

(Presenting Christ #2) Summing Up All Things in Christ Through the Word

by Dana Congdon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeing Christ as the central theme and purpose of the entire Bible, and of allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal to us the connection between the Old and New Testaments.

Duration: 53:04

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 5:39-40, Acts 9:1-22, Ephesians 1:9-10, Hebrews 1:1-2

Topics: "Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the topic of Christ as the sum of all things through the Word of God. They mention that they were asked to speak on this topic in three sessions, which they find challenging due to the vastness of the subject. The speaker acknowledges that some attendees may already be familiar with this concept, while others may be hearing it for the first time. They emphasize the importance of the Word of God in revealing the mystery of God's will and bringing us into the fullness of Christ.

Transcript

Good morning, brothers and sisters. I am sort of the shuttle speaker. Lance is speaking every night, Brother Stephen is speaking every morning, and I'm morning-evening, morning-evening.

In between. So since it's morning, I didn't feel I had to wear a wake-up shirt. And anyway, I feel much better now that Lance has spoken and, you know, the thunderstorms have ceased.

Let's hope for a good day as we enjoy the Lord and fellowship together. I'd like for us to begin again by turning to Ephesians chapter one, reading verses nine and ten. This tremendous summing up that we're part of today.

Actually you're part of it, whether you realize it or not, if you belong to him, either you're being dragged or you're willingly being gathered into all that he has for us. It's amazing how reticent we are to enjoy all the good of our inheritance and the fullness of Jesus. Why is it that our flesh so resists these things? Well, and yet here is the mystery revealed in verse nine.

He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his kind intention, which he purposed in him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of times. That is the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. Then I'd like us to look at those familiar verses at the

beginning of Hebrews, Hebrews chapter one.

Just the first two verses, God, after he spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways in these last days has spoken to us in his son, whom he appointed heir of all things through whom also he made the world. And then we want to turn back to the gospel of John and chapter five, verse 39 and 40. You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life.

It is these that testify about me and you are unwilling to come to me so that you may have life. And then finally, in Matthew chapter 23 and verse verses 37 to 39, Matthew 23, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her. How often I wanted to gather your children together the way a hand gathers her chicks under her wings and you were unwilling.

Behold your house is being left to you desolate for I say to you from now on, you will not see me until you say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Let's just have another word of prayer. We thank you, Lord, that we can gather together in the name of our Lord Jesus this morning.

We can open our hearts and sing songs of worship and praise to the. We can sense the effect of your precious blood cleansing us. And your spirit quickening us.

And now in your presence, as we come to look at the word of God again, we ask that your Holy Spirit would be our teacher and teach us of the fullness of Christ. And gather us up into Christ in fullness. We thank you for this privilege to be together as your people.

We realize many people don't have such an opportunity. So quicken our mortal bodies. And anoint our ears that we may hear what the spirit would say to the church today.

We pray in Jesus precious name, amen. We see here in Matthew chapter 23, a very solemn moment, a moment, a crossroads for the life of Israel. Their Messiah is standing face to face with the leaders in Jerusalem.

And these leaders do not see who he is. They have resisted his gathering time and time again. How many times I have come to you and wanted to gather you together as a hen gathers chicks, but ye would not.

There's something very willful in our fallen nature that resists being gathered even by the Lord and Savior, and in this case, the Messiah. And so they stood at this awful crossroads and they heard the Messiah, although they didn't recognize it, speak a curse upon them for their rejection. Desolation.

Because you did not recognize the hour of your visitation. Now, these are solemn words, and we shudder as we have seen Israel's subsequent history filled with trial, filled with awful dealings of the Lord as well as mercy. And it brings us to the place where I hope we realize the importance of us realizing the hour of his visitation.

But there's another aspect that is the matter that I want to dwell on this morning. Because it wasn't only that they didn't recognize Jesus as their Messiah, their culpability went deeper than that. For they had been given the Word of God, the Law and the Prophets, which spake of Him.

And yet they resisted that Word of God. They would not allow the Spirit to deal with them, though, praise God, there were some who were waiting the consolation of Israel, and in that position of waiting, when they heard the Word of the Messiah, they responded. But these leaders, for whatever reasons, in the end

it's sin, whether the vested interest of their power or their self-righteousness or whatever it was, though they had the Word and the Prophets, they did not hear the voice of the Prophets speaking and pointing to the Messiah.

And yet isn't it strange that these very people who are standing before the Messiah blind to who He is, were the very people who had memorized large sections of the Word of God. Indeed, that Jesus could speak to them in John 5 and said, ye search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life. And these are the very ones that are saying, look at Jesus, but you will not come to me.

And so basically, if you will not come to me, the Scriptures are closed to you. So these people had a tremendous outward knowledge of the Word, which as a letter was killing them. Because they would not see the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

Now this solemn matter is not really what I want to speak upon, that is Israel's history subsequently. But what I'd like to do is speak upon this wonderful matter of the summing up of all things in Christ through the Word of God. Now, you can imagine, I mean, you know, these brothers in Richmond and sisters get together after we had the planning meeting and they decide who's going to speak what, you know.

And they just say to me, Dana, present everything there is to know about Christ. Now you have three sessions. Don't take too long because the children get restless in the various Bible classes.

This is impossible. Speak on Christ, the sum of all things. And then if you would also take up this matter of fullness.

And we have three sessions. I mean, to return to it is pretty easy or to be ready for it even. Seems simple the way Lance put it.

Forget the prophecies, be ready. That was it. Now, all I have to do is speak the rest of the Bible.

That's all. And this small portion given to me, I have decided that rather than speak by way of testimony of his height and depth and width and breadth, but rather say to you and point you that the Word of God brings us to the fullness and the summing up of all things in Christ. The Word of God in relation to the summing up has three different dynamics to it.

Number one, the Word presents. Christ as the sum of all things. And secondly, as it presents it to it, being powerful as the Word of God is.

It also gathers us up into. The summing up of all things in Christ. But we see even further on another level altogether that the Word of God itself is summed up in Christ.

And so we would say this morning that which you already know, you could start from any place in Scripture and preach Christ. As dear Philip did out there in the desert. Just give him a passage and let him go.

And the Holy Spirit can present something of Christ. I want to share on this matter of the Word of God as it presents the summing up of all things in Christ. And of course, how could I completely do that? And and I also have to talk about my own pilgrimage in relation to the Word of God.

So I know that for some of you, this whole matter of Christ and his fullness, the sum of all things is almost kindergarten. You've known it so long. But I'm also very much aware of the fact that many new people are

always coming to the conference and hearing things for the first time.

And and then we have young people here perhaps haven't heard these things rehearsed. And so I'm going to go back to some basic things as we talk about this wonderful matter. How can we come into this gathering into Christ through the Word of God? Very simple.

I want to start by telling you about my own struggle with the Word of God. Now, I was saved when I was 20 years old and I finished up at a Christian college, took some courses in the Bible, and then I went off to seminary to study for the ministry. And there took all kinds of Bible courses.

That was my favorite thing to do. I took Bible courses. I took them in Greek.

I took them in Hebrew and I took them in English. I loved them. As a matter of fact, I mean, not to toot my own horn because I've never done anything with it, but I was at the top of my class.

So they asked me if I wouldn't go into the doctoral program. And they had a position for me, which I didn't feel like a scholar. And since meeting Brother Christian Chen, I'm so glad I didn't even pretend that I could be a scholar.

But I had a training. You understand what I'm saying? Training. And set off in a ministry, which 10 years after I was saved, I'd already been serving for eight of those 10 years as a pastor.

And that's when I bumped into, in the fullness of times, our brother Stephen Kong. Now, I was in Raleigh, North Carolina, and I was actually a co-pastor of a church, a little church there in Raleigh. And I don't know how it happened.

Some folks came over from some little meeting and said, why don't you come and hear this brother Stephen Kong? I said, who's he? Well, he's translated some of Watchmenese works. You should come. Well, I came, and he was doing this little thing.

I don't think you know about it. He was doing there in Raleigh once a month, coming for a weekend, and doing this little series called Christ in the Bible, a series which he was doing here in Richmond also over the years. Taking a book of the Bible and showing Christ.

I picked up in numbers how you'd find Christ in numbers. I had no idea. He found him.

Enough for three messages. Then I came back the next month and heard Deuteronomy, Christ in Deuteronomy, and then in Joshua and Judges, and on and on and on. But immediately when I heard it, I thought, this is some of the most clever Bible gymnastics I've ever seen.

How he gets all these things to point to Christ, and he finds all these types, and all of these pictures, and all of these illustrations in the Old Testament. You know, it's masterful the way he does it, but it's hermeneutically completely wrong. Now, I must stop here because some of you don't even know what hermeneutics is, and neither would I if I hadn't gone to seminary.

You started using scholarly language, but hermeneutics is very simple. There's laws and principles for interpreting Scripture. And there are, and they're important, you know.

Most cults come out of an improper interpretation of Scripture. Either non-contextual or eisegetical or many things like that, you see. And so one of the things that we had hammered away at seminary is the

hermeneutical principles of studying the Old Testament.

Number one, the Old Testament theology is not equal to the New Testament theology. So you cannot take an Old Testament example and say it's teaching about the New Testament. No, you have to be honest.

Take each book of the Bible as its own. Has its own historical context, its own use in what they used to call the Yahwistic cult. In my seminary, that means the Jews.

The people who followed Yahweh are now the Yahwistic cult, according to Gerhard von Raad. That's a whole other story, you see. And so we learned these principles.

Basically, the Old Testament was not a New Testament picture book. You know, they used to laugh at that little saying. I think it was a quaint saying of some Scotsman or something who said, The new is in the old concealed.

The old is in the new revealed. They used to laugh at that. So I learned to laugh.

And I learned that you need to be very suspicious of typology. Allegory. And any kind of crossover usage, you see.

Because we were driven to the point at my seminary where we were taught that that's what the Catholics did. And they brought in all the Old Testament temple vestments and procedures right into the church. That's a no-no.

Hermeneutical mistake. And here's my brother crushing my hermeneutics every month with three messages. It's Christ in Deuteronomy.

It's Christ in Judges. Don't you see Joshua is Jesus? I said, What? And on and on and on. I'd studied Joshua in Hebrews.

In Hebrew. I said, What is this guy doing? At the same time, I was being drawn by the beauty of it. Drawn by the simplicity of it.

Man, the Old Testament is very complicated to a seminarian. 39 disparate books with hardly any connection. And everybody who wrote those are questioned, basically.

Or at least half the book is questioned. As to its validity, as to authorship. And I went to a good Bible-believing seminary.

Evangelical today. So first of all, I want you to understand. Our whole approach to the Scriptures is hermeneutically incorrect to a mass of Christianity.

It's too mystical. Too typological. Well, this was my conflict.

I had an Old Testament. It didn't make much sense to me. I used it for occasional illustrations.

But, you know, as most of the church evangelical does today, they just use the New Testament. And the Old Testament doesn't. If you want to show how bad somebody is, pick Jacob.

If you want to show how good somebody is, pick Abraham or David. That's basically the rule. But now the Lord started dealing with me.

Because I couldn't help it. It was just so simple. That it was causing a crisis.

Let's see, do I want complexity or simplicity? What's logical here? And I saw the simplicity of the Word of God as our brother shared from month to month. And the Lord crushed my hermeneutics. How did He do it? You see, we had studied the Word of God.

But there's a point about coming to fullness and realizing Christ is the sum of all things. It's something that's called revelation. And without revelation, you just don't get it.

And that's where I was. Of course, I'd seen revelation. I had seen revelation as Christ is my Savior.

I had seen revelation as Christ, the baptizer and the Holy Spirit. I had seen revelation of a number of things regarding the doctrines of the church. But I didn't see the connection.

And the vital connection is this. This is what I didn't understand. I thought you received a revelation about something.

What I didn't understand is that true revelation is you see Christ first. And then that revelation out of Christ. See, Christ is the sum of all things.

But I was looking at the Bible as these disparate parts. And somewhere along the lines of my dear brother coming humbly and sharing every month there for the sake of the saints. Somewhere I saw this revelation.

You know what it is? Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Word of God. Now you say, you knew that already. I knew he was the Logos in John chapter 1. I knew word, word, Logos.

I knew all that stuff. But I didn't know he was the Bible. You see.

And until you see. Now by that I mean the spirit of the Bible. What does that phrase mean? The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

What it means is that over and beyond the details of the prophecies given. Over and above the outward matters of kingdoms and events and everything. Underneath those prophecies the spirit is saying.

The Lord is coming. Jesus is coming. He's setting up his kingdom.

And prophecy all has to do some way. Directly or indirectly. With a gathering that's going to eventuate in his kingdom being established.

And him being the Messiah over this whole earth. You see I didn't see that. Until one day.

And I wish I could tell you the day. But I can tell you what happened on that day. When I saw Christ was the Old Testament as well as the new.

The thing opened up. I mean it was. Suddenly I was soaking it in and drinking.

And then I heard about this crazy bunch of Christians called the brethren. Who had all kinds of books out about how the Old Testament is Christ. And type and this and that.

And you know these guys were just like crazy. Every page of the Old Testament defined in Jesus. And I think Stephen was along that same crazy line.

Then I joined the crazies. And believe it or not. It isn't just that you have to be instructed by somebody.

Who's got this clever way of applying the Old Testament. If you see that Christ is the sum of the Old Testament. Suddenly you see him popping up on every page.

You can read Psalm so and so. And there he is. You can read a prophet like Nahum.

There he is. You can read Genesis. There he is.

And when you read it like that. I'm telling you. The word just goes.

It's just. It's just. It's amazing.

Isn't it amazing. Without revelation of Christ. As the word of God.

I just couldn't see that. And it's as if. A whole new hermeneutic rushed into my spirit.

Undefined. But things came so clear. I just expressed three.

I saw that Christ. Was the hidden thread that held all of those 39 books together. I never.

I never saw that. The whole thing. As a whole makes sense.

When you see Christ threaded through the whole thing. When you see God in his mercy and good pleasure. Gathering.

Preparing. All things for his son. And for the end.

Oh my. I mean. All of those 39 books.

As crazy as some of those books seem to be. Had been threaded together. Because they are all speaking of the living logos.

At the end. That was marvelous. The second thing.

That I saw is. That the overall lessons of each book. Could only be unfolded by a revelation of Christ.

So each book itself has a story to tell. Now you know. Our brother Stephen always feels uncomfortable when I bring these kinds of things up.

But I do believe one day. If the Lord carries more than a few years. One of the great classics of evangelical literature will be seeing Christ in the Bible.

That is a most precious series of books. If you don't have that. You need to stop up to that bookstore and get it.

Our brother Stephen just shared with the brothers and sisters here in Richmond over the years. Each book. Just a little nugget.

One message. Of Christ in these books. What a marvelous book.

I think it's so valuable. What a tremendous blessing for the Saints in Richmond to see Christ. Through the whole Bible.

Seminary never taught me that. This was a blessing. I fell into by the mercy of God.

So each book in itself has a lesson in it. That points us toward Christ. And of course finally.

And of course this is one of these. Why didn't I see this before? Is that the New Testament writers themselves freely use the Old Testament and typology. Their hermeneutic was the crazy hermeneutic.

The hermeneutic of revelation. Paul. You know.

Just look at this one little thing. I mean. I don't know if this catches your attention.

But in 1st Corinthians 15. As Paul is sort of summarizing the gospel. Just in a few pithy verses.

His basis for his saying. Here's the gospel. And here's how you know it's the truth.

In verse. Chapter 15 of 1st Corinthians. In verse 3 and 4. I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received.

That Christ Jesus died for our sins. According to the scriptures. What scriptures? There was no New Testament.

He said. Don't you understand? Christ died for our sins. According to the Old Testament.

It's as clear as day. Wow. That he says.

And that he was buried. And that he was raised on the third day. According to the scriptures.

Why any? Nudnik can see that. I couldn't. Oh.

My. My. Then Paul.

Of course. He used types all the time. And he saw.

And the writer of Hebrews. He saw Melchizedek. Supplying the Christ.

No. No. No.

It's a yes. Yes. Yes.

By revelation. And then. Of course.

The final nail in the coffin. If I. If I needed one. And I did.

Jesus. Himself. You know.

You know. What really stunned me. Jesus.

Believed that Jonah. Actually. Was in the belly of the fish.

Three days. And that really. Threw out.

The whole course. I'd had in Jonah. Because.

I had to come. To the simplicity. God had to do.

A spiritual low body. Me. And my seminary.
Eyes. Brain. That if Jesus.
Believed it. I believe it. If Noah.
Was in the ark. I believe it. If Jesus.
Said it. That's it. You know.
But then. To see that Jesus. Saw himself.
As he. As he. Stood before the.
The leaders. Just before his crucifixion. And he said.
Are you the Messiah? He says. And you shall see. The son of man.
Coming on the clouds of glory. He saw himself. As the fulfillment.
Of the vision. In Daniel chapter nine. That.
That was. Amazing to me. And when he was being.
When the scribes. Were arguing with him. About various things.
He saw. That he was the fulfillment. Of the second.
Lord. In Psalm. 110.
The Lord said. To my Lord. Sit thou at my right hand.
Until I make thine enemy. As I footstool. That the Lord himself.
Saw that he was the Messiah. Prophesied there. In Psalm.
110. I mean. These kinds of things.
Began to blow me away. And especially. And of course.
He had to come. To his disciples. Even after.
His resurrection. To explain to them. Don't you understand.
I am the suffering. Servant of Isaiah. 53.
Didn't you see that. Didn't you know. That it was according.
To the scriptures. That I had to suffer. And die.
But the disciples. Hadn't seen it. Until it was revealed.
Through Christ's actions. You see. Even though.

The disciples. Knew the scriptures. Until you see it.
In Christ. You don't understand. It's reality.
It's the revelation. Of Christ. That's necessary.
To our lives. And so. The blinders.
Came off. Now. It also happened.
At that time. That I've. Into my hands.
Came a book. That I think. It's out of print.
But maybe. It's back in print. You know.
How they do this. But it was a book. By G. Campbell Morgan.
Called the. The. Unfolding message.
Of the Bible. Now. You know.
Evidently. He just sat down. With somebody.
And they started writing it down. He flew. Over the Bible.
It's only. About this thick. And he covers every book.
In the Bible. But. It just opened.
My eyes. To the Old Testament. Some more.
It was at about. That same time. In the mid.
Seventies. That I began. To see this.
Tremendous. Summing up. Of Christ.
Through the scriptures. And Brother Morgan. Put it in such.
A beautiful way. If I could borrow. His basic.
You know. Set up. I'll.
Just like to. Fly through the Old Testament. With you.
He says. We see. Christ revealed.
In the Pentateuch. The first. Five books.
Not only. As he. Sovereignly.
And mercifully. Is gathering. The children.

Unto himself. Revealing. Himself.

But. As he's. Raising up.

And Abraham. And Isaac. Jacob.

And. Joseph. Who all look like.

Jesus. Some fashion or form. Now.

You may find that. Very hard. About Jacob.

But. Jesus looks like. Jacob.

The transformed. Jacob. As I told.

The young people. This spring. You know.

I don't want to. Say. It's very.

Vernacular. And I. Have to hesitate. About these things.

But I said. Just like Jacob. Was a grabber.

Who was transformed. At Peniel. To become a grabber.

For God. Jesus. Was a grabber.

For God. He came. To this earth.

To seek. And to grab. Sinners.

Down from the tree. And to their house. Now.

You might like. Like the word. Grabber.

If I said. Possessor. You'd say.

Oh. That's so much better. But.

You know. Jesus looks like. All of those men.

If you take a look. Closely. There's something.

To be seen. Not only that. But Melchizedek.

In the middle of Genesis. I mean. It's a wonderful thing.

To see. But to see. God gathering.

And you read that word. And you're being gathered. And then you come to Exodus.

And you see. God gathering. Some more.

He's gathering. By the. Passover lamb.
Hmm. What was that like? And then he gathers. At the mountain.
With a covenant. And then he gathers. The saints.
Around the tabernacle. And then. You know.
I mean. His gathering. His gathering.
His revelation. Of himself. His revelation.
And then. Of course. The raising up of Moses.
Oh. What a wonderful man of God. In the house of God.
In the Old Testament. I don't know. If there was anyone better.
He was. The servant. In the house of God.
And then. Of course. Leviticus.
And you find. All the sacrifices. Of Christ.
And you. Then you see. Numbers.
And you see. God gathering. His children.
Through discipline. Taking them. Through the wilderness.
Teaching them. Those lessons. About murmuring.
Placing. That brass. Serpent.
Up in the wilderness. For the times. Of their sin.
And then. Deuteronomy. There's Moses.
Standing. Almost on the border. Of the promised land.
Saying. I can't go in. But can I just tell you.
A couple of things. You know. How the Lord's led you.
All this time. Has it seemed severe. Sometimes.
You know. The commandments. That God has given you.
Have they seemed tough. To you. Sometimes.
Can I share with you. God's heart. For you.
And how much. He's loved you. All this time.

And he reinterprets. The law. Through the.
Chesed of God. And they see. That God has cared for them.
And loved them. And borne them along. And taught them lessons.
Oh. What a. What a tremendous. Soliloquy.
Of Moses. But what is. The sum.
Of our. Thinking. Here's where.
Brother Morgan. Has such a. Wonderful. Way of putting it.
When all is said. And done. And you've read.
The five books. And you've seen. God.
Mercies. And you see. The people's.
Rebellion. And you look. At the whole thing.
And even Moses. Who himself. Could not go in.
The promised land. He says. What comes out.
Is a sigh. Oh. For a priest.
Who could truly. Atone. And change our lives.
That we wouldn't be. Such rebels. Oh.
For a Moses. Who could truly. Take us in.
And not himself. Be disqualified. If there was.
Only one. A priest. A high.
Priest. Who could bring us. The ultimate.
Once for all. Sacrifice. And so.
When we read. These portions. We sense.
A sigh. There's something. Incomplete.
About the. Pentateuch. Until Jesus.
Comes. Well. Then.
The next section. Was that. What do.
We call. In our. English Bible.

The historical. Books. And the historical.
Books. Was obviously. A book.
That are. God's. Gathering.
And preparing. A kingdom. Through Joshua.
Jesus. The same name. He brings.
The children. Into this land. That environmentally.
Is perfect. For the gathering. Into a kingdom.
If there was ever. A case. To prove.
That. Environment. Does not change.
People. The children. Of Israel.
Coming into. The promised land. Is the proof.
They came in. And despite. All of their victories.
And despite. The faith. Of Caleb.
And Joshua. And et cetera. It wasn't too long.
Before. We were in. Judges.
And seeing. The people. Resisting.
Being gathered. Everybody. Does what's right.
In their own. Eyes. Who needs.
A king. Even if. The twelve.
Tribes. Had stayed. Together.
As a unit. They could have. Warded off.
Most of the outside. Enemies. But no.
No. No. They bickered.
And fought. With. One another.
They became. So weak. That anybody.
Can come in. And plunder. One tribe.
At a time. They wouldn't. Be gathered.

They just. Remained. Independent.
And only. Occasionally. When a judge.
Came along. The people. Began to see.
That they needed. To be gathered. Unto their god.
Samuel. Was. The great judge.
Of course. At. MISPA.
He gathered them. And they. Came.
And worshipped. God. With their whole heart.
There were moments. Of gathering. In.
Judges. But. For the most part.
What was it? You know. It's a very. Disappointing.
Thing. To see the opportunities. God has given.
His children. And what they've done. With it.
But it became. Obvious. Maybe the problem is.
Not ourselves. What we need. Is a king.
So they went ahead. And got a king. To be gathered.
Around their king. Was the ideal. But of course.
You know. They picked Saul. As the greatest king.
In the flesh. He could pick. A big.
Tall guy. Strapping. Good soldier.
Just the kind of king. Everybody in the world. Would want.
But he didn't work. Didn't work. For the kingdom.
Of God. And it turned out. The children of Israel.
Wouldn't even be gathered. To him. When it was time.
For a war. He had to. He had to.
Threaten people. Just to get him. To come out.
And fight. They. Couldn't be gathered.

By this. Fleshly king. And then.
Of course. We come to. Those wonderful.
The era. Of David. And somehow.
The people. Gathered around. His heart.
They gathered. Around this man. And then.
They gathered. Around Solomon's. Wisdom.
And saw. Those great things. And stood together.
In those great things. But. You know.
The story. Of the kings. Keeps going.
Doesn't it? And. The list. Of kings.
Takes us. Up and down. On a roller coaster.
Ride. That leads us. Into.
Corruption. In the kings. That were so.
Poor. That the people. Just split up.
And went again. Had. They had to do.
Their own things. Because the kings. Were so poor.
They couldn't even. Be trusted. It's always interesting.
To me. Sometimes. They bring in.
Both statistics. At once. They usually.
Don't try to bring it. At the same time. But right now.
You know. President. Bush's.
Approval. Rating. Is.
What. 32%. Oh.
It's abysmal. But. They don't always.
As. Somebody. In the democratic.
Caucus. Or something. Is talking.
They don't always. Bring in. The fact.

That. Congress. Is at an.
All time. Low. At 21%.
Well. So. The kings.
Had come. To such. A low.
Level. Of approval. That.
They. Falling. Deeper.
And deeper. Into sin. And so.
When you read. Those books. Of the histories.
You're left. With a sigh. A sigh.
For a messiah. A sigh. For a king.
A king. Who can keep. His people.
And shepherd. His people. A shepherd.
King. A messiah. A greater.
Than david. But. In his line.
That's what's needed. When you read. Those history books.
You almost. Sense the yearning. Oh.
If we could just be completed. But we're so incomplete. Unless.
This messiah. Comes. And then of course.
You have the prophets. Who even. In that decline.
God. Can never leave. Himself.
Without a witness. And so. He began.
To raise up. Prophets. And these.
Prophets. Once presented. Before the people.
Blinded. By sin. And idolatry.
The heart. Of god. Held up.
The heart. Of god. They held up.
The standard. Of god. They held up.

God. Himself. Before his people.
Warned of judgment. Time. And time.
Again. Even down. To the moment.
Of judgment. Still saying. There's a way.
Of repentance. But that way. Was not really found.
And then. When the people. Were brought into captivity.
And went into judgments. Of various kinds. Even during that time.
The lord. Raised up. Prophets.
And they started. Speaking of the promise. And of a plan.
And of a messiah. And of a kingdom. That would surely come.
Despite all. These years. Of our travail.
And of a gathering. That would come about. One day.
And the prophets. Were prophets of hope. In those times of doom.
But what was the result? Well. Praise God. You know.
Through the work of the prophets. The remnant. Was raised up.
People who believed the word. People willing to suffer. And stand.
And perhaps. The greatest. Sign.
Of their being gathered up. Before God was. They were waiting.
The consolation of Israel. They were groaning. They were waiting.
Waiting. Waiting. With that sigh.
Expressed in their very lives. They would wait by the temple. When the others went home.
We know those people. We met some. When Jesus comes on the scene.
They're ever waiting. Ever praying. Ever giving themselves.
To the lord saying. Oh lord. Please.
We're incomplete. Without you. But even the message of the prophets.
Leaves us with that sigh. For the living word. That can come and transform us.
Not just a word. Spoken to the outside. A word that we know is true.

But we can't respond to. But a living word. That can come and indwell us.
And give us life. Righteous life. Godly life.
And so. We see that the whole. Old testament is.
Is waiting for Jesus. Can only be summed up. In Jesus.
That's why. We've got four books. That we call.
Good news. Because when Jesus came. Suddenly.
Things that were in waiting. And things that were only partially fulfilled. Started to be fulfilled.
One after another. As Jesus came on the scene. You know.
I was. As I said. I was saved.
In the spring of 1964. And. I was going to college.
In the summer time. I was working on a. 40 hour a week job. But during.
But I was a brand new Christian. Saved on April fool's day. And.
So I worked. All summer. June.
July. August. And despite the working.
40 hours a week. And all the stuff. Every.
Breakfast time. Every lunch time. Snack time.
Break time. All the time I could. I read the whole Bible through.
Genesis. Revelations. And it.
Didn't hurt at all. I even did it the hard way. They gave me an old Schofield.
King James. And I. Read the whole thing through. Well.
I remember. Somewhere there. Toward the end of the summer.
Coming to the gospels for the. First time as a Christian. Now.
I know many of you. Have known the Lord. Since your youth.
And you've. Heard the word of God. Is just absorbed in your life.
Praise God. For that. For me.
I was hitting everything. Fresh. Oh.
Man. When I hit the gospels. I don't know.

Something happened to me. I. Just was so exciting. I mean.
When I read Matthew. I thought. There was a very complicated.
Book. Seemed very religious. And complicated.
You know. But. The teachings.
In there. Those parables. And the things.
They just stood out. I said. Wow.
Wow. I remember that. So clearly.
Wow. I go back to Matthew. Thirteen.
Trying to figure them out. I had. I misinterpreted.
Every one of them. Because. I had little revelation.
About the kingdom. At that time. I was just newly saved.
But. Wow. Look at those parables.
Jesus. Always speaking in. Paradoxes.
And. Messing people up. Yeah.
He's really something. You know. And.
Then. I hit Mark. And Mark.
I just saw power. I saw power. Jesus.
Power. It was at that time. While I was reading Mark.
That I received the Holy Spirit. I had such a hunger. For that power.
I said. Look at him. Look at him.
He's bound the strong man. What? That must be the devil. And.
He's healing people. And saving people. Wow.
What a powerful savior. He is. I just.
Man. I got down on my knees. God.
I want the power from heaven. And. I got it.
A little drip. That's all I could handle. At the time.
You know. I only was. Up to a hundred goosebumps.

In those days. So. I couldn't get too much.

But. And. Then.

I came to Luke. And that's where I fell in love. I never read a book like Luke.

I found a champion. I saw a human being. You know.

I wasn't quite clear who Jesus was. You know what I'm saying. I knew he was God.

I knew he was man. Wow. And Luke.

What a man. And I found somebody who. Loves sinners.

I was a sinner. I was the worst one in my family. My brother.

He's here today. You know. I don't know if you know.

I have a brother. He's a very precious man. He was always better than me.

My sister better than me. I was the black sheep of the family. And I found Jesus.

Who loves sinners. And I loved him. When he died on the cross.

It broke my heart. Just the things he said. He forgave everybody.

I just couldn't believe it. I'm so glad he rose again in Luke. I was devastated.

But I found my savior. I found him in Luke. I love Luke.

I still see him. Whenever I read Luke. He's walking.

So wonderful. What a wonderful Lord. I was being gathered up.

Into the Lord Jesus. I was being caught. By a loving God.

Thank you Lord. Thank you Lord Jesus. Then of course.

I had to come to John. And see something so beautiful. I didn't know what to do with John.

I didn't understand the IM's. I didn't understand so much of it. But there's two things I really saw.

One. In his interview. He brought everybody to understand.

That there's a spiritual side. To everything. I didn't understand.

Until I hit that. And then. The other wonderful thing I saw.

In the gospel of John. As I was reading it. Was that love was redefined.

For me. You know love. Was basically emotional.

But I saw there. A deliberate. Self-giving love.

I remember when I came to John 13. Say Jesus. Who knew where he was coming.
Where he was from. And where he was going. Having been with his disciples.
Even up to the end. He loved them to the uttermost. And I saw something so deliberate.
In love. I saw that love. Goes far beyond just feeling.
There's a life poured out. Well the gospels were a great gospel. For me as you can imagine.
And then. Of course to go through the rest of the book. We've run out of time.
And. I still have all the rest to go. You see.
I can't do my job. But at least at the book of Acts. We can see a tremendous gathering.
Now wouldn't you agree. What a gathering. They gathered together in one accord.
When's that ever happened before. And it's as if Babel was reversed. They all came together.
And the spirit came down on them. And they started speaking in tongues. Then they were gathered in Jerusalem.
And then they were gathered in Antioch. And gathered at the. Centurion's house.
And then gathered out across the world. Jesus. Gathering them up.
And. You know. Right from the start.
I saw that Acts was Jesus gathering people. Which I later found out was the truth. Even though at seminary they told me.
It's the spirit who's gathering people. Well he is. The spirit even to this day.
Oh. What a wonderful book. Oh.
What a wonderful. Moment to see. That Jesus is.
The word of God. And then from that revelation. To have the Bible come alive to you.
Old Testament and new. It makes your heart. If you'll study the word.
Available to the Lord speaking to you. And bringing you into fullness. I mean.
I'm a poor student. But can you imagine what happened to the apostle Paul. There on the road to Damascus.
When he later. Almost immediately or quickly. Went to Arabia for three years.
And he'd known that. The Old Testament backwards and forwards. In the letter.
But now that he'd seen Christ standing before him. Can you imagine his Bible studies. In the Arabian desert.

He was preaching to the sheep. He couldn't believe it. He was worshiping God.
And praising God. For Christ here. And Christ there.
He was seeing Christ everywhere. And when a person goes through such a process. You're gathered.
You can't help but be gathered under his headship. Because you see how immense he is. The fullness of Christ.
Is seen through the word of God. And that's why I say to you. Rather than tell you.
Or try to tell you. If I could. Of his dimensions.
Of his glory. I point you to the word of God. Be a student of the word of God.
Yay. Be a lover of the word of God. It is your meat.
It is your food. And without it. We cannot come unto fullness.
Even to this day. There's a tremendous. Ignorance.
Not even. I don't want to say Bible ignorance. Revelation.
Ignorance. Oh that we may see. That the whole of scripture is summed up.
In Christ. At the spirit of prophecies. The testimony of Jesus.
At all the various parts. Even the parts we don't understand. Somehow.
In an amazing way. Have to do with this whole gathering. Unto the Lord.
Through his word. Oh let's be gathered to the Lord. Let's come to that fullness.
Let's recognize. This precious Lord we own. It's right here.
Search for Jesus in every page. You young people up there. You be one who opens this Bible and says.
Oh Jesus. Let me find you here in Leviticus. And the spirit will reveal him.
You be a faithful student of the word. As we're gathered together. Unto the Lord.
We're gathered together. Around his word. What a wonderful.
Provision of God. Let us not. Despise it.
Or get used to it. There's living revelation. You never can get used to living revelation.
Oh may the Lord help us. Let's pray. Oh father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
The lover of our souls. You have desired nothing better for us. Than to.
Gather us around Christ. Oh how we need to see a revelation. Of our shepherd.
The great shepherd of our soul. How we need to see revealed. This great hen.

Gathering his chicks together. Oh forbid Lord Jesus. That we would be those.
Who could be. People who have Bibles. But don't understand them.
To be standing in the same position. As those leaders in Jerusalem. To be standing face to face.
With the living God. And just looking at the letter of the Bible. And not getting the point.
Oh Lord lead us in life. In these last days. Give us further revelation of yourself.
It's the only way you can recover us. We know. And Lord we pray.
Not just that there would be some. A few here and there. Who would receive a revealed word.
But every one of us. Could see a logos revealed. That would result in.
Our everyday devotion. Being full of Christ. Oh you are.
The sum the source. And the meaning of scripture. We thank you Lord.
Help us continue to see that more and more. As we pray in Jesus precious name. Amen.

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