jesus’ crucifixion. In John 19:24, John shows the dividing of the garments as a direct fulfillment of Psalm 22.

New Testament Authors and the Use of Jesus in the Old Testament

In addition to the methods of the gospel writers concerning the Old Testament’s focus on Jesus, the authors of the greater New Testament also rely on a myriad of methods to present Christ from the Old Testament. This overview will briefly observe the preaching of the apostles, the writing of the apostles, examples from Paul, examples from Peter, and the book of Hebrews.

The Preaching of the Apostles

The Apostolic preaching available through Luke’s writings is rife with Old Testament references to Jesus. These early sermons of the apostles recorded in Acts are filled with excerpts from the law, the prophets, and the psalms. As the apostles used these sources, they clearly proclaimed how they were prophetic of Christ. Rather than an

exhaustive approach, this study will observe some general examples by exploring the apostolic use of the Old Testament.

Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost quotes from Joel and Psalms as he presented the gospel message to the crowds of Jerusalem. In defending the truthfulness of the resurrection, Peter quotes Psalm 16 and then says of David's writing in Acts 2:30-31, "Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption." John Stott emphasizes, "David cannot have been referring to himself, when he wrote that God would not abandon him to the grave or let his Holy One see decay, because David had *died and was buried*, and his tomb was still in Jerusalem."⁵⁶

In Acts 3:18-24, Peter's reliance on the Old Testament for the validity of Jesus as Messiah is made abundantly clear. In Acts 3:18, Peter says, "what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled." A few verses later, in Acts 3:21, Peter mentions how the prophets foretold the ascension of the Messiah into heaven saying that Jesus is he "whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago." Further, in Acts 3:22, Peter quotes Moses and a prophecy about Jesus, "Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.'" Peter's strongest statement about the revelation of the Old Testament to shed light on the events of his day is found in Acts 3:24, where he simply states, "And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days."

⁵⁶John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Acts*, in *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 76, emphasis original.

Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch is a clear example of using an Old Testament passage to present the gospel. The eunuch was reading from Isaiah 53 and needed help understanding the passage. Phillip stepped into his chariot, and as Acts 8:35 records, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus."

Paul's preaching throughout the book of Acts is also dependent on Old Testament passages to defend the claims and events of Jesus. In Acts 13, Paul is preaching in Antioch and upon mentioning King David, he states in verse 23, "Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised." As Paul presents the main points of the gospel, specifically the death and resurrection of Jesus, each point is carefully drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures. Paul says in Acts 13:32-35,

And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you.' And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way, 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.' Therefore he says also in another psalm, 'You will not let your Holy One see corruption.'

Greidanus observes from this text, "In their preaching, therefore, the apostles followed their Master by preaching Christ from the Old Testament."⁵⁷

In Acts 17:2-3, Luke records Paul preaching in Thessalonica, where he writes, "And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." Understanding the context, it is certain that Paul is preaching from the Old Testament Scriptures as he makes his appeal to the people of Thessalonica. As Paul had to soon travel to Berea, he made the same appeal from the Old Testament there, with Luke

⁵⁷Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 58.

recording in Acts 17:11, “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.”

The Writings of the Apostles

Alongside the sermons of the apostles are their inspired written letters. The most prolific of the apostolic authors was none other than the great apostle Paul. Throughout Paul’s 13 letters are scattered hundreds of references and allusions to the Old Testament, many of which are used to highlight the Glory of God in Christ.

Examples from Paul. Paul’s most important message is the gospel, where he clearly roots its foundations in the Old Testament Scriptures. As he states this in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that 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.” Kistemaker clarifies that Paul “uses the phrase *according to the Scriptures* to demonstrate that the gospel is rooted in and emerges from the Old Testament.”⁵⁸

At the end of the book of Acts, Paul is observed pleading with the people of Rome to place their trust in Jesus Christ. How does Paul share the message of the Gospel? Acts 28:23 says, “From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.” John Polhill writes,

Luke did not specify which texts Paul used to expound Jesus, but they were surely those which point to the necessity of the Messiah’s suffering and to his resurrection—the texts Jesus set before the disciples after his resurrection (Luke 24:27, 44–47), which Peter used to show Christ’s messianic status to the Jews at

⁵⁸Simon J. Kistemaker and William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New Testament Commentary, vol. 18 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953-2001), 528, emphasis original.

Pentecost and in the temple square (Acts 2:17–36; 3:12–26) and which Paul himself expounded in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch (13:32–39).⁵⁹

Another summary text of Paul as concerns Jesus in the Old Testament is 2 Timothy 3:15. Here, Paul tells Timothy “how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” Duncan makes clear that it is, “the Old Testament, the Apostle Paul says, that is able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith.”⁶⁰

As Paul is dependent on the Old Testament for his preaching, he makes it clear to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 2:2, “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” Paul’s message is a crucified Christ, and his content is from the Old Testament.

The example of Peter. Peter also understands the role of Christ in the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. In 1 Peter 1:10-11, Peter writes, “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.” Karen Jobes explains, “By pointing this out, Peter draws continuity between what is foretold in the OT and what is realized in the life of Jesus and preached in the gospel.”⁶¹

The book of Hebrews. The book of Hebrews is rife with Old Testament imagery, allusions, typology, and fulfillment. The first two verses of the book serve as a key to the book, “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers

⁵⁹John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman, 2001), 542.

⁶⁰Duncan, *Preaching the Cross*, 56.

⁶¹Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 98.

by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.” Christ, therefore, is a continuation of the Old Testament as God’s message to the world.

Hebrews is also unique in that it is the only recorded sermon in the Bible that is preached to a Christian congregation. Dennis Johnson remarks that Hebrews is the “only such sermon delivered to a regular congregation of Jesus’ followers after Pentecost that the New Testament records.”⁶² Observing how the author interacts with the Old Testament and applies it to Christ and to the congregation, Hebrews provides modern pastors with valuable insights and principles for preaching a Christocentric sermon using an apostolic hermeneutic.

The book of Revelation. According to Carson and Beale, “No other book of the NT is as permeated by the OT as is Revelation.”⁶³ They further write, “Although its author seldom quotes the OT directly, allusions and echoes are found in almost every verse of the book.”⁶⁴ The Old Testament plays such a crucial role in the Apocalypse, that one must understand its use to adequately and correctly interpret the book as a whole.

While Revelation is full of allusions to the Old Testament, it is difficult to connect all of the images to specific texts. Grant Osborne explains, “Everyone agrees that the OT is alluded to more often in the Apocalypse than in any other NT book, but no one agrees about the exact number of allusions, because it is difficult to determine partial quotations, allusions, and echoes of the OT in the book.”⁶⁵ What is certain is that

⁶²Dennis E. Johnson, *Him We Proclaim* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2007), 20.

⁶³ Carson, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 1081.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 25.

Revelation uses a wide range of Old Testament material. In his commentary on Revelation, G. K. Beale explains,

The range of OT usage includes the Pentateuch, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Job, and the major and the minor prophets. Roughly more than half the references are from the Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and in proportion to its length Daniel yields the most.⁶⁶

John’s use of allusion in the book of Revelation contains a deeper level of complexity compared to his use of allusion in his Gospel. Osborne writes, “What makes his use of the OT difficult is that he has no introductory formulas; he embeds the allusions directly into his narrative. This makes his book unique among NT works and increases the difficulty for the interpreter.”⁶⁷ Beale further explains, “Sometimes four, five, or more different OT references are merged into one picture.”⁶⁸

In addition to allusion, many of the longitudinal themes found throughout the Bible find their conclusion in the book of Revelation, and more importantly, in the person of Jesus Christ. These longitudinal themes include the presence of God with His people, judgment on sin, rewards for the righteous, and the kingship of God over all creation. The value of the book of Revelation and its use of the Old Testament is without parallel in comparison to other New Testament books.

Conclusion

With all of the New Testament content available that is dependent on the Old Testament, there should certainly be enough material to develop a New Testament Hermeneutic of the Old Testament. As Ligon Duncan challenges, there are enough

⁶⁶ G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 77.

⁶⁷ Osborne, *Revelation*, 25.

⁶⁸ Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 79.

examples where one “ought to be able to preach Christ naturally and exegetically from all of the Old Testament.”⁶⁹ Though the task should be easy, there are a number of methods and varying opinions for modern preaching of Christ from the Old Testament. It is to these modern methods which this study will now focus its attention.

⁶⁹Duncan, *Preaching the Cross*, 47.

CHAPTER 3

APPROACHES TO PREACHING CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Preaching Christ in the Old Testament has become a popular topic in recent years. Many books, seminars and conferences have flooded the market to better help pastors to properly present Christ from an Old Testament passage. While pastors can learn from a number of modern methods, it is still a worthy endeavor to survey the varied examples of preaching Christ from the Old Testament that are provided from the history of the church. This chapter will research the history of preaching Christ from the Old Testament, as well as look at the various modern hermeneutical approaches to preaching Christ from the Old Testament. An evaluation and assessment of each approach will accompany each studied method.

Church history provides a host of hermeneutical methods for preaching Christ from the Old Testament. Each method must be scrutinized to see if it faithfully treats the text and the grammatical-historical context of a passage. For the purposes of this project, an examination of the history of the primary methods of interpretation was investigated and evaluated. The historical periods of concern will be the early church, the reformation, and modern times.

Preaching Christ from the Old Testament in the Early Church

The Early Church Fathers genuinely attempted to preach Christ from the Old Testament and endeavored to defend the Old Testament, as Greidanus explains, from the

charges of the “Marcionites, Gnostics, and non-Christians like Celsus.”¹ Greidanus also writes that the early Christian preachers, like Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, seem to “have preached Christ from the Old Testament by using the kind of typological interpretation we find in the New Testament.”² While both Irenaeus and Martyr used typology, both men’s writings also contained numerous allegorical interpretations of Old Testament passages.

Allegorical Interpretation

Allegorical interpretation is defined by Sidney Greidanus as a method that “enables preachers to move beyond the historical meaning of a passage to a supposed deeper sense.”³ Clement of Alexandria and Origin appear shortly after Irenaeus and led the way for a complete acceptance of the allegorical interpretation of Scripture. The teachers of the allegorical method and its followers became known as the School of Alexandria. The allegorical approach was the primary method of preaching Christ from the Old Testament from the third century to the sixteenth.

Titus Flavius Clement (A.D. 150-215) was the leader of the Alexandrian school. David Dockery provides a general overview to Clement’s allegorical approach to Scripture.

He believed that in every text there was always one or more additional or deeper meanings beyond and above its primary or immediate sense. These deeper meanings were to be uncovered through allegorical interpretation. This method insisted that the literal senses, particularly of historical passages, did not exhaust the divinely purposed meaning of such passages, but that they also included a deeper, higher, spiritual and mystical sense. The literal sense indicated what was said or

¹Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 88.

²Ibid., 72.

³Ibid., 70.

done, while the allegorical showed what should be believed. The allegorical approach, then, was adopted for apologetical and theological purposes.⁴

While Origen and Clement have honorable motives for employing the allegorical method, they are not the originators of its use. The origins of the allegorical method date back to the third century B.C. in Greece. Edmund Clowney shares the background for how it came into use, saying that Origen

was following the pattern of Stoic and Platonic philosophers who had allegorized Greek mythology. Philo used the same method in order to commend the Old Testament to cultured Hellenists. The Gnostics went to much greater excess as they used allegorizing to draw out secret doctrines that were not only absent from Scripture but contradicted it.⁵

One assertion of the allegorical interpretation is that it presents a more spiritual and deeper meaning of Scripture. Clement of Alexandria is known for developing the twofold interpretation of Scripture. Blomberg asserts, “Like Philo, Clement taught that Scripture has a twofold meaning: like a human being, it has a body (literal) meaning as well as a soul (spiritual) meaning hidden behind the literal sense. Clement regarded the hidden, spiritual sense as the more important one.”⁶

Origen further believed in a threefold interpretation of Scripture. Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard write, “Thus, said Origen, the wise interpreter of Scripture must move from the events of a passage (its literal sense) to find the hidden principles for Christian living (its moral sense) and its doctrinal truth (its spiritual sense).”⁷ In his work, *First Principles*, Origen writes,

⁴David S. Dockery, “The History of Pre-Critical Biblical Interpretation,” *Faith and Mission* 10, no. 1 (1992): 13.

⁵Edmund Clowney, *Preaching Christ in All of Scripture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), 21.

⁶William W. Klein, Craig Blomberg and Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 38.

⁷*Ibid.*, 39.

The individual ought, then, to portray the ideas of holy Scripture in a threefold manner upon his own soul; in order that the simple man may be edified by the “flesh,” as it were, of the Scripture, for so we name the obvious sense; while he who has ascended a certain way (may be edified) by the “soul,” as it were. The perfect man, again, and he who resembles those spoken of by the apostle, when he says, “We speak wisdom among them that are perfect, but not the wisdom of the world, nor of the rulers of this world, who come to nought; but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God hath ordained before the ages, unto our glory,” (may receive edification) from the spiritual law, which has a shadow of good things to come. For as man consists of body, and soul, and spirit, so in the same way does Scripture, which has been arranged to be given by God for the salvation of men.⁸

Typological Interpretation

During the fourth century, a school of thought arose to counter the allegorical interpretation. Utilizing typological interpretation, it has been referred to as the School of Antioch. This school championed a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, with an added focus on a typological interpretation of Old Testament passages. Charles Fritsch defines a type as “an institution, historical event or person, ordained by God, which effectively prefigures some truth connected with Christianity.”⁹

While typology has already been defined in chapter 2 of this study, because of its difficult nature to fully comprehend, a more detailed explanation is provided by John D. Currid.

Based on a study of scriptural usage, a type may be defined as follows: it is ‘a preordained representative relationship which certain persons, events, and institutions bear to corresponding persons, events and institutions occurring at a later time in salvation history’. In other words, the New Testament writers often see in certain Old Testament persons, events and institutions, prefigurations of New Covenant truths. Thus, the New Testament teaches that Jonah (Matt. 12:39–41), Adam (Rom. 5:14), Solomon (Matt. 12:42), David (Lk. 6:3–4), and Moses (Heb. 3) are all types of Jesus Christ. In addition, Jesus is understood as the new tabernacle

⁸Origin, *Origin de Principiis*, ed. Alexander Roberts, and James Donaldson, vol. 4 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), 360.

⁹Charles T. Fritsch, “Biblical Typology,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 104 (1947): 213.

(see Jn. 1:14, in which the common translation ‘dwelt’ is literally ‘tabernacled’; cf, also, Rev. 21:3), the new temple (Mk. 14:58), and the new manna (Jn. 6:32).¹⁰

There are numerous differences to note between the School of Alexandria and the School of Antioch. Greidanus mentions, “In distinction from the allegorical method, typological interpretation can trace its roots back to the Old Testament.”¹¹ Greidanus further states,

The major difference between typological and allegorical interpretation is the way redemptive history functions in interpretation. Although allegorical interpretation may not deny redemptive history, it plays no role in interpreting Scripture. Typological interpretation, by contrast, requires redemptive history because the analogy and escalation between type and antitype are drawn within redemptive history.¹²

Where the School of Alexandria emphasized a twofold or threefold approach to the interpretation of Scripture, the School of Antioch opted for a single sense: the literal-historical. The main teachers and proponents of this view were Diodorus of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret, and John Chrysostom.

One wonders where the church would be today if the view of the School of Antioch had held prominence. Frederic Farrar, in his Oxford lectures, said of the School of Antioch,

their system of biblical interpretation approached more nearly than any other to that which is now adopted by the Reformed Churches throughout the world, and that if they had not been too uncharitably anathematised by the angry tongue, and crushed by the iron hand of a dominant orthodoxy, the study of their commentaries, and the adoption of their exegetic system, might have saved Church commentaries from centuries of futility and error.¹³

¹⁰John D. Currid, “The Use of Typology in Preaching,” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 21 (2000): 237.

¹¹Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 90.

¹²Ibid., 91.

¹³Frederic William Farrar, *History of Interpretation* (London: Macmillan, 1886), 210-11.

Fourfold Interpretation

During the beginning of the Middle Ages and well throughout, a fourfold approach to hermeneutics was applied to Scripture. Adding another layer to the threefold approach of Origen, Augustine advocated the eschatological meaning of the text alongside the literal, moral, and spiritual.¹⁴ Augustine's approach to preaching Christ from the Old Testament relied on typology, promise-fulfillment, and allegory. In defense of his allegorical approach to interpreting the four rivers in the Garden of Eden as the four Gospels, Augustine wrote, "These and similar allegorical interpretations may be suitably put upon Paradise without giving offence to any one, while yet we believe the strict truth of the history, confirmed by its circumstantial narrative of facts."¹⁵ While Augustine admitted that there could be a number of interpretations for any one text, he was fine with them as long as they adhered to the catholic rule of faith.

Fourfold interpretation dominated the Middle Ages. While there were a few different approaches to what the four senses of Scripture were, what was widely accepted is described by Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard:

A popular rhyme (in Latin, that is) that circulated widely in the Middle Ages summarizes them: The letter teaches deeds; allegory, what you should believe; the moral sense, what you should do; and the anagogical sense, what to hope for. Thus, the Bible's four senses are: literal (or historical), allegorical (or doctrinal), moral (or tropological), and anagogical (or eschatological). For example, medieval Bible scholars commonly took the word "Jerusalem" to have four senses: Literal: the ancient Jewish city; Allegorical: the Christian Church; Moral: the faithful soul; Anagogical: the heavenly city.¹⁶

The allegorical approach to interpreting Scripture led to widespread confusion over the meaning of different passages. Thomas Aquinas would refine this view to find

¹⁴Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 98.

¹⁵Augustine, *City of God*, ed. Philip Schaff, vol. 2 of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), 256.

¹⁶Klein, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 43.

the foundation for the meaning of a text to be rooted in the historical sense, yet his use of the allegorical was still prevalent. It would take the work of the reformers and their emphasis on the literal meaning of a text before the church would finally see the allegorical approach fade.

Assessment of the Methods of the Early Church

The allegorical method of the early church fathers has some positives and one strong negative. For the positives, Sidney Greidanus shares four helpful insights of the allegorical approach of the early church fathers.

First, the church fathers' use of allegorical interpretation was a genuine attempt to preach Christ from the Old Testament. Second, their preaching was generally not unbiblical, for they tended to use allegorical interpretation within the context of Scripture and the framework of the "rule of faith." Third, with the allegorical method the church fathers were able to defend the Christian character of the Old Testament rather successfully against the charges of the Marcionites, Gnostics, and non-Christians like Celsus. Finally, the allegorical method is indeed a good method for interpreting allegories.¹⁷

While the positives of the allegorical method are numerous, one negative far outweighs them: that the allegorical interpretation alters the authorial intent. When one deals with the text in a way that is unintended by the original author, that author's message becomes distorted. While the allegorical method may help us to interpret allegorical passages in the Bible such as certain parables, to use this method for other genres like narrative will only, according to Sidney Greidanus, "read alien ideas into the text."¹⁸ Greidanus further observes, "In looking for the real message at this 'deeper' level, allegorical interpretation violates the historical nature of the biblical narrative and ultimately denies the value of redemptive history."¹⁹ Since such an approach to the text is

¹⁷Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 87-88.

¹⁸Ibid., 88.

limited only by the pastor's imagination and not the intended parameters of the text, pastors would do well to discard this method when preaching Christ from the Old Testament.

The typological interpretation of the church fathers has more value when seeking to preach Christ from the Old Testament. Typological interpretation can be seen throughout Scripture, and it was a method used by the New Testament authors to present Christ from the Old Testament. Used by the School of Antioch, typological interpretation was sound in its historical interpretations of a text. Greidanus mentions that the typological approach acknowledges that "there is a progression in God's revelation."²⁰ While the use of typology can be overemphasized to the point of absurdity, the correct use of typology is a viable path to preaching Christ from an Old Testament text.

One of the strengths of four-fold interpretation is that it maintained the literal-historical interpretation as its first approach to a text. Though many layers to a text were explored, the literal interpretation was emphasized. Concerning the use of the four-fold interpretation to preach Christ, Greidanus observes,

It could suggest several ways of preaching Christ from the Old Testament: the literal sense might have a promise or type of the coming Messiah; the allegorical sense might reveal Christ by way of allegory; and the anagogical sense might reveal Christ by way of eschatology.²¹

Though the church fathers emphasized the literal sense as one of their four layers, their actual use of the other layers only served to de-emphasize the literal meaning of a text. Like the allegorical method, the four-fold method of the church fathers would distort the authorial intent of a passage. Altering the original intent should give modern

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., 97.

²¹Ibid., 107.

preachers great pause when considering using the four-fold method today to effectively preach Christ from the Old Testament.

Preaching Christ from the Old Testament in the Reformation

The Reformation brought needed clarity to the world of hermeneutics, focusing primarily on an author's intended meaning of a text. The sermons of the leaders of the Reformation, such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, serve as models for how to find and preach Jesus from an Old Testament text. Their examples are still followed today by preachers who value their approach.

Martin Luther

Though Martin Luther was raised on the allegorical interpretation of the text, after working through the book of Romans he began to abandon its use for the more literal interpretation. Farrar lists a few clear quotes of Luther's view of allegory:

“An interpreter,” he said, “must as much as possible avoid allegory, that he may not wander in idle dreams.” “Origen's allegories are not worth so much dirt.” “Allegories are empty speculations, and as it were the scum of Holy Scripture.” “Allegory is a sort of beautiful harlot, who proves herself specially seductive to idle men.” “To allegorise is to juggle with Scripture.” “Allegorising may degenerate into a mere monkey-game.” “Allegories are awkward, absurd, invented, obsolete, loose rags.”²²

Luther laid down hermeneutical principles that became the foundation for the Reformation. As Farrar lists, Luther's hermeneutic

insists (1) on the necessity for grammatical knowledge; (2) on the importance of taking into consideration times, circumstances, and conditions; (3) on the observance of the context; (4) on the need of faith and spiritual illumination; (5) on keeping what he called “the proportion of faith”; and (6) on the reference of all Scripture to Christ.²³

²²Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, 328.

²³Ibid., 332.

This sixth principle has become known as Luther's Christological Interpretation. David Dockery adds, "To Luther, the function of all interpretation was to find Christ."²⁴

Luther's Christological Interpretation placed a direct attack to the allegorical view of interpretation. To further understand Luther's view, Dockery explains,

Luther insisted that the correct use of Scripture is at once the plain sense and the sense which expounds Christ. He believed that there are not two senses of interpretation, but only one. This meant that he saw no difference between the christological principle and the grammatical-historical principle Theoretically, everything proclaimed in the OT looks forward to its fulfillment in Christ. Along with this, everything in the NT looks back to the Old. Everything is connected with Christ and points to him.²⁵

Foster McCurley writes that Luther has primarily two ways in which he works out his Christological exegesis, "(1) direct predictions of Christ and (2) indirect permeation of the gospel."²⁶ Lutheran scholar Raymond Surburg notes at least three different kinds of Christological teachings that Luther discovered within the Old Testament, namely "(1) that of the Angel of the LORD; (2) types that pointed to Christ's person, work and kingdom; and (3) rectilinear prophecies dealing with Christ's person and work."²⁷

²⁴David Dockery, "Martin Luther's Christological Hermeneutics," *Grace Theological Journal* 4 (2002): 191.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 192.

²⁶Foster McCurley, "Confessional Propria as Hermeneutic – Old Testament," in *Studies in Lutheran Hermeneutics*, ed. John Reumann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 233-51.

²⁷Raymond F. Surburg, "Luther and the Christology of the Old Testament" [on-line]; accessed 12 October 2011; available from <http://www.wlssays.net/files/SurburgChristology.pdf>, 11: Internet. This essay was taken from the 1982 Reformation Lectures delivered at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, October 28-29, 1982. Punctuation original.

John Calvin

John Calvin was a stalwart defender of the literal interpretation of a text. In his commentary on Hosea 6:2, Calvin writes, “Subtle speculations please at first sight, but afterwards vanish. Let every one, then, who desires to make proficiency in the Scriptures always keep to this rule—to gather from the Prophets and Apostles only what is solid.”²⁸ While John Calvin affirmed Luther’s views concerning justification and the allegorical abuses of Scripture, his approach to preaching Christ from the Old Testament was more Theocentric than Christocentric. In contrast to Luther, Calvin’s perspective on the loci of Scripture was more broadly accepted to be the sovereignty and glory of God. Greidanus explains, “This broader perspective enables Calvin to be satisfied with biblical messages about God, God’s redemptive history, and God’s covenant without necessarily focusing these messages on Jesus Christ.”²⁹

While Luther saw the relationship between the Old and New Testament as a contrast between law and gospel, Calvin emphasized the unity of the Old and New Testament.³⁰ Calvin emphasized this in his *Institutes*, writing “that the Gospel points with the finger to what the Law shadowed under types.”³¹ As Greidanus explains, “Whereas Luther looked for unity only in the witness to Christ, Calvin sees the unity across a broad front: one God, one Saviour, one redemptive history, one covenant of grace, and even one law.”³²

²⁸John Calvin and John Owen, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets* (Bellingham, WA: Logos, 2010), Ho 6:2.

²⁹Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 127.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 132.

³¹John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Bellingham, WA: Logos, 1997). 2.9.3.

³²Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 132.

Though Calvin's focus was more theocentric, it did not stop him from attempting to preach Christ from an Old Testament text. As Greidanus clarifies, "In focusing on the sovereignty and glory of God, theocentric interpretation is broader than Christological interpretation but does not necessarily exclude christocentric interpretation"³³ Calvin himself taught that we must read the Scriptures to find Christ. In his commentary on John 5:39, Calvin instructs, "First, then, we ought to believe that Christ cannot be properly known in any other way than from *the Scriptures*; and if it be so, it follows that we ought to read *the Scriptures* with the express design of finding Christ in them."³⁴

Greidanus points out how Calvin would see Jesus in the Old Testament in three different ways: "Christ is present in the Old Testament as the eternal Logos, as promise, and as type."³⁵ Calvin's view of Christ as the eternal Logos shaped his sermon's focus on God, for he felt that no one could know God at all without understanding the nature of Jesus. However, Calvin's approach would often lead to many of his sermons from the Old Testament to be delivered without any specific mention of Jesus. Greidanus mentions Calvin's strong belief in the unity of God's personhood, namely his strong Trinitarian view, led him to believe that whenever he preaches a "God-centered sermon, it is implicitly Christ centered."³⁶

Where Christ is encountered in Calvin's sermons is primarily in his interaction with prophetic promise. Calvin's use of promise in his preaching Christ from the Old Testament was prevalent and would follow a particular pattern. Greidanus writes, "The

³³Ibid., 137.

³⁴John Calvin and William Pringle, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John* (Bellingham, WA: Logos, 2010), John 5:39, emphasis original.

³⁵Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 141.

³⁶Ibid., 147.

main possibilities of fulfillment are: first, fulfillment in Old Testament times; second, in the coming of Christ; third, in the contemporary church; and finally, in Christ's second coming.³⁷ In his commentary on Jeremiah 31:24 where the promise of Judah being gathered together again is given, Calvin writes,

Now, were any one to ask, when was this fulfilled? We must bear in mind what has been said elsewhere,—that the Prophets, when speaking of the restoration of the Church, included the whole kingdom of Christ from the beginning to the end. And in this our divines go astray, so that by confining these promises to some particular time, they are compelled to fly to allegories; and thus they wrest, and even pervert all the prophecies. But the Prophets, as it has been said, include the whole progress of Christ's kingdom when they speak of the future redemption of the people. The people began to do well when they returned to their own country; but soon after distresses came as Daniel had predicted. It was, therefore, necessary for them to look for the coming of Christ. We now taste of these benefits of God as long as we are in the world. We hence see that these prophecies are not accomplished in one day, or in one year, no, not even in one age, but ought to be understood as referring to the beginning and the end of Christ's kingdom.³⁸

John Calvin also made a stalwart use of typology throughout his commentaries. Writing elsewhere in his commentary on Jeremiah, Calvin highlights the typology of King David.

Now we know that in David was promised a spiritual kingdom, for what was David but a type of Christ? As God then gave in David a living image of his only-begotten Son, we ought ever to pass from the temporal kingdom to the eternal, from the visible to the spiritual, from the earthly to the celestial. The same thing ought to be said of the priesthood; for no mortal can reconcile God to men, and make an atonement for sins; and further, the blood of bulls and of goats could not pacify the wrath of God, nor incense, nor the sprinkling of water, nor any of the things which belonged to the ceremonial laws; they could not give the hope of salvation, so as to quiet trembling consciences. It then follows, that that priesthood was shadowy, and that the Levites represented Christ until he came.³⁹

³⁷Ibid., 143.

³⁸John Calvin and John Owen, *Commentaries on the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations* (Bellingham, WA: Logos, 2010), Jeremiah 31:24.

³⁹Ibid., Jeremiah 33:17–18.

Evaluation of the methods of the Reformation

Luther's Christological approach is valuable for many reasons. First, it removes the text from the shackles of church tradition, allowing the Scriptures alone to interpret other Scriptures. Second, Luther stressed the need for pastors to emphasize the relevance of the text to their audiences. Third, Luther's textual approach led to an immediate emphasis on textual-expository preaching.

The Christological approach of Luther does have its weaknesses, most importantly, his contrasting view between the law and gospel. Luther's view of the law was seen to be in direct opposition to the gospel, and he created a hard line of separation between the two. Preachers who try to emphasize this contrast from each and every passage will do injustice to both, and exploit the text's authorial intent. Second, Luther's preaching also made heavy use of the allegorical method and de-emphasized the typological approach.

Calvin's Theocentric approach to preaching Christ from the Old Testament provides modern pastors with a wealth of resources. Concerning allegory, Farrar notes that Calvin "saw more clearly than Luther that the method has no foundation, and is liable to gross error."⁴⁰ John Broadus writes, "Calvin gave the ablest, soundest, clearest expositions of Scripture that had been seen for a thousand years, and most of the other great Reformers worked in the same direction."⁴¹

Preaching Christ from the Old Testament in Modern Times

As one moves into modern times, a variety of methods to preach Christ from the Old Testament come into view. This project specifically researched the methods of

⁴⁰Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, 345.

⁴¹John Albert Broadus, *Lectures on the History of Preaching* (New York: Sheldon, 1876), 115.

Charles Spurgeon, Walt Kaiser, Dennis Johnson, Bryan Chapell, Graeme Goldsworthy, and Sidney Greidanus.

Charles Spurgeon

Charles Spurgeon, easily considered one of the greatest of Baptist preachers, offered a myriad of advice to young pastors who desired to preach Christ from the Old Testament. One famous story from Spurgeon that concerns preaching Christ from the Old Testament was delivered in a sermon on May, 13, 1859.

A Welsh minister who was preaching last Sabbath at the chapel of my dear brother, Jonathan George, was saying, that Christ was the sum and substance of the gospel, and he broke out into this story: A young man had been preaching in the presence of a venerable divine, and after he had done he went to the old minister, and said, "What do you think of my sermon?" "A very poor sermon indeed," said he. "A poor sermon?" said the young man, "it took me a long time to study it." "Ay, no doubt of it." "Why, did you not think my explanation of the text a very good one?" "Oh, yes," said the old preacher, "very good indeed." "Well, then, why do you say it is a poor sermon? Didn't you think the metaphors were appropriate and the arguments conclusive?" "Yes, they were very good as far as that goes, but still it was a very poor sermon." "Will you tell me why you think it a poor sermon?" "Because," said he, "there was no Christ in it." "Well," said the young man, "Christ was not in the text; we are not to be preaching Christ always, we must preach what is in the text." So the old man said, "Don't you know young man that from every town, and every village, and every little hamlet in England, wherever it may be, there is a road to London?" "Yes," said the young man. "Ah!" said the old divine "and so from every text in Scripture, there is a road to the metropolis of the Scriptures, that is Christ. And my dear brother, your business in when you get to a text, to say, 'Now what is the road to Christ?' and then preach a sermon, running along the road towards the great metropolis-Christ. And," said he, "I have never yet found a text that had not got a road to Christ in it, and if I ever do find one that has not a road to Christ in it, I will make one; I will go over hedge and ditch but I would get at my Master, for the sermon cannot do any good unless there is a savour of Christ in it." Now since you say amen to that, and declare that what you want to hear is Jesus Christ, the text is proved-"Unto you therefore which believe he is precious."⁴²

⁴²Charles Spurgeon, "Christ Precious to Believers" [on-line]; accessed 2 September 2011; available from <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0242.htm>: Internet.

Spurgeon's interpretive methods involved two basic senses of Scripture: the literal sense and the spiritual sense. Spurgeon's literal sense would emphasize the plain intended meaning of the biblical authors while his spiritual sense would involve typology, metaphors, and even allegory. Concerning the spiritual sense, Spurgeon would caution,

In the matter of spiritualising and accommodation very large latitude is to be allowed; but liberty must not degenerate into license, and there must always be a connection, and something more than a remote connection—a real relationship between the sermon and its text.⁴³

While Spurgeon would warn his students of wild interpretations of allegory, he would often ignore this advice in his own preaching.

Sidney Greidanus lists four main methods of preaching Christ from the Old Testament that can be found in Spurgeon's sermons: promise-fulfillment, typology, typologizing, and allegorizing.⁴⁴ Greidanus explains typologizing as where "Spurgeon often pushes typological interpretation into the details and ends up with a form of typologizing which blends into allegorizing."⁴⁵ Greidanus evaluates many of Spurgeon's sermons from the Old Testament as skimping on the literal sense and maximizing on the spiritual sense.

Evaluation of Charles Spurgeon's method. While it is commendable to follow Spurgeon's advice to adhere to the literal sense of the text, Spurgeon's practice and use of allegory struggles to pay any respects to the authorial intent of a passage. As

⁴³Charles Spurgeon, *Lectures to my Students* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 75.

⁴⁴Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, 156-57.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 157.

Chapell warns, “Such an approach simply progresses without clear biblical authority.”⁴⁶ Dennis Johnson admits, “on occasion brother Spurgeon’s sermons strike me as involving much hedge climbing and ditch fording, when the Spirit of God has already blazed a clearer and more convincing trail by means of the apostolic writings of the New Testament.”⁴⁷ While Spurgeon serves as a stalwart defender of the faith, his allegorical approach to preaching Christ from the Old Testament should not be emulated.

Walt Kaiser

In addition to his commentaries and books, Walt Kaiser has written much on the topic of preaching Christ from the Old Testament. Kaiser’s book, *Toward an Exegetical Theology*, is a standard in the field of conservative hermeneutics and it provides a solid bridge between exegesis and preaching. Many who desire to preach Christ effectively seek Kaiser’s advice.

The chapter from *Toward an Exegetical Theology* that concerns preaching Christ from the Old Testament is found in chapter six, where Kaiser outlines what he calls “Antecedent Theology.”⁴⁸ Kaiser is wary of reading future concepts found later in progressive revelation back into an older text, and thereby preaching what he calls a good theology, but from the wrong text.⁴⁹

⁴⁶Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 273.

⁴⁷Dennis E. Johnson, *Him We Proclaim* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2007), 16.

⁴⁸Walter C. Kaiser, *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 136. Kaiser breathes out his meaning of this term fully in chap. 6 of his book.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 206.

Central to Kaiser's concerns is the pastor's use of canonical context. Kaiser's main point for canonical context is that the "whole canon must not be used as the context for every exegesis."⁵⁰ Kaiser further adds, "It is the mark of eisegesis, not exegesis, to borrow freight that appears chronologically later in the text and to transport it back and unload it on an earlier passage simply because both or all of the passages involved share the same canon."⁵¹

Evaluation of Walt Kaiser's method. While Walt Kaiser's book offers an excellent overview of the path from exegesis to preaching, Kaiser's advice on canonical context can prove challenging for preaching Christ from the Old Testament. While it is important that preachers not impose foreign ideas into a text or to simply apply weak proof-texts to a current passage, Kaiser's method seems to forbid any application of New Testament hermeneutics onto an Old Testament passage. This advice places Kaiser at odds with Graeme Goldsworthy and Dennis Johnson, who advocate the use of the entire story of redemption to shed light on the text.

In Kaiser's defense, he does advocate the use of the New Testament in preaching from an Old Testament passage. While many would advocate the use of the New Testament throughout the preaching of an Old Testament passage, Kaiser would place the information that is relevant from the New Testament into the conclusion of the message. Kaiser writes,

Should someone complain that no Christian exegete can or should forget that part of the Bible which was completed after the text under investigation, we respond by saying, "Of course, no one expects the exegete to do that." Subsequent developments in the revelation of theology (subsequent to the passage we have under consideration) may (and should, in fact) be brought into our *conclusion* or *summaries after* we have firmly established on exegetical grounds precisely what

⁵⁰Ibid., 81.

⁵¹Ibid.

the passage means. We do, in fact, have the whole Bible; and we are speaking (usually) to a Christian audience. Therefore, in our summaries we should point out these *later* developments for the sake of updating and putting everything in its fullest context. However, in no case must that *later* teaching be used exegetically (or in any other way) to unpack the meaning or to enhance the usability of the individual text which is the object of our study.⁵²

Understood in his own context, Kaiser's approach would not produce sermons from the Old Testament that would sound acceptable in a synagogue. Kaiser clearly advocates the use of Christological methods within the conclusions of a sermon from the Old Testament. Some, however, may struggle to accept Kaiser's approach because there are times when working out the exegesis of an Old Testament prophecy of Christ requires a study of its New Testament fulfillment.

Dennis Johnson

In his book, *Him We Proclaim*, Dennis Johnson seeks to recover the apostolic method of preaching that was used by Peter and Paul, and from this method he draws practical examples of their preaching to the various genres of the Bible. In his introduction, Johnson mentions that to preach as effectively in the modern era as Peter and Paul did in the first century, we need to see the reunion of three concepts that have seen a divorce in our modern times. Johnson writes that we need to "reunite the Old Testament and New Testament, apostolic doctrine and apostolic hermeneutics, biblical interpretation and biblical proclamation."⁵³

Drawing from Colossians 1:24-2:7, Johnson draws out seven principles that define apostolic preaching.

(1) The proclamation, explanation and application (communication tasks) (2) of the word of God written, in relation to its integrating center – Christ, the only Mediator between God and man – (content) (3) by a man called by God, gifted by the Holy Spirit, and growing in Christlikeness, (office) (4) to people made in God's

⁵²Ibid., 140, emphasis original.

⁵³Johnson, *Him We Proclaim*, 4.

image but alienated and marred by sin and its toxic by-products (listeners) (5) in the presence of God (office) (6) to serve as the Spirit's means of grace by which he replaces unbelieving hearts of stone with believing hearts of flesh and then brings immature children of God into conformity to Christ, (purpose) (7) to the glory of God in his church (purpose).⁵⁴

Central to Johnson's thesis is his assertion that the book of Hebrews is actually an apostolic sermon delivered to an early Christian congregation. Johnson explains that while all the apostolic sermons in the book of Acts were all directed to non-Christians, the book of Hebrews is the only sermon we have in the New Testament that was directed to a Christian audience. Johnson further investigates how Hebrews expounds on the Old Testament and highlights the work of Christ, providing an excellent hermeneutical model for preachers today. Johnson explains, "This book contends that the apostolic preachers through whom God gave us the New Testament normatively define not only the content that twenty-first century preachers are to proclaim but also the hermeneutic method by which we interpret the Scriptures and the homiletic method by which we communicate God's message to our contemporaries."⁵⁵

Evaluation of Dennis Johnson's method. Dennis Johnson's apostolic method of preaching Christ from the Old Testament offers a provocative approach. Every Bible believing preacher would love to have the apostolic hermeneutic in use as he studies and proclaims a message from the Old Testament.

While Johnson's apostolic method is admirable, making good use of his method can prove difficult for the pastor. Johnson admits that his advice "has not produced a rigid sermon template, or even a set of orderly exegetical steps guaranteed to link every biblical text to Christ and, through him, to our hearers in a way that will be self-evidently

⁵⁴Ibid., 95-96.

⁵⁵Ibid., 167.

appropriate to everyone.”⁵⁶ As such, his work is still valuable and yields a solid argument for the ability to discern how the apostles interpreted the Old Testament and applying their methods.

Bryan Chapell

Bryan Chapell is the author of the book *Christ Centered Preaching*, which highlights his methods and process for preaching Christ from any passage. While Chapell’s book provides a great overview to many methods of preaching Christ from the Old Testament, his book is best known for what he calls the “Fallen Condition Focus.”⁵⁷

Chapell’s foundation for his Fallen Condition Focus (FCF) can be seen clearly in the preface of his book. Here, Chapell highlights how the Bible reveals our constant inadequacy, “The Bible does not tell us how we can improve ourselves to gain God’s acceptance.”⁵⁸ Chapell further states, “Fundamentally and persuasively the Scriptures teach the inadequacy of any purely human effort to secure divine approval.”⁵⁹ Since the Bible shows us our inadequacy for securing divine approval, Chapell connects that inadequacy to our need of Jesus. Chapell asks, “How can we make all Scripture center on Christ’s work when vast portions make no mention of him? The answer lies in learning to see all of God’s Word as a unified message of human need and divine provision.”⁶⁰

As Chapell works out the FCF in greater detail, he repeatedly shows how Scripture reveals our fallen condition in order to highlight the need and way of

⁵⁶Ibid., 270.

⁵⁷Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 14.

⁵⁸Ibid., 12.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid., 19.

redemption. “The Bible” states Chapell, “is not a self-help book. The Scriptures present one, consistent, organic message. They tell us how we must seek Christ who alone is our Savior and source of strength to be and do what God requires.”⁶¹

Chapell’s foundational text for the FCF is found in 2 Timothy 3:16, which he says, “necessarily implies that even the most gifted and good persons remain spiritually incomplete apart from God’s revelation.”⁶² Chapell convincingly asserts that every passage addresses man’s fallen condition for the sake of revealing our need for a savior. Chapell writes, “Why does all Scripture reveal an aspect of our fallen condition? The clear answer is: to supply the warrant for (and to define) the character of the redemptive elements in Scripture that we can, in turn, apply to our fallenness.”⁶³

In addition to using the FCF of a passage, Bryan Chapell also encourages pastors to incorporate the use of biblical theology. Chapell defines biblical theology as, “The branch of Bible study devoted to examining Scripture in the light of the overarching themes that unite all its particulars.”⁶⁴ Chapel further shows how this can help us to relate any passage to Christ, “This means that for us to expound biblical revelation from any passage, we must relate its explanation to the redeeming work of God present there.”⁶⁵

Finally and equally as important, Chapell encourages preachers to expound the redemptive message of a text in order to correctly preach Christ. There are three different ways that Chapell says a preacher can expound the redemptive message of a text: text disclosure, type disclosure, and context disclosure. Chapell defines text disclosure as

⁶¹Ibid., 271.

⁶²Ibid., 263.

⁶³Ibid., 267.

⁶⁴Ibid., 269.

⁶⁵Ibid., 270.

when a text makes a “direct reference to Christ or to an aspect of his messianic work.”⁶⁶ Type disclosure is seen when typology can be discerned within a text, as Chapell affirms, “God's redemptive work in Christ may also be evident in Old Testament types.”⁶⁷ Chapell explains context disclosure, “By identifying where a passage fits in the overall revelation of God's redemptive plan, a preacher relates the text to Christ by performing the standard and necessary exegetical task of establishing its context.”⁶⁸

Evaluation of Bryan Chapell’s method. Bryan Chapell’s presentation of the FCF is unique in presenting Christ from the Old Testament. The positives of Chapell’s advice are numerous. First, the FCF is clearly a helpful approach which leads each sermon to a positive conclusion towards redemption in Christ. Second, following Chapell’s advice will help to keep every sermon faithfully central on Christ. Third, his included discussion of biblical theology and expounding the redemptive message of a passage make for a thorough and balanced method for faithfully preaching Christ from the Old Testament.

While the positives of Chapell’s work far outweigh the negatives, there are a few weaknesses of this approach that need to be mentioned. First, it is arguable that every text was written to address a fallen condition. For example, certain texts like praise psalms and genealogies would make for a difficult use of the FCF. Second, Chapell does not address how to make sermons that use the FCF diverse in their approach. Standard and repeated use of the FCF can make for a boring and predictable bridge to Christ in preaching. Minor negatives aside, Chapell’s FCF approach should fit nicely in any

⁶⁶Ibid., 274.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid., 275.

pastor's box of tools for how to correctly and effectively preach Christ from the Old Testament.

Sidney Greidanus

Sidney Greidanus serves as professor of preaching at Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Greidanus is a prolific author, who is well known for his books *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text*, and *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*. Understandably, the content from his work, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, was foundational for inspiring this project.

According to Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* was written "to provide seminary students and preachers with a responsible, contemporary method for preaching Christ from the Old Testament."⁶⁹ Greidanus' definition of preaching Christ is to "proclaim some facet of the person, work, or teaching of Jesus of Nazareth so that people may believe him, trust him, love him, and obey him."⁷⁰

Greidanus' work introduces and explains seven roads that lead from the Old Testament towards Christ: Redemptive Historical Progression, Promise-Fulfillment, Typology, Analogy, Longitudinal Themes, New Testament reference, and Contrast.⁷¹ While his approach uses these methods, Greidanus names his own system the "Redemptive-Historical Christocentric method," and he places it somewhere between Martin Luther's Christological method and John Calvin's Theocentric method.⁷²

⁶⁹Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, xii.

⁷⁰Ibid., 8.

⁷¹This project has defined each of these terms and provided examples in chap. 2.

⁷²Ibid., 227.

Evaluation of Sidney Greidanus' method. *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* is a powerful book with many strengths. First, Sidney Greidanus' work is the most helpful in providing an excellent overview to the many effective methods for preaching Christ from an Old Testament passage. Seven methods clearly defined and exemplified provide a myriad of ways to properly preach Christ from the Old Testament. This allows preachers many ways to highlight where Jesus is within the text and defends the presentation from becoming repetitive and predictable. Second, Greidanus' Redemptive-Historical Christocentric method builds clearly upon the reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin, and keeps his conclusions well within the parameters of biblical authorial intent.

In contrast to Walt Kaiser's views on canonical context, Greidanus stresses that "a Christian sermon on an Old Testament text will necessarily move on to the New Testament."⁷³ To neglect to do so would serve only to preach an Old Testament sermon in isolation. Greidanus' solution is, "Christian preachers cannot preach an Old Testament text in isolation, but must always understand the text in the contexts of the whole Bible and redemptive history."⁷⁴

Graeme Goldsworthy

Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture, by Graeme Goldsworthy, is a helpful book that assists pastors to apply a Christ-centered approach to all their sermons. Goldsworthy is a lecturer in Old Testament, biblical theology, and Hermeneutics at Moore Theological College in Sydney, Australia. He is the author of numerous books, including *Gospel and Kingdom*, *The Gospel in Revelation*, *Gospel and Wisdom*, and *According to Plan*.

⁷³Ibid., 230.

⁷⁴Ibid., 230.

Goldsworthy begins his book, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, by expounding on 1 Corinthians 2:2, where Paul wrote, “I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”⁷⁵ Working from this passage, Goldsworthy points out the centrality of the gospel in all Scripture. Even though the central message of the New Testament concerns Jesus Christ and his death on the cross for our sins, Goldsworthy stresses, “the whole of Scripture is filled with the sense of the divine initiative in salvation.”⁷⁶ Further, Goldsworthy adds that “biblical theology is nothing more nor less than allowing the Bible to speak as a whole: as one word of the one God about the one way of salvation.”⁷⁷ This understanding of the whole allows preachers to connect any passage to the larger picture of God’s history of redemption.

Building upon the foundation of biblical theology, Goldsworthy’s method places a strong emphasis on how to present the history of redemption. Goldsworthy’s approach links biblical theology to salvation history, as he says, “biblical theology is concerned with how the revelation of God was understood in its time, and what the total picture is that was built up over the whole historical process.”⁷⁸ In defining biblical theology, Goldsworthy writes that it “involves the quest for the big picture, or the overview, of biblical revelation.”⁷⁹ Goldsworthy then builds upon his biblical theology as

⁷⁵Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 7.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 26.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 22.

it relates to preaching since it enables us to “understand the biblical teaching on any given topic in a holistic way.”⁸⁰

With the foundation of biblical theology and the history of redemption in mind, Goldsworthy advises preachers to present both an analytic and synthetic perspective of the text being preached. Goldsworthy defines an analytic perspective as an approach that concentrates on the “details of revelation at any given point.”⁸¹ A synthetic perspective, Goldsworthy declares, gives “details that are put together in sequence to form the big picture of the text.”⁸²

Evaluation of Graeme Goldsworthy’s method. While *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* is an excellent work in its own right, it clearly improves upon the work of Sidney Greidanus and others. In particular, Greidanus’ book, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*, mentions seven methods of properly connecting an Old Testament passage to Jesus Christ. The first method Greidanus presents is the way of redemptive historical progression, the method that Goldsworthy expounds in his book.

The strengths of Goldsworthy’s approach are evident. First, Goldsworthy correctly asserts that the gospel should be central to our preaching since it is the culmination of biblical revelation and theology. Second, Goldsworthy’s method beautifully presents Jesus Christ as the central figure in salvation history and, also, as the key that unlocks the whole Bible. As Goldsworthy mentions of Christ, “he is the salvation historical event that gives significance to all others.”⁸³ Third, Goldsworthy effectively shows how the gospel work of Christ is the hermeneutical key to the Bible,

⁸⁰Ibid., 32.

⁸¹Ibid., 27.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Ibid., 52.

since the nature of Scripture is “the message about Jesus in his life, death and resurrection.”⁸⁴

The criticism of Goldsworthy’s redemptive-historical approach involves application. If one properly applies the historical redemptive method to the preaching of Old Testament texts, how can any other application be reached but that we must thank God for his redemptive work for us in Christ? Most would agree with Goldsworthy that we must not make the “Jesus bit”⁸⁵ a boring part of our preaching, but if the application is the exact same in each Old Testament sermon preached, how can one keep the discussion of the text in its history of redemption fresh in every sermon? Goldsworthy’s approach needs more homiletic discussion to help pastors see various ways that this method can be utilized to present applications from the text.

Conclusion

The survey of the history of preaching Christ from the Old Testament yields many methods that should prove useful to modern preachers. All of the preachers from the early church fathers, the reformers, and the preachers of our day have traveled down many different roads to get to Christ in the Old Testament text.

While only a few modern approaches have been addressed, it is clear that they comprehensively address all of the methods that are in use today. Popular modern preachers like Tim Keller, Sinclair Ferguson, and Edmund Clowney have all incorporated these methods into their preaching.

Moving into the project stage of this dissertation, the main emphasis was on methods that do not distort the authorial intent of the biblical writers. This project used

⁸⁴Ibid., 84.

⁸⁵Ibid., xi.

the approaches of typology, promise-fulfillment, redemptive history, analogy, contrast, long-term themes, New Testament references, and Fallen Condition Focus.

CHAPTER 4

ELEMENTS OF THE MINISTRY RESEARCH PROJECT

The ministry research project consisted of a twelve-week sermon series on the various ways to discern Christ in the Old Testament. The elements of the project consisted of a pre-series and post-series questionnaire, a focus group, a seminar on discerning Christ in the Old Testament, and weekly sermon evaluation forms. These elements were based on the project's three goals: (1) increasing my personal understanding of Preaching Christ from the Old Testament; (2) strengthening my expository preaching of Christ in Old Testament texts through the analysis and feedback of preaching through various texts; (3) helping to educate the members of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church in how to properly discover Christ in Old Testament texts. Each of the elements helped to measure the effectiveness in achieving these goals.

Scheduling of the Elements

The sermon series began in September 2011 and continued through the middle of January 2012. Four weeks of that period were allotted for a revival, a Christmas service, a Thanksgiving Holiday weekend, and a mission trip to Poland, resulting in a twelve week series during a five month period. A timeline for the project's elements consisted of the following:

1. September 11 – Began recruiting for the focus group.
2. September 21 – Conducted focus group.
3. September 25 – Began sermon series.
4. September 25 – Administered pre-series questionnaire.

5. January 15 – Conducted series recap/seminar.
6. January 15 - Conducted post-series questionnaire.
7. January 15 – Conducted focus group.

The total duration of the project was 19 weeks.

The Pre-Sermon Series Focus Group

The Focus group consisted of 7 individuals from various age groups and life stages. Understanding that one of the goals was dependent on the responses of the focus group, I chose 7 committed members of the church who I felt would consistently participate. Since the series ran primarily on Sunday evenings, I chose 7 faithful attendees of this weekly service. Five of the focus group members have been Christians for longer than 21 years. The other 2 members have been Christians for less than 10 years. One focus group member was over the age of 60, 4 were between the ages of 50-59, and 2 were between the ages of 18-29. Three of them have been members of the church less than 5 years, while all of the others have been members for more than 11 years respectively.

Each of these individuals was approached personally by me and asked to participate in the project. They were told the requirements of participation: to participate in three focus group meetings and to evaluate my sermons during the series. They were asked not to miss more than two Sundays over the course of the twelve-week sermon series. All 7 agreed to participate in the project.

The group met on Wednesday evening, September 21, for about one hour. The purpose of this meeting was to learn about each member's level of understanding of discerning Christ from the Old Testament. A couple of examples of the questions I asked are as follows: "How often do you read from the Old Testament?" and "Do you enjoy reading from the Old Testament?" I focused a lot of time on the question, "How are you

able to see Jesus in the Old Testament?” and, “Where do you see Jesus within the Old Testament?”

At the end of the meeting, the participants were given a pre-series questionnaire, the same that would be given to the church the next Sunday. Because this focus group would receive the same information as the rest of the church, the results of their questionnaires were evaluated corporately.

The Pre-Series Questionnaire Administered

The questionnaire was composed of 6 general questions and 10 terms to be matched with their definitions. (A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.) The questionnaire was designed to learn the length that participants have been a Christian and a member of the church, measure both the congregation’s attitudes and perceptions toward reading the Old Testament, and to test their knowledge of the various terms used to discern Christ from an Old Testament passage. The first two questions asked only how long they have been a Christian and how long they have been a member of the church. The next four questions focused on attitudes and perceptions towards the Old Testament and how well they felt they were able to discern Christ from a text. For example, question 6, “How well are you able to find Jesus in an Old Testament text?” was designed to measure the participant’s aptitude in discovering Christ in the Old Testament. The back of the questionnaire showed a quiz where participants had to match ten terms to their accompanying definitions. This was designed to measure the participants’ familiarity with the terms and concepts used in seeing Christ in the Old Testament. The terms included approaches such as typology, allegory, and redemptive history.

The pre-series questionnaire was administered to the church during the Sunday Evening service on September 25th. Each member in the service was handed a questionnaire with instructions and six minutes was allowed during the service for its

completion. Those under the age of eighteen years were asked not to turn in a completed questionnaire. Most of the participants completed the questionnaire within five minutes.

Synopsis of Sermons Preached

The theme of the sermon series, “Finding Christ in the Old Testament,” was derived simply from the focus of this project. Each sermon revolved around the theme of finding Christ in the Old Testament, and highlighted one of the many methods used to discern Jesus.

Sermon 1

The first sermon, “Seek, and Ye Shall Find,” introduced the overall theme of the series. The sermon focused on Luke 24:13-35 and spoke of the heart burning experience the Emmaus Road disciples had when Jesus opened the Scriptures up to them and showed, from the Old Testament, how the Messiah was to suffer and die. These disciples had looked sad, and they were confused as to why Jesus, whom they had hoped to be the messiah, died. Jesus appeared to them in veiled form and said that they were fools and slow of heart for not understanding the Scriptures. Since Jesus showed these disciples where he was in the Old Testament, changing their slow hearts into burning hearts, we would do well to journey through the Old Testament, lest we also become fools for failing to understanding Scripture.

Sermon 2

The second sermon, “The Greatest Story Ever Told,” focused on understanding the history of redemption as a method for discerning Christ in the Old Testament. Looking at Genesis 12:1-3, we placed the story within the redemptive pillars of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration and witnessed God’s salvation plan begin to unfold. The conclusion of the sermon looked into how the New Testament authors used the call and covenant with Abraham and showed Jesus as the fulfillment of the promises. The sermon

concluded with a focus on our place within the timeline, and the unique role we have as a church to proclaim the gospel message to the world until the time of consummation.

Sermon 3

The third sermon, “The Shadow Proves the Sunshine,” looked at understanding typology for discerning Christ in the Old Testament. Looking at Exodus 12:1-13, we investigated the typological fulfillment of Jesus within the Passover meal. A challenge was given to go home and study further where other parts of the Passover meal were fulfilled typologically. Application questions provided other investigative trails to link the typological fulfillment of Jesus to a list of Old Testament people, and objects.

Sermon 4

The fourth sermon, “I Know I’ve Seen that Somewhere Before,” addressed the approach of New Testament references when determining to find Jesus in an Old Testament text. For the biblical example of this approach, we studied the challenging passage of Hosea 11:1-2. After preaching from the text with attention to its immediate context, we looked into Matthew’s use of the passage in Matthew 2:15 and readdressed the topic of typology. An application section in the notes helped the church to see links to Christ from Old Testament passages by using a reference Bible.

Of particular interest during this sermon was a challenge handed out to all of the church to go and investigate the typological connections to Jesus from a prepared list of people, places and objects from the Old Testament. The first one to respond back with a completed sheet would be given a brand new MacArthur Study Bible. The response was overwhelming and fruitful for those who participated.

Sermon 5

Bryan Chappell’s Fallen Condition Focus was the subject of the fifth sermon. Preaching from Judges 6 and 7, we looked at Gideon and explored God’s use of this

fearful judge. Identifying with the fears of Gideon, we looked to Christ our savior who casts out all fears and reigns as our Prince of Peace. To better help church members to be able to identify the Fallen Condition Focus on their own, various passages were given in the application section of the sermon notes to encourage the investigation and discovery each text's Fallen Condition Focus.

Sermon 6

The sixth sermon, "Apples to Apples," looked at the approach of analogy, which is seeing Christ in the Old Testament through similarities. Preaching from Psalm 110, the sermon investigated the person Melchizedek and studied the similarities that this mysterious figure from the Old Testament has with Jesus Christ. Emphasis was given to Melchizedek being a priest-king, which are two of the three main Old Testament offices that Jesus fulfills.

Sermon 7

The seventh sermon looked at the approach of contrast, which is seeing Christ in the Old Testament through differences. This is done by comparing the attributes of a person or story to Jesus Christ in order to show the unlikeness. The text for this sermon was 1 Kings 21, the story of Ahab plotting and fulfilling the death of Naboth in order to take his vineyard. While Ahab is a wicked king who takes advantage of his people and uses his power to satisfy his greed, Jesus, though he was the king of kings, took the form of a servant and died for sinners. Jesus, who suffered the greatest injustice of history, is able to identify with and assist all who suffer injustice in our fallen world.

Sermon 8

The eighth sermon studied the Old Testament use of prophecy, which is defined as God's promises that gradually fill up until they reach their final fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Preaching from Genesis 3:15, we investigated the Bible's oldest prophecy of

the Virgin Birth. In the sermon's conclusion, we followed the path of that promise through to its fulfillment in the New Testament. Many examples were given in the application notes for people to see how prophecies are used elsewhere in the Old Testament.

Sermon 9

The ninth sermon addressed the method of long term themes as a means of discerning Christ in an Old Testament passage. Preaching from Isaiah 7, we looked at the long term theme of God's presence with his people. Through the Immanuel promise given to Ahaz, we can see the desire of God to give his people comfort during frightening times with the promise of his presence. This theme of God with us repeats throughout the Bible and is fulfilled ultimately in Jesus Christ. Other longitudinal themes that were mentioned in brief were the themes of covenant, atonement, and the fear of the Lord.

Sermon 10

The tenth sermon served as a brief recap of the series and applied the lessons that had been discussed to a difficult chapter of the Bible. Preaching from Genesis 19, I showed how Jesus was present in the chapter through the previously studied methods of history of redemption, typology, New Testament references, Fallen Condition Focus, analogy, contrast, and prophecy. We studied the story of Lot and learned how we are to escape worldly corruption through our relationship with Jesus Christ. Some attention was paid to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the connection of its imagery to the judgment preaching of Jesus. We also looked at the incestuous union of Lot and his daughters and how that produced the Moabite race from which Ruth, the grand-mother of King David came.

Sermon 11

The eleventh sermon, “Faithfully applying the Bible,” also served to apply the methods that have been studied in all prior sermons. The sermon focused on Deuteronomy 4:1-8 and looked at faithfully applying the Bible to all areas of life. Highlighted during the conclusion of the sermon was how Jesus was present in the text through the methods of history of redemption, New Testament references, Fallen Condition focus, analogy, contrast, and long term themes.

Sermon 12

My final sermon for the series addressed one of the more debatable ways to discover Christ in the Old Testament, the method of allegory. Pros and cons of this approach were investigated and a list of examples of allegorical preaching from other pastors was communicated. Then, to provide a sample of this method, I preached allegorically from Song of Solomon 3.

Evaluations from the Focus Group

There was ample feedback from my focus group throughout the project that measured biblical faithfulness, interest, and content. Space was provided for the focus group to provide advice, correction, and/or encouragement. While some did not add much to the provided space, many took the liberty to write extended responses to the sermons.

The questions about biblical faithfulness scored high marks throughout the series. Almost every sermon in the series received a perfect score for the statement, “The sermon focused on the biblical text.”¹ The only caution observed from the focus group was that some felt I was sacrificing information on textual context to spend more time on

¹See appendix 2 for the full sermon evaluation form that was used throughout the series.

explaining the method in study. Because of this, they gave me a low score to the statement, “I believe I have a much better understanding of the passage after hearing this sermon.” This concern was only voiced for three of the sermons in the series.

Statements on the feedback form that concerned interest scored the highest for all if the areas measured. There were high marks throughout the feedback forms for the statement, “The sermon was interesting.” Also earning high marks was the statement, “The sermon was inspiring, encouraging and/or convicting.” In the feedback space on the sheets were consistent remarks about the excitement of learning new approaches to seeing Christ and the personal growth that was being sensed.

The statements on the feedback form that related to content received the most mixed feedback throughout the series. Some would give high praise for the opening illustrations while others were not as enthused. One reviewer warned that my opening illustrations were drawn out too long and that I needed to get to the text quicker. It was clear through the feedback that a few of my illustrations in the series worked well with the younger participants yet were not as understandable to the older participants.

The feedback section provided space for additional thoughts or insights to the series. Many took the opportunity to provide encouragement to me through expressing excitement over what they were learning in the series. More than one member shared how they were previously unaware that there were so many methods to discern Christ from an Old Testament passage. Their feedback made it clear that they found the series both enjoyable and rewarding.

Sermon 1

I received all 7 evaluations from my focus group for this sermon. While most of the feedback indicated a strong launch for the series, one respondent reported that the introductory illustration seemed a “little lengthy.” Another member of the focus group, a college student, wrote, “This was perfect for me, because I haven’t been reading my

Bible like I should, it's exactly what I need." While high marks were given for the biblical focus of the sermon and a strong level of interest, one member remarked that it lacked a few relevant illustrations.

Sermon 2

I received 6 evaluations from my focus group for this sermon. While the sermon scored high in levels of interest and biblical integrity, one noted that "it was close to being too much information to handle in one setting." That comment brought an immediate adjustment to the level of content that was printed on the sermon notes that were distributed during the services.

Sermon 3

This sermon yielded 5 evaluations from the focus group. The scores indicated that this sermon was the strongest one in the series, both for biblical content and strength of delivery. The only criticism was that my definition for typology was confusing, but when I put it into everyday language, "it was very clear." Another member wrote that "through your sermons, I've learned more in-depth things in the Old Testament that I had never heard before."

Sermon 4

Only 4 evaluations were turned in from the focus group for this sermon. The scores indicated that this sermon was one of the weaker sermons delivered in the series. Some within the focus group reported that they were pleased to learn that they already possessed the correct tool to discern the method of New Testament references, namely a reference Bible. One person responded that I did a good job showing "that the Old Testament passages that are used by the New Testament can be used in exciting ways that are unexpected."

Sermon 5

This sermon generated 5 evaluations from the focus group. The scores indicated that this sermon was one of the weaker sermons delivered in the series. Some respondents indicated that they preferred more background information on the text than what was given during the sermon. One wrote, “I do not believe I ever heard the phrase ‘Fallen Condition Focus’ before but the idea was clearly explained.”

Sermon 6

All 7 members of the focus group were present and commented on this sermon. The scores indicated that this sermon was one of the stronger sermons delivered in the series. One wrote that it was a “strong presentation of a rather difficult subject.” Another member of the focus group felt strongly about the subject matter to write

I think that one could argue that David saw himself in the order of Melchizedek by the synonymous New Testament phrases of both “in the order of David” and “in the order of Melchizedek,” to describe the role of the messiah, the choice of David to move the cultic and governmental city to Jerusalem, the understanding of the fulfillment of God’s promises in 2 Samuel 7:13-16, and finally the practices David does in 2 Samuel 6:12-19. Namely that David leads the procession of the priests, wears priestly garments, and offers sacrifices to God that are shown to be honored by God’s favor that follows in the promises of the next chapter. Great sermon!

Sermon 7

Six evaluations were handed in after the completion of this sermon. The scores indicated that this sermon was one of the strongest sermons delivered in the series. Since the sermon was preached on an obscure passage, one reviewer wrote, “I hadn’t really heard this passage before.” There was not much feedback on the evaluations other than a few encouraging remarks to keep going with the series.

Sermon 8

This sermon yielded 5 evaluations from the focus group. The scores indicated that this sermon was one of the stronger sermons delivered in the series. It was clear at this point that some of the focus group were beginning to apply what they had been learning on their own. One responded, “It has been eye opening to realize that ‘all’ the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, focus on Jesus.”

Sermon 9

This sermon yielded 5 evaluations from the focus group. The scores indicated that this sermon was one of the more average sermons delivered in the series. I made a mistake of sharing how long term themes can be seen as part of a “rare multi-fulfillment prophecy,” and was corrected by a respondent who said, “I am unsure that multiple fulfillment is as rare as you said.” He did go on to mention, “I think this was the best of your series so far.”

Sermon 10

This sermon applied all of the previous information from the series and yielded 6 evaluations from the focus group. The scores indicated that this sermon was one of the stronger sermons delivered in the series. I took the text as a challenge from my congregation to give me the darkest chapter they can find in the Old Testament where they cannot see Jesus. One member submitted Genesis 19, and after the sermon, a member of the focus group wrote, “it seems safe to assume that if Jesus can be found in Genesis 19, he can be found throughout.”

Sermon 11

Another recap sermon that applied the methods taught prior, this sermon produced 5 evaluations from the focus group. The scores indicated that this sermon was

one of the weakest sermons delivered in the series. The sermon was put forth as an example of the methods learned applied to a common passage from the Old Testament. With attention only given to the methods in the conclusion of the sermon, one member of the focus group responded, “this sermon seems out of place in your series, but I understand why you preached it.” Another wrote, “you have provided me with a helpful template with which to seek Christ in all Old Testament passages.”

Sermon 12

The final sermon in the series yielded 4 evaluations and was scored as the weakest in the series. One reason for this was that the sermon was an allegorical sermon, which is clearly out of character and comfort for me to preach. While the feedback was encouraging, one member of the focus group felt that my definition of allegory needed improvement. He wrote the longest response of any evaluation:

I think it would be helpful to use the more standard definition of allegory as, “a representation that is intended by the author, extended over several lines of text.” I would argue that your definition is a specific way of using allegory that may or may not be problems. It is also helpful to show specific passages that call themselves allegory in the New Testament. I think that your sermon could have benefitted to show where the Bible uses allegory, such as Isaiah 5 and Galatians 4. Some of your positives were good, but your cons minimize the allegorical nature of the author’s intent. I think a major con is that you can force allegory onto a text when the author didn’t intend to use it. With that in mind I think the cons you mention are legitimate but not universal, and only apply when the text is not allegorical, and we try to force an allegory on the text that doesn’t fit. I also think because God is also the author and it is useful to teach people beyond the historical context that texts can be used allegorically as applications, as Paul uses this story of Sarah and Hagar. The New Testament uses the Old Testament in ways that original audience wouldn’t understand, like Matthew’s use of Hosea 11:1. This originally speaks of the Exodus, and no audience of Hosea 11:1 would know it refers to Christ. I think your sermon is a good one but since all good love stories are images of Christ’s love for the church, then we can make the connections legitimately. This method is hard but discussion of the kind of allegory you cite with a well trained pastor can be very faithful when done in humility. Thank you for discussion even though you don’t recommend this method.

The Post-Sermon Series Seminar

On Sunday evening January 15, during the Sunday evening service, I hosted a post-sermon series seminar to help recap all of the methods learned throughout the series. Developed from the research in chapters 2 and 3, the seminar reexamined all of the methods that had been preached, and stressed the value of communing with Jesus no matter where one reads from the Bible. The members present were commissioned to go and to adventure through the Old Testament with open eyes to find where Jesus is present in the text.

The purpose of the seminar was to better educate the congregation on what had been preached, and to equip members with the necessary tools to find Christ in the Old Testament on their own. Since many of the participants had missed some of the services, this seminar equipped them to fill in the gaps. Each participant was provided with detailed notes and an annotated bibliography for further study. The notes highlighted each method with definitions, questions to help utilize the method within the Old Testament text, and suggested tools to help discover each method. While this information had been included in the sermon notes for each sermon members now had all of the needed material in one place.

The Post-Test Questionnaire Administered

The post-test questionnaire was administered on January 15 during the Sunday evening service and following the post-series seminar. This questionnaire was the same as the pre-test questionnaire. The purpose of administering the same questionnaire was to evaluate the effectiveness of the sermon series in achieving the project's goals by comparing the pre and post-test results. The same format was also used in administering the test.

The Post-Sermon Series Focus Group

The final meeting for the focus group was Sunday afternoon, January 15. The meeting lasted for one hour and was designed to assess their growth in understanding and finding Christ in the Old Testament. I asked questions similar to the ones asked during the first focus group session. In addition, I asked questions that encouraged the focus group to provide feedback concerning the project as a whole and my preaching.

CHAPTER 5
EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Analysis of Data

The pre-series congregational survey yielded an initial 28 surveys compared to a post-survey yield of twenty-nine. With each Sunday evening service averaging 45 members in attendance, the project was supported by a modest participation rate. The pre-survey and post-survey data were entered on a spreadsheet for analysis. After examining the results, it is easy to conclude that there is significant statistical change that occurred as a result of the project.

The first question on the survey asked the participants how long they had been a Christian. The data for both surveys reveal that both the pre-series group and the post-series group had a different makeup (see Table A1 in Appendix 4). The largest groups from both surveys were individuals who had been members and Christians for more than 21 years. For the pre-series survey, 23 people had been a Christian for more than 21 years and only 5 of the pre-series respondents had been a Christian for less than 21 years. For the post-series survey, 19 of the respondents had been a Christian for more than 21 years and 10 had been a Christian for less than 21 years.

The second question on the survey asked how long the participants had been attending Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church. The data for both surveys reveal that both the pre-series group and the post-series group had a similar makeup (see Table A2 in Appendix 4). The largest groups from both surveys were individuals who had been attending the church for more than 21 years. For the pre-series survey, 12 people had been attending Bruner's Chapel for more than 21 years and 16 of the pre-series

respondents had been attending for less than 21 years. For the post-series survey, 13 of the respondents had been attending the church for more than 21 years and 16 had been attending for less than 21 years.

Questions 3 and 4 saw no significant movement in the data for their answers (see Tables A3 and A4 in Appendix 4). The third question on the survey asked how well the participants loved to read from the Old Testament and it saw a minor decrease (2 people) for the answer, “somewhat well.” Question 4 asked how well the participants had been able to grasp the historical background of the Old Testament, and it saw a slight increase (4 people) for the answer “very well.”

The more significant increases in the survey were noted for questions 5 and 6 (see Tables A5 and A6 in Appendix 4). Question 5 asked how often the participants believed that Jesus could be discerned in the Old Testament and it saw a 5 person increase, 24 of the 28 survey respondents, for the answer “every chapter.” Question 6 asked how well participants were able to find Jesus in an Old Testament text and only 2 people indicated the answer, “not very well,” compared to the 8 respondents from the pre-series survey. These results are encouraging to the overall success of this project.

The greatest noticeable improvement between the pre-series survey and the post-series survey involved the matching test (see Table A7 in Appendix 4). Participants were asked to match 10 terms with their corresponding definitions. The surveys were scored on a 100 point scale, 10 points per definition. One hundred was the highest possible score and zero was the lowest possible score. The average score from the 28 pre-series surveys was a grade of 65. The score from the 29 post-series surveys saw a noticeable increase to a grade average of 81. In most primary schools, these grades would reflect a movement from a failing F to a passing C grade.

One noticeable improvement from the pre-series test to the post-series test was the total number of perfect scores. Scoring the pre-seminar test, 5 participants scored a

perfect score of 100. The post-seminar test results yielded a perfect score for 15 participants.

When the test results of people who had been members of the church for more than 21 years were compared with people who had been members of the church for less than 21 years, some surprising results were seen (see Table A7 in Appendix 4). For the post-series test, members of 21 plus years yielded a score of 69 compared to an average of 91 for participants who have been a part of the church for less than 21 years.

By a lesser margin, the analysis of test results for member who have been Christians for more than 21 years compared to members who have been Christians for less than 21 years was also significant (see Table A7 in Appendix 4). Members who had been Christians for 21 plus years averaged 76 compared to the 91 average for members who had been Christians less than 21 years. While this project saw improvement for the long term members and older Christians in the study, there is still great work to be done.

Analysis of Focus Group Meetings

The initial focus group meeting took place on Wednesday evening, September 21. I moderated a discussion about the group's understanding of finding Christ in the Old Testament and sought to learn how well the group desired to read from the Old Testament. The first question I asked was, "How often do you read from the Old Testament?" I was surprised to learn that most of the focus group had read regularly from the Old Testament.

My second question was met with mixed emotion from the focus group. I listened closely when I asked, "Do you enjoy reading from the Old Testament?" Some of the members indicated that they enjoyed the Old Testament just as much as they did the New Testament. Others shared that they were not as enthusiastic about the Old Testament as they were the New Testament. One participant told me, "I just don't understand what

is going on in the Old Testament, but when I read the New Testament I can understand what is happening.”

My third question asked, “How well are you able to see Jesus in the Old Testament?” “Not very well,” replied one of the older participants. The energy level in the meeting was decreasing as the group shared about the places they knew that Jesus was present in the Old Testament. This led quickly to my final question for the group.

My final question was the one I was the most interested in discussing, “Where do you see Jesus within the Old Testament?” Almost all of the answers involved prophetic fulfillment or debated Christophanies. The group shared how Jesus was the fourth man in the fire in the book of Daniel, and that the Old Testament tells us prophecies of his birth in Bethlehem and coming from the line of David. Some in the group believed that Jesus is the Angel of the Lord and the Old Testament person Melchizedek. One person mentioned the Isaiah 53 chapter, and how the Old Testament speaks of the suffering servant. One participant, a Sunday School teacher, shared how there are various types of Christ that appear in the Old Testament. I was surprised to hear him define typology and mention the sacrificial offerings of Leviticus. One of the participants, a Southern Seminary student, declined to share what he knew in this discussion.

I ended the seminar by explaining to them that my upcoming series was going to focus on discerning Christ from the Old Testament through every major method that is known. I gave them all sermon feedback forms and asked them to be present for all of the services where I would be preaching the series. The participants were excited and eager to begin the series and to learn more ways to see Jesus in the Old Testament.

The most valuable feedback for the project came at the final focus group meeting on Sunday, January 15. There was great excitement and affirmation present in this meeting. First, the participants shared how this project increased their desire to read the Old Testament. One gentleman shared how he had begun to see and experience Jesus

in new ways as a result of the series, and he was thankful for my willingness to preach on this subject. Others also shared how they had been introduced to new ways of seeing Jesus that they had been previously unaware. This discussion encouraged me in seeing fulfillment for the third goal of this project, which is that people would grow in their understanding of seeing Christ in the Old Testament and, as a result, their love for the Old Testament would grow.

The second area of discussion concerned my delivery of the sermons. Most everyone complimented me on taking some deep theological concepts and breaking them down where they were understandable. The group shared how they sensed that I personally loved this topic, and that led to a fresh excitement coming through in the delivery of the sermons. The sermon evaluation forms, which are examined in detail in chapter four of this project, provided high marks throughout for interest level and delivery of the series messages. This feedback was encouraging for the first and second goals of this project.

I asked the members of the focus group if they could remember any of the sermons that were helpful to them. One gentleman shared how I opened up the sermon on typology with an illustration about Sherlock Holmes solving a crime by matching a typewritten letter to a typewriter. That image of the type corresponding to a typewriter helped him to understand the typology of Jesus. Most all of the group shared how well they remembered the sermon on typology. Another shared how the sermon on Melchizedek was helpful and he remembered the great analogy of the sermon was that Melchizedek was a priest-king.

In the final minutes of our meeting, I asked the group, “What new way to see Jesus did you learn during this series, which perhaps has become one of your favorite ways to see Jesus in the Old Testament?” One member said, “I always have loved prophecy and continue to see it as my favorite way to discover Jesus, but I have been awakened to typology and look forward to seeing Christ this way.” Others shared how

well they enjoyed the sermon on Typology. Another participant shared how she enjoyed seeing the long-term themes that tie the whole Bible together. New Testament references got a mention for being the easiest way to see Jesus in an Old Testament text, as long as one has a reference Bible.

Evaluation of Goals

The goals for this project serve as the criteria for evaluating its effectiveness. With the help of the pre-series and post-series survey, as well as the focus group feedback, all three goals that were laid out at the beginning of this project can now be fully evaluated.

Goal 1

The first goal of this project was to increase my personal understanding of preaching Christ from the Old Testament. This goal was achieved as I journeyed through the preaching of the sermon series. I was able to explore many of the methods that are used to discern Christ from the Old Testament and grew in my understanding of how to discern and preach them.

The strongest areas of personal understanding through this project came in my study of typology, Fallen Condition Focus, and long-term themes. For typology I was able to go deeper than I ever had before, personally encouraging me to look for Christ in more places. The simplicity of Fallen Condition Focus and its power to connect people to the sermon was improved as a direct result of this project. For long-term themes, I discovered Gospel preachers like Tim Keller who utilize this method in their preaching to be a great encouragement to me.

Goal 2

The second goal of this project was to strengthen my expository preaching of Christ in Old Testament texts through the analysis and feedback of preaching through various texts of the Old Testament. In the focus group meetings, I sought feedback from the team and asked them to assess the clarity of Christ within the texts preached. I also asked them to provide feedback on the sermon evaluation forms that concerned the interest level of the sermons.

Eleven of the twelve sermons preached in the project series were expository messages. Another eleven of the twelve sermons preached in the series were from Old Testament texts. The Old Testament genres covered included prophecy, narrative, poetry, and law. The feedback from the focus group was overwhelmingly favorable concerning biblical focus, interest, and a proper discernment of Christ within the texts preached. Some of the focus group members indicated an excitement with the new approaches to see Christ that were presented throughout the series. With the feedback of the focus group, and more feedback from general participants in the project series, I feel that this goal was successfully achieved.

Goal 3

The third goal of this project was to help educate the members of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church in how to properly discover Christ in Old Testament texts. My desire was for the congregation to see the Old Testament as Christian Scripture. My hope was that such information would increase their desire to read the Old Testament, and further increase their love for God and His Word.

To evaluate this goal I looked at the results of the pre-series survey and the post series survey. To see the grade of the participants of this project move from a 65 to an 81 is an incredible success toward this goal. While this project was a great step forward, more steps will need to be taken to help my congregation go further.

One direct area where the work of this project will show up in my future Old Testament sermons is in the note handouts that the members of my church receive. On the back of each note sheet will be a section entitled, “Where is Jesus in this text?” Following that title will be a run-down of all of the major methods from this project, where applicable, with a one sentence explanation of how Christ can be seen with that method. This feature has already generated some positive feedback from my congregation.

Evaluation of Process

There are a few things that I would change if I had to do the project over again. One change I would make is that I would have added more participation activities to the church throughout the project. During my sermon for typology, I gave away a study Bible to the first person who would go home and work on a list of types that I had provided. Participants were asked to research some people, places, and objects in the Old Testament and then connect them to Christ through typology. The resulting participation was both high and rewarding for the members who took on the challenge. With better planning, I could have implemented more challenges throughout the series.

Another change I would make is that I would have requested a year off to deal with my cancer prognosis and resulting surgeries. I received a diagnosis for sarcoma cancer early in the research stage of this project that gave me a life expectancy of two years. Three surgeries with long and stressful recoveries resulted in a difficult management of time between my family and my church. By God’s grace, today I am in a place where the cancer appears to have been fully removed. Though not out of the woods yet, I will need four more years of tests to make sure the cancer is truly gone. Though I did not request a year off, I had to take a year off from the writing as I dealt with this concern.

Analysis of Project Timing and Congregational Demeanor

Throughout the preaching of this series there were a number of hardships that I had to manage. During the second week of this project an exodus of eight members took place. While they were silent about their exodus, the resulting negative feelings felt throughout the church had to be addressed. Time spent in visits with these members revealed a myriad of reasons as to their departure. Included in the list of reasons, a few departing members mentioned their dislike for verse-by-verse preaching. Others mentioned that they did not like having printed notes to fill out as they go through a sermon. This information caused me great stress as I was in the beginning stage of the series. I am thankful for the timing of this project to keep me focused on the task of preaching as I endured through this hardship.

The timing of the sermon series was also problematic. The sermon series would have run better as a summer or winter series than it did as a fall series. Running it in late fall led to some of the sermons competing with people's holiday plans and vacations. There were many sermons where even the people in my focus group could not attend due to traveling.

As the project neared its end, there was a great feeling of accomplishment and spiritual renewal among the members. More as a result of God's work in my church than from this project, it was enjoyable to see how this project fed into the life of my congregation. In the interim time since the exodus, we have all sensed a deepening of care for one another and are facing the future with a renewed unity and excitement.

Written Survey Analysis

I was initially discouraged by the low involvement of my Sunday night group with the surveys. With 49 in attendance the first night of the series, only 28 of them filled out a survey. During the sermon series, I was able to read a seminary research paper of a previous pastor of my congregation. I read how he was also discouraged by a low

involvement from the church for a survey he conducted. I realized that since this was common for my church, I had better forge ahead without concern.

For those who did participate in the surveys, there was ample information provided in the resulting data to benefit this project. While I would improve on some of my definitions in the survey if I were to do this project again, I am thankful for the feedback and insight that the surveys provided.

Sermon Series Process Analysis

The sermon series covered nine major methods of discerning Christ from an Old Testament passage. Eight of the methods were recommended to my congregation as excellent methods for use in personal study. One method, allegory, was given with great caution for personal use. Two sermons provided a recap of the methods by applying them to some requested Old Testament texts. I was pleased with the way the series was planned and executed.

Theological Reflection

I knew from Jesus' own preaching that the Old Testament was full of references, stories, prophecies, and types that point to him. This project has pushed me to see, deeper than ever before, how these passages reveal Christ. This project has been an incredible blessing for me to see the glory of Christ throughout the pages of the Old Testament. I have learned that my sermons from the Old Testament can be Christ centered without sacrificing the intent of the text.

There is a great need in all of our churches for solid biblical literacy. I have found this project provide a great encouragement for people to learn and read the Old Testament. Seeing Christ in the Old Testament has enhanced my church's understanding of biblical theology and has deepened their hunger for the Bible. I trust that the fruit of this project will last for many years.

This project has reinforced my commitment to expository preaching. While some in my congregation have voiced their disapproval of a verse-by-verse approach, many have voiced their strong approval. This project has assisted in proving that we can learn the deeper things of Scripture and experience growth in our faith. I have enjoyed watching the “light bulbs” turn on in the minds of my church members as I journeyed through this project. Seeing the fruit that this project has born, I will not abandon Paul’s command in 2 Timothy 4:2 to, “preach the word.”

Personal Reflection

To know Christ personally had been the greatest experience of my life. To be able to commune with him from any chapter of the Bible is absolutely priceless. I cannot put into words how much this project has impacted my own devotional life and preaching ministry. As a direct result of this project, I approach my quiet times in the Old Testament with greater anticipation and excitement. I approach my pulpit with an energy that is fueled from a better knowledge of how to preach Christ.

To know that my preaching in the Old Testament is relying on proven methods to present Christ has given me greater confidence in the pulpit and greater joy in the study. I am thankful for the fruit this project has produced in my life and am I am excited to see what great adventures lay ahead.

Last, I have been thankful for the positive ways that this project has impacted my family. My children look at the Old Testament stories now with the big picture of how it all points to Jesus. My wife has been equipped in her reading and teaching to better show others where Jesus in the text. Our family devotions in the Old Testament include time discussing where Christ is present in the story.

Conclusion

This project of preaching Christ from the Old Testament was a great success in the life of my church. Equipping the saints of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church to see and savor Christ in all of the pages of Scripture has been one of the most rewarding preaching experiences of my life. Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church endeavors to share the Gospel of Christ to Harrodsburg and the world. And my prayer is that it would be the love of Christ experienced daily in fellowship with him in his word that would propel and control us.

APPENDIX 1

SURVEY

Agreement to Participate.

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to ascertain your beliefs and understandings about certain issues. This research is being conducted by David M. Crowe for his Doctor of Ministry project for Southern Seminary. This research is seeking to equip Christians to discover Jesus throughout the Old Testament. In this research, you will answer questions concerning your knowledge about finding Jesus in Old Testament passages. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Personal Information

Please write your name:

How long have you been a Christian?

1-5 Years 6-10 Years 11-15 Years
16-20 Years 21 plus years

How long have you been a member of Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church?

1-5 Years 6-10 Years 11-15 Years
16-20 Years 21 plus years

1. How well do you love reading from the Old Testament?

- A) Not very well
- B) Somewhat well
- C) Very well

2. How well have you been able to grasp the historical background of the Old Testament?

- A) Not well at all
- B) Somewhat
- C) Very Well

3. How often do you believe that Jesus can be discerned in the Old Testament?
- A) I believe that Jesus can be found in some of the Old Testament books.
 - B) I believe that Jesus can be found in most of the Old Testament books.
 - C) I believe that Jesus is mentioned in some way in every chapter of the Old Testament.

4. How well are you able to find Jesus in an Old Testament text?
- A) Not very well
 - B) Average
 - C) Very well

The following terms are used in the study of discovering Jesus in an Old Testament text/
Try to connect the following terms to their definitions. Place the appropriate letter of the definition in the blank spaces next to the terms below:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Typology ____ | 6. Covenant ____ |
| 2. Promise/Fulfillment ____ | 7. Contrast ____ |
| 3. Allegory ____ | 8. Long Term Theme ____ |
| 4. Redemptive History ____ | 9. New Testament References ____ |
| 5. Analogy ____ | |

- A. The unifying principle of all Old Testament history where every event and every person mentioned in the Old Testament plays some important role, leading us to the ultimate fulfillment in Jesus.
- B. To compare the attributes of a person or story in order to show unlikeness or differences to Jesus.
- C. Every story in the Bible plays a role in this history of salvation and points forward to Jesus.
- D. The sharing of similarities. Example: what God was for Israel to what God through Christ is for the New Testament church.
- E. Recurring topics that appear all throughout scripture and have their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus.
- F. A pattern of redemptive acts that finds its ultimate conclusion in Jesus Christ.
- G. When a New Covenant author writes about the Old Covenant in a way that reveals Jesus.
- H. God brings his promises at one stage in history and brings them to fruition in a later stage through Jesus.
- I. A symbolic representation of a story or person that speaks about Jesus.

APPENDIX 2

SERMON EVALUATION FORM

Agreement to Participate.

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to ascertain your beliefs and understandings about certain issues. This research is being conducted by David M. Crowe for his Doctor of Ministry project for Southern Seminary. This research is seeking to equip Christians to discover Jesus throughout the Old Testament. In this research, you will answer questions concerning your knowledge about finding Jesus in Old Testament passages. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	

1. _____ The sermon focused on the biblical text.
2. _____ The sermon's introduction was interesting, contemporary and was a "doorway" into the text.
3. _____ The preacher used at least one interesting and contemporary illustration as a "window" into the text.
4. _____ The sermon was interesting.
5. _____ The sermon was inspiring/encouraging and/or convicting.
6. _____ I believe I have a much better understanding of the passage after hearing this sermon.
7. _____ The pastor made *specific* application from the biblical text to the congregation.
8. What advice, correction, and/or encouragement do you have for the preacher?

APPENDIX 3
SERMON OUTLINES

- Sermon 1 Luke 24:13-35 “Seek and Ye Shall Find”
- I. Seek to know the Old Testament.
 - II. See how the Old Testament points to Jesus.
 - III. Seize the joy of understanding Scripture.
- Sermon 2 Genesis 12:1-3 “The Greatest Story Ever Told”
- I. Survey the land that was promised.
 - II. See the nation that was promised.
 - III. Seek the blessing from Abraham’s line.
- Sermon 3 Exodus 12:1-28 “The Shadow Proves the Sunshine”
- I. See the penalty of sin.
 - II. See the provision of a substitute.
 - III. See the promise of salvation.
- Sermon 4 Hosea 11:1-12 “I’ve Seen That Somewhere Before”
- I. Sense the loving care of God the Father.
 - II. Survey his near judgment on Israel.
 - III. See the promise of the returning exiles.

- Sermon 5 Judges 6-7 “Jesus, What a Friend to Sinners”
- I. Sense the fear of Gideon.
 - II. Survey the ways God addresses Gideon’s fears.
 - III. See God’s use of fearful, frail, and flawed people.
- Sermon 6 Psalm 110 “Apples to Apples”
- I. Study Melchizedek.
 - II. See the similarities between Messiah and Melchizedek.
 - III. Serve the Priest-King Messiah.
- Sermon 7 1 Kings 21 “Well ... Isn’t That Different?”
- I. Expect to suffer injustice in this world.
 - II. Explore God’s heart for justice.
 - III. Examine God’s mercy towards remorseful sinners.
- Sermon 8 Genesis 3:15 “Promises Made, Promises Kept”
- I. See the war of two kingdoms.
 - II. Study the mystery of the woman’s offspring.
 - III. Survey the end of the battle.
- Sermon 9 Genesis 19 “Escaping Worldly Corruption”
- I. Avoid all compromises.
 - II. Abandon all wordliness.
 - III. Abstain from all immorality.

- Sermon 10 Isaiah 7 “The Promise of Christmas”
- I. Stand firm in your faith.
 - II. Seek God’s revelation.
 - III. See the promises of God.
- Sermon 11 Deuteronomy 4:1-8 “Faithfully applying the Bible”
- I. Listen to it.
 - II. Live out what it commands.
 - III. Let it stand as written.
- Sermon 12 Song of Solomon 3 “Seeing Christ when Christ is not Seen”
- I. Seek Christ.
 - II. Search for him with others.
 - III. Stay firmly with him.

APPENDIX 4
SURVEY RESULTS

Table A1. Actual responses to question 1

Question 1		
How long have you been a Christian?	Pre-Series	Post-Series
1-5 Years	2	2
6-10 Years	2	3
11-15 Years	0	4
16-20 Years	1	1
21 + Years	23	19

Table A2. Actual responses to question 2

Question 2		
How long have you been attending this church?	Pre-Series	Post-Series
1-5 Years	8	7
6-10 Years	2	2
11-15 Years	3	3
16-20 Years	3	4
21 + Years	12	13

Table A3. Actual responses to question 3

Question 3		
How well do you love reading from the Old Testament?	Pre-Series	Post-Series
Not very well	1	1
Somewhat well	16	19
Very well	11	9

Table A4. Actual responses to question 4

Question 4		
How well have you been able to grasp the historical background of the Old Testament?	Pre-Series	Post-Series
Not very well	2	0
Somewhat well	20	19
Very well	6	10

Table A5. Actual responses to question 5

Question 5		
How often do you believe that Jesus can be discerned in the Old Testament?	Pre-Series	Post-Series
Some books	2	0
Most books	7	5
Every chapter	19	24

Table A6. Actual responses to question 6

Question 6		
How well are you able to find Jesus in an Old Testament Text?	Pre-Series	Post-Series
Not very well	8	2
Average	15	18
Very well	5	9

Table A7. Average term-matching results

Term Matching		
	Pre-Series	Post-Series
Overall Test Scores	64.64	81.37
Christian for more than 21 years	62.17	76.31
Christian for less than 21 years	76	91
Attended Bruner's Chapel for more than 21 years	55.83	69.23
Attended Bruner's Chapel for less than 21 years	71.25	91.25

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ABSTRACT

PREACHING CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AT BRUNER'S CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH, HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY

David Mitchell Crowe, D.Min.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Robert S. Plummer

This project sought to preach Christ from the Old Testament at Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church. Chapter 1 introduces Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church and the surrounding community. Chapter 2 establishes a biblical and theological basis for the project. The paper investigates the methods that New Testament Authors used to present Christ from the Old Testament. Chapter 3 examines the various approaches to preaching Christ from history. Three historical eras are investigated, the early church, the reformation, and the modern day church. Chapter 4 explains the process undertaken in implementing the project. Chapter 5 analyzes and evaluates the results of the project.

VITA

David Mitchell Crowe

PERSONAL

Born: March 12, 1977, Little Rock, Arkansas
Parents: Henry and Diane Crowe
Married: Ginny Suzanne Davis, May 19, 2000
Children: Elijah Henry, born October 31, 2002
Jonah Roger, born October 15, 2004
Gabriel Jeffery, born January 31, 2007
Malachi Davis, born November 4, 2008

EDUCATIONAL

B.A., University of North Florida, Jacksonville, Florida
M.Div., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

MINISTERIAL

Student Pastor, First Baptist Church of Shepherdsville, Shepherdsville,
Kentucky, 2000-03
Student Pastor/Associate Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, Elko, Nevada, 2003-
05
Pastor, Bruner's Chapel Baptist Church, Harrodsburg, Kentucky, 2006-

