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TEACHING LEADERS OF REDEEMER CHURCH,
DENTON, TEXAS, HOW TO APPLY OLD
TESTAMENT MINOR PROPHETS

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TEACHING LEADERS OF REDEEMER CHURCH,
DENTON, TEXAS, HOW TO APPLY OLD
TESTAMENT MINOR PROPHETS

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PREFACE

I love Jesus. This love is the crux of my spirituality because Christ's work is my means of salvation. Jesus reached down and saved me. His grace continues by conforming me to his image each and every day. The theology of this project is Christocentric, and it would have been impossible to complete without his persevering grace.

After Jesus, I love my wife above all others. Since seventh grade I have loved her and compared every woman to her. She is my greatest asset. She is a better pastor's wife than I am a pastor. After my salvation and sanctification, she is my greatest grace from God. In fact, Kristen and her love are two of the primary reasons I know that God is real and that God is good. Thank you for loving me well and letting me complete this degree. I love you, sweetheart.

I love our children, Mason Lawrence and Kenlee Grace. I have loved being their daddy more than I ever dreamed. I long to be a man who models the gospel so they know how to live. Mason is a tender yet courageous young man who is maturing into a true Christian gentleman. Kenlee is a loving yet convictional honeybear who brings joy to my soul when she bats her big blue eyes at me.

I love my parents, David and Alberta Caswell, who have supported me through my seminary journey. They have graciously loved me through the years, taught me to love the church, and taught me to stand up courageously for what is right. I also love my in-laws, Ken and Kathy Stockdale. They model gracious lives as well as anyone I know. They have taught this young pastor how to love others tangibly.

I love my Uncle Norman, who is the most generous man I know. He has loved me well my entire life, and now our own kids call him Uncle NorNor. We do not know

how to do life without Uncle Norman and have simply come to the conclusion that everyone needs an Uncle Norman.

I want to thank the Berkman family, who generously loved my family in different ways during different seasons. I also want to thank all our friends in Houston at Bethel Church and Christ Community Church, two bodies that we will always cherish. I also want to thank my best friend, Ross Appleton, who always believes in me, and his beloved church Christ Community Church. I also want to express my love for Redeemer Church in Denton, Texas.

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to Southern Seminary. Dr. Albert Mohler is my hero and my generation's Martin Luther. Thank you to Dr. T. J. Betts, Dr. Jim Hamilton, Dr. Michael Haykin, Dr. Robert Vogel, Dr. Michael Wilder, and Betsy Fredrick. The highlight of my Southern experience was my cohort. I deeply love and respect Dr. Paul Lyle, Dr. Jake Cooper, Dr. Matt Shakelford, and Dr. Clif Johnson.

My simple prayer is that this little offering will help others love Jesus more as they fumble through the book of Micah.

Micah Lawrence Caswell

Denton, Texas

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to teach leaders how to apply the Old Testament Minor Prophets Christocentrically through an expositional sermon series on Micah at Redeemer Church in Denton, Texas.

Goals

The first goal of this project was to increase knowledge of five leaders of Redeemer Church related to how to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets. Their knowledge was increased through attending four seminars, two focus group sessions, and listening to eleven sermons. This goal was measured by administering the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires¹ and the Sermon Evaluations.² The questionnaires were administered during the first and final seminars. The Sermon Evaluations were administered after the third and tenth sermons. This goal was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive significant difference between the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires and the two Sermon Evaluations.

The second goal of this project was to modify the affections that five leaders of Redeemer Church have for Christ as a result of interpreting the OT Minor Prophets. This

¹See the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires in appendix 1.

²See the Sermon Evaluations in appendix 2.

goal was measured by administering Pre/Post Sermon Questionnaires³ and the Sermon Evaluations.⁴ The questionnaires were administered during the first and final seminars. The Sermon Evaluations were administered after the third and tenth sermons. This goal was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive significant difference between the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires and the two Sermon Evaluations.

The third goal of this project was to equip five leaders to interpret Christ from the Minor Prophets. Participants were equipped by engaging the information presented in the four seminars, two focus group sessions, and eleven sermons. They demonstrated their ability to implement the established interpretive model, primarily Greidanus' 7 Ways to Christ, through interactions in the two focus group sessions. This goal was measured by administering Sermon Evaluations for two sermons. The Sermon Evaluations were submitted and discussed during seminars the week following the preaching of the sermon. This goal was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive significant difference between the two Sermon Evaluations.

Ministry Context

These goals were accomplished as the project was carried out at a one-year-old church plant, Redeemer Church, in Denton, Texas. Even though the congregation has heard faithful gospel-centered preaching, rather than moralistic teaching, they have had little teaching from the Old Testament and no teaching from the Minor Prophets. Since the church was launched in 2014, over 90 percent of the sermons have been from the

³See the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires in appendix 1.

⁴See the Sermon Evaluations in appendix 2.

New Testament, and no sermons have been preached from the Minor Prophets. Also, the church does not offer an adult Sunday school program; therefore attendees have been taught from only the Sunday morning sermon.

This limited exposure is a problem for them because they run the danger of not understanding elements of the gospel that are emphasized in the Minor Prophets. For example, without the Minor Prophets they are at risk of not cherishing as well as fearing the “day of the Lord” (Joel 2). They are also in jeopardy of not understanding and appreciating themes like the wrath of God (Mic 2:3) and social justice (Mic 6:8) in light of the Christ event. Finally, Christians could tend toward moralistic tendencies in their teaching if they do not interpret the Minor Prophets through a Christocentric grid. Trying to earn eternal salvation is the worst outcome of moralism, but Christians also risk accomplishing godliness solely through human effort. This project does not argue that if a leader refused to adopt Greidanus’ method that they will necessarily teach moralism. However, the principles and methods explained in this project protect a leader against moralistic teaching from the OT.

Redeemer Church is a new congregation of new believers that are in danger of misunderstanding issues vital to the faith that are found in the Minor Prophets. If the key leaders misunderstand the Minor Prophets, then the congregation as a whole will suffer. Specifically, gifted emerging leaders need to know how to interpret the Minor Prophets in order to deepen the congregation’s affections for Christ and protect them from moralism.

Rationale for the Project

The desire of this project was to help leaders learn not only the original author’s intended meaning for the text, but also know God’s present meaning for the church. However, the OT can be difficult to understand for both lay leaders and even seasoned preachers. It is difficult for anyone to understand stories from thousands of years ago

because of the cultural differences. For example, in the Minor Prophetic books preachers directly refute kings (Amos 7:11). However, Christians living in the United States of America do not live under the authority of kings. The prophets also engaged an agricultural society, while most contemporary people do not understand ancient farming techniques and thus agricultural illustrations (Joel 3:13). These cultural differences can make it difficult for leaders to apply an OT passage to contemporary audiences. When a teacher is assigned Hosea 1, it can be a challenge applying the passage to elementary school children; therefore, even though it can be difficult to teach from the OT, this project sought to equip leaders on how to explain and apply the OT to the contemporary church.

Even though Christians are the product of God's grace through Jesus' death on the cross, many still struggle with moralism. Moralism is the attempt to accomplish righteousness, or gain favor with God, through moral behavior. Like the older brother in the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), many in the church try to accomplish godliness through their own strength. These self-righteous Christians struggle with pride when comparing themselves to other Christians who struggle with different sins and are more likely to interpret the Minor Prophets in a way that could lead to moralism. For example, the story of David and Goliath is a popular story in children's Sunday school classes. However, many times the teacher unintentionally makes moralistic applications using this OT tale. Christians can identify with how Graeme Goldsworthy opens *Gospel and Kingdom*. He tells an account of a Sunday school teacher teaching from 1 Samuel 17 in a creative and engaging manner, yet ends up applying the story moralistically. The teacher's application was for the children to slay their "Goliaths" with "a sling labeled 'faith' and five stones listed as 'obedience,' 'service,' 'Bible reading,' 'prayer,' and 'fellowship.'"⁵ The problem with this particular series of applications is that it makes

⁵Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom in The Goldsworthy Trilogy* (Colorado Spring: Paternoster, 2000), 8.

David if not the only then the primary example to follow. These applications become a charge to have great David-like faith. People can hear applications of this nature as a call to muster more faith through their own moral strength. Goldsworthy explains that the danger of making 1 Samuel 17 a character study of David is that it can miss the reality that “when it comes to his slaying of Goliath it is as the unique anointed one of God that he wins the battle.”⁶ Preachers could apply a passage in a way that causes congregants to rely more on their own moral strength and less on God unless they intentionally bridge the OT story to Christ’s gospel.

Further, a Minor Prophetic book like Micah is also used by advocates for social justice in order to advance a progressive social gospel agenda.⁷ Advocating social justice using a book like Micah runs the danger of applying the text in a way that urges people toward progressive political positions yet disconnects the application from Jesus and the gospel. For example, when O’Brien argues for feminist theory using Micah, she does not ground her arguments in a heart changed by conversion to the gospel. She also does not apply the text by teaching how the Holy Spirit continues to conform believers to the image of God. Smith-Christopher also draws out an application that is restricted to politics.⁸ The book of Micah speaks to political issues, but it should not be applied moralistically.

⁶Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 28.

⁷O’Brien advocates for a progressive form of feminism using the book of Micah. She states, “Advocates for social justice love to quote the book of Micah. Its scathing critique of the wealthy who ‘covet fields, and seize them; house, and take them away’ (2:2), its radical vision of a day in which ‘nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more’ (4:3), and its plaintive insistence that what YHWH requires is to ‘do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God’ (6:8) have been rally cries for those who seek a more just world. Often paired with quotes from Amos, verses from Micah adorn the banners under which agents of change march forward.” Julia M. O’Brien, *Micah*, Wisdom Commentary, vol. 37 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2015), xxxix.

⁸Smith-Christopher applies Micah in his commentary in a way that advocates for greater equity of resources. He writes, “As I write this commentary, I am committed to historical-critical biblical scholarship and a declared sympathy with movements in the

Redeemer Church has been blessed with exegetically sound preaching as well as gospel-focused preaching; yet, they have heard very little preaching from the Old Testament. However, the OT can be confusing because of cultural barriers. Further, there is a danger of teaching the OT moralistically. The new believers and emerging leaders at Redeemer Church needed exposure to the Minor Prophets from a distinctly Christocentric approach. The leaders of Redeemer Church must understand how to interpret Christ from the Minor Prophets in order to avoid moralism.

The book of Micah was selected for a number of reasons. First, Micah provides opportunities to interpret Christ from a variety of Greidanus' 7 Ways to Christ. Different options gave me the opportunity to model effectively different Christocentric approaches. Second, the length of the book provided the congregation a manageable preaching unit. The preaching series through Micah lasted eleven weeks, which kept the audience from losing attention. Third, Micah also includes some of the key theological themes found in other Minor Prophetic books. This series included focus on the Day of the Lord, issues of social justice, and the just wrath of God, as well as the promised restoration. Fourth, many are not familiar with the Minor Prophets, yet Micah offers three important well-known verses (5:2, 4:3, and 6:8). Fifth, I have never taught through the book of Micah, therefore, it was fresh not only for the church but also for me personally.

Those who attended the seminars and heard the sermon series experienced several benefits. First, and most importantly, their affections for Christ were increased as

twenty-first century for seeking greater and more equitable distribution of the earth's resources to peoples who have been systematically suppressed, as well as movements that seek to ameliorate those inequitable situations without violence." Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, *Micah: A Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2017), 2.

they gained a fuller understanding of his grace from listening to the teachings. Second, they gained a better knowledge of the Old Testament, thus tearing down possible barriers new believers might have towards the books. Third, emerging leaders increased in their knowledge of the Minor Prophets, improved their ability to interpret this particular genre for themselves, and improved their ability to teach them to others.

Definitions, Limitations, and Delimitations

The following definitions, limitations, and delimitations need to be explained in order to understand and use the project. Some of the terms are theological in nature, while some are practical for this project. This section introduces previously developed methods, demonstrates their implementation, and then explains how to use them.

Christocentric/Christological/Christ-centered method. These three terms define a method that interprets how Christ's work of redemption makes "holiness possible."⁹ It is a method that integrates "the message of the text with the climax of God's revelation in the person, work, and/or teaching of Jesus Christ."¹⁰ This approach attempts to understand the passage on the basis of the knowledge provided about Christ in the New Testament. This Christocentric method does not give the interpreter license to interpret a passage contrary to the grammatical-historical method. Rather, Christ-centered interpretations complement the grammatical-historical method.

Expository preaching. Many have provided helpful definitions of expository

⁹Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 19.

¹⁰Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999), 10.

preaching including Robinson,¹¹ Mohler,¹² Chapell,¹³ and Heisler.¹⁴ Expository preaching is simply defined as a sermon that *explains* and *applies* the passage preached. Lectures on the Bible are not what make a sermon an expository sermon.¹⁵ Expository preaching is also not limited to consecutive exposition; however, it is my preferred method.¹⁶ The following definition was used in this project:

¹¹Robinson defines expository preaching as “the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through the preacher, applies to the hearers.” Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 21.

¹²Mohler states, “Expository preaching is that mode of Christian preaching that takes as its central purpose the presentation and application of the text of the Bible. All other issues and concerns are subordinated to the central task of presenting the biblical text. As the Word of God, the text of Scripture has the right to establish both the substance and the structure of the sermon. Genuine exposition takes place when the preacher sets forth the meaning and message of the biblical text and make clear how the Word of God establishes the identity and worldview of the church as the people of God.” R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody, 2008), 65.

¹³Chapell states, “An expository sermon may be defined as a message whose structure and thought are derived from a biblical text, that covers the scope of the text, and that explains the features and context of the text in order to disclose the enduring principles for faithful thinking, living, and worship intended by the Spirit, who inspired the text.” Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 31.

¹⁴Greg Heisler, *Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit’s Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery* (Nashville: B & H, 2007). His work has been a helpful refocus on the Holy Spirit’s work on every stage of sermon development as well as preaching the sermon.

¹⁵Tim Trumper explains, “The argument that the ‘expository’ method is the best means to cover most of the Bible is too largely connected with the idea that the foremost purpose of preaching is to convey as much as possible of the Bible. But that idea needs to be challenged. Preaching needs to be much more than an agency of instruction. It needs to strike, awaken, and arouse men and women so that they themselves become bright Christians and daily students of Scriptures. If the preacher conceives his work primarily in terms of giving instruction, rather than of giving stimulus, the sermon, in most hands, very easily becomes a sort of weekly ‘class’—an end in itself. But true preaching needs to ignite an on-going process.” Tim J. R. Trumper, *Consecutive Exposition: A Weighing of Iain H. Murray’s “Time for Caution”* (Grand Rapids: From His Fullness, 2014), 3.

¹⁶Trumper defends preaching through consecutive books of the Bible as the preferable, yet not exclusive, approach: “There is far more good than harm being done by

Expository preaching consists of a Christian preacher uncovering an author's intended meaning of a section of the Bible by means of the historical, grammatical, literal (consistent with the genre of the passage) exegesis as well as enlightenment by the Holy Spirit; then structuring a sermon not only built around the central idea of the text but also the structure and thought of the text; then placing the passage within the metanarrative of redemptive history; then interpreting a universal principle which he first applies to himself; and concluding by applying the Scripture through the power of the Holy Spirit to his audience.

Within this definition are five key components: exegesis, central idea and structure, metanarrative, universal principle, and application.

Greidanus' seven Christocentric methods. This project leaned heavily on Greidanus' 7 Ways to Christ by devoting an entire seminar to the method, making it the focus of the sessions, and measuring the leaders' understanding of the Ways to Christ in the Sermon Evaluations. He recognizes distinctions between the testaments¹⁷ and difficulties¹⁸ in interpreting the ancient texts. However, in light of these distinctions and difficulties he provides a uniquely convincing and clear method of interpreting the Old Testament Christocentrically.¹⁹ After outlining the problems and difficulties, then explaining the need to preach Christ from the Old Testament, Greidanus then provides an interesting and helpful history of preaching Christ using Old Testament texts but ultimately gives preachers the tools to interpret Christocentrically. His method is made up of seven ways or roads to Christ: redemptive-historical progression, promise-fulfillment, typology, analogy, longitudinal themes, New Testament references, and contrast.

consecutive exposition, and far more harm than good being done in wider evangelicalism by a regular diet of anecdotal preaching.” Trumper, *Consecutive Exposition*, 49.

¹⁷Greidanus states, “One does not have to begin with two different Gods to notice that there are differences between the Old Testament revelation of God and that of the New Testament.” Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 24.

¹⁸Greidanus goes on to say, “The Old Testament presents God's blessings in the area of material wealth (many children, livestock, harvests—Deut 30:9), while the New Testament sees God's greatest blessing as ‘eternal life’ (John 3:16).” Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., 227-79.

Leaders. This term defines the five key people that are the focus of this seminar training. Leaders are laymen in the church who were selected on the basis of their faithful ministry within the church as well as their potential as teachers. It was a requirement that they be covenant members of the church in good standing, serving in the church in some capacity, and recognized as future teachers or small group leaders.

Moralism. This term simply refers to the process of trying to achieve “godliness entirely as a product of human endeavor.”²⁰ Moralism not only refers to the attainment of eternal justification through human effort, but also attempts sanctification and present godliness solely through human strength and resolve. Moralism is an attempt to change sinful desires and behaviors through human strength. Moralism inevitably produces self-righteousness rather than humility within the hearts of Christians.

People of God. Before preaching any genre of the Old Testament, an interpreter must have clarity on issues of continuity and discontinuity between the testaments. Feinberg clearly states, “The more one moves in the continuity direction, the more covenantal he becomes; and the more he moves in the discontinuity direction, the more dispensational he becomes.”²¹ Most scholars agree that the Word has been revealed progressively, opening up more and more of God’s plan over time. Most also agree that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the ultimate object of the prophets’ prophecies. But a key interpretive issue that has much less of a majority consensus among evangelicals and, therefore, needed to be settled before preaching the Minor Prophets was the relationship between Israel and the NT Church. Israel and the church have distinctions, but both are the “People of God.” Obedience and faith bring blessing for the “People of God,” but the blessing is somewhat distinct between the two groups. When Israel was obedient and

²⁰Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 288.

²¹John S. Feinberg, ed., *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship between the Old and New Testaments* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1988), xii.

faithful to the Lord they received the blessing of communion with God—including spiritual peace with God, spiritual salvation from sin, physical security from hostile nations, and what Greidanus describes as “material wealth.”²² When the Church is obedient and faithful to the Lord, the Church also receives the blessing of communion with God—including both spiritual peace and spiritual salvation but not physical security or material prosperity. Greidanus argues that the church’s greatest blessing is eternal life.²³ Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT and thus the church represents the “fulfillment of Israel’s God-given mission in history.”²⁴ At this point it is also helpful to note that the United States of America is not like OT Israel, in that it does not have a covenant relationship with God. With this distinction established it was, however, important to note that Micah’s rebukes against the oppressive leaders of the nation of Israel have implications for leaders in a secular state because their God-ordained role is to establish justice in their land. However, the similarity between Israel and the church is much stronger, and the interpretive bridge from Israel in the Minor Prophets to the present Church is to understand both as the “People of God.”

Valentino’s BETA Method. Timothy Valentino’s contribution to one’s understanding of the Law genre of the OT is helpful. He created a simple yet beneficial method on how to understand the Law in light of the gospel.²⁵ I used this method, with

²²Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 24.

²³Ibid.

²⁴William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 381. They go further and explain: “The NT writers regard Jesus as the new David (cf. Isa 11:1-5; Jer 23:5-6) and the Church as the new Israel. They do not deny that Israel still exists, nor do they say it has no prophetic future (e.g., Rom 10:1-4; 11). But they stand convinced that Jesus as the Church—with both Jewish and Gentile members—fulfill Israel’s prophetic hopes and, hence, constitute God’s one, true elect people (see Eph 1-2).” Ibid., 381.

²⁵Valentino explains, “The term ‘BETA method’ refers to my own four-step approach to interpreting and applying Old Testament law in a Christian way. BETA is an acronym that stands for: (1) Back-read the law from a New Testament context; (2) Examine the law in its Old Testament context; (3) Theologize the law to its universal

slight adjustments to account for the Minor Prophetic genre, in my own personal study and instruction to the leaders on how to interpret the Minor Prophets.

This project had a limitation of fifteen weeks, including three weeks of seminars, eleven weeks of sermons, two additional sessions during the sermon series, and concluding with a seminar the week following the final sermon.

This project was limited in its focus to the Old Testament minor prophetic book of Micah. The text is a good sample for the entire genre, because it provides themes that are addressed in other books. The eleven-week expositional sermon series will go through the entire book of Micah.

Research Methodology

The research methodology for this project included a selection process that secured leaders for training, teaching four seminars, preaching eleven sermons, teaching two focus group sessions, a Pre/Post-Sermon Series Questionnaire, and Sermon Evaluations of two sermons.

As stated previously, this project had three goals. The first was to increase knowledge in the lives of five leaders of Redeemer Church related to how to interpret Christ from the Old Testament Minor Prophets. The desire for the leaders was not only know the original human author's intended purpose for the text, but also to know God's present Christocentric purpose for the church. Specifically, they learned how to interpret key Minor Prophet themes from a redemptive-historical perspective. The Minor Prophets and the book of Micah are frequently quoted in the New Testament; therefore, the congregation needed to know how to interpret and apply passages that are cited in the New Testament. In order to accomplish these knowledge goals, a small group of leaders

context; and (4) Apply the law to the present context." Timothy Ray Valentino, "Using Expository Preaching to Promote a Christian Understanding of Old Testament Law at Fleetwood Bible Church, Fleetwood, Pennsylvania" (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 19.

developed the skill of interpreting the Old Testament Christocentrically, leaning heavily upon Greidanus' Ways to Christ.

The first goal was measured by administering a Pre/Post-Sermon Series Questionnaire and Sermon Evaluations of two sermons. The focus group of leaders attended three seminars before the eleven-week sermon series. The first seminar provided an overall explanation of the goals of the project and the plans for the focus group. This seminar also explained the philosophy of expository preaching and the need for it. The participants also learned a definition of expository preaching. This first seminar addressed the basics of studying the Bible. The Pre-Sermon Series Questionnaire was administered during the first seminar. The second seminar addressed the Minor Prophets, including the themes of the "day of the Lord," the wrath of God, and social justice. The third seminar focused solely on Greidanus' method of Christocentric hermeneutics. After the third and tenth sermons the focus group of leaders filled out Sermon Evaluations and met for a discussion session. During these sessions they participated in a number of activities demonstrating their ability to interpret correctly the Way to Christ from a selected passage. After the eleventh and final sermon, I led the focus group through a fourth (and final) seminar reviewing what they learned about interpreting the Minor Prophets Christocentrically. The focus group also completed the Post-Sermon Series Questionnaire at the close of this final seminar.

The two questionnaires²⁶ and sermon evaluations²⁷ were the same document, one administered at the beginning of the project and the other at the end. The results of the questionnaires and evaluations were compared in order to measure the effectiveness of the project. The questionnaires were a series of Likert Scale questions. The two Sermon Evaluations also included a series of Likert Scale questions. This goal was

²⁶See the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires in appendix 1.

²⁷See the Sermon Evaluations in appendix 2.

considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrates a positive significant difference. A t-test of dependent samples “indicates that a single group of the same subjects is being studied under two conditions”²⁸ and determined if the subjects experienced measurable change as a result of the project.

The second goal of this project was to modify the attitudes or affections that five leaders of Redeemer Church have for Christ as a result of interpreting the Old Testament Minor Prophets. Personal study along with public proclamation of the Old Testament should have stirred their affections for Jesus. Following Jesus’ and the apostles’ teaching, Christians should understand the Old Testament in light of Jesus and his gospel of grace. This distinctly Christian approach to interpreting the Minor Prophets naturally caused the leaders to love Jesus more and was specifically addressed in the third seminar that trained them in Greidanus’ method outlined in the book *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*. This goal was measured by administering Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires²⁹ and the Sermon Evaluations.³⁰ This goal was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive significant difference.

The third goal of this project was to equip five leaders to interpret Christ from the Minor Prophets. Leaders need head knowledge about hermeneutical principles, but they also need time to develop the skill of interpretation. This goal was measured by administering Sermon Evaluations for two sermons. After the third and tenth sermons the focus group of leaders filled out Sermon Evaluations and meet for a discussion session. During this session they participated in a number of activities demonstrating their ability to rightly interpret the Way to Christ from a selected passage. This goal was considered

²⁸Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008) 189.

²⁹See the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires in appendix 1.

³⁰See the Sermon Evaluations in appendix 2.

successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive significant difference.

The questionnaire and the sermon evaluation were field tested by a group of four area pastors prior to use. All aforementioned research instruments were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

CHAPTER 2
BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT OF
PREACHING CHRISTOCENTRICALLY
FROM THE MINOR PROPHETS

Jesus and his Apostles provide examples of preaching Christ from the Old Testament (OT) Minor Prophets.¹ Even though leaders might not naturally see themes of Christ as they read the Minor Prophets, the New Testament (NT) writers made connections as they explained and applied the prophets. Further, the Bible provides a principle for interpreting the Minor Prophets Christocentrically. Jesus' and the Apostles' use of the OT illustrates their Christocentric exegesis. Finally, the Minor Prophetic book of Micah will be used to highlight how it can also be interpreted Christocentrically.

A Christocentric Exegesis of Luke 24:13-27

Those who advocate preaching Christ from the Minor Prophets commonly cite Luke's "Road to Emmaus" account.² The passage is helpful because Jesus is teaching after his resurrection. Preaching Christ by using the OT was not just an approach used by the disciples, but also Jesus himself!³ The content of Jesus' preaching provides

¹The only example from Christ and the apostles in the NT is a Christocentric interpretation. Exegesis of the NT passages in this chapter (Luke 24:13-27, Matt 5:17, Acts 2:14-41, Matt 2:6, Matt 28:19-20) support this claim.

²Green writes, "The possibility of insight for Jesus' followers is strengthened, however, by the intervention of Jesus in the Emmaus scene, for he opens the Scriptures and, in doing so, opens the eyes of additional disciples." Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997), 841-42.

³Stein explains, "Jesus himself explained his passion and entrance into glory as the fulfillment of the OT prophecies." Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: B & H, 1992), 612.

contemporary preachers a principle of interpreting Christ from the Minor Prophets.⁴

The passage records two men walking to a village (Emmaus) outside of Jerusalem shortly after Jesus' resurrection. Jesus appeared on the road, yet "their eyes were kept from recognizing him" (24:16). This verb is in the passive voice, which Stein labels the "divine passive."⁵ Therefore, sovereign induced blindness followed by illumination is a literary theme running through the passage. The two men began sharing the events of the previous weekend with their new acquaintance. They previously had believed, evidenced by their hope "that he was the one to redeem Israel" (24:21) as well as their description of the women who went to Jesus' tomb as "women of our company" (24:22). However, they now appeared to be questioning their faith in Jesus as the Messiah. Apparently even followers of Jesus can struggle to recognize him, struggle to have faith in him, and struggle to interpret the Bible accurately. Then Jesus began to open their eyes by interpreting and applying Christ from the OT: "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (24:27).

When Jesus used the phrase "Moses and all the Prophets" he was certainly referencing the books of the Law (Gen, Exod, Lev, Num, and Deut), as well as the prophetic books (Isa through Mal). However, in Luke 16:16, Jesus appeared to include all of the OT with the phrase the "Law and the Prophets," because he said they were before John. Marshall believes Jesus most likely "searched in *all* the Scriptures, but starting from (i.e. principally from) the law and the prophets."⁶

⁴Bock argues, "The account relates the travelers' disappointment over Jesus' death and their curiosity over the empty tomb. Since their "sight" is veiled, they do not initially recognize Jesus when he joins them. They think that all hope is lost. But things change as their new companion shows how Jesus is the fulfillment of all of the OT." Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 1906.

⁵Stein, *Luke*, 610.

⁶I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Greek

When Jesus interprets from “all the Prophets,” his interpretations include the Minor Prophets. Surely time prevented him from addressing each and every verse of the Prophetic books; however, he at least addressed direct messianic prophecies. Even if Jesus focused solely on messianic prophecies, the other passages were consistent with the broader redemptive themes of these OT texts. Stein explains, “‘All’ the prophets ‘everywhere’ spoke of him.”⁷ Even if Jesus addressed “all the Prophets” in only the broadest sense, each particular passage is thematically part in the whole. Thus, even if particular passages might not make direct messianic predictions, the particular passages are to be understood within the broader theme of the book and the OT as a whole. Thus, the statement “all the Prophets” extends broadly to the particulars of specific passages in the Minor Prophetic books. If Jesus interpreted “all the Prophets” according to “himself,” then it is correct to conclude that his later followers were to interpret the prophets accordingly. Therefore, Scripture calls Christ to be preached from the Minor Prophets.

Clearly, Jesus is also providing a hermeneutical principle. Jesus is the unifying theme of the two testaments. Carroll writes that Jesus forged “connections between Scripture and his own vocation and destiny.”⁸ However, regarding Cleopas’ speech, Ryken comments, “Something still seems to be missing.”⁹ Something was indeed missing in Cleopas’ interpretation of Scripture and the events that were unfolding around him. Green explains that revelation comes not from “angelic intervention . . . but through a hermeneutical process of comprehending the purpose of God in the correlation of Jesus’

Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Paternoster, 1978), 897.

⁷Stein, *Luke*, 612.

⁸John T. Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary*, The New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012), 484.

⁹Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke 13-24*, vol. 2, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2009), 646.

career with the Scripture of Israel.”¹⁰ Jesus is the bridge between the two testaments; therefore, there is indeed a correct way to interpret the Minor Prophets, as well as an incorrect way to interpret these texts. Jesus interprets “all the Prophets” in light of himself, thus passing down a hermeneutical principle. Green continues, “What has happened with Jesus can be understood only in light of the Scriptures, yet the Scriptures themselves can be understood only in light of what has happened with Jesus. These two are mutually informing.”¹¹ Thus, the beginning point of this correct hermeneutical principle is recognizing that Jesus is the unifying theme of the two testaments. Bock concludes, “All Scripture points to Jesus”¹² and, thus, “Luke sees continuity in God’s plan.”¹³

In Luke 24, Jesus highlights that Christ should be preached from the Minor Prophets by referencing “all the Prophets” (24:27) and by explaining himself as the unifying theme of the two testaments. For example, even though Cleopas had many of the historical facts correct about the previous weekend, he interpreted them incorrectly, because he did not understand Jesus as the fulfillment of all the OT messianic prophecies. Ryken explains that their facts “did not yet add up to a gospel.”¹⁴ The reason Cleopas was struggling to understand is because of Jesus’ sufferings. However, Zechariah 13:7 taught that the shepherd would suffer. Thus, if Cleopas understood how Jesus was the fulfillment of the Prophets, he would have better understood Jesus’ sufferings. Jesus explained the events in light of the fact that he was the fulfillment of all the OT messianic prophecies, thus giving Cleopas spiritual eyes to see the gospel.

¹⁰Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 843-44.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, 1918.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ryken explains their understanding as akin to “hearing the punch line without getting the joke.” Ryken, *Luke 13-24*, 648.

However, Luke 24 actually goes further. Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT, even though particular verses might serve to move stories along and are not direct messianic prophecies. Jesus is certainly the object of numerous Minor Prophetic messianic prophecies, but he is also the theme of the Minor Prophets. Again, Jesus interpreted “in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). Jesus’ approach that day was not only selectively choosing beneficial passages, but also explaining how those passages all fit together into a theme and, therefore, how the OT fits within the broader theme of redemption.¹⁵ Carroll explains that Jesus “in his role as interpreter of the Jewish Scriptures, begins to forge connections between Scripture and his own vocation and destiny, a hermeneutical activity that will expand in scope until the whole sweep of Scripture is seen to illumine Jesus’ mission.”¹⁶ Jesus is the fulfillment of the messianic prophecies found in the Minor Prophets, but Jesus is also the theme of the Minor Prophets. Jesus was teaching his travel companions the gospel using the intended meaning of his trial, conviction, torture, death on the cross, and resurrection. Jesus accomplished his teaching goal by explaining these truths in light of the theme of the entire OT. The reason they did not understand what had happened is because they did not see Jesus thematically in the OT.¹⁷

¹⁵Goldsworthy also explains that the OT is to be seen within the theme of redemption: “We have seen that the Old Testament is not a mere textbook of the history of Israel as we understand it today, but a theological history. How can we characterize this history so that we are able to see the real unity within it? I suggest we look at the Old Testament as a *history of redemption*. In other words, the key to the Old Testament is not the part Israel plays—as important as that is—but the part *God* plays in redeeming a people from slavery and making them his own. This first approach would be to reduce the Old Testament to an example of ancient national history; the second interprets Israel’s history as a part of God’s redeeming activity to man.” Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, in *The Goldsworthy Trilogy* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2000), 46.

¹⁶Carroll, *Luke*, 484.

¹⁷Ryken states, “The reason they did not get it was that they had not yet seen Jesus—not with the faith of knowing him as the risen Christ.” Ryken, *Luke 13-24*, 648.

Messianic prophecies clearly teach redemptive themes. However, Jesus not only fulfilled the prophecies quoted in the NT, he also fulfilled the entire Law and Prophets. Again, not every verse in the Minor Prophets is a messianic prophecy or a direct teaching on the atonement; however, the Minor Prophets fit within the larger Christocentric redemptive story of the Bible. Therefore, every time Christians preach, the gospel should be preached.¹⁸

Jesus' teaching demonstrates that he views himself as the theme and fulfillment of the OT, and thus also the Minor Prophets. This is Jesus' hermeneutical approach to the OT Minor Prophets. If Jesus understands the OT Minor Prophets in this way, then his followers after him should as well. Luke 24:13-27 calls leaders to preach Christ from the OT Minor Prophets and provides a principle for that preaching.

A Christocentric Exegesis of Matthew 5:17

Matthew 5:17 reads, "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." This passage is another verse that makes the case that because Christ is the unifying theme of both testaments the OT should be interpreted Christocentrically. As with the Luke 24 passage, this text also provides a hermeneutical principle. Matthew 5:17 is part of Jesus' famous Sermon on the Mount. It directly follows the memorable Beatitudes and the Salt and Light passage. It serves to transition the text to practical teachings on anger, lust, divorce, oaths, and treatment of enemies. In the audience were the Pharisees who were critical of Jesus' perceived lack of adherence to the OT Law and the Prophets. Therefore, Jesus directs

¹⁸Mohler writes, "Every time we preach, we need to create dissonance in the minds of our hearts. We need to declare our wretchedness, our sin, and our powerlessness, and we need to admit frankly that we can't solve this problem. And then we proclaim the gospel. We show our people how God Himself did what they were wholly unable to do. We tell them that the problem of sin was only solved when the sinless Son of God died on the cross as a substitute for His people." R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody, 2008), 101.

this portion of his sermon to the criticism that he is abolishing the Law and the Prophets. The purpose of Matthew 5:17-20 was to establish firmly Jesus' commitment to the OT Scriptures.

In Matthew 5:17, Jesus taught that he did not “come to abolish” or reject the OT.¹⁹ Rather, Jesus interpreted it differently than the Pharisees. It is important to note the personal connection he maintains with his hermeneutic.²⁰ Jesus did not reject the Law and the Prophets, rather he rejected the Pharisees' interpretation of the OT. Toussaint says Jesus perfectly conformed his life to the “high standards”²¹ of the OT, as well as retrieved the OT's “true meaning from the niceties of its rabbinic interpretations.”²² Jesus was not lessening the demands of the OT, rather “he presents even more stringent demands of the kingdom in these verses.”²³ Jesus typically addressed the condition of the heart, while the Pharisees focused more on behavior. This contrast is a key emphasis for Jesus when interpreting the OT.²⁴ Therefore, as Blomberg explains, Jesus intended for the OT to remain “normative and relevant”²⁵ for his followers. Jesus was not “simply establishing

¹⁹Blomberg 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).” Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, The New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 103.

²⁰Toussaint argues, “Even as He defends His relationship to the law He makes a striking implication as to His person by using the verb ‘come’ (althon) twice in verse seventeen.” Stanley D. Toussaint, *Behold the King: A Study of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1980), 99.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Craig S. Keener, *Matthew*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series, vol. 1 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 110.

²⁴Keener states, “Jesus essentially says, ‘Look, if you thought the law was tough, wait till you see this. If you really want to be my disciples, give me your hearts without reservation.’” Ibid.

²⁵Blomberg, *Matthew*, 103.

the law as is, nor of supplementing it.”²⁶ Jesus was not abolishing, rejecting, or contradicting the OT; but he was also not “preserving it unchanged.”²⁷

As Jesus interpreted the OT, he avoided the extremes of two poles. He avoided accepting the OT as the rabbis understood it, but he also avoided a wholesale rejection of the OT. He avoided extremes in emphasizing both the continuity and discontinuity of the OT into the NT. He was not rejecting the OT as useless, nor fully accepting the Pharisees’ interpretations. Blomberg explains that Jesus’ teaching “challenges both classic Reformed and Dispensationalist perspectives.”²⁸ Keener writes, “Jesus was not an antinomian. He expected his followers to understand and apply the moral principles already revealed in Scripture.”²⁹ Jesus was neither an antinomian nor a moralist. He did not leave the OT as it was nor in any way reject it.

Jesus avoids diminishing the OT by explaining he fulfills the OT. Jesus’ fulfillment rather than lessening the OT calls into question New Covenant Theology. This theological development seeks to exist between Covenant Theology and Dispensational Theology, yet it is categorically different than Progressive Dispensationalism because it rejects foundational tenants of Covenant Theology. Progressive Dispensationalism remains within the Dispensational theological system even though it recognizes weaknesses of the system and strengths of the opposing system. However, New Covenant Theology rejects central teachings of Covenant Theology. For example, Swanson explains that New Covenant Theology “is founded on its central precept that the covenants of Covenant Theology: the Covenant of Redemption, the

²⁶Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33b (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 106.

²⁷Blomberg, *Matthew*, 103.

²⁸Ibid., 103-4.

²⁹Keener, *Matthew*, 110.

Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace are unbiblical and are to be rejected.”³⁰ Proponents of New Covenant Theology also prioritize the NT over the OT. Based upon Matthew 5:17, Jesus does not view the OT at odds or inconsistent with what he doing in the NT. Further, Swanson writes New Covenant Theology contends that the OT Law has “no theological, legal, ethical, or binding influence on the Christian in the New Covenant era.”³¹ Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5:17 is not in opposition to a covenant organized theology, it does not diminish or devalue the OT, and it does not abolish OT teaching.

Rather, the term “fulfill” is key to understanding Jesus’ OT hermeneutic. The term means to “to make full” or “to bring to a designed end”³² or “complete.”³³ Fulfillment is set in opposition to “abolish,” which assists in conveying its meaning. Abolish means to do away with completely, but fulfill means to “establish completely.”³⁴ Jesus did not come to “add something to the law”³⁵ but rather to complete the OT to its desired end. Through firmly establishing the OT, Jesus explained his “faithfulness to the Scriptures.”³⁶ He was also doing more than just teaching that he was committed to the OT. Jesus was establishing the OT by establishing a new way to understand it. Blomberg explains that Jesus was “bringing to fruition of its complete meaning.”³⁷ Jesus was not

³⁰David Swanson, “Introduction to New Covenant Theology,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 18, no. 1 (Fall 2007), 158.

³¹Ibid., 161.

³²Walter Bauer et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 828.

³³Ibid., 829.

³⁴Toussaint, *Behold the King*, 99.

³⁵Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 105.

³⁶Keener, *Matthew*, 111.

³⁷Blomberg, *Matthew*, 103.

contradicting the OT but rather explaining the “intended goal”³⁸ or the “intended meaning” or the “true meaning”³⁹ of the OT. The goal or complete meaning to the OT was Jesus’ bridge of continuity between the OT and the NT. When Jesus said, “I have come,” he established himself as that bridge of continuity. Jesus, himself, is the intended goal and complete meaning and fulfillment of the OT.

Blomberg is correct that this understanding has “massive hermeneutical implications. . . . It is inadequate to say either that none of the Old Testament applies unless it is explicitly reaffirmed in the New or that all of the Old Testament applies unless it is explicitly revoked in the New.”⁴⁰ Jesus is the prophetic fulfillment of the messianic prophecies. He established the new messianic age.⁴¹ His presence inaugurated the New Covenant⁴² and inaugurated the kingdom.⁴³ Further, Christocentric interpretation of the OT is Jesus’ hermeneutical principle; therefore, modern disciples can rightly conclude that it is to be the hermeneutical method of his followers. If Jesus’ coming inaugurated the New Covenant, inaugurated the kingdom, inaugurated the Messianic age, fulfilled the intended and complete meaning of the OT, and was taught by Jesus himself; then his hermeneutical method applies to Christians today. Clearly, Jesus was establishing a thematic way to understand the OT. Jesus is teaching these concepts in a sermon and

³⁸Blomberg, *Matthew*, 103.

³⁹Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 106.

⁴⁰Blomberg, *Matthew*, 103-4.

⁴¹Hagner states, “The messianic age has dawned in history, and with it comes the fulfillment of the prophetic expectation.” Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 105.

⁴²Blomberg argues, “Every Old Testament text must be viewed in light of Jesus’ person and ministry and the changes introduced by the new covenant he inaugurated.” Blomberg, *Matthew*, 104.

⁴³Hanger writes, “Jesus defines righteousness by expounding the true meaning of the law as opposed to wrong or shallow understandings, it is best to understand *phylarosai* here as “fulfill” in the sense of “bring to its intended meaning”—that is, to present a definitive interpretation of the law, something now possible because of the presence of the Messiah and his kingdom.” Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 106.

thus intended for his followers to adopt the same interpretive methods. Matthew 5:17 clearly teaches the modern preacher to interpret all of the OT Christocentrically.

A Christocentric Exegesis of Peter's Use of Joel 2 in Acts 2

Peter's sermon in Acts 2 is a tremendous window into the apostle's preaching principle. It is invaluable to this discussion because it is an actual sermon preached by one of Jesus' most significant disciples. His sermon highlights that the initial disciples took advantage of the OT Minor Prophets to direct their hearers to Jesus. Because Acts 2 is divinely inspired Scripture, the hermeneutical approach that Peter takes provides understanding about how contemporary preachers should preach Christ from the Minor Prophets. Peter developed the theme of the Day of the Lord in what Greidanus describes as the way of longitudinal themes.

Greidanus provides seven ways to interpret Christ from the OT in *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*. His method is a formula that attempts to interpret the OT how Jesus and the apostles interpreted the OT. The approach understands the OT in "light of Jesus Christ."⁴⁴ These methods did not originate with Greidanus. Rather, he developed them on the basis of how Jesus and the Apostles interpreted the OT. For example, Paul in Colossians 1:28 summed up his approach to preaching by stating, "Him we proclaim." Therefore, Paul's approach to preaching was to proclaim the truths about Jesus by using the OT. However, Greidanus explains that NT preachers did not exclusively proclaim Jesus in the "narrow sense of focusing only on Christ crucified, nor in the broadest sense of focusing only on the Second Person of the Trinity or the eternal Logos."⁴⁵ Rather, they preached Christ "in the context of the full sweep of redemptive

⁴⁴Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999), 228.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 4.

history.”⁴⁶ One of Greidanus’ seven ways to interpret Christ from the OT is what he calls longitudinal themes. This method uses biblical theology to trace themes from the OT to the NT.⁴⁷ Use of longitudinal themes is a key avenue the NT writers proclaimed Jesus using the OT. This way is built upon the thesis that the “Bible discloses the gradual development of themes because God progressively reveals more of himself and his will as he works out his redemptive plan in history.”⁴⁸ Using Joel 2, Peter extended a theme and intensified the theme in light of Christ’s coming.

Peter preached a sermon in Acts 2 initially based upon the development of longitudinal themes taken from Joel 2. The Minor Prophet’s chapter is devoted to the theme of the Day of the Lord. This theme can be taught as both a positive or negative moment. Joel 2 explains the destructive aspects of the Day of the Lord (2:1-11).⁴⁹ In light of this terror, Joel called his listeners to repentance, or return to the Lord (2:12-17). The great hope of this passage is the Lord’s merciful response to their repentance (2:18-27). The Lord will extend mercy to the repentant before this terrible day reaches a crescendo with the outpouring of the Lord’s Spirit (2:28-32). It is this teaching on the Spirit that Peter referenced in his Acts 2 sermon.

⁴⁶Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 4.

⁴⁷Greidanus explains, “The New Testament, of course, develops many other Old Testament themes. Today it is especially the discipline of biblical theology that helps us trace longitudinal themes from the Old Testament to the New.” *Ibid.*, 267.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 222.

⁴⁹Polhill writes, “Joel’s prophecy was originally given after a locust plague had ravaged the land, creating a severe famine. Joel called the people to repentance, promising the restoration of their prosperity and going on to foresee the coming of the Day of the Lord, the dawn of the messianic age, when the Spirit would be poured out on all of Israel.” John B. Polhill, *Acts*, *The New American Commentary*, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 109.

The OT typically views the coming of the Spirit as an eschatological event.⁵⁰ However, different prophets highlight different facets of the role of the Spirit. Garrett explains,

Ezekiel promised that in the age to come God would by his Spirit enable people to obey God from the heart (Ezek 36:26-27). Isaiah foretold a day when God would pour out his Spirit in order to create a new community and a new people of God (32:14-18; 44:3-5). In Joel, by contrast the gift of the Spirit is prophetic.⁵¹

Joel lists a series of miraculous events that “serve to authenticate the presence of the Spirit and to draw the individual into a direct experience with God.”⁵² Joel also leaves a breadcrumb regarding the universality of the salvation that follows this outpouring of the Spirit when he says “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (2:32).

Peter’s Acts 2 sermon begins at verse 14 with the odd comment that the crowds thought the preachers were drunk. There was something strange about their behavior. However, Peter began by establishing the credibility of their message by addressing the criticism.⁵³ Polhill argues that Peter’s explanation for their behavior was “the outpouring of the Spirit predicted by the Prophet Joel.”⁵⁴ This explanation was important to Peter because he wanted to “explain the significance of what was happening.”⁵⁵ Beginning in Acts 2:17 until 2:21, Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32.⁵⁶ Using the

⁵⁰Garrett explains, “The prophets often associated the Spirit with the eschatological era.” Duane A. Garrett, *Hosea, Joel*, The New American Commentary, vol. 19A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997), 368.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Marshall states, “The preacher’s first task is to correct a misapprehension by his audience.” I. Howard Marshall, *Acts*, The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1980), 73.

⁵⁴Polhill, *Acts*, 108.

⁵⁵Marshall, *Acts*, 71.

⁵⁶Marshall explains, “The quotation follows the LXX, but with a number of small alterations to adapt the prophecy to its context.” Ibid., 73.

LXX version he makes only slight changes to the quotation, but Marshall notes, “It was natural for the New Testament writers to adopt the form of the Old Testament text which best suited their purpose or to adapt the wording as necessary. The meaning was more important than reproduction of the exact wording.”⁵⁷

Joel spoke of the Spirit, and Peter seized on at least two of Joel’s theological points. First, Joel (and later Peter) understood that this work of the Spirit was “pointing to cosmic signs on earth and in heaven.”⁵⁸ This work of the Spirit was a marker that “the messianic age had already dawned,”⁵⁹ and they were now “living in the final days of God’s saving history.”⁶⁰ Therefore, Marshall explains that the “resurrection of Jesus and the pouring out of the Spirit both testified that Jesus was Lord and Messiah.”⁶¹ Joel taught that the outpouring of the Spirit would be a sign pointing to the Messiah, and the first point of Peter’s sermon was that Acts 2 demonstrated this promised work of the Spirit. Second, in addition to teaching that the pouring out of God’s Spirit was a marker of the “last days,” Joel and Peter explain that the pouring out of the Spirit will be universal: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21). There was possibly consensus among the rabbis on this point about the universality of salvation,⁶² but Peter was developing it to explain what was happening. The Apostles were teaching in different languages to a crowd made up of people from all over the

⁵⁷Marshall, *Acts*, 71.

⁵⁸William J. Larkin, *Acts*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series, vol. 5. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995), 45.

⁵⁹Polhill, *Acts*, 109.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Marshall, *Acts*, 72.

⁶²Polhill explains, “Peter’s conviction was very much in keeping with the rabbinic consensus that the Spirit no longer rested on all Israel but would return as a universal gift at the end time.” Polhill, *Acts*, 109.

known world who had descended upon Jerusalem for Pentecost. Instead of recognizing that their preaching was a miracle, they believed the preachers were drunk. In reality it was a work of the Spirit that was to mark the messianic age, which included bringing the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. This international audience needed to understand that God was now “going to pour out his Spirit upon all people”⁶³ and all kinds of people.⁶⁴ In summary, Peter utilized Joel to explain that they were experiencing the promised outpouring of the Spirit thus marking the messianic age and he was using Joel to explain this messianic age was universal; all who believed in the messiah would experience salvation.

Peter extended and intensified Joel’s theology of the Spirit. He not only agreed that the Spirit would mark the last days or the messianic age, but he also claimed it was happening in his day. Further, he quoted Joel in order to highlight that the Spirit was now being universally poured out into the hearts of all kinds of people from many different nations. All of this theology was in light of Jesus’ coming. Peter was not taking Joel’s passage out of context, but applying what Greidanus describes as the longitudinal theme method. Peter extends Joel’s teaching on the Spirit because he “sees that it is beginning to be fulfilled in the events of Pentecost.”⁶⁵ His hermeneutical approach that extends out a theological truth to point to Jesus is a definable method. Peter, in Acts 2, does not just teach contemporary preachers an essential theological truth, but he also demonstrates how to interpret the OT. Peter’s sermon in Acts 2 calls modern leaders to preach the OT Christocentrically.

⁶³Marshall, *Acts*, 73.

⁶⁴Marshall writes, “*I.e.* upon all kinds of people and not just upon the prophets, kings and priests, as had been the case in Old Testament times.” *Ibid.*

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 74.

A Christocentric Exegesis of the Use of Micah 5:2 in Matthew 2:6

The way Matthew interprets and applies Micah 5:2 provides additional evidence for preaching Christocentrically from the OT Minor Prophets. Matthew 2:6 clearly demonstrates the method of linking Minor Prophetic prophecies to Jesus himself. The Minor Prophets have themes that are developed longitudinally in the NT, as previously described. However, the Minor Prophets also include verses directly quoted in the NT as finding their fulfillment in Jesus. Micah 5:2 is one of those directly quoted prophecies. Matthew's use of Micah 5:2 therefore provides a model for contemporary interpreters.

Micah 5:2 is set against Micah 5:1. The chapter opens with the defeated “judge of Israel” being struck on the cheek and a siege laid against him. But in contrast, this little village of Bethlehem is going to bring a powerful ruler.⁶⁶ Bethlehem was small but would be used for big things because God does the unexpected.⁶⁷ Bethlehem's primary significance was that it was the birthplace of King David, a central figure in the messianic line. Micah's Jewish audience would have made the connection on the basis of the fact that both David and the coming ruler have the same birthplace.⁶⁸ This coming

⁶⁶Barker states, “Micah next quotes the Lord directly. The conjunction **at** the beginning (*we*) is adversative (‘But’). A sharp contrast is drawn between the weak and helpless ruler of v.1 and the strong, ideal, Messianic King/Ruler of this verse.” Kenneth L. Barker and Waylon Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, The New American Commentary, vol. 20 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 96. “Bethlehem Ephrathah was the smallest, most insignificant clan in Judah.” Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 32 (Waco, TX: Word, 1984), 43.

⁶⁷Barker writes, “Out of seeming littleness and weakness God has perfected strength.” Barker and Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 96. Allen writes, “How strange that God summoned the man of his choice from so insignificant a source! He can take acorns and turn them into mighty oaks; Jerusalem and her king are reassured that, low though they have sunk in the eyes of the world and shrunken though the royal power is, yet God can restore and grant new greatness.” Leslie C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1976), 343.

⁶⁸Barker claims, “The Lord announces his birthplace and his Davidic roots.” Barker and Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 96.

ruler was messianic in nature because of God’s promise to establish David’s “kingdom forever” (2 Sam 7:13). Micah 5:1 speaks of a present “judge,” but Micah 5:2 speaks of a coming “ruler.” Their hope for deliverance was not in their present judge but in a future ruler.⁶⁹ This future ruler has origins “from of old, from ancient days.” This fact convinces the reader that Micah was discussing an individual of divine origin. Micah was bringing his people hope—not necessarily hope against their present human foe, but hope for deliverance from a greater spiritual foe.⁷⁰ Allen declares, “Yahweh has not cast aside the Davidic covenant.”⁷¹ Even though it appears hopeless for Micah’s readers, there is indeed hope. Smith writes, “Deliverance will come from the least expected place.”⁷² Thus, as Phillips notes, “Micah here offers the solution to the chief problem against which he has been preaching.”⁷³

Matthew inserts Micah 5:2, highlighting it as “a glimpse at God’s marvelous and inscrutable plan for history.”⁷⁴ However, the Matthew quotation includes some variations from Micah 5:2. Matthew edits out “Ephrathah” from the first line. Regarding the second line, he appears to provide an interpretation of the meaning. Both say this one is to be a “ruler,” but Matthew explains that ruler will “shepherd my people Israel.” Matthew also edits out the reference to the Messiah being “from of old, from ancient

⁶⁹Smith states, “This new king will be crowned and rule in the glory and name of Yahweh. The people will dwell secure and the new king will be great to the ends of the earth (v 3).” Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 43.

⁷⁰Waltke explains, “The logical conclusion to be drawn from the promise of a new David is that Israel’s deliverance from the Assyrians, and implicitly all her enemies, ultimately awaits the time when the remnant will give birth to the Messiah.” Bruce K. Waltke, *A Commentary on Micah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 277.

⁷¹Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, 343.

⁷²Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 43.

⁷³Richard D. Phillips, *Jonah & Micah*, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2010), 261.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 268.

days.” These changes might seem troublesome, but Blomberg explains that these edits are “not a mistake in quoting the Scriptures but an interpretive explanation.”⁷⁵

Matthew’s quotation verifies one important accepted fact about the promised Messiah, his birth in Bethlehem. A fact with which even the religious experts, from whom the biblically illiterate Herod sought counsel, all agree. Micah 5:2 and the Messiah’s birth in Bethlehem were considered basic knowledge regarding the coming deliverer. Thus, Matthew’s Gospel provides a “straightforward prediction-fulfillment scheme.”⁷⁶ Previously explained in this chapter, the NT authors applied the way of longitudinal theme development. Here, one sees what Greidanus describes as the “way of New Testament references.”⁷⁷ Matthew directly quotes a prophecy from Micah and does not develop its meaning. The NT is here affirming an already well-understood and accepted link to the Messiah. The Minor Prophets understood that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, and the NT agrees that the Christ will be born in Bethlehem. Even the religious leaders around Herod directly quote Micah 5:2, thus the theology of the verse is directly understood and applied. God uses seemingly little insignificant things in big ways; this child is part of the Davidic line, he will be the ruler of Israel in an ultimate way, and his origin is divine. Hagner writes,

The application of the quotation, unlike the formula quotations of the first two chapters, is straightforward, involving no dimension of *sensus plenior* or deeper fulfillment. Its meaning is obvious: the Messiah (the verse was understood as messianic by the Jews) is to be born in Bethlehem, the very place where Jesus’ birth had already occurred. The Messiah is to “shepherd my people Israel,” which recalls the statement in 1:21 that “he will save his people.” The people of the Lord are thus the people of the Messiah.⁷⁸

⁷⁵Blomberg, *Matthew*, 64.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 269.

⁷⁸Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 29-30.

Herod was not the ultimate solution for the people of Israel; rather, Jesus was their ruler and shepherd. This example points to a Christocentric hermeneutical method employed by NT authors. They look back to the Minor Prophets and affirm their prophecies about the coming Messiah and then apply those prophecies to the person of Jesus. The NT authors interpret all the messianic prophecies found in the Minor Prophets through this Christocentric lens. Matthew 2:6 does not change the meaning of Micah 5:2 in any way. Matthew 2:6 interprets the messianic prophecy in Micah 5:2 in such a way, that those reading it would see its fulfillment in Jesus. This example supports the thesis that modern leaders are to preach the OT Christocentrically, to point modern hearers to Jesus, who is the same Messiah of both testaments.

A Christocentric Exegesis of Micah

The focus of this project is the 12 Minor Prophetic books. These books are ideal selections for preachers because they are colorful, thus interesting; not read as much as other books thus providing fresher truths for the congregation; and since they are shorter in length they provide a more manageable preaching unit for the pastor as well as the congregation. The book of Micah was selected for this project for a number of reasons. First, the text addresses key themes of the genre, namely, The Day of the Lord, justice, the wrath of God, and God's promised restoration. Second, it provided a variety of ways to preach Christocentrically. As leaders were taught ways to interpret Christ from the OT, the book of Micah gave a number of different options. This section explores some of those ways to interpret Christ from Micah. The book is unique in that it includes a definitive Messianic prophecy (Micah 5:2) that most congregations recognize. However, NT citation is not the only way to preach Micah Christocentrically. Micah was selected because of the number of different ways Christ can be preached from the book. Third, it provides two definitive verses on justice, Micah 6:8 and 4:3. These verses are popular

verses amongst those who care about justice⁷⁹; therefore; even if many congregants have not completely read the book of Micah, they will be familiar with Micah 6:8 and 4:3. Fourth, the book provides the preacher and congregation with a manageable preaching unit. Micah is 7 chapters and I preached the book in eleven sermons. Fifth, and finally, I had never preached or taught the book of Micah, even though I had taught Jonah, Joel, and Hosea. The NT citation of Micah 5:2 is addressed in previous sections. Other ways to preach Micah Christocentrically are illustrated in the following paragraphs.

Micah 2 opens with a “woe”⁸⁰ statement upon those who think about then carry out evil. In this chapter, God’s judgment is upon two groups of people. First, judgment is promised on powerful oppressors. These people are powerful enough to devise wickedness and then carry out their wickedness. Micah provides the example in verses 1 and 2 of someone who lies in bed and covets someone’s property, then in the morning is powerful enough to oppress by taking another’s field house and inheritance. Micah promises that there is coming a day when that type of person will face disaster (2:3) and ruin (2:4). Second, judgment is promised on wicked preachers. Micah sees wickedness through the society, yet also sees preachers condoning the wickedness. The dialogue is confusing in verses 6 to 11. It is best to understand Micah as speaking in verse 6, God then speaking in verse 7 to 10, then Micah again speaking in verse 11.⁸¹ Wicked preachers in verse 6 are preaching against Micah’s calls for justice. After the listing of social ills in verses 7

⁷⁹Daniel L. Smith-Christopher views the book of Micah as a “populist-based criticism of the social destructiveness of relentless military buildup, mustering, and extraction.” Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, *Micah: A Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (Louisville: John Knox, 2015), 25. He goes further to explain the message of Micah as “very close to the motto of the early twenty-first-century movement of antiwar famers: ‘Farms, Not Arms!’” Ibid., 26.

⁸⁰Waltke argues that the term is correctly translated “woe” versus “alas” because Micah 2 is within the “contexts of accusation and threat, and the mood is that of scorn and criticism.” Waltke, *A Commentary on Micah*, 92.

⁸¹Waltke writes, “A change of speaker from *I AM* to Micah may be suggested by the change from addressing ‘house of Jacob’ in the second person to the third person.” Ibid., 122.

through 11, Micah concludes in verse 11 that these wicked preachers are giving license to the wickedness. Judgment is promised because of these preachers when the people are told to “arise and go, for this is no place of rest” (2:10). Micah 2 is about judgment, but also hope. The chapter closes with verse 12 and 13 speaking of a day when the faithful remnant will be gathered together following a faithful king. Even though they might have to go away (2:10), there will be a day they will be gathered back together (2:12). Further, this will happen as a king leads them (2:13). This king will operate under and follow the lead of the Lord (2:13).

Micah 2 makes a promise of judgment upon wickedness, but then also promises the hope of salvation under the leadership of a faithful king. Historically, the Southern Kingdom was exiled in 586 B.C. and King Cyrus of Persia facilitated their return. However, the Christian reader is to see an even greater salvation that came in Jesus, and an even great hope in the second coming of the Lord. Like the people in Micah’s day, today’s powerful and today’s preachers can be marked by wickedness. Like the people in Micah’s day, believers can rest assured that God will judge powerful oppressors and wicked preachers. Also, like the people in Micah’s day, one can hope in a coming king. Present salvation came when Jesus initially came. Further, hope for a day when all will be made right and just will happen at Jesus’ second coming. This Christocentric interpretation of Micah 2 utilizes Greidanus’ Way⁸² of Promise Fulfillment that is explained further in the next chapter.

Micah 4:1-8 can be interpreted using Greidanus’ Way of Redemptive-Historical Progression. In previous passages, Micah promises of judgment upon the wicked (3:12). Micah 4:1-8 speaks of “latter days” (4:1).⁸³ Previously, Micah rebuked

⁸²Greidanus’ Christocentric Method is thoroughly discussed in chap. 6 of Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 227-78.

⁸³Walke warns against forcing meaning into this term as a reference to a specific eschatological moment but rather the thrust of the future: “Latter days [is a term that] points to a new epoch, which, thought it lies in the hidden future, comprehensively

the people for their wickedness and calling them to faithfulness, but now he is giving them hope for a joyful future day. In a way, Micah is giving his audience a pathway to joy through the impending judgment.

Micah provides six descriptions of this future day. First, in that latter day, God's mountain shall be established and lifted up higher than all the other mountains, causing the people to flow to it. Physically tall mountains cause water to flow away from it, but places of great prominence cause people to flow to it. Prominence unites people. The first description of the latter day is that people will flock to and unite around God. Second is the reason the sojourners claim they come to this mountain. Micah 4:2 says the sojourners come "that he may teach us his ways." They come to hear his Word. Hearts open to the Word mark this future day. Third, this day is marked by justice as the king judges fairly between the nations (4:3). Fourth, this day is marked by peace as the nations "beat their swords into plowshares" (4:3). Fifth, this day will also be marked by prosperity, as people will have their own vine and fig tree (4:4). Sixth, this day will also be marked by faithfulness as the people will faithfully "walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever" (4:5). This joyful day has yet to happen, thus Micah is prophesying about the coming kingdom. Therefore, as Christians interpret this passage, they can find the same hope as the people of Micah's day. Micah's audience found hope in this promised future as they faced present trials. Likewise, Christians can interpret that they also can find hope in this joyful future as they face trials. This type of interpretation and application is a trace of how God's redemptive plan is progressively revealed.

Micah 6:1-8 provides an opportunity for a preacher to interpret the passage Christocentrically by way of contrast. The opening verses (6:1-5) of this section show God defending himself against the charge that he is not merciful. The second section (6:6-7) explains how the people respond with external moralistic religion. Then, the third

alters time and is the goal or outcome toward which an event is striving." Waltke, *A Commentary on Micah*, 193.

section (6:8) is God’s gospel solution of pure heart religion. The opening section is God rebuking the people for putting him on trial in a sense. The people were questioning his ways. He then lays out the evidence of his benevolence by reminding them how he freed them from slavery (6:4), provided caring shepherds (6:4), and how he turned curses into blessings (6:5), as well as fulfilled his promise to bring them into the Promised Land (6:5). Micah provides a response to God’s benevolence with religious acts. He is claiming that because God is so good to his people, then his people ought to make grand external religious acts. Then Micah 6:8 contrasts the previous two verses with true and pure religion. Micah 6:8 explains that God does not want grand external religious gestures but a pure heart that leads to a lifestyle of justice kindness and humbly communing with God.⁸⁴ The distinction between Micah 6:6-7 and Micah 6:8 is the distinction between religion that is only external and religion that is primarily internal. This contrast provides Christians a way to interpret the passage Christocentrically by contrasting religion based upon good works versus religion that is transformed by Jesus’ gospel.

Micah 6:9-16 can be interpreted using what Greidanus labels the Way of Longitudinal Themes. After explaining true and pure heart religion in Micah 6:8, verses 9-16 provide “sound wisdom” (6:9) using the image of a “rod” (6:9). Thus, those practicing pure religion need to be reminded that God will pour out his wrath (like the strike of a rod) on those who practice false religion. Micah 6:9-16 explains that God has reserved a rod for sin. Christians can link the theme of punishment for sin to Christ on the cross. God reserves the rod for sin, but the one who ultimately takes the punishment of this rod is Jesus—he was the one pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our

⁸⁴Smith-Christopher touches on how the condition of the inner person impacts his behaviors. Inner love is linked with outer justice. He explains, “Justice without love can become a mockery of justice itself: it becomes merely cold rules and regulations, with no thought of actually building the human enterprise. On many occasions, Jesus profoundly clarifies the necessary combination of justice with mercy and devotion. When Peter asks if we forgive our brothers and sisters even ‘seven times,’ Jesus relies with his calculation of loving mercy: not seven but *seventy*.” Smith-Christopher, *Micah*, 196.

iniquities (Isa 53:5). Therefore, a preacher can interpret Micah 6:9-16 Christocentrically by tracing punishment for sin in Micah 6 to Jesus atoning for sin on the cross.

Micah 7:1-7 begins with the cry, “Woe is me!” Micah grieves the sinfulness of his city. The people are murderous (7:2), evil (7:3), and corrupt (7:3). As a result, Micah explains that judgment is imminent, using the phrase “the day of your watchmen” (7:4). Again, the Southern Kingdom was eventually exiled as punishment for their sins. However, the passage is not without hope of salvation. The solution to Micah’s woes is found as he looks to the LORD (7:7) and waits for the “God of my salvation” (7:7). Thus, as Micah is broken hearted over the sin of his city because it is leading to judgment, he is ultimately able to hopefully look to God for salvation. Christians can interpret this passage Christocentrically by seeing analogies to our present city. Micah’s culture can serve as a source to the target of present culture. Further, Micah’s solution can serve as a source for our present solution. Both cultures are sinful and God provides salvation for both cultures. Even though Micah was initially woeful, he was ultimately hopeful because God would provide salvation. Modern Christians likewise grieve the sinfulness of culture, yet should remain hopeful because they can look to God for salvation. Salvation is found in Jesus’ atoning work on the cross. Ultimately, we also hope that Jesus will return and take us to himself (John 14:3). Greidanus’ Way of Analogy can be used to interpret Micah 7:1-7 Christocentrically.

The Prophet Micah certainly decries the injustices of his day. However, the message of Micah is not a rally cry against war in general nor is its message a call for socialist reforms in the government. Ultimately, Micah points to a day when God “will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:19). No one is like God (Micah 7:18) because he is the one who will pardon all sins. Salvation will not come through anti-war movements or socialist reforms, but rather through the one who will “show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham” (Micah 7:20).

A Christocentric Exegesis of Matthew 28:19-20

Jesus' Great Commission from Matthew 28:19-20 supports the thesis that Scripture calls us to preach Christ from the OT. This passage provides an approach to disciple making that is also grounded in the Christocentric method of interpretation. All Scripture is profitable, but Matthew 28:19-20 has unique significance. First, it is one of the most Trinitarian passages in the Bible. All three persons of the Trinity are mentioned, and all three are shown to be equal.⁸⁵ Baptism plays a role in the discipleship process, thus the Great Commission highlights how each person of the Trinity works together to make disciples. Second, this passage is significant because it is Jesus' final commissioning.⁸⁶ This passage serves as a sort of "last will and testament," but Jesus also takes advantage of the moment to clarify the mission. To carry out the vision outlined in Matthew 28:19-20 is to be a disciple of Jesus.

Specifically, the Great Commission explains that being a disciple is to make additional disciples.⁸⁷ Unlike the sages of Jesus' day who had disciples, Jesus commissions his followers to actively make more disciples.⁸⁸ Additionally, great practitioners have long noted that Jesus also provided a method for how to make disciples. Making disciples mandates going to all peoples, converting them, and discipling them toward baptism as

⁸⁵Toussaint states, "Not only does the Messiah claim to possess all authority, but He also places Himself on an equal level with the Father and the Holy Spirit." Toussaint, *Behold the King*, 318.

⁸⁶Toussaint explains, "The second purpose of Matthew in writing this passage was to present the final commission of the King to His disciples." Ibid.

⁸⁷Blomberg writes, "The main command of Christ's commission is 'make disciples' (*matheteusate*)." Blomberg, *Matthew*, 431.

⁸⁸Keener argues, "Judaism also spoke of sages as having disciples (see comments on 4:19; 19:21-22) and sometimes even persuading large numbers of people to become students of the Torah." Keener, *Matthew*, 401. However, this can be contrasted with Jesus' command to actively pursue making new disciples obeying his commands and teachings.

well as “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt 28:20).⁸⁹

Teaching is central to the disciple-making process.⁹⁰ Specifically, Jesus commands his disciples to teach future converts to obey all his commandments.⁹¹ In order to observe all of Jesus’ commands, the teachings must be grounded in Jesus’ broader message of redemption. Keener writes, “But once they are initiated, we must also build them into stronger discipleship by *teaching* them Jesus’ message.”⁹² The angel explained to Joseph that Jesus would atone for the sins of his people (Matt 1:21). The truth about his redemptive work was also Jesus’ message. Thus, Jesus’ ministry was proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom (Matt 4:23).

The ethical content of Jesus’ teaching was for his followers to believe in his redemptive work and thus then live according to a morality based in his kingdom. The Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5 is a helpful example of Jesus’ ethical message. Jesus taught about the “kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:3). This ethic addresses the motivations of the heart, not just legalistic behaviors (Matt 5:20). Of course, ethics focused upon the motivation of the heart over outward behaviors quickly leads to the

⁸⁹Hagner states, “The word ‘disciple’ means above all ‘learner’ or ‘pupil.’” Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 887.

⁹⁰Blomberg explains, “Teaching obedience to all of Jesus’ commands forms the heart of disciple making.” Blomberg, *Matthew*, 433.

⁹¹Toussaint writes, “The participle ‘teaching’ (*didaskontes*) indicates the second phase of making disciples. The apostles were to teach their converts to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them. The verb ‘to command’ (*eneteilaman*) can refer to two things. It may mean the apostles are to teach everything which Christ had preached and taught during His whole earthly ministry. The word may also be interpreted here in a more restricted sense. Christ could be saying that the disciples were to instruct their converts in a definite course of instruction. The disciples had been commanded previously as to what they were to teach, and the Lord here refers to that. This seems best since the King did not instruct by means of commandments. In addition, the word ‘whatsoever’ (*osa*, 28:20 KJV) restricts the teaching ministry of the disciples to what Christ had commanded them to teach.” Toussaint, *Behold the King*, 319.

⁹²Keener, *Matthew*, 402.

gospel message. Humans can only experience inner transformation as they repent and believe in Christ.

Thus, the ground for this kingdom ethic is the teaching that Jesus does not destroy the Law and the Prophets but is the fulfillment of the OT (Matt 5:17). Jesus teaches to obey the kingdom ethic from the heart but also provides the solution as the fulfillment of the OT. God sent Jesus to fulfill the righteous requirements of the OT (Rom 8:3-4). People are able to live according the kingdom ethic only if they have experienced the inner transformation of the gospel. Individuals only experience this inner transformation when they repent from relying upon their own moral strength and believe upon the moral righteousness of the one who atoned for their sins. The kingdom ethic is impossible to live without understanding how Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT.

The Great Commission emphasizes the role of teaching in the discipleship process. The Sermon on the Mount highlights that Jesus himself was Christocentric in his teaching.⁹³ This example of Christocentric teaching is at least partially what Jesus was referencing in the Great Commission. The goal of the Great Commission is to make disciples. The plan to make disciples is to teach them what Jesus taught the initial disciples. Jesus taught the initial disciples to live according to his kingdom ethic, which is based upon the truth that he is the fulfillment of the OT. Disciples are called to live according to Christian ethics and Christian ethics are understood through the lens of Jesus being the fulfillment of the OT.⁹⁴ Blomberg explains how Jesus' fulfillment impacts Jesus' teaching:

⁹³Hagner writes, "The final element of the commission is found in *didaskontes*, 'teach' (the third participle functioning as an imperative). They are thus told to do what Jesus himself did (Jesus is referred to as teaching in 4:23; 5:2; 7:29; 9:35; 11:1; 13:34; 21:23; 26:55). The command recalls the explicit teaching in 5:19." Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 888.

⁹⁴Hagner explains, "'Righteousness' for Matthew find its final and authoritative definition in the teaching of Jesus, who is the *one* teacher (23:8, 10)." Ibid.

Jesus' words further demonstrate that Christian ethics and morality should first of all focus on Jesus' teaching, even though the Old Testament still remains relevant, as one sees how it is fulfilled in Christ (Matt 5:17-20), and even though the rest of the New Testament remains relevant as further explanation of the significance of Christ and his teachings. But the testimony of the Gospels and the commands Jesus issued (of which more are found in Matthew than in Mark, Luke, or John) must comprise the central core of Christian faith and proclamation.⁹⁵

In Jesus' significant final commissioning he calls his disciples to make more disciples. Their playbook for how to make disciples is to teach converts. Specifically they are to teach converts all that Jesus taught them, which is a kingdom ethic that addresses the motivation of the heart and is grounded in Christ as the fulfillment of the OT. Therefore, disciples are to make more disciples by teaching them that Jesus fulfills the Law and the Prophets.

Preaching has the end of making disciples of Christ, which is why preachers should preach Christocentrically. Preaching is included in the Great Commission mandate to teach. Preaching that matures individuals into disciples is faithful to cover the whole counsel of God.⁹⁶ The whole counsel of God finds its climax and fulfillment in Christ. Preaching that matures individuals into disciples is Christocentric and leads the congregation to believe Jesus' gospel message. Blomberg writes, "The final word of the Gospel remains Christ-centered. Even when we fail, he remains faithful."⁹⁷

The Minor Prophet's Place in Christian Preaching

The Minor Prophets provide preachers colorful and powerful gospel texts. The books are shorter than texts such as Isaiah and Jeremiah and are therefore more conducive to covering more of the Bible in a shorter amount of time. However, like the rest of the

⁹⁵Blomberg, *Matthew*, 433.

⁹⁶Blomberg writes, "If new converts are not faithfully and lovingly nurtured in the whole counsel of God's revelation, then the church has disobeyed the other part. Key implications for preaching appear here. There must be a balance between evangelistic proclamation and relevant exposition of all parts of God's Word, including the more difficult material best reserved for the mature (cf. 1 Cor. 2:1-5 with 2:6-10)." *Ibid.*, 433.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 434.

OT, the passages discussed in this chapter highlight that Jesus and the Apostles intended the Minor Prophets to be preached. Jesus and the Apostles modeled preaching the Minor Prophets Christocentrically and always in light of salvation history. Understanding that they preached the Minor Prophets Christocentrically means that there was method to their interpretations and preaching. Contemporary preachers should use the same method as Jesus and his Apostles.

CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR
TEACHING LEADERS HOW TO INTERPRET
CHRIST FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT
MINOR PROPHETS

Church leaders face the problem of how to learn to interpret then preach Christ from the OT Minor Prophets. The solution to this problem is hermeneutical training that explains how Jesus is the fulfillment of Minor Prophetic passages. This chapter attempts to layout the hermeneutical principles needed to interpret the Minor Prophets faithfully. In order to understand how to interpret Christ from these OT passages, the leader must clearly understand the authority of the Bible. Related, leaders must understand the connection of the authority of the Bible to the ministry philosophy of expository preaching.¹ Referencing scholars and pastors, expository preaching will be established as essential to interpreting and preaching Christ from the Minor Prophets. Next, grounded on the solution of Christocentric expository preaching, hermeneutical issues unique to the Minor Prophets will be addressed. Finally, three useful tools will be explained. These tools assist leaders in their effort to interpret then preach Christ from the OT Minor Prophets. Thus, the most biblically faithful method for interpreting and preaching Christ

¹In chap. 1, I presented my definition of expository preaching: “Expository preaching consists of a Christian preacher uncovering an author’s intended meaning of a section of the Bible by means of the historical, grammatical, literal (consistent with the genre of the passage) exegesis as well as enlightenment by the Holy Spirit; then structuring a sermon not only built around the central idea of the text but also the structure and thought of the text; then placing the passage within the metanarrative of redemptive history; then interpreting a universal principle which he first applies to himself; and concluding by applying the Scripture through the power of the Holy Spirit to his audience.” My concise definition of expository preaching was also explained in chap. 1: Expository preaching is simply defined as a sermon that *explains* and *applies* the passage preached. “They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading” (Neh 8:8) is a helpful verse to understand the essence of expository preaching.

from the Minor Prophets emerges when the authority and role of the Bible is established, hermeneutical issues are understood and used properly, and contemporary interpretive tools are utilized.

Preachers Agree that Expository Preaching Rests upon the Authority of the Bible

Bryan Chapell

Bryan Chapell is a Presbyterian minister, former pastor, former professor of preaching, and past president of Covenant Seminary. His book *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon* is one of the most significant texts on expository preaching. Simply, expository preaching is explaining and applying the passage. Chapell understands there is a link between one's view of the Bible and the philosophy of expository preaching. He writes, "Augustine simply summarized, 'When the Bible speaks, God speaks.'"² Chapell agrees with Augustine's view of the Bible. Without it the preacher cannot bridge to expositional preaching, much less Christocentric expositional preaching. The Bible claims to be the Word of God, which is the ground for explaining and applying it. Chapell explains, "The claim of Scripture and the premise of expository preaching is that God has spoken in his Word."³

Interpreting the Bible as authoritative, then, actually frees the preacher from performance and manipulation. Chapell explains that ultimately "preaching accomplishes its spiritual purposes not because of the skills or the wisdom of a preacher but because of the power of the Scripture proclaimed (1 Cor. 2:4-5)."⁴ He continues,

Preachers minister with greater zeal, confidence, and freedom when they realize that God has taken from their backs the monkey of spiritual manipulation. God is not

²Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 31.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., 26.

relying on the sufficiency of our craft or character to accomplish his purposes (2 Cor. 3:5). God certainly can use eloquence and desires lives befitting the sanctity of our subject matter, but his Spirit uses the Word itself to fulfill his saving and sanctifying purposes.⁵

The authoritative Word of God (rather than human skill or manipulation) changes hearts.⁶

Therefore, leaders should explain and apply it. They should avoid other means of leading people to spiritual growth such as entertainment, psychology, or moralistic religion.

Chapell explains that without “the authority of the Word, preaching becomes an endless search for topics, therapies, and techniques that will win approval, promote acceptance, advance a cause, or soothe worry.”⁷ This truth then becomes the foundation for why the Bible should be explained and applied.

Chapell describes expository preaching as an attempt to “present and apply the truths of a specific biblical passage.”⁸ He explains that expository sermons begin with the text not the sermon idea.⁹ The biblical text drives the preaching ideas and points, not the other way around. Topical sermons, which are quite different, set out to advocate a topical position, and then reference Bible verses to make the point. They do not focus solely or primarily on one passage from the Bible. When some pastors preach on topics like marriage and sexuality and money, they run the danger of inserting too much of their opinions and less of the Bible’s opinion. Similarly doctrinal sermons, yet another type,

⁵Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 26

⁶Ibid., 30. Chapell writes, “Spiritual change resides in God’s Word.”

⁷Ibid., 32.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Chapell explains, “Expository preaching points preachers to the biblical text with the instruction ‘begin here.’ This does not mean that preachers have not thought about the trail before or that they have no idea what they want to see. We often begin sermon preparation by looking for what the Bible has to say about a particular concern or topic. Still, the text itself is the source of the truths we ultimately present. In the pulpit, we are expositors, not authors. Sermons explain what the Bible says. This means that a preacher’s first expository task is to choose a portion of Scripture from which to preach.” Ibid., 50.

seek to explain a doctrinal truth, and then reference Bible verses to support the truths. They also are not limited to one passage from the Bible. When some pastors preach sermons on angels or end times or creation, they often run the danger of inserting more of their opinions than the Bible's. Chapel recognizes that topical and doctrinal sermons might be "valid and valuable"¹⁰ periodically, but expositional preaching should be the "regular congregational diet"¹¹ of every local church. If the pastor is limited to staying within the meaning of a particular passage, then he has less room to avoid what the passage actually says as well as preach only his strong opinions. Thus, the authority of the Bible should lead preachers to preach primarily expositional sermons.

Chapell, however, goes even further. If one holds to the authority of the Bible, and if that leads to adopting expositional preaching, then the issue of how to maintain the theology of the Bible in the sermon is next. Chapell argues, "Preaching that is faithful to the whole of Scripture not only establishes God's requirements but also highlights the redemptive truths that make holiness possible."¹² The needed redemptive truths that are often lacking in topical and doctrinal preaching dominate expository preaching. Chapel's point is that expository preaching is insufficient when it does not include these redemptive truths. It might sound strange to some, but a preacher can explain and apply a passage of the Bible in such a way that is not uniquely redemptive, but rather is moralistic. For example, someone could teach from the book of Jonah and explain points about the Hebrew terms, conclude the text is about not being prejudicial, and then apply the text by denouncing prejudicial laws and call people to vote a certain way. However, if this sermon does not explain redemptive truths that help one to overcome prejudices, it runs the risk of teaching people that loving others through differences is done in one's own moral

¹⁰Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 50.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., 19.

strength. Explaining how to not be prejudicial in light of Christ and his redemption is an example of Christocentric preaching. Christ and his redemption is the message of the Bible, and every biblical passage should be understood in light of that broader theology.

As shown, Chapel's text assists preachers in understanding the link between the authority of the Bible and expositional preaching, which should then lead to Christocentric expositional preaching. This concluding point about redemptive preaching is key, because if expositional preaching becomes moralistic preaching, then the authority of the Bible has actually been abandoned. In his book, Chapell makes a case for the Bible and for expositional preaching, but also the case for the gospel over moralism. In conclusion, Chapell declares, "Grace rules—as both the most powerful motivation and the only true means of Christian obedience!"¹³

Greg Heisler

Greg Heisler is a homiletics professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. His book *Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit's Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery* was monumental in the expository preaching movement for preserving the active role of the Holy Spirit in the development and preaching of a sermon. His book does not pit the Bible against the Holy Spirit, but rather calls one to "recover the Holy Spirit for expository preaching."¹⁴ He explains that in "addition to a strong emphasis on the text of Scripture, we must place an equally strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit who empowers us to preach the Scriptures."¹⁵ However, these two emphases are grounded in the authority of the Bible. Heisler argues that all preachers want God to speak through them to their congregations. Then, citing Hebrews 1:1-4, he explains, "In order for God

¹³Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 19.

¹⁴Greg Heisler, *Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit's Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery* (Nashville: B & H, 2007), xvi.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, xv.

to speak *through us*, we must first be convinced that God has already spoken *to us* in his Word.”¹⁶ Heisler’s bridge to expository preaching begins with his position that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God.¹⁷ Even though this book emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in the preaching process, he affirms, “Wholeheartedly the centrality of the text in the development and proclamation of a sermon.”¹⁸ The text, not the topic, is what drives expository preaching. He views the Bible as authoritative and, thus, embraces expository preaching, and those convictions work in tandem with his understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit. Heisler writes,

Yes, God speaks today because he speaks to me by his Spirit through his Word. Is the Spirit giving me new teaching that is higher and superior to the Scripture? No, the Spirit is illuminating what is already recorded in God’s Word, so that the Word of God is quickened to my heart for every need of my life.¹⁹

This understanding is incredibly important for any church leader and why Heisler’s little book is so valuable.

Also, grounded in his commitment to the authority of the Bible, Heisler strongly advocates preaching the actual content of the Bible, as opposed to preaching an idea then trying to support the idea with passages from the Bible. He ultimately leads the reader to embrace the message of the Bible (Jesus and his gospel of grace) as the message of preachers’ sermons. He explains that preachers should understand the passage they are preaching within the larger metanarrative of the Bible. For example, using Jesus’ sermon in Luke 24, he describes it as the “greatest sermon in the Bible.”²⁰ He explains further,

¹⁶Heisler, *Spirit-Led Preaching*, 22.

¹⁷Heisler states, “Convinced of this, we make a commitment to preach Scripture because we know when we preach Scripture, people hear from God.” Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., xv.

¹⁹Ibid., 42.

²⁰Ibid., 25.

Christ is the grand theme, the singular message, and the supreme subject of *all* the Bible. . . . Whereas the Old Testament predicts Christ, the New Testament presents Christ. Both Testaments bear Christological witness. If Jesus used the Old Testament to preach about himself, then so should we!²¹

Finally, Paul's view is also shown to be Christocentric. Paul's position was preaching should be "centered on the cross because the cross is the fulfillment of the redemptive message of the Bible."²² Clearly, Heisler advocates preaching Christ even from OT books such as the Minor Prophets.

Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit's Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery played a monumental role in more than establishing the Holy Spirit's role in expository preaching, it also greatly assisted preachers in their understanding of the importance of Christocentric expository preaching. Heisler shows how his position on Christocentric expository preaching is dependent upon adopting expository preaching, which is dependent on his position on the nature and authority of the Bible itself. Of course preachers who hold to inerrancy and infallibility do advocate the superiority of topical or doctrinal preaching, but Heisler helps make a better case for the superiority of Christocentric expository preaching. He concludes his position by stating, "The Spirit reveals and glorifies Christ by magnifying Christ's teaching, Christ's gospel, and Christ's work as the grand fulfillment of God's redemptive plan."²³ Heisler's text is a helpful case for the authority of the Bible as the ground for the philosophy of Christocentric expository preaching.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., is the President of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, a popular cultural commentator, popular preacher, and the author of *He Is Not*

²¹Heisler, *Spirit-Led Preaching*, 26.

²²Ibid., 35.

²³Ibid., 55.

Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World. His book makes the case for expository preaching (particularly in the context of postmodernity), and that the Bible is “the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God.”²⁴ Mohler argues that postmodernity has had a significant impact on the church’s view of preaching. He explains a number of impacts, then states, “Taken together, all this amounts to a significant loss of confidence in the word as written and spoken.”²⁵ General loss of confidence in objective truth and words as written includes a loss of confidence in the objective truth of the Bible. Skepticism about objective truth of the Bible is then linked to a skepticism regarding authoritative preaching. If someone rejects the former, then he will reject the later:

Since preaching is itself a form of “mental transport,” any loss of confidence in the word leads to a loss of confidence in preaching. Ultimately, preaching will cease to be *Christian* preaching if the preacher loses confidence in the authority of the Bible as the Word of God and in the power of the spoken word to communicate the saving and transforming message of the Bible.²⁶

Some preachers, Mohler explains, might not completely reject the Bible, but postmodern pressures cause some of them to suffer “embarrassment before the biblical text.”²⁷ This embarrassment has led some to “simply disregard and ignore vast sections of Scripture, focusing instead on texts that are more comfortable, palatable, and nonconfrontational to the modern mind.”²⁸ Further, Mohler explains that this disregard due to embarrassment is a “form of pastoral neglect and malpractice.”²⁹ After explaining the problem of modern preaching and outlining his concerns over preachers rejecting the authority of the

²⁴R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody, 2008), 19.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 17.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷*Ibid.*, 18.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 18-19.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 19.

Word of God, he shifts to advocating for expository preaching as the solution to the problem. He goes so far as to state, “In fact, I believe that the only form of authentic Christian preaching is expository preaching.”³⁰ Expository preaching is described as “that mode of Christian preaching that takes as its central purpose the presentation and application of the text of the Bible.”³¹ He explains, “Authority, reverence, and centrality” mark the best kind of expository preaching.³² Next, he addresses the content of this preaching. Expository preachers are to grasp the broadest and most significant hermeneutical issue: the gospel.³³ Expository preaching that does not place a passage within its broader redemptive context is criticized because it will drift toward moralistic applications and, thus, stunt the spiritual growth of a church. Mohler explains,

The tendency to isolate our sermons to one tiny piece of biblical text is a major problem, and it also explains why so much evangelical preaching is moralistic. It is easy to pick out a familiar story, make a few points from it about what people should and should not do, and then be done with it. But that kind of preaching will leave a church weak and starving, because the Christians who sit under it never find themselves in the big story of God’s work in the world. If we as preachers want to see our people growing to maturity in Christ, we must give them more than a diet of wee little morality sermons. We must place every text we preach firmly within the grand, sweeping story of the Bible.³⁴

The fear is that people will gain facts about the Bible, but will not progress in their sanctification because they will try to accomplish righteousness in their own strength.

The solution is “to preach Christ from both the Old and the New Testaments,”³⁵ because

³⁰Mohler, *He Is Not Silent*, 49.

³¹*Ibid.*, 65.

³²*Ibid.*, 69.

³³Mohler writes, “The preaching of the apostles *always* presented the *kerygma*—the heart of the gospel.” *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 89-90.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 84.

“every text in the entire Scripture points to Jesus Christ.”³⁶ Jesus and his gospel are the sweeping story of the Bible, and the solution to moralistic expository preaching. Mohler lands where the great Charles Spurgeon lands and embraces his famous quote, “I take my text . . . and make a bee-line to the cross.”³⁷ This book is unique in that it addresses the impact of postmodernity upon preaching, particularly expository preaching. In light of postmodern culture, a convincing case is made for expository preaching based upon the inerrancy and authority of the Bible. However, he is also weary of preaching that interprets and applies the Bible moralistically. Rather, Christian preaching must interpret Christ from the text, even the OT texts. Mohler concludes, “Even as we preach the immediate meaning of every text, we should also show its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.”³⁸

Haddon Robinson

Haddon Robinson is an acclaimed Professor of Preaching at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. His text *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages* is a standard expository preaching text in many seminaries. It is more of a manual on how to preach and less of a case for expository preaching. Thus, theoretical issues surrounding expository preaching are not addressed, including the need to make redemptive applications. Rather, the reader is taught how to develop and preach an expository sermon, but does not specifically find a case for preaching Christ from the Old Testament. However, Robinson does make an effective general case for expository preaching in the opening of his book. First Peter 1:23-25 is used to explain that redemption happens through preaching.³⁹ First Thessalonians 2:13 is cited in order to explain,

³⁶Mohler, *He Is Not Silent*, 84.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Robinson writes, “Through preaching God had redeemed them.” Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*,

God Himself spoke through the personality and message of a preacher to confront men and women and bring them to Himself. . . . When preachers speak as heralds, they must cry out ‘the Word.’ Anything less cannot legitimately pass for Christian preaching.⁴⁰

Authority for the preacher comes not from his position, but from the Scriptures he preaches.⁴¹ Robinson understands that the Scriptures are authoritative. Next, it is clearly stated, “The type of preaching that best carries the force of divine authority is expository preaching.”⁴² Thus, a philosophy of expository preaching rests on the authority of the Bible. Regarding treatment of the OT, Robinson is critical of allegorizing the text, as well as reading NT theology back into the OT.⁴³ When reading the OT, are readers to work to interpret that passage’s understanding of the person of God.⁴⁴ In the end, Robinson understands that redemption through the preaching of a sermon is the work of “Jesus Christ through His Spirit.”⁴⁵ He encourages preachers to give “your sermon to Him.”⁴⁶

2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 19.

⁴⁰Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 20.

⁴¹Robinson states, “Ministers can proclaim anything in a stained-glass voice at 11:30 on Sunday morning following the singing of hymns. Yet when they fail to preach the Scriptures, they abandon their authority.” *Ibid.*

⁴²*Ibid.*

⁴³Robinson writes, “Another inadequate method of handling the Old Testament uses it only as an example or illustration of New Testament doctrine. Here the authority for what is preached comes neither from the theology of the Old Testament nor from the intent of the Old Testament writer, but entirely from the reader’s theology read back into the passage. Should those who do this be challenged about their interpretation or application they appeal not to the passage before them, but to some passage in the New Testament or to a theology that they assume they share with their audience.” *Ibid.*, 88.

⁴⁴Robinson observes, “When you study a biblical text, therefore, you should ask, ‘What is the vision of God in this passage?’ God is always there. Look for Him. At different times He is the Creator, a good Father, the Redeemer, a rejected Lover, a Husband, a King, a Savior, a Warrior, a Judge, a Reaper, a vineyard Keeper, a banquet Host, a Fire, a Hen protecting her chicks, and so on.” *Ibid.*, 94.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 223.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

These pastors and scholars advocate expository preaching as well as redemptive interpretation of the Bible. They also understand that the application of a passage cannot be moralistic, but rather needs to be Christocentric, on the basis the power of the gospel. Furthermore, their conclusions are dependent upon their position on the authority of the Bible as God's Word. Preachers who hold to the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture can advocate topical or doctrinal sermons. However, Christocentric expositional sermons are uniquely dependent on the authority of the Bible. It has also been shown that expository preaching should be the normative mode of preaching. Thus, the authority of the Bible should lead preachers primarily to preach expositional sermons. Leaders need first to embrace the authority of the Bible as God's Word as a step to adopting the method of expository preaching. Preaching Christ from the OT Minor Prophets is dependent upon embracing the authority of the Bible and then understanding expository preaching as the normative mode of preaching. These scholars and pastors explain how these steps are dependent upon each other.

Interpreting Christ from the OT Minor Prophets Requires Addressing Hermeneutical, Historical, and Theological Issues

The Minor Prophets were written in a unique period of history and have a distinct message. Further, the genre is different than other genres found in the Bible. In order to interpret Christ from these books certain hermeneutical, historical, and theological issues must be addressed.

For example, the Minor Prophets deal extensively with the promised Day of the Lord and the reader must determine hermeneutically how to interpret this theme. Linked to the Day of the Lord are issues of social justice as it relates to violations of the covenant, as well as God's wrath, and then his promised restoration. Osbourne explains, "Beginning with Amos and continuing through the exile, the prophets announced the end of the covenant and therefore of the national existence of Israel and Judah. God would

destroy the old nation and resurrect a new people in their place (Ezek 37).”⁴⁷ The original hearers of the Minor Prophets’ sermons did not experience the promised restoration to the degree that the new people of God have experienced restoration after the atoning work of Christ. Thus, the hermeneutical principle of progressive fulfillment is key to interpreting the Minor Prophets. Barker explains progressive fulfillment:

What that means is that certain prophecies are of such a nature that they are progressively fulfilled (i.e., in stages). Prophecies sometimes require two or more stages in order to fulfill the whole picture seen by the prophet. Conceptually, each stage is necessary to ‘fill to the full’ the total content of what the prophet envisioned. And the fulfillment of one part is part of the fulfillment of the whole—a guarantee that the remaining events will definitely follow. Each stage becomes typology of the later stage[s] (i.e., of the fulfillment[s] yet to come).⁴⁸

Related, Osborne states, “The goal of evangelical hermeneutics is quite simple—to discover the intention of the Author/author (author = inspired human author; Author = God who inspires the text).”⁴⁹ Thus, contemporary readers discover the Author’s intended meaning for them by tracing out how the passage is progressively fulfilled. On a side, progressive fulfillment does not conflict with the original meaning of a text to the original meaning audience.⁵⁰ Further, it has been shown that Christ is the ultimate fulfillment. Osborne agrees when he writes, “Jesus has filled up all that the Old

⁴⁷Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1991), 259.

⁴⁸Kenneth L. Barker and Waylon Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, The New American Commentary, vol. 20 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 41.

⁴⁹It would be more accurate to state that the human authors of Scripture were “carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet 1:21), and the words of Scripture are what were inspired. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 24.

⁵⁰Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard write, “As sovereign Lord, God has the freedom to bring about the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of OT prophecies as he wishes. This does not imply divine unpredictability, as if God arbitrarily changes his mind simply because he ‘feels like it.’ Certainly, God’s sovereign purposes do not change, and we may expect him to adhere to much of the prophetic design.” William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 380

Testament means and brought it to completion.”⁵¹ He also explains, “The Old Testament event is the promise that looks forward to its fulfillment in the New Testament.”⁵² But, what about Minor Prophetic passages that are not direct prophecies about the Messiah? How does the broad theme impact the details of a particular passage? How much can we appropriately read into a particular passage? Ellis explains,

Jesus and his apostles conceive a history within the framework of two ages, this age (*aión*) and the age to come (e.g. Matt. 12:32; Mark 10:30; Luke 20:34f.; Eph. 1:21). This perspective appears to have its background in the Old Testament prophets, who prophesied of ‘the last (*‘aharit*) days’ and ‘the day of the Lord’ as the time of an ultimate redemption of God’s people and the destruction of their enemies (e.g., Isa. 2:2; Dan. 10:14; Mic. 4:1).⁵³

Each passage must first be interpreted through the eyes of the original hearers, but then be understood in light of Christ’s redeeming work.⁵⁴ With each passage the interpreter is to determine how Christ fulfills the passage. One cannot get outside the boundaries of the historical-grammatical method, but rather should also look to the apostles’ approach. Christocentric interpretations are not in opposition to the historical-grammatical approach. For example, Zuck is committed to historical-grammatical exegesis and also explained the apostles did not invent hidden meaning.⁵⁵ Rather, Zuck explained they

⁵¹Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 24, 328.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³E. Earle Ellis, “The New Testament’s Use of the Old Testament,” in *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Introduction to Interpreting Scripture*, ed. Bruce Corely, Steve Lemke, and Grant Lovejoy, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 83.

⁵⁴Osborne writes, “The early Christians (like the Jews) saw all of salvation history (God working out his plan of salvation in human history) as a single continuous event. Therefore events in the past are linked to those in the present, so that God’s mighty deeds like the exodus or the return from exile foreshadow the experiences of God’s present community, the church. This does not see a direct prophetic link but rather a correspondence in history, in which the current experience relives the past.” Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 328.

⁵⁵Zuck writes, “This is not to suggest that the New Testament writers saw ‘hidden’ meanings in the Old Testament passages. They were not changing the meanings of the statements in the Old Testament.” Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1991), 269.

drew out heightened meanings.⁵⁶ No one is arguing for an arbitrary reading, but an approach that seeks to find how Christ fulfills each particular passage. A Christocentric formula, like Greidanus', is especially helpful for passages that are not direct messianic prophecies. It is important to note not everything said in a Minor Prophetic text is prophetic in the sense that it is predicting or foretelling of future events. Many passages are a call to repentance of sin (national and institutional as well as individual sins). The Christocentric method would recognize that contemporary hearers still sin, and thus would also call the church to repentance. Greidanus simply states, "Jesus Christ is the link between the Old Testament and the New."⁵⁷ The hermeneutical task of the modern interpreter is to trace the truth of a particular passage through the Bible as a whole, in order to understand how it is fulfilled in Christ, and thus determine how it applies to the contemporary church.⁵⁸

Historically, the Minor Prophets consist of the twelve books traditionally listed between Hosea and Malachi. Their ministry was during the period spanning 2 Kings 15-20 and 2 Chronicles 27-32. Their ministry spread from the 830s BC to around 400 BC. Hosea, Amos, Obediah, Jonah, and Nahum prophesied to the Northern Kingdom of

⁵⁶Zuck explains, "On a number of occasions the New Testament writers referred to statements in the Old Testament and then enlarged or extended those statements beyond their original historical setting to refer to Christ. Though the passages in the two Testaments refer to entirely different historical situations, parallels or analogies were seen by the New Testament writers in reference to Christ. The Old Testament situations were 'heightened' in the New Testament to speak of Christ. The New Testament references did not contradict the passages quoted from the Old Testament. Nor were they unrelated. Instead, they were expansions of related truths." Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation*, 267.

⁵⁷Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 49.

⁵⁸Byargeon explains, "The final type of fulfillment is sequential. Some prophecies, when traced through God's Word, are obviously progressively or sequentially fulfilled. Interpreters often focus on the prediction and the fulfillment. However, it is important to remember that the prophetic word is sometimes more of a process than simply cause and effect." Rick Byargeon, "Thus Saith the Lord: Interpreting the Prophetic Word," in *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 308.

Israel. Joel, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi prophesied to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Specifically, Micah's ministry was from as early as 750 BC to as late as 686 BC⁵⁹ and was during the time of Isaiah and Hosea.⁶⁰ Micah and his contemporary Prophets lived during the eighth-century BC, which sits in the Iron Age II (1000-586 BC) period.⁶¹ In short, the period of the Minor Prophets was marked by much corruption and upheaval.⁶² Religiously, 2 Kings 17 explains that the period of the Minor Prophets was marked by false religion and idolatry. Hezekiah was a bright spot during the period, but for the most part the two kingdoms were marked by violations against God's covenant. Politically, the kingdom split after King Solomon's death and spent years in fear of the Assyrians, then in fear of the Babylonians. All their fears were realized when the Northern Kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC.⁶³

⁵⁹Barker observes, "The maximum period for Micah's prophetic ministry would be 750-686 BC . . . the minimum time would be 735-715." Barker and Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 31.

⁶⁰Barker writes, "This means that Micah's ministry overlapped those of Isaiah (ca. 740-681) and Hosea (ca. 750-715). But his ministry was closest to that of Isaiah in both time and place." Ibid.

⁶¹Hamilton explains, "Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah seem to have ministered through the same period of Israel's history (ca. 740-680), and they may have known one another personally. The land of Israel is not a large place, geographically speaking. Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah prophesied around the time of the destruction of the northern kingdom by Assyria (721 BC). Nahum was perhaps next to appear (between 660 and 612 BC), and then Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah (ca. 640-570 BC)." James M. Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 189.

⁶²Barker states, "Both Israel under the reign of Jeroboam II (793-753 BC) and Judah under Uzziah (792-740) had enjoyed a long period of material and economic prosperity. Unfortunately it was also a time of political, social, moral, and religious corruption." Barker and Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 23.

⁶³Brisco explains that, in response to the Egyptian backed rebellion of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, "Shalmaneser responded by besieging Samaria for three years until the city fell in 722 BC (2 Kgs. 17:5-6). Though Sargon II (722-705 BC), successor to Shalmaneser V, claims credit for the capture of Samaria, the Bible implies that Shalmaneser was primarily responsible for the final destruction of the Northern Kingdom Israel (2 Kings 17:5)." Thomas V. Brisco, *Holman Bible Atlas* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 139.

In order to understand the Minor Prophets, three theological issues must be addressed. First, there is a common misunderstanding that prophetic books, including the Minor Prophets, are primarily about the future.⁶⁴ The Minor Prophets made predictions about the future (foretelling), but were primarily concerned with boldly preaching a convicting message from God (forthtelling). God gave the prophets the task of calling his people to repent of violations against his covenant and believe on him once again.⁶⁵ Many times, predictions about the future were included as part of the call to repentance, but the convicting message was the purpose of the sermon.

Second, foretelling then brings the reader to the content of the messages. Barker explains, “It has been said that one of the purposes of the prophets was to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comforted.”⁶⁶ The people were violating the covenant, and the prophets were sent to convict sinners, but also comfort the faithful. In order to both convict and comfort, the prophets leaned heavily on a theology of the Day of the Lord. The prophets promised a day of judgment for injustices. The Minor Prophets rebuked social injustices, but Osborne provides clarity on how one should understand their messages for people today:

It is popular in many circles today to make the prophets revolutionaries or at least urban social reformers. This is not the case, however. While they decried the social sins of their contemporaries, they did not do so as an end in itself but rather as particular instances of their true message, the religious apostasy of the nation. They

⁶⁴Osborne explains, “The basic misunderstanding regarding the prophetic literature of the Old Testament is that it relates primarily to the future.” Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 264.

⁶⁵Hamilton writes, “All the prophets indicted Israel on the basis of the terms of the Mosaic covenant. Because the covenant had been broken, the prophets called Israel to repentance. When the people did not repent, the prophets declared that the covenant curses would fall: the people would be exiled from the land just as Adam was exiled from Eden. But the prophets also announced hope for the future.” Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation*, 231.

⁶⁶Barker and Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 35.

were not social workers but primarily were preachers, God's ambassadors representing him before a nation that had turned from his ways.⁶⁷

The promised moment of judgment was a paradox of wrath and restoration. Sinners would experience ruin and the faithful would find relief.⁶⁸

Third, interpreters of the Minor Prophets need to understand the nature of how these promises are progressively fulfilled. Fulfillment is typological as part of a telescoping view of time. Regarding typology, people, events, and themes serve as symbols that point to Christ and his gospel. Osborne writes, "The New Testament writers would see analogous situations in salvation history and link them prophetically."⁶⁹ Regarding a telescoping view of time, the prophets and NT Apostles viewed statements and themes as past, present, and future.⁷⁰ Progressive fulfillment of the Minor Prophets means "there is a progress in redemption that makes the eschatological promises new in every era."⁷¹

Thus, understanding key hermeneutical historical and theological issues help explain how the Minor Prophets still apply today. In summary, Barker's conclusion still rings true:

For God always requires justice, faithful covenant love, and humble obedience to him. Indeed, his most famous rhetorical question and reply probably is 6:8, "What

⁶⁷Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 262.

⁶⁸Barker observes, "Micah appears to have had a threefold purpose: first, to present the nature of God's complaint against his covenant people (1:2-7; 2:6-11; 3:1-4, 9-12; 6:1-16); second, to proclaim the Lord's certain punishment of their many sins (3:8); and third, to predict God's sure salvation to come, centering in the appearance of the Davidic Messianic Deliverer (5:2)." Barker and Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 36.

⁶⁹Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, 266.

⁷⁰Osborne writes, "Second, the key is the Jewish concept of the telescoping of time. In God's acts within history a conceptual link would equate such analogous situations ("a thousand years are like a day" [2 Pet 3:8] amalgamates past, present and future). Therefore, the New Testament could draw together Antiochus Epiphanes (past), the destruction of Jerusalem (present) and the eschaton (future)." Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid.

does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”⁷²

Three Contemporary Tools to Interpret Christ

Bryan Chapell’s Fallen Condition Focus

Bryan Chapell’s *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon* is a call for a type of expository preaching that highlights the “redemptive truths that make holiness possible.”⁷³ He writes, “God’s Word acts as an instrument of his redeeming work.”⁷⁴ Chapell argues that these redemptive truths are key to grasping the ultimate purpose of any passage. When leaders ask why the Holy Spirit included any given passage in the Bible, Chapell contends the purpose is not just for the original audience, but also for the contemporary church. He cites Romans 15:4 to remind the reader that God gave the Bible to the contemporary church for spiritual growth. Chapell also states, “God intended the Bible to serve both an original purpose and a present use.”⁷⁵

His helpful tool to mine for redemptive truths in any given passage is what he calls the Fallen Condition Focus: “The Fallen Condition Focus (FCF) is the mutual human condition that contemporary believers share with those to or about whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage for God’s people to glorify and enjoy him.”⁷⁶ The FCF relates the problems of the original hearers to problems in the modern church. Chapell advocates finding parallel tensions in the biblical context with the modern context. The spiritual concerns of the original audience are bridged to the spiritual concerns of the listeners of the sermon.

⁷²Barker and Bailey, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah*, 37.

⁷³Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 19.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 269.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 270.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 50.

The process then acknowledges, “Biblical solutions must be divine and not merely human.”⁷⁷ These biblical solutions then become the purpose of the sermon.⁷⁸ Biblical solutions based upon the FCF lead to redemptive Christ-centered application. The FCF leads the preacher away from moralistic solutions and “directs people to the presence and power of the Savior.”⁷⁹ Thus, the goal of an expository sermon that utilizes the FCF tool is “beautifully positive.”⁸⁰ However, if these Christocentric solutions are not clearly identified, a sermon runs the risk of being moralistic. Chapell explains that moralistic sermons that only advocate being good or having greater compassion are actually “sub-Christian,”⁸¹ even if the Bible demands being good and having greater compassion. He then writes exhortations “for moral behavior apart from the work of the Savior degenerate into mere Pharisaism, even if the preachers advocate the actions with selected biblical evidence and good intent.”⁸²

One might understandably argue that not every single verse of the Bible makes a direct link to Christ or his atoning work on the cross. However, Chapell would respond, “We must relate even seed-form aspects of a text to the mature message they signal or for which they prepare us in order to interpret fully and rightly what the passage means.”⁸³ Chapell is advocating the use of biblical theology with every passage in order to bridge even the seeds of the gospel to redemptive solutions. Biblical theology is

⁷⁷Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 50.

⁷⁸Chapell writes, “Ultimately, a sermon is about how a text says we are to respond biblically to the FCF as it is experienced in our lives.” *Ibid.*, 50-51.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 54.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 273.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 274.

⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸³*Ibid.*, 276.

distinct from systematic theology in that it emphasizes “the development of redemptive history.”⁸⁴ Biblical theology emphasizes the whole or unity of the Bible. Thus, biblical theology is attempting to “hold together everything the Bible says.”⁸⁵ Chapell’s FCF method is a tool for doing biblical theology, even on a passage that might not have a direct apparent link to something like Jesus’ atonement.

In this way, Chapell’s FCF method is useful to understand the gospel from every passage of the Bible.⁸⁶ However, Chapell’s FCF method does “not allow a preacher to add material to a text in order to derive a redemptive focus.”⁸⁷ For example, Osborne warns against forcing meaning when he explains Isaiah 49:23 is not a reference to the magi (Matt 2), but rather is a verse fulfilled in Isaiah’s day.⁸⁸ Therefore, it would add meaning to the text if a preacher sought to link this passage to the magi during a Christmas sermon. Bridging Isaiah 49:23 to Matthew 2 would be an example of deriving a redemptive message by adding meaning upon a passage. A redemptive bridge can certainly be found from Isaiah 49, but not by making a definitive link to the magi of Matthew 2. Chapell’s FCF method enables the preacher to keep interpretations faithfully within the broad redemptive message of the Bible, even if the passage does not make a

⁸⁴Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 882. Biblical theology is similar to Greidanus’ way of longitudinal themes explained in the next section.

⁸⁵Hamilton, *God’s Glory in Salvation*, 47.

⁸⁶Hamilton writes, “In this sense, the entire Bible is Christ-centered because his redemptive work in all of its incarnational, atoning, rising, interceding, and reigning dimensions is the capstone of all of God’s revelation of his dealings with his people. Thus, no aspect of revelation can be thoroughly understood or explained in isolation from some aspect of Christ’s redeeming work.” *Ibid.*

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 281.

⁸⁸Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006), 273-74. Osborne says the context of the verse “shows it refers to the restoration of Israel after the Babylonian exile, and both the intent and style of the passage demand it be interpreted of the nations’ obeisance before Yahweh and his people.”

direct link to the gospel. However, Chapell's FCF method does not give license to misinterpret the passage in order to make redemptive applications.

The FCF method accomplishes these Christocentric goals by first asking three questions of a passage: "What does the text say? . . . What concern(s) did the text address in its context? . . . What do listeners share in common with those to (or about) whom the text was written?"⁸⁹ Answering these three questions will lead the interpreter to develop a FCF premise. Once a premise is established, the leader can then determine how the gospel heals this problem. These solutions are easier in some passages because some passages make a direct reference to Christ or use distinct typological methods. The context of every passage will bridge to redemptive solutions in one of four ways. He writes that a text "may be: predictive of the work of Christ, preparatory for the work of Christ, reflective of the work of Christ and/or, resultant of the work of Christ."⁹⁰ Determining one of these four ways enables the preacher to establish a gospel solution for his sermon. This gospel solution is then utilized throughout the sermon.

For example, Micah 1 does not necessarily have a direct link to Christ. However, Chapell's FCF method could be used when teaching to determine what concerns this text addresses. Micah 1:7 highlights that God is judging them for their idolatry. Careful exegesis then further explains the nature of their idolatry. At this point one could utilize the FCF method to determine how a present day congregation also struggles with idolatry. Both audiences shared the fallen struggle of idolatry, the fallen consequence of judgment, and also share the gospel hope of redemption. The solution for the original audience was to repent of idolatry. The same solution applies to present-day congregations when they fall into idolatry. Thus, through linking both groups' fallen conditions, one can link the present group to the gospel solution of repentance. Even though Micah 1

⁸⁹Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation*, 270.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 282.

does not have a direct link to Christ, through using the FCF method one can provide redemptive applications.

Chapell's FCF method is a useful tool to train lay leaders to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets and was used in the seminar portion of this project.

Sidney Greidanus' 7 Ways to Christ

Sidney Greidanus is a retired preaching professor from Calvin Seminary. Greidanus' *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* is an argument for Christocentric preaching and a history of how Christ has been preached from the OT, but also an explanation of a biblical method for preaching Christ from the Old Testament. The Christocentric method is particularly useful for this project and the focus of this section. Greidanus describes Christocentric preaching as "preaching sermons which authentically integrate the message of the text with the climax of God's revelation in the person, work, and/or teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament."⁹¹

This integration is done using his 7 Ways to Christ. First, he explains the way of redemptive-historical progression: "Redemptive history, or kingdom history, is the bedrock which supports all the other ways that lead to Christ in the New Testament. Today redemptive history is called the 'metanarrative,' or 'The Story.'"⁹² As opposed to Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation, he describes the metanarrative of Scripture as Creation, Redemption in OT times, Redemption through Jesus Christ, and New Creation.⁹³ Like all biblical theology proponents, he emphasizes a "unified history."⁹⁴

⁹¹Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 10.

⁹²Ibid., 234.

⁹³Ibid., 235.

⁹⁴Ibid., 236.

The first way is seeing “every Old Testament text and its addressees in the context of God’s dynamic history, which progresses steadily and reaches its climax in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and ultimately in the new creation.”⁹⁵ The story of David and Goliath is used to explain that every OT narrative can be understood as a personal story, a national history, but also as redemptive history.⁹⁶ He goes on to describe that the account of David and Goliath is “more than Israel’s king defeating the enemy; the essence is that the Lord himself defeats the enemy of his people.”⁹⁷ Utilizing this first way of redemptive-historical progression and applying it to David and Goliath, he writes,

Thus the battle between David and Goliath is more than a personal scrap; it is more than Israel’s king defeating a powerful enemy; it is a small chapter in the battle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent—a battle which reaches its climax in Jesus’ victory over Satan, first with his death and resurrection, and finally at his Second Coming when Satan will be thrown “into the lake of fire and sulfur” (Rev 20:10).⁹⁸

Second is the way of promise-fulfillment, which is when the OT is interpreted in light of Christ’s fulfillment. Greidanus gives two rules for this method.

First, take into account that God usually fills up his promises progressively—in installments, as it were. . . . Second, in interpreting the text, move from the promise of the Old Testament to the fulfillment in Christ and back again to the Old Testament text.⁹⁹

As an example, he cites the promise of Isaiah 61:1-4 finds its fulfillment in the return of the remnant in 583 BC, then its greater fulfillment in Jesus’ first coming as dawn of Jubilee, and finally its ultimate fulfillment in the Day of Judgment.¹⁰⁰ The way of promise-

⁹⁵Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 237.

⁹⁶Ibid., 238.

⁹⁷Ibid., 239.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Ibid., 242.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 243.

fulfillment is about how a text “was fulfilled, is being fulfilled and will be fulfilled.”¹⁰¹ Third is the way of typology. Types are most often people, but can also be institutions and events, which serve as prerepresentations or prefigures of Christ. Of course, the links show Christ to be the perfect escalation and extreme type. Greidanus admits that the original audience would not have recognized most OT types as predictive, but only later does the church recognize the typology.¹⁰² He also warns against the error of typologizing, which is when every detail of the type is interpreted as a type. An example of this is the view that the blue, purple, and red in the tabernacle are types pointing to Christ’s heavenliness, kingship, and death.¹⁰³ Six rules are provided to protect against typologizing: proceed with using literary-historical interpretation, look for types in the central message not details, determine symbolic meaning, note points of contrast, carry forward the meaning of the symbol, and do more than just draw a typological line to Christ; Preach Christ.¹⁰⁴ Moses, Joshua, the exodus event, and the institution of the tabernacle are all examples of typology. Fourth is the way of analogy. Analogy is transferring meaning from a source subject to a target subject. This way links the goal of the original author’s message to the goal or goals of one or more of Jesus’ messages. Analogies can be found when connecting what God does, teaches, and demands of Israel in the OT to the church in the NT.¹⁰⁵ As an example, “God guided and protected Israel through the cloud (Exod 13:21-22), so God guides and protects his church through Christ

¹⁰¹Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 242.

¹⁰²Greidanus writes, “The answer, I think, is not an either-or but a both-and: some Old Testament types are predictive and others are not. I suspect that most types are not predictive, but specific persons or events are later seen to have typological significance.” *Ibid.*, 251.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, 252.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 257-60.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, 263.

‘to the end of the age’ (Matt 28:20).”¹⁰⁶ Fifth is the way of longitudinal themes, an approach that traces biblical themes from the OT into the NT. The biblical theology process is closely linked to it.¹⁰⁷ It develops a theme through the history of redemption, in order to make applications for the contemporary church. One example Greidanus provides is the theme of the presence of God with his people that he traces from Jacob at Bethel in Genesis 28:10-22 to Jesus as Immanuel in Matthew 1:23.¹⁰⁸ Sixth is the way of NT references. This way is found when NT authors cite OT passages in order to support their own specific message. However, this message is not wholly distinct from the OT message. These messages can provide a bridge to Christ. An example cited by Greidanus is the reference in Mark 15:34 to Psalm 22:1. If a preacher is expounding Psalm 22, he will need to reference Mark 15:34. But the preacher can also bridge the messages and thus make Christocentric applications. Seventh is the way of contrast. This final approach highlights distinctions between the OT and the NT. The emphasis is on how Jesus, not any human, changes a message. Greidanus changes a message by highlighting the problems in the OT, which then find their solution in Christ.¹⁰⁹ In one example, Greidanus highlights the difference in the closeness of the individual to the glory of God in Ezekiel 1:28 and John 1:14. Ezekiel is two-steps removed from the glory of God, but by contrast God himself dwells as a human with his people in the NT.

Greidanus’ 7 Ways to Christ is a useful tool to train lay leaders to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets. Greidanus’ concern is not to stick to “precise

¹⁰⁶Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 263-64.

¹⁰⁷Greidanus explains, “Today it is especially the discipline of biblical theology that helps us trace longitudinal themes from the Old Testament to the New.” *Ibid.*, 267.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹Greidanus observes, “Under the way of contrast we can also include a road to Christ frequently traveled by Spurgeon—a road which begins with the problems encountered in the Old Testament and leads to the solution in Jesus Christ.” *Ibid.*, 272.

perimeters of a particular way,”¹¹⁰ rather to be confident that any sermon from the OT has preached Christ. Every preacher of the Minor Prophets should share this same goal when using Greidanus’ 7 Ways to Christ.

Timothy Valentino’s BETA Method

Timothy Valentino’s 2009 D.Min. project developed a Christocentric method that can be specifically applied to the OT Law. Valentino’s BETA Method¹¹¹ is a Christocentric approach that is extremely helpful to lay leaders who teach the Bible, because they can implement it easily and apply it to both the OT Law and Minor Prophets. He explains his method: “BETA is an acronym that stands for: (1) Back-read the law from a New Testament context; (2) Examine the law in its Old Testament context; (3) Theologize the law to its universal context; and (4) Apply the law to the present context.”¹¹² Back-reading the OT from a NT context begins by acknowledging continuity and discontinuity between the testaments, but then ultimately recognizing Christ fulfills the OT. The method correctly utilizes the grammatical-historical hermeneutic to examine an OT passage in its context. His hermeneutic includes four steps: “(1) analyzing the literary context; (2) analyzing the narrative context; (3) analyzing the grammatical context; and (4) analyzing the historical-cultural context.”¹¹³ Theologize to its universal context is less “a quest to find a certain *principle* but a certain *person*.”¹¹⁴ The reader is to ask what each passage teaches about Jesus. Finally, applications are explained as having two dimensions: Christological and ethical. Ethically, faithful obedience to each text is

¹¹⁰Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 276.

¹¹¹See p. 8 of this project for initial reference.

¹¹²Timothy Ray Valentino. “Using Expository Preaching to Promote a Christian Understanding of Old Testament Law at Fleetwood Bible Church, Fleetwood, Pennsylvania” (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 65.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, 67.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 68.

determined by asking personal questions of the hearers. Christologically, Valentino asks how Jesus lived the teachings of the passage. He also encourages asking how this teaching can be faithfully kept in contemporary culture. Valentino's BETA Method is a useful tool to train lay leaders to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets.

In summary, a case for Christocentric expository preaching is made once the authority of the Bible is established, the philosophy of expository preaching is solidified, and the solution to the problem of moralistic preaching is explained as redemptive preaching. Leading preachers and scholars advocate these positions and how they are connected. A method for Christocentric expository preaching emerges upon better understanding the Minor Prophets, as well as their place in the whole of Scripture. The tools explained assist any preacher in soundly applying any Minor Prophetic passage according to the metanarrative of the Bible. Once these issues are addressed and understood, leaders are better equipped to preach Christ from the OT Minor Prophets.

CHAPTER 4
ELEMENTS OF THE MINISTRY
RESEARCH PROJECT

This ministry research project was a fifteen-week effort designed to teach leaders how to apply the Old Testament Minor Prophets Christocentrically rather than moralistically. The project included three weeks of pre-sermon series seminars, followed by an eleven-week sermon series. During the sermon series, participants met for two sermon evaluation sessions and concluded with one post-sermon series seminar. The seminars were titled “Seeing Jesus Seminars,” and the sermon series through the book of Micah was titled “Paradox: Micah’s Prophecy of Ruin and Redemption.” The elements of the project included pre/post-sermon series questionnaires and two sermon evaluations.

The project aimed to accomplish three goals. The first goal was to increase knowledge in the lives of five leaders of Redeemer Church related to how to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets. The second goal was to modify the affections for Christ of those five leaders as a result of interpreting the OT Minor Prophets. The third goal was to equip the five leaders in skills regarding how to interpret Christ from the Minor Prophets.

Project Schedule

The ministry research project began on Sunday, August 16, 2015, and was completed on Sunday, November 22, 2015. A timeline of the research project consisted of the following:

1. Sundays, August 16, 23, and 30—gathered leaders for the “Seeing Jesus Seminars.”
2. Sunday, August 16—administered the pre-sermon series questionnaire.

3. Sundays, September 6 to November 15—preached an eleven-week sermon series through the book of Micah, titled “Paradox: Micah’s Prophecy of Redemption and Ruin.”
4. Sunday, September 20—administered sermon evaluations and led a session following the sermon.
5. Sunday, November 8—administered sermon evaluations and led a session following the sermon.
6. Sunday, November 22—gathered leaders for the final “Seeing Jesus Seminars.”
7. Sunday, November 22—administered the post-sermon series questionnaire.

The total duration of the research project was 15 weeks.

The Focus Group

The focus group consisted of covenant members of Redeemer Church of Denton from various age groups, life stages, and teaching experience. They were recruited on the basis of their general faithfulness to the Lord and to the church, as well as their potential as teachers. The participants were also understood to be members in good standing that served in the church in some capacity, as well as being recognized as future teachers or small group leaders.

The leaders expressed a desire to understand better the Minor Prophets as well as how to interpret the Bible correctly. Prior to promoting the project, I sought 5 participants; however, 18 attended the initial seminar and 8 fully completed the project. The group represented a diversity of ages ranging from a 26-year-old to an 80-year-old. Redeemer Church of Denton is a church plant, thus most had been involved in the church less than 2 years.

The participants were recruited through personal conversations as well as emails. The requirements of the project were explained prior to the initial seminar and also clearly outlined at the first seminar on August 16, 2015. I explained that they would complete a pre-sermon series questionnaire during the first seminar, attend three pre-sermon series seminars, listen to all eleven sermons through the book of Micah, complete sermon evaluations on the third and tenth sermons in the series, attend a closing post-

sermon series seminar, and complete a post-sermon series questionnaire. If they had to miss a seminar, an audio version was emailed to them. If they had to miss a sermon, then they could listen to it on the church's website.

An enthusiastic group of leaders gathered on Sunday, August 16, for the first seminar. Their questions and comments demonstrated a desire to learn more about books of the Bible that they had rarely studied, as well as a desire to sharpen their skills as Bible teachers. It was explained at that initial seminar that the pre-sermon series questionnaire and the post-sermon series questionnaire contained the same questions, and thus would be used to determine if the knowledge, affection, and skill goals of the project were met.

Pre-Sermon Series Questionnaire Administered

The pre-sermon series questionnaire consisted of 30 questions with answers measured on a 6-point Likert scale (see appendix 1). The questionnaire was intended to measure the leaders' knowledge of the OT Minor Prophets, their knowledge of redemptive interpretive skills, and their ability to bridge Christological interpretations from the OT Minor Prophets to their affections for Christ.

The cover page explained the basic goals of the research project, the role their involvement would play in the research, and that their information would remain strictly confidential. The leaders provided basic biographic information on the cover page. They provided a confidential four-digit number to identify them throughout the research, the date, their age, how many years they had been a Christian, and the number of years they had been involved in Redeemer Church.

Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 were designed to determine their knowledge of the OT as well as the Minor Prophets. Questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30 were designed to measure their Christological interpretive skills of the OT. Questions 9, 10, and 18 measured their affections for Christ through understanding key OT Minor Prophetic themes. The pre-sermon series

questionnaire was administered and completed during the initial seminar on Sunday, August 16.

Synopsis of “Seeing Jesus Seminars”

The group of leaders met over lunch after the worship service on Sunday afternoons for about 2 hours. They would grab a quick lunch in order to begin at noon. Redeemer Church is a church plant that meets in an event center so we had to give time for our teams to tear down the worship area. We were able to meet in a rented party room at the event center. I lectured for much of the seminars, but also utilized slides and handouts as well as periodic times of Socratic discussion questions to maintain their attention and gauge their understanding.

As a church plant, the leaders have come from a variety of corners of Evangelicalism. Our church has a strong emphasis on expository preaching, but not all of the leaders understood the reason why we strongly emphasize that method. These seminars gave me a tremendous leadership opportunity to explain why our church teaches the way it does. Thus, it better equipped them as teachers within the church.

Seminar 1

The first seminar introduced the project as well as addressed foundational issues related to redemptive expository preaching. First, time was spent establishing a philosophy of expository preaching. Second, the need for expository preaching was explained. Third, was a thorough discussion about defining expository preaching. Fourth, I taught the leaders about two practical expository preaching tools.

I began the teaching by using Genesis 1 to illustrate the point that God creates through his Word. I then expanded on this idea of creation through his Word to explain that God also generates life through his Word. I utilized Ezekiel 37 to support this point. Next, we studied the meaning of Scripture being breathed out by God in 2 Timothy 3:16-

17. Finally, using 2 Timothy 4:2, I applied all these truths to explain that we are thus called to preach his Word.

Regarding the need for expository preaching, I taught the leaders my concern for post-modern interpretations of literature in general, and specifically the Bible. We utilized Mohler's *He Is Not Silent* in this section of the seminar. I also addressed concerns about topical preaching, most notably the danger of preachers taking verses out of context, only preaching topics they were most interested in teaching, and avoiding difficult passages in the Bible. We also addressed my concerns about moralistic preaching. I explained the meaning of moralism along with the need for "being" applications over "doing" applications. The importance of addressing issues of the heart over addressing just behavioral issues was also emphasized. Finally, we discussed the need to explore how Christ is the hero of a passage.

I spent time explaining my thorough definition of expository preaching.¹ During the seminar this definition was discussed as five topics: exegesis, central idea and structure, metanarrative, universal principle, and application. I also explained a simpler definition of expository preaching as explaining and applying a text of Scripture.

Finally, two Bible study tools were explained. I described Hendricks' "Observation, Interpretation, and Application" method from *Living by the Book*. The leaders were given passages in which to apply these three steps. We also studied Robinson's "Central Idea of the Text" and "Central Idea of the Sermon" ideas from *Biblical Preaching*. The leaders were challenged to bridge the main idea of the passage to contemporary audiences.

¹In chap. 1, I presented my definition of expository preaching: "Expository preaching consists of a Christian preacher uncovering an author's intended meaning of a section of the Bible by means of the historical, grammatical, literal (consistent with the genre of the passage) exegesis as well as enlightenment by the Holy Spirit; then structuring a sermon not only built around the central idea of the text but also the structure and thought of the text; then placing the passage within the metanarrative of redemptive history; then interpreting a universal principle which he first applies to himself; and concluding by applying the Scripture through the power of the Holy Spirit to his audience."

Seminar 2

The second seminar focused exclusively on the Minor Prophets. I taught on the historical context of the era, the messages of the books, and the distinct theology of the Minor Prophets. Most of the leaders knew very little about the Minor Prophets, thus I taught them the summary messages of each of the twelve Minor Prophetic books. Using a series of visual aids, I explained the basics of the historical context of the era, including facts surrounding the divided kingdom, chronology of the related Jewish Kings and the prophets' ministries, distinctions between the Iron and Bronze Ages, and key facts about the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians. They also learned a thorough description of the context of the book of Micah. Finally, most of the seminar was devoted to exploring four key theological themes found in the Minor Prophets. The first one we studied was how "The Day of the Lord" was a paradoxical moment of ruin and redemption, as well as how the theme is interpreted progressively. The second theme we focused on was "social justice" and its unique emphasis in the Minor Prophets. Third was the theme of "the wrath of God" and how it was promised to the disobedient and unbelievers. Fourth was the theme of "promised restoration" and how Christ is our ultimate hope.

Seminar 3

The third seminar focused on educating the leaders on Christocentric hermeneutics, including the use of three hermeneutical tools: Chapell's "Fallen Condition Focus," Greidanus' "Ways to Christ," and Valentino's BETA Method. I emphasized the importance of placing the OT Minor Prophetic passage within the broader context of the redemptive message of the Bible, in order to protect their teaching from moralistic applications. Moralism was defined as attempting godliness through human endeavor. Moralistic applications were explained as a call to "be good" through human strength. Examples from the Minor Prophets were used, and in the end the key point that moralism is a false gospel was emphasized.

Chapell's "Fallen Condition Focus" was defined as "the mutual human condition that contemporary believers share with those to or about whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage for God's people to glorify and enjoy him."² I explained how every passage in the Bible bridges from the original audience to contemporary people by linking the similar problems both groups face. I taught the participants to ask, "What is wrong with the original audience," and "What is also wrong with us?" Next, the leaders were challenged to ask, "What is the gospel solution to the biblical saints problem?" Whatever grace the OT saints experienced is the grace that contemporary saints are likewise to experience. I taught them to find sinful commonalities with the biblical audience, but then also find common gospel solutions with the original audience. Next, the bulk of the seminar explained Greidanus' "7 Ways to Christ."³ Each way was defined, explained, and applied using an example from the Minor Prophets. Along the way I explained additional hermeneutical rules if I felt the group would find them helpful. Finally, I briefly explained Valentino's BETA method of back-reading the OT from a NT perspective, examining the Minor Prophets from the OT context, theologizing the passage in the broader universal context, then applying the passage to the contemporary context. Each of the tools included fill-in-the-blank hands-outs that were part of a binder of information that aided in their retention of the information as well as served as a reference when needed.

Seminar 4

The fourth and final seminar was a summary of the key points of the project. This seminar was the final step to complete the project after the end of the sermon series through the book of Micah. I led the group through a discussion using Socratic questions,

²Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 288.

³See chap. 3 for more information on Sidney Greidanus' "7 Ways to Christ."

in order to solidify important topics and gauge their knowledge of Christocentric preaching. In this seminar I also administered the post-sermon series questionnaire.

Synopsis of Sermons

I preached the first of eleven sermons through the book of Micah on Sunday, September 6, 2015, over the entire first chapter of the book. The sermon was titled “What Is God Going to Do about It?” The sermon began with a look at key contextual issues surrounding the book of Micah. Using the Way of Redemptive-Historical Progression, I showed that no matter if one is an unbeliever, an unorthodox believer, or a true believer; if he is guilty of idolatry then he will face the consequence of God’s wrath. God is angry at sin and thus will judge sinners by enslaving them. God hates unbelief, heresy, and idolatry and thus everyone should repent or face enslavement.

I preached the second sermon on Sunday, September 13, 2015, through Micah 2. It was titled “Fear the Judge, but Hope in the King” and utilized the Way of Promise-Fulfillment or Progressive Fulfillment. I explained that God will bring judgment upon both oppressors and wicked preachers, but the faithful are to hope in his coming salvation. The sermon began by asking the congregation if we love the earthly city or the heavenly city more? God promises death to the powerful oppressors in the first five verses, next he calls the faithful to flee wicked preachers, and then ultimately the faithful are to have hope in our Shepherd-King.

My third sermon was over Micah 3 and was preached on Sunday, September 20, 2015. It was titled “Live Justly or Face His Justice.” Using the Way of Redemptive-Historical Progression, I explained that God promises to judge unjust shepherds who become cannibals, unjust prophets who work for profits, and unjust people who lean on self-serving theology. I opened the sermon with the shocking tale of Walker Railey as an example of a wicked shepherd. Then, I explained the way God responds to wicked shepherds, prophets, and theology. The congregation was warned against these sins and called to hope in a higher court and a perfect judge.

I preached the fourth sermon on Sunday, September 27, 2015, over Micah 4:1-8 in a sermon titled “Joy that Follows Judgment.” Using the Way of Redemptive-Historical Progression, I urged Christians to learn about what is coming in order to hope in the kingdom as well as submit to Jesus’ reign in their lives. This sermon became a discovery of finding joy through painful judgment. I called the congregants to hope in Jesus’ promised reign then explained six marks of the promised kingdom. Thus, believers are to submit to his reign and confidently rest through judgment because of God’s promise of a good future.

The fifth sermon was titled “Tools for Troubled Times” over Micah 4:9-13 and was preached on Sunday, October 4, 2015. Using the Way of Redemptive-Historical Progression, I explained that through present pain God is giving birth to future redemption. Instead of panicking when pain comes, Christians are to rest on the Redeemer. When a hostile enemy comes, believers are to battle for God’s plan.

I preached the sixth sermon on Sunday, October 11, 2015. The sermon was over Micah 5:1-6 and titled “God Uses Small Things to Do Big Things.” I explained how God used my young struggling family in the 1980s to start a Crisis Pregnancy Center. This passage galvanizes readers when all seems lost or when insignificant feelings arise. I explained the “big thing” as Jesus himself. Jesus shepherds his people, stands for his people, rules in the strength of the Lord, causes his people to dwell secure, and brings people to his people. Using the Way of New Testament References, I explained that God is in the business of using small things to do big things, because no matter the foe, Christians have a King who will shepherd his people to peace.

I preached the seventh sermon on Sunday, October 18, 2015. It was titled “Feel the Heat,” and was from Micah 5:7-15. This sermon utilized by the Way of Analogy as well as the Way Redemptive-Historical Progression. Even in the face of marginalization, the role of God’s people in society is to be a blessing and a judge. Also, in the face of marginalization, God’s people are to depend on God by hoping in their day of deliverance.

On Sunday, October 25, 2015, I preached the eighth sermon titled “Our Case Against God’s Heat,” which was through Micah 6:1-8. I used the Way of Contrast to distinguish moralistic religion with pure gospel religion, as well as the Way of Longitudinal Themes, to show how pure gospel religion leads to a Micah 6:8 lifestyle. I explained that humans tend to put God in the dock, but in this passage God defends charges against him by giving evidence of his goodness. False human moralistic religion is not the solution to how to live a Micah 6:8 lifestyle, but pure gospel heart religion is the solution. Micah 6:1-8 shows that God is not the problem, but the solution.

On Sunday, November 1, 2015, I preached the ninth sermon of the series. It covered Micah 6:9-16 and was titled “Sound Wisdom for Tremblers.” Using the Way of Longitudinal Themes, I developed the need for atonement and concluded with how Jesus takes the atoning blow. Based upon the sound religion of Micah 6:8, I explained that Micah 6:9-16 gave sound wisdom. God will expose and curse false religion. In the end, the gospel is that Jesus became atonement for sin of false religion so believers did not have to take the punishment.

The tenth sermon was preached on Sunday, November 8, 2015. It was titled “Don’t Stop Singing” and covered Micah 7:1-7. I used the Way of Analogy by linking the source of Micah’s broken city with the target of present broken cities, then the source of the Day of the Watchman to the target of the ultimate Day of the Lord. I showed how this analogy leads to the same gospel living of “Don’t Stop Singing.” I called the congregation to be broken-hearted for our city, and explained the fate of our unbelieving city. Finally, I showed how this passage was like a traditional lament Psalm resulting in an affirmation of faith.

On Sunday, November 15, 2015, I preached the eleventh and final sermon titled “Who Is a God Like God?” which covered Micah 7:8-20. Using the Way of Longitudinal Themes, I traced the glory of God through the darkness of Micah’s day as a call to remain confident, hopeful, faithful, and ultimately worshipful because there is

none like God. I closed the series by sharing a story about how my parents gave me a little plaque when I was a child. The plaque had my first name, Micah, on it. It defined “Micah” by that statement “one who is like Jehovah.” That statement became a powerful charge for me to be godly when I was a child. However, a better understanding of the name is actually the question, “who is a God like you?” Micah’s parents were not moralists, calling their son to be better, but worshipers trying to honor the Lord through how they named their son. The essence of the Micah’s gospel is this beautiful paradox that there is none like God, thus we are left to sing his praises.

Sermon Evaluations Administered

Following the third and tenth sermons the leaders evaluated the sermon and met to discuss their observations. The evaluation measured a series of opinion questions using a 6-point Likert scale. Leaders were asked their opinion on the sermons’ content, effectiveness, and way to Christ. These three categories led to helpful discussions on the skill of teaching the Bible, but also the hermeneutical tool of determining a way to Christ when teaching the OT Minor Prophets. Regarding the content of the sermon, I wanted leaders to determine if the sermon was faithful to Hendricks’ “Observation, Interpretation, Application” tool. They also needed to utilize Robinson’s Central Idea of the Text to determine if the sermon was faithful to the biblical author’s original meaning. Regarding effectiveness, I wanted the leaders to determine if the sermon was interesting but also accomplished the gospel goals of glorying Jesus over a moralistic call to be good through human strength. Questions about the way to Christ were divided into two different Likert scales. Four questions were answered on a scale of agreement versus disagreement. The final four questions were answered by selecting one of the seven Ways to Christ. Leaders were asked which way I used, as well as which other way they might use if they were teaching the passage. This final section was the grounds for helpful discussions on how to use the hermeneutical tool.

The Post-Sermon Questionnaire Administered

The leaders took the post-sermon series questionnaire on Sunday, November 22, 2015. This questionnaire was identical to the one taken on Sunday, August 16, 2015. Upon taking the questionnaire I led the leaders through a discussion of the project and the sermon series. I was delighted to hear positive feedback, particularly in developing the skill of seeing Jesus and his gospel in the OT Minor Prophets. They reported learning more about the OT Minor Prophets in general, as well as their ability to interpret truths from difficult passages and apply them to contemporary situations. They also reported growing in their ability to teach the Bible.

Conclusion

Overall, this project, “Teaching Leaders of Redeemer Church, Denton, Texas, How to Apply Old Testament Minor Prophets Christocentrically,” served well the leaders of Redeemer Church. Participants reported growth in their knowledge of how to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets. I discuss areas of improvement in chapter 5; however, the feedback and data suggests that overall goals were met. Leaders learned how to interpret the OT Minor Prophets Christocentrically rather than moralistically.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF PROJECT

This final chapter concludes the presentation of this ministry research project and considers its success. First, the research data and goals will be evaluated. Second, is an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project, including recommended modification for teaching the material in the future. Third, a section is included on the effectiveness and impact of the project. Fourth and finally, this chapter concludes with the success and benefits of equipping leaders to apply the OT Minor Projects Christocentrically.

Evaluation of Research Data

In appendix 3 and appendix 4, the responses of the participants to the Pre- and Post-Sermon Questionnaire are recorded. The two questionnaires were identical and consisted of 30 questions related to the goals of the project. The questions addressed the participants' knowledge of the OT Minor Prophets, knowledge of redemptive interpretive skills, and ability to bridge Christological interpretations from the OT Minor Prophets to their affections for Christ. Changes in all three areas reflect a net change in the responses. A positive shift in the responses from the Pre- to Post-Sermon Questionnaire determined if the ministry project successfully taught the leaders how to apply the OT Minor Prophets Christocentrically.

Each of the 30 statements in the Pre- and Post-Sermon Questionnaire correlated with one of these three project goals. Likewise, each of the 24 statements in the sermon evaluation form correlated with one of the three project goals.

The questionnaires utilized a six-point Likert scale. Generally, the highest values indicated strongest agreement and numbers with the lowest values indicated strongest disagreement. However, certain statements were flipped and thus highest values indicated strongest disagreement. Scoring required focus group participants to respond to each statement where “1” represented “strongly disagree,” “2” represented “disagree,” “3” represented “disagree somewhat,” “4” represented “agree somewhat,” “5” represented “agree,” and “6” represented “strongly agree.” On the Sermon Evaluation form, the final four questions asked participants to select from one of the 7 Ways to Christ rather than using the 6-point Likert scale. The Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaire consisted of 30 statements to agree or disagree with, thus the highest possible score was 180. The Sermon Evaluation form consisted of 20 statements to agree or disagree with, thus the highest possible score was 120. The final four questions on the Sermon Evaluation form were scored a “1” if they answered correctly and a “0” if they answered incorrectly. Thus, the highest possible score was a 4.

It was assumed that most of the leaders would have very little knowledge of, or experience with, the OT Minor Prophets. This young church had never taught from one of the OT Minor Prophets in any of the sermon series, in small groups, or in the women’s ministry. Further, when discussing the project with participants, most were familiar with Jonah, but had very little exposure to any of the other Minor Prophets.

I did not fully understand how to interpret the OT Christocentrically until my studies for my D.Min. degree at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Thus, I assumed most of the leaders would have limited ability to interpret the OT Minor Prophets redemptively. Therefore, it was assumed this would be a new topic for most of the leaders. Some of the leaders have come from churches that emphasize gospel grounded teaching, but that is not the case for all of the leaders. In fact, two of the leaders came from a mainline liberal Protestant church prior to joining our church plant.

I also assumed most of the participants would not identify the OT Minor Prophets as a source of their affections for Christ. Due to my assumption about their lack of engagement with the OT Minor Prophets, as well as the assumption regarding their understanding about interpreting redemptive themes, I concluded that studying the book of Micah would spark their affections for Christ in a new and fresh way. Based upon these assumptions I set out to see them grow in their Christocentric interpretive abilities, in order to increase their love for Christ.

The first four statements in the Pre/Post Sermon Questionnaires were designed to determine participants' knowledge of the OT Minor Prophets in order to determine if there was an increase in the leaders' knowledge of how to interpret Christ specifically from the Minor Prophets. A paired, one-tail *t*-test showed a statistically significant improvement ($t = 2.37_{(27)}, p = .0125$) in knowledge of the Old Testament Minor Prophets. The scores on all four increased on the Post-Sermon Questionnaire. This positive change was encouraging. The most significant increase was statement 4, "I can recite a meaningful verse from a Minor Prophetic book." The average score increased from 4.142 to 5.428. Ability to know, memorize, and thus recite a verse from one of the 12 Minor Prophets demonstrates genuine engagement with this genre. The increase of statement 4 seems to indicate that the project positively impacted the participants' knowledge of the OT Minor Prophets.

The second goal was to modify the affections that five leaders of Redeemer Church have for Christ as a result of interpreting the OT Minor Prophets and was measured by questions 9, 10, and 18 of the questionnaire. A paired, one-tail *t*-test showed a statistically significant improvement ($t = 2.26_{(20)}, p = .0177$) in affections for Christ through understanding key Old Testament Minor Prophetic themes. Determining if this project accomplished the goal of increasing the participants' affections for Christ was more difficult. Statements 9 and 10 were about their emotions concerning the Day of the Lord. The Post-Sermon Questionnaire indicated positive increases concerning both

statements. However, statement 9 saw only a slight change due to the already strong agreement with the statement. Participants demonstrated a greater change when answering statement 10. Statement 18 read, “Understanding and treasuring Jesus in all his glory (John 17:24) is central to my spiritual growth.” Again, there was a slight positive increase in the Post-Sermon Questionnaire compared to the initial test. Even though the questionnaires are not conclusive, the participants’ comments suggest they gained exciting insights about Jesus from this study. They appeared to move from a theoretical interest in the Bible to an emotional desire to discover truths about their Savior as they studied the text.

The third goal was to equip five leaders to interpret Christ from the Minor Prophets and was measured by questions 5-8, 11-17, and 19-30 of the questionnaire. A paired, one-tail *t*-test showed a statistically significant improvement ($t = 6.26_{(320)}, p < .0001$) in Christological interpretive skills of the Old Testament. This goal was confirmed by a statistically significant improvement *t* ($t = 2.53_{(250)}, p = .0059$) in sermon evaluation skills.

Statements 5 through 8 focused on redemptive interpretive issues. Each statement saw positive increases in the scores, some rather dramatically. For example, statement 7 said, “Jesus and his gospel, as found in the NT, gives a more complete meaning to the OT that the original audience might not have fully understood.” The average answer of the Pre-Sermon Questionnaire was 4.462, while the average answer to the Post-Sermon Questionnaire was 4.962. Further, leaders were genuinely interested in these Christological interpretive issues, and were engaged when I taught on how to interpret the gospel from the OT. There were also ongoing questions and comments throughout the sermon series about these issues. They seemed eager to utilize these ideas in their own study.

Statements 11 and 12 from the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires focused on continuity between the testaments. It is common to believe God was different in the two testaments, but a redemptive reading of the Bible interprets continuity. The average

initial response to statement 11 was 5.571, but increased to 5.857. However, this constituted a dramatic change in just one leader. The average initial response to statement 12 was 4.857, but increased to 5.285. More leaders demonstrated a positive increase over statement 12 versus statement 11. These figures demonstrate a measurable increase in the participants' understanding of the continuity of God's holiness and wrath from the OT to the NT.

Statements 13 to 17 addressed issues of interpretive method. Statements 19 and 20 also focus on the participants' ability to interpret Christ and the gospel from the OT. This portion of the Questionnaire was designed to determine the participants' understanding of the existence of an interpretive method, as well as their adherence to that hermeneutical method. Even though the increases were not always drastic, every one of these statements saw positive increases from the initial test to the concluding test. The most drastic increase was statement 19, "I know how to perceive and interpret Jesus when studying the OT." The Pre-Sermon Questionnaire average was 4.142, while the Post-Sermon Questionnaire average was 5.285. Another significant increase was statement 16 "I understand the method that Jesus and the Apostles used to interpret the OT." Initially the participants averaged only 3.714, but after the sermon series the average response was 4.714. These increases seem to indicate the participants increased in their knowledge of interpreting Christ from the OT Minor Prophets.

The final ten statements focus on specific redemptive interpretive issues. The issues range from the purpose of the OT, if the OT is primarily about morals and laws as opposed to grace, the role of Israel and the church in God's redemptive plan, and types of Christ found in the OT. Varying degrees of positive increases were seen in 9 of the 10 statements. Only statement 29 saw no positive increase. It is likely, however, that a typographical error in the statement itself confused the participants.¹

¹Statement 29 reads, "The OT teaches the one can be saved by keeping the law or moral code." This sentence included a typing error that was not caught by numerous

The data suggest the ministry project participants were influenced toward knowing how to apply the OT Minor Prophets Christocentrically. However, the questionnaire was only a limited amount of questions and participants. Some questions saw most of the participants answer consistently between the two questionnaires, but the average of the statements increased due to one or two participants improving their answer. However, this type of change in a minority of the participants keeps that data from being too conclusive. Yet, the data does demonstrate success. Therefore, I conclude the project to the select group of participants made a statistically significant difference resulting in the increased ability to interpret the OT Minor Prophets Christocentrically.

Evaluation of Project Goals

This ministry research project had three goals: (1) increase knowledge in the lives of five leaders of Redeemer Church related to how to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets, (2) modify the affections the five leaders of Redeemer Church have for Christ as a result of interpreting the OT Minor Prophets, and (3) equip five leaders to interpret Christ from the Minor Prophets.

Evaluation of project goals is based upon comparing the scores of the participants' Pre- and Post-Sermon Questionnaires. The scores suggest positive changes toward the three project goals. Scores from 29 of the 30 questions increased in a positive direction, thus demonstrating a positive statistical change. Further, this assessment was confirmed by the *t*-test for dependent samples, which indicated the project intervention made a statistically significant difference. However, upon reflection, if given the opportunity to do the project again I would change the wording of some of the questions and ask additional questions. The goals were met, but I am basing that opinion more on subjective conversations with participants and less on the data from the questionnaires.

rounds of edits. The statement should read, "The OT teaches that one can be saved by keeping the law or moral code."

The first goal was accomplished through the improvement of answers in the Pre/Post-Sermon Questionnaires. Further, the sessions included lively discussions focused primarily on their understanding of how to interpret Christ from the Micah sermons. Each participant demonstrated an ability to understand the 7 Ways to Christ and how to apply them to different passages. The hermeneutical tools, explained in chapter 2, proved useful in giving something tangible for the leaders to use. The 7 Ways to Christ was the most useful of the tools. The list is concise and memorable, thus giving the leaders a grid to consider how a passage relates to Christ. The session discussions solidified their understanding about how to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets.

I accomplished the second goal of the project by stressing the importance of applying biblical passages to the condition of one's heart versus moralism. In the seminars and sessions I also emphasized the importance of evaluating the motivations of the heart as the pathway to behavioral applications. There was an intentional attempt to marvel not only at the ways to interpret Christ from the OT, but also the new ways to see Christ. Affections like love, fear, and delight were all discussed as we reflected on new insights about Jesus that we gained from our interpretive tools. Finally, the Questionnaires included questions about the participants' emotions toward Jesus. As previously noted, their scores related to these questions moved in a positive direction.

I accomplished the third goal through developing interpretive skills in the seminars and sessions. Not only were interpretive tools such as the 7 Ways to Christ explained, but also a number of exercises were used to help develop skills. This project was more than an information dump through lectures; it was an interactive experience where novices improved skills. These skills were best seen in the sessions where we discussed actual sermons from Micah. Participants discussed which of Greidanus' Ways to Christ I used in my sermon, then others from the list that I could have used instead. These discussions equipped the leaders in the skill of interpreting Christ from the OT Minor Prophets.

My greatest delight was to see the leaders gain greater passions for both the OT as well as Christ. Participation in this project gave them insights into both. It was also exciting to hear them discuss how they were going to use what they learned as they developed lessons for children's Sunday school classes and adult small groups. I also joy in the fact that this project and these goals enabled me further to establish the centrality of Christ in the life of our new church.

Strengths of the Project

Our new church is a mixture of people from different church backgrounds as well as those who did not attend a church prior to Redeemer Church. Thus, most (even the leaders) needed time to understand better the ministry philosophy of expository preaching. Even if the teaching tools in the project would have proved ineffective, this project was a worthy topic for the leaders. However, the seminars, sermons, and sessions effectively taught the participants about expository preaching. They walked away from this project with a better understanding of the nature of expository preaching, the need for this approach to preaching, and keys to interpret and apply the Bible in their own lives. We designated expository preaching as a bedrock value at our new church, thus the project was worth the time to explain our philosophy to the key leaders.

Overall, this project gave key leaders in our church the opportunity to understand an important issue related to interpreting and applying the Bible. I also knew most of the participants never had the opportunity to study the issue of interpreting the OT Christocentrically. Further, this project gave them an interactive experience to solidify their thinking. Since we are a new church, we had not spent extensive time in the OT, so I assumed our leaders had not thought through how to interpret the gospel from the OT. It was a delight to see the leaders understand these ideas and begin to use them in their own teaching. This topic was no doubt worthy of our leaders' devoted and focused time.

Participants gained a greater understanding of the gospel through this project. Most did not instinctively perceive the gospel when studying the OT, thus they discovered

a more robust theology of God's redemptive grace. For example, studying the OT Minor Prophetic theme of the Day of the Lord helped the leaders see that the gospel does not diminish justice, but truly brings justice. They began to understand that the implications of the gospel are broader than just entry into heaven, but also our hope to make all things right again. The Minor Prophets give hope that God will restore creation. Calling the participants to look at the OT through a gospel lens, then giving them the tools to bridge the OT to the gospel, gave them greater understanding and greater joy!

Through hermeneutical tools that bridged the OT to the gospel, the leaders began to be sanctified by the OT like never before. They reported not only a desire to read and study the OT, but also that they grew in their understanding of the gospel and how it led to renewed faith. The book of Micah is very paradoxical in nature; it speaks of both ruin and redemption. Many of the participants have struggled through difficult seasons in their lives and had trouble seeing redemption through their pain. This project helped them see the hope of the gospel through their trials. This hope led to greater faithfulness, as they journeyed through experiences like divorce, sickness, and death of a loved one. In general, this project gave them the tools to mature in gospel faith by studying the OT.

This project not only impacted the hearts of the participants, but also equipped them as teachers. All of the leaders teach the Bible in some context. Many of the leaders are teachers in children and youth ministries. As their hermeneutical skills improved and passion for seeing the gospel in the OT increased, they then reported improvements as teachers. This project improved their ability correctly to understand and then apply the OT when teaching. They all began to think about how the issue of Christocentric interpretations impacted their teaching. Conversations began to revolve around how they could focus less on moralistic applications and more on applications related to the condition of the heart. As the project progressed, we heard more and more reports about how the project improved their ability to teach the OT Minor Prophets.

Weaknesses of the Project

Following two sermons the participants met for two sessions to evaluate the preaching. At the opening of those sessions, the participants completed a Sermon Evaluation. The goal of these Sermon Evaluations was to determine if the project was meeting its stated goals. However, upon processing the data, the Sermon Evaluations proved to be an ineffective. The Sermon Questionnaires were very useful in determining the goals were met, but the Sermon Evaluations were not as effective for a number of reasons. First, I determined that the questions I developed were not objective enough to determine if the project goals were actually met. Second, the Likert Scale is obviously the ideal testing device when measuring the exact same material; but, I gave two Sermon Evaluations for two different sermons rather than the exact same material. If I gave two Evaluations of the same sermon after sharing information about the sermon, then the Likert Scale would have provided an effective measurement of the shared information. Thus, comparing the two Likert Scales from the two Sermon Evaluations did not determine if goals were met. Third, hermeneutics is not always an exact science. The 7 Ways to Christ tool was the key tool I wanted the participants to understand. However, the questions about the 7 Ways to Christ in the Sermon Evaluations were confusing. The participants could have selected a wrong answer, but many times there were a number of right answers to the question. A Likert Scale is a great tool if there is a clear right answer; however, the participants could have answered certain questions a number of different ways and still answered the question correctly. Third and finally, their answer to the 7 Ways to Christ questions using a Likert Scale would not necessarily determine their understanding. The Sermon Evaluations were an inconclusive tool to determine if the goals of the project were met. The good news is that as we discussed their answers in the sessions, I was able to help clarify and thus sharpen their understanding. The participants walked away with a clear understanding of how to use the 7 Ways to Christ. I would recommend drastically reworking the Sermon Evaluations in order better to determine if the project goals were actually met.

The affection goal was met, but that was confirmed through subjective comments with participants rather than through objective data from Questionnaires and Evaluations. This second weakness is similar to the first, because I lay the blame on the measurement tools. If given the opportunity to redo this project, I would rewrite the questions intended to measure affections for Christ. For example, questions 9 and 10 from the Questionnaire ask if the participants hope and fear in the coming Day of the Lord. The questions would have been more effective if they linked the theme of the Day of the Lord specifically to their feelings for Christ rather than general emotions of hope and fear. For example, I could have written, “My understanding of the Day of the Lord increases my present hope in Jesus.” My best question on this topic was statement 18 from the Questionnaire: “Understanding and treasuring Jesus in all his glory (John 17:24) is central to my spiritual growth.” And yet, while this question gets directly to the issue I wanted to measure, it was worded in a way that Christians would likely agree and, therefore, still did not help me completely determine if the affection goal was accomplished. However, conversations with the participants help me conclude that the affection goal was met. As a result of their study of the OT Minor Prophets, they began to have their hearts stirred for Jesus. This was a new and surprising experience for those who viewed the OT as only harsh and dominated by the Law in a way that was disconnected from the gospel of grace.

This project put good resources in the hands of the participants, most notably Greidanus’ 7 Ways to Christ. During the seminars and sessions we designated time to discuss these resources and key points I wanted them to learn. These discussions were very profitable. However, if I were to do the project again, I would designate more time for discussion. Related to the need for more discussion, the project would have been better if we added a workshop that gave the participants an opportunity to apply to an OT Minor Prophet passage what they had learned. I would have loved to see them take a selected passage, work through the Christocentric interpretive issues, and use the 7 Ways to Christ

to apply the passage to a contemporary audience. Space to discuss the material was a strength, but a weakness was not giving the participants space to work on a passage themselves.

Another weakness was most of the original participants did not complete all the requirements of the ministry project. I am uncertain all the reasons why most did not complete the project. I anticipated a declining participation rate as the weeks progressed, but not as much as 60 percent in the end. The project began with 18 participants, and those leaders who completed all requirements (attending all the sessions and seminars, listening to all the sermons, and completing both the Pre- and Post-Sermon Questionnaires) number 7. Thankfully, this amount is two more than the project requirement for participants. Redemptive expository preaching is a hallmark of our church, and I hope that all of the teachers understand how to interpret Christ from the OT. I am confident the project goals were met in the lives of the 7 who completed the project, but because information included in this project is so helpful to anyone who teaches the Bible I had hoped for more to finish.

Finally, I wish I had thought through specific ways for the participants to apply the project upon completion. They gained knowledge that hopefully they will utilize, but it would have been helpful if I had assisted the participants with certain passages they were teaching. For example, it would have been useful to the student pastor if I had helped him think through how to apply what he was learning to what he was teaching the youth. If I had the chance to do the project again, I would seek to tailor the information to the participants' specific studies.

Theological Reflections

It was a delight to see the leaders begin to understand how the Bible climaxes with Christ and his gospel of grace. The leaders saw the OT with new eyes as they began to understand how to make Christological interpretations. Giving participants the time and teaching to understand these essential hermeneutical issues was tremendously helpful

in laying a firm gospel foundation in the life of this new church. Our key leaders began to see how each passage, even the OT Minor Prophets, point to Jesus and thus his gospel. It was a joy to see them apply texts to the heart and to affections, rather than apply passages moralistically. Our church has been on a journey to apply the gospel to all areas of our lives. This project helped us along that journey by gaining greater understanding of Jesus and his gospel of grace.

This project also solidified our vision for expository preaching. Specifically, it helped us deepen our vision for redemptive expository preaching that focuses on gospel grounded applications from each text. I was emboldened by the teaching to propagate these issues all the more. Teaching the gospel from each passage of Scripture is not a peripheral issue, but must be central to what we are about as a church. As a new church, I learned that in many ways we are immature in our thinking on this method and the important fruit that it yields. This project helped me see the importance of clinging to this style of preaching, and especially the importance of continuing to apply the gospel. Our people need a richer understanding of the gospel, and interpreting passages redemptively is the key to that understanding.

Due to the spiritual mixture and newness of our church plant, I cannot take for granted that all our leaders possess mature theological thinking. They come from a few different evangelical traditions including charismatic churches, traditional Southern Baptist churches, mainline denominations, and Reformed churches. Further, we are a young church and thus many of our gifted leaders have never been exposed to different theological issues that took me years to establish in my own thinking. This project reminded me that I cannot assume theological maturity from leaders.

This project also convinced me of the need for an adult Sunday school program or some sort of lay institute. I have now taught through some books of the Bible on Sunday morning, and most of the adults also attend the mid-week small groups that read books together and discuss passages of Scripture. However, I believe our church also

needs focused times of teaching, so our people can gain an established theology. I became convinced of this need as I prepared for this project, and launched a Shepherding Training track last fall that was required for all our small group leaders. It has been tremendous equipping these men to shepherd our people. After seeing the response of the ministry project, these leaders want only to go further. Our plan is to begin an intentional study of systematic theology next fall. Expository preaching truly establishes a healthy church; but leaders need time to work out their positions on numerous theological issues. Therefore, I am already preparing to build on our current approach to training leaders. This ministry project fueled the desire in the hearts of our leaders for more theology and confirmed the need for additional teaching venues.

Finally, the project convinced me of the need to keep the issue of interpreting Christ from all passages of the Bible in front of our church. Our people need to understand biblical theology for themselves. I want them to know how passages bridge to Jesus and his gospel. I desire for them to study a passage and apply it redemptively rather than moralistically. During our membership process, we talk about redemptive expository preaching as one of the key philosophical distinctions as a church. I am more convinced than ever of the need for this distinction. This project not only clarified my own thinking, but also helped me equip the church to interpret the OT Christocentrically for themselves.

Personal Reflections

The D.Min. degree at Southern Seminary, as well as this ministry project, have had a significant impact on me. In God's sovereign goodness he placed me within a cohort of men who became great friends. I also loved the teaching, because it was both insightful as well as practical. Our classes were a perfect blend of academic experts and pastors. I grew in my ability to write, was able to develop my thinking on some key issues, and sharpened my preaching skills. Dr. Mohler and Dr. Betts revolutionized my thinking about the OT. I am eternally grateful for those two men for teaching me how to

interpret the OT Christocentrically. Their teaching was so impactful that I quickly resolved to do my project on preaching redemptively from the OT. I also love the changes made under Dr. Wilder, especially helping students begin working on the project earlier in the program and providing hands-on assistance throughout the program. I wish I had the opportunity to begin this project earlier in the program rather than after I completed all my courses.

Upon completing the project I am convinced of the need to keep the issue of interpreting the OT Christocentrically in front of our church in order to establish the church on the gospel. By God's grace, our church plant continues to grow into an established church. We have worked to establish a healthy church by thinking through how the gospel applies to the life of our church. We strive to ground not only the teaching on the gospel, but also how we view God, each other, and ourselves on the gospel. The gospel speaks to our relationship with God, but also how we relate to others around us, and to how we understand who we are as individuals. The gospel is the key to the health of our church as we grow into maturity. Thus, preaching the gospel from every text is essential to the health of our new church. Focusing on issues related to redemptive interpretations and applications help me equip our church for spiritual maturity as well as equip the church for ministry.

This degree was a refreshing experience. It was a joy to get away from the routines and pressures of church ministry and travel to Louisville. Each class deeply impacted my soul. The teaching challenged my thinking, developed me as a preacher and pastor, and gave me time to work through issues I might not have otherwise. The professors were always open to developing relationships with the students and also helped me think through how the new information benefited our local church ministry. As mentioned, I also developed lasting friendships from my cohort. As relationships deepened, so did the conversations. The men in the cohort sharpened my thinking, encouraged my soul, and helped me become a better preacher and pastor. The ministry

project also challenged me in refreshing ways. It gave me time to deepen my understanding of an essential issue for our church, as well as gave me the opportunity to train our leaders and cast vision for our church. The project truly assisted me in leading this new congregation.

In the end, this degree and project only fanned my flame to be a pastor-theologian. I desire to shepherd our people through substantive teaching and counsel. I desire always to grow in my maturity and thinking. My experience at Southern Seminary gave me those opportunities in a way that aided rather than hindered our local church.

Conclusion

My desire for this project and this degree was personally to grow with the goal of ministering more effectively in our church. My own development was not the primary objective, rather it was to see our leaders better equipped to follow and serve Jesus Christ. Our new church has given me the space to work on this degree. I began the degree while on staff first at Bethel Church in Houston, Texas, and then Christ Community Church in Houston, Texas. Both churches made sacrifices for me to go to Southern Seminary. I pray both churches benefited from the training I received. Ultimately, however, our new church plant, Redeemer Church in Denton, Texas, has benefited the most. I dearly love this church and pray that its leaders were as blessed by this project as I was. I am thrilled to journey with this group of Christ's followers. It is a delight to watch them embrace the gospel even when it is scary. I am so thankful that I was able to deepen their understanding of the Word of God through this project. I am excited to see how this project has already improved the teaching ministry of our church. What a joy to watch our church have their hearts stirred for Jesus, as we gained a fuller knowledge of the OT Minor Prophets!

APPENDIX 1

PRE/POST-SERMON QUESTIONNAIRE

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to measure your knowledge of the Old Testament Minor Prophetic books. It is also designed to measure how you interpret the Old Testament. Micah Caswell is conducting this research for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and then you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Last 4 Digits of Your SS# _____
Date: _____

The first section will obtain some demographic information about the people filling out this questionnaire.

1. Please indicate your age: _____
2. Please indicate how many years you have been a Christian: _____
3. Please circle the number of years your have been attending Redeemer Church:
Less than 1 year 1-2 years 2-3 years More than 3 years

Please turn to the next page

Read each statement and indicate your opinion by using the following scale:

SD Strongly Disagree	D Disagree	DS Disagree Somewhat	AS Agree Somewhat	A Agree	SA Strongly Agree
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Sermon Content

1. The Old Testament (OT) is as valuable as the New Testament (NT) for my spiritual growth	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
2. I can list the 12 Minor Prophetic books	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
3. I have read all 12 Minor Prophetic books (Hosea-Malachi)	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
4. I can recite a meaningful verse from a Minor Prophetic book	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
5. When studying the OT I work to understand the message the original author intended to say to the original audience	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
6. The original OT message is not applicable today	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
7. Jesus and his gospel, as found in the NT, gives a more complete meaning to the OT that the original audience might not have fully understood	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
8. The OT applies to my life in the same way as it did to the original audience	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
9. I hope in a coming Day of the Lord	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
10. I fear a coming Day of the Lord	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
11. The God of the NT is still a holy God, like in the OT	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
12. The God of the NT is still a wrathful God, like in the OT	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
13. If Jesus used a certain method for interpreting the OT, I should also use the same method	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
14. If the Apostles used a certain method for interpreting the OT, I should also use the same method	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
15. Jesus and the Apostles used a discernable method for interpreting OT passages	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
16. I understand the method that Jesus and the Apostles used to interpret the OT	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
17. I use the same method that Jesus and the Apostles used when I personally study, interpret, and apply the OT	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
18. Understanding and treasuring Jesus in all his glory (John 17:24) is central to my spiritual growth	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
19. I know how to perceive and interpret Jesus when studying the OT	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
20. I perceive the gospel of grace when studying the OT	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Please turn to the next page

21.	The purpose of the OT is to give a history of the nation of Israel	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
22.	The purpose of the OT is to teach about and prepare the way for Christ	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
23.	The OT is predominately a book of morals	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
24.	The OT is predominately a book of laws	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
25.	The OT is about law and the NT is about grace	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
26.	The prophecies and narratives in the OT only apply to the nation of Israel	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
27.	God has one plan of salvation for the nation of Israel and another plan of salvation for the Church	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
28.	God has one plan of spiritual growth for the nation of Israel and another plan of spiritual growth for the Church	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
29.	The OT teaches the one can be saved by keeping the law or moral code	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
30.	I believe pictures or glimpses or types or shadows of Christ exist in the OT Minor Prophets	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

APPENDIX 2

SERMON EVALUATION FORM

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to measure your knowledge of the Old Testament Minor Prophetic books and to measure if you can interpret the Old Testament. Micah Caswell is conducting this research for purposes of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions after the third sermon in the preaching series and then the same questions after the tenth sermon. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and then you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By completion of this questionnaire, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Last 4 Digits of Your SS# _____

Date: _____

Sermon Title: _____

Sermon Text: _____

The first section will obtain some demographic information about the people filling out this questionnaire.

1. Please indicate your age: _____

2. Please indicate how many years you have been a Christian: _____

3. Please circle the number of years you have been attending Redeemer Church:

Less than 1 year 1-2 years 2-3 years More than 3 years

Please turn to the next page

Read each statement and indicate your opinion by using the following scale:

SD Strongly Disagree	D Disagree	DS Disagree Somewhat	AS Agree Somewhat	A Agree	SA Strongly Agree
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Sermon Content

1. The sermon content was clearly developed from the passage	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
2. The sermon was sensitive to the context of the passage	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
3. The sermon explained the author's original meaning	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
4. The sermon appropriately related the passage to Jesus	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
5. The illustration clarified the key theological truths	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
6. The application was related to the gospel	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
7. I know what to do as a result of this sermon	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Sermon Effectiveness

8. The sermon was interesting	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
9. The sermon enabled me to understand the passage better	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
10. The sermon demonstrated the passage's relevance	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
11. The gospel was highlighted in the passage	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
12. Jesus was clearly glorified from the passage	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
13. The sermon deepened my affections for Jesus	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
14. The sermon counseled me to "be good" solely through my own human strength	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
15. My overall impression of this sermon was positive	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Way to Christ

16. The preacher used a Way to Christ in this sermon	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
17. The preacher could have used a different Way to Christ in this sermon	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
18. The Way to Christ was appropriate for the passage	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
19. I would have used a different Way to Christ	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
20. The Way to Christ used in this sermon utilized Jesus and the gospel to apply the passage to the congregation	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Please turn to the next page

Read each statement and indicate your opinion by using the following options:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Redemptive- Historical Progression	Promise- Fulfillment	Typology	Analogy	Longitudinal Themes	NT Reference	Contrast

Way to Christ

21. Which Way to Christ did the preacher use in this sermon?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. If you were teaching this passage, which Way of Christ would you have certainly used?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. If you were teaching this passage, which Way of Christ could you have also used?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Which Way of Christ would be inappropriate to use with this passage?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

APPENDIX 3

AVERAGES OF THE PRE/POST-SERMON
QUESTIONNAIRE

Table A1. Responses to demographic question 1

Demographic Question 1: Please indicate your age							
Pre-Test	26	29	32	42	46	53	80
Post-Test	26	29	32	42	46	53	80

Table A2. Responses to demographic question 2

Demographic Question 2: Please indicate how many years you have been a Christian							
Pre-Test	13	15	16	38	23	30	62
Post-Test	13	15	16	38	23	30	62

Table A3. Responses to demographic question 3

Demographic Question 3: Please circle the number of years you have been attending Redeemer Church:				
	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	More than 3 years
	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	More than 3 years
Pre-Test	3	3	1	0
Post-Test	3	3	1	0

Table A4. Average responses to statement 1

Statement 1: The Old Testament (OT) is as valuable as the New Testament (NT) for my spiritual growth	
Pre-Test Average	5.714
Post-Test Average	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A5. Average responses to statement 2

Statement 2: I can list the 12 Minor Prophetic books	
Pre-Test Average	4
Post-Test Average	4
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A6. Average responses to statement 3

Statement 3: I have read all 12 Minor Prophetic books (Hosea-Malachi)	
Pre-Test Average	4
Post-Test Average	4.428
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A7. Average responses to statement 4

Statement 4: I can recite a meaningful verse from a Minor Prophetic book	
Pre-Test Average	4.142
Post-Test Average	5.428
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A8. Average responses to statement 5

Statement 5: When studying the OT I work to understand the message the original author intended to say to the original audience	
Pre-Test Average	4.857
Post-Test Average	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A9. Average responses to statement 6

Statement 6: The original OT message is not applicable today	
Pre-Test Average	5.571
Post-Test Average	6
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A10. Average responses to statement 7

Statement 7: Jesus and his gospel, as found in the NT, gives a more complete meaning to the OT that the original audience might not have fully understood	
Pre-Test Average	4.571
Post-Test Average	5.571
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A11. Average responses to statement 8

Statement 8: The OT applies to my life in the same way as it did to the original audience	
Pre-Test Average	3.285
Post-Test Average	3.428
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A12. Average responses to statement 9

Statement 9: I hope in a coming Day of the Lord	
Pre-Test Average	5.857
Post-Test Average	6
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A13. Average responses to statement 10

Statement 10: I fear a coming Day of the Lord	
Pre-Test Average	2.285
Post-Test Average	3.285
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A14. Average responses to statement 11

Statement 11: The God of the NT is still a holy God, like in the OT	
Pre-Test Average	5.571
Post-Test Average	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A15. Average responses to statement 12

Statement 12: The God of the NT is still a wrathful God, like in the OT	
Pre-Test Average	4.857
Post-Test Average	5.285
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A16. Average responses to statement 13

Statement 13: If Jesus used a certain method for interpreting the OT, I should also use the same method	
Pre-Test Average	4.857
Post-Test Average	5
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A17. Average responses to statement 14

Statement 14: If the Apostles used a certain method for interpreting the OT, I should also use the same method	
Pre-Test Average	4.571
Post-Test Average	4.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A18. Average responses to statement 15

Statement 15: Jesus and the Apostles used a discernable method for interpreting OT passages	
Pre-Test Average	5
Post-Test Average	5.428
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A19. Average responses to statement 16

Statement 16: I understand the method that Jesus and the Apostles used to interpret the OT	
Pre-Test Average	3.714
Post-Test Average	4.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A20. Average responses to statement 17

Statement 17: I use the same method that Jesus and the Apostles used when I personally study, interpret, and apply the OT	
Pre-Test Average	4
Post-Test Average	4.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A21. Average responses to statement 18

Statement 18: Understanding and treasuring Jesus in all his glory (John 17:24) is central to my spiritual growth	
Pre-Test Average	5.714
Post-Test Average	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A22. Average responses to statement 19

Statement 19: I know how to perceive and interpret Jesus when studying the OT	
Pre-Test Average	4.142
Post-Test Average	5.285
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A23. Average responses to statement 20

Statement 20: I perceive the gospel of grace when studying the OT	
Pre-Test Average	4.285
Post-Test Average	5
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A24. Average responses to statement 21

Statement 21: The purpose of the OT is to give a history of the nation of Israel	
Pre-Test Average	3.285
Post-Test Average	4
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A.25. Average responses to statement 22

Statement 22: The purpose of the OT is to teach about and prepare the way for Christ	
Pre-Test Average	5
Post-Test Average	5.571
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A26. Average responses to statement 23

Statement 23: The OT is predominately a book of morals	
Pre-Test Average	3.714
Post-Test Average	4.285
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A27. Average responses to statement 24

Statement 24: The OT is predominately a book of laws	
Pre-Test Average	3
Post-Test Average	3.428
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A28. Average responses to statement 25

Statement 25: The OT is about law and the NT is about grace	
Pre-Test Average	3
Post-Test Average	3.142
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A29. Average responses to statement 26

Statement 26: The prophecies and narratives in the OT only apply to the nation of Israel	
Pre-Test Average	5
Post-Test Average	5.571
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A30. Average responses to statement 27

Statement 27: God has one plan of salvation for the nation of Israel and another plan of salvation for the Church	
Pre-Test Average	5.285
Post-Test Average	5.714
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A31. Average responses to statement 28

Statement 28: God has one plan of spiritual growth for the nation of Israel and another plan of spiritual growth for the Church	
Pre-Test Average	5
Post-Test Average	5.428
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A32. Average responses to statement 29

Statement 29: The OT teaches the one can be saved by keeping the law or moral code	
Pre-Test Average	4.428
Post-Test Average	4.142
1 = SA 2 = A 3 = AS 4 = DS 5 = D 6 = SD	

Table A33. Average responses to statement 30

Statement 30: I believe pictures or glimpses or types or shadows of Christ exist in the OT Minor Prophets	
Pre-Test Average	5.142
Post-Test Average	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

APPENDIX 4

AVERAGES OF SERMON EVALUATION FORM

Table A34. Responses to demographic question 1

Demographic Question 1: Please indicate your age							
Sermon 1	26	29	32	42	46	53	80
Sermon 2	26	29	32	42	46	53	80

Table A35. Responses to demographic question 2

Demographic Question 2: Please indicate how many years you have been a Christian							
Sermon 1	13	15	16	38	23	30	62
Sermon 2	13	15	16	38	23	30	62

Table A36. Responses to demographic question 3

Demographic Question 3: Please circle the number of years you have been attending Redeemer Church:				
	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	More than 3 year
	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	More than 3 years
Pre-Test	3	3	1	0
Post-Test	3	3	1	0

Table A37. Average responses to statement 1

Statement 1: The sermon content was clearly developed from the passage	
Sermon 1	5.857
Sermon 2	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A38. Average responses to statement 2

Statement 2: The sermon was sensitive to the context of the passage	
Sermon 1	5.857
Sermon 2	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A39. Average responses to statement 3

Statement 3: The sermon explained the author's original meaning	
Sermon 1	5.714
Sermon 2	5.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A40. Average responses to statement 4

Statement 4: The sermon appropriately related the passage to Jesus	
Sermon 1	5.857
Sermon 2	5.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A41. Average responses to statement 5

Statement 5: The illustration clarified the key theological truths	
Sermon 1	5.857
Sermon 2	6
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A42. Average responses to statement 6

Statement 6: The application was related to the gospel	
Sermon 1	5.714
Sermon 2	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A43. Average responses to statement 7

Statement 7: I know what to do as a result of this sermon	
Sermon 1	5.571
Sermon 2	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A44. Average responses to statement 8

Statement 8: The sermon was interesting	
Sermon 1	5.285
Sermon 2	5.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A45. Average responses to statement 9

Statement 9: The sermon enabled me to understand the passage better	
Sermon 1	5.428
Sermon 2	5.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A46. Average responses to statement 10

Statement 10: The sermon demonstrated the passage's relevance	
Sermon 1	5.714
Sermon 2	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A47. Average responses to statement 11

Statement 11: The gospel was highlighted in the passage	
Sermon 1	5.714
Sermon 2	5.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A48. Average responses to statement 12

Statement 12: Jesus was clearly glorified from the passage	
Sermon 1	5.428
Sermon 2	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A49. Average responses to statement 13

Statement 13: The sermon deepened my affections for Jesus	
Sermon 1	5.285
Sermon 2	5.857
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A50. Average responses to statement 14

Statement 14: The sermon counseled me to "be good" solely through my own human strength	
Sermon 1	5.714
Sermon 2	5.571
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A51. Average responses to statement 15

Statement 15: My overall impression of this sermon was positive	
Sermon 1	5.428
Sermon 2	5.714

Table A52. Average responses to statement 16

Statement 16: The preacher used a Way to Christ in this sermon	
Sermon 1	5.142
Sermon 2	5.428
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A53. Average responses to statement 17

Statement 17: The preacher could have used a different Way to Christ in this sermon	
Sermon 1	2.714
Sermon 2	3.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A54. Average responses to statement 18

Statement 18: The Way to Christ was appropriate for the passage	
Sermon 1	5.142
Sermon 2	4.142
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A55. Average responses to statement 19

Statement 19: I would have used a different Way to Christ	
Sermon 1	2.571
Sermon 2	1.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A56. Average responses to statement 20

Statement 20: The Way to Christ used in this sermon utilized Jesus and the gospel to apply the passage to the congregation	
Sermon 1	5.285
Sermon 2	7.714
1 = SD 2 = D 3 = DS 4 = AS 5 = A 6 = SA	

Table A57. Average responses to statement 21

Statement 21: Which Way to Christ did the preacher use in this sermon?	
Sermon 1	3.142
Sermon 2	3.857
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	

Table A58. Average responses to statement 22

Statement 22: If you were teaching this passage, which Way of Christ would you have certainly used?	
Sermon 1	6
Sermon 2	6
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	

Table A59. Average responses to statement 23

Statement 23: If you were teaching this passage, which Way of Christ could you have also used?	
Sermon 1	6
Sermon 2	6
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	

Table A60. Average responses to statement 24

Statement 24: Which Way of Christ would be inappropriate to use with this passage?	
Sermon 1	5.285
Sermon 2	3.142
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	

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ABSTRACT

TEACHING LEADERS OF REDEEMER CHURCH, DENTON, TEXAS, HOW TO APPLY OLD TESTAMENT MINOR PROPHETS

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Chapter 1 explains the purpose of the project: to teach leaders at Redeemer Church how to apply the OT Minor Prophets christocentrically rather than moralistically through an expositional sermon series on Micah. The goals were to increase the leaders' knowledge on how to interpret Christ from the OT Minor Prophets and increase their affections for Christ. The purpose and goals were accomplished through eleven sermons, four seminars, and two focus group sessions.

Chapter 2 explains how the Bible both demands teachers preach Christ from the OT Minor Prophets as well as provides a christocentric method. Luke 24:13-27, Matthew 5:17, Peter's use of Joel 2 in Acts 2, the use of Micah 5:2 in Matthew 2:6, and Matthew 28:19-20 are all explained to establish the case for the christocentric method.

Chapter 3 moves from the biblical case for christocentric preaching in chapter 2 to establishing a method. Chapter 3 provides a case for biblical authority as grounds for a case for expository preaching, which then bridges to a case for redemptive expository preaching. A christocentric method is explained which leans heavily on Chapell's "Fallen Condition Focus" and Griedanus' "7 Ways to Christ."

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