

I want to share with you something that perhaps many of you already know but may not be top of mind all the time, especially as you look into God's word day by day, is that the Bible is all about Jesus. The last two verses of our passage for this morning are often used to prove, because they do, the inspiration of Scripture. But it's not just that God breathed out these words, this passage also tells us what these words are for and what difference these words should make in our lives. This is meant to help us as we come to God's Word, whether you're reading through the Old Testament for a class, whether you're reading through the New Testament for a class, whether you've already done those things and you're like, Well, I know what the Bible is about generally, and yeah, I try to do devotions. But if you're like me, there are days you read and you go, you get to the end, especially in the Old Testament, you think, Well, that was interesting. Have you felt that? You get there and you're like, Well, that was a story about something. There were people, and I know I'm supposed to think about it a certain way.

But what do we do? What do we do in those moments? How do we push through to meet with God there? And how should we expect to meet with him? It's out of the conviction that the Scripture is all about Jesus. Now, it's not just that we just run. What's the first thing that reminds me of Jesus? You may have heard of some of the wild allegorical journeys that have been gone on in the history of interpretation where any piece of wood, Jesus died on the cross. There it is. I feel a tear. It's like, Well, probably not most of the time. Not every tree is the tree that was used for the wood where Jesus died for our sin. So it's not always this straight line. If it's not a straight line, how do we get there and what should we expect? What should we expect, especially of the Old Testament? Because maybe we think the Old Testament God, and perhaps you even grew up in a culture that taught that the New Testament God is essentially different from the Old Testament God. What's the Old Testament God like? Well, he's one who likes rules, has a lot of wrath when you don't follow the rules, needs a lot of death, apparently for you to stay in the community.

But then in the New Testament, Jesus is all about love. He would never talk about difficult topics like hell more than anyone else does in the New Testament. He certainly wouldn't, right? We think there's this difference, and we're comfortable with the New Testament because there Jesus actually is, and there's the Apostles reflecting on what Jesus has done. But I want to remind us, and perhaps it's a reminder mainly for you today, but I want to remind you and to help you, to motivate you for tomorrow morning, that in the Scripture, and here's the big idea for this morning, in the Scripture, we have everything we need to trust in Jesus for eternal life and to live for him now. In the Scripture, we have everything we need to trust in Jesus for eternal life and to live for him now. Let's consider that piece by piece. The Scripture. What is the Scripture? What does it do? Why do we need it? Paul's referring here, writing to Timothy, his protege in ministry, telling them, As for you, verse 14, Continue in what you've learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings.

He calls them the sacred writings in verse 15. Then in verse 16, he says, All Scripture is breathed out by God. When Paul speaks of the sacred writings, when he speaks of Scripture, he's actually speaking of the Old Testament. He tells, Timothy, you've been acquainted with these since childhood. There was no New Testament when Timothy was a child. It's the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible, that Paul is talking about here and that he says, is able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. The Old Testament is where we learn that? I thought it was the New. Well, what is this? This is God's word. And so we want to pay attention to the Scripture. It is breathed out in verse 16, by God. It's not just that a bunch of guys wrote a bunch of stuff about what they felt about God. Listen to the words of 2 Peter 1, Verses 20 and 21. "No prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man. But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." So this is the word of God written down by men as they're carried along by the Holy Spirit.

So the Bible didn't just drop from heaven a whole cloth like the Book of Mormon. It was written by people, but with God always as the divine author, so that sometimes even the guys who were writing down what they knew was God's Word didn't know all that they were writing. And so when we think about interpreting Scripture. Well, it's got to be what the author intended. Well, Paul's telling us what the author intended. It's not that we ignore the human author's intent. But 1 Peter 1, where Peter says

that the ones who were writing down what was to come about the Messiah, they were inquiring what person or time when they were predicting the Messiah's sufferings and the glory to follow. The Old Testament authors were writing better than they knew because they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. And in God's grace and in his plan and in this age, we have that same Holy Spirit, not to inspire our writing the way that he inspired theirs, but to help us, to guide us into all truth. And this word of God is what we live by. As Jesus was being tempted by the devil in Matthew 4, he answered when the devil tells him, make some bread out of these stones.

He quotes from Deuteronomy and says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." So we would do well to pay attention to the Scripture. Sometimes in a Christian university setting, we can know just enough Bible to be inoculated to its power. I know that already. I'm familiar with that story, especially if you grew up in church. And it's even more if you grew up in a Christian school and you're like, Wait, are those not advantages? Yes, they are and they're blessings if you have them, if that has been your experience. But there's sometimes the familiarity. I pretty much got this, which can also lead us to think, I pretty much got following Jesus. I know the stuff. But we never grow beyond our need for God's Word. If Jesus quoted God's Word when he was being tempted, it's possible that I need it, too. And Maybe also you guys. This is where God himself has spoken. And however well you think you know the Scriptures, you don't know them as well as you could. However well I think I know the Scriptures, I don't know them as well as I could.

In a way, it's so simple. A child can understand that they're a sinner who needs a savior, but there's also a deep well in the Scriptures that you have not gotten near the bottom of, and you won't in your lifetime of seeking the Lord there. Yes, nature cries out that there must be a creator God, but we would be utterly lost without the Scripture. The fact that we have this Bible at all is a sign of God's love for us. He did not have to speak to us, but he has. The living, eternal, Holy God has spoken to you. Are you listening? Am I listening? Are we listening to his voice? So it is ours then to listen, to pay attention, and to respond. And what do we find in this word of God? Paul says, Everything we need to know, to trust in Jesus, even in the Old Testament. Says, You know who taught you. You know from whom you learned them. From childhood, you've been familiar with the sacred writings. You've been acquainted with them. You know them. Who taught them? Well, Paul was one of his teachers. Just a few verses above that.

He'll say, You followed my teaching, my aim in life. You have followed my way. But also we learn earlier in this letter that he had a mother and a grandmother who taught him the Scriptures, and that Paul is convinced there's an unfeigned faith, a sincere faith in him, too.

Let me just stop for a second. If you have grown up knowing the Scriptures, if you have grown up acquainted with the Bible, with its stories, and more importantly, with its savior. Thank God. And maybe an application that you can just do. I can actually do what I was told in the message today in chapel. Thank someone who has taught you. It might be a text to a parent. It might be a teacher who took time and invested in you. It might be the Sunday school teacher where in their class, you saw it and you realized. It might be a youth pastor. It might be a professor here. So whether it's text, email, call, If you belong to Christ, you heard that good news from someone, most likely from multiple someone's. And so thank God, and maybe even right after chapel, Thank someone who taught you.

And what did they teach us? They taught us the Bible, the good news about Jesus. That's ultimately what the Scriptures are for. That's ultimately what they're about. It's easy for us to get distracted, even as Christians who have the spirit and have the Bible, and we can start reading the Bible like it's really about something else. I know I prayed when I was younger, but now we got to go to the really interesting stuff. The Bible doesn't tell us everything we need to know about everything. For example, you will need another book if you're going to pass your driver's test. If you live in Pennsylvania, there's a very specific book for that. We're up to state you're from, you have that book. You can read your Bible all day. It won't help you know which one is to go first at a four-way stop. There's nothing in the Bible about that. You need another book. If you live in Philly, you know that no one stops at four-way stops anyway. We actually had... We were defending that at a denominational meeting once. Not on the floor of it, it was like a meal time in between.

And one of the pastors in our church said, I am ready to defend running stop signs as an act of love for your neighbor. We're Sunday at 10:00. We'd love to see you there. The Bible is also not a science book. It doesn't tell us the exact right mix for the best drinking water. We have a guy in our church who recently retired from the Philadelphia Water Department after a 40-year career, and he can tell you all about that. But he's been doing research. He was running a lab. That's why Philly water tastes so good. It's amazing. You don't realize it until you go somewhere else. But you're not going to learn about how to get the best mix of water. The Bible is also not a health and wellness book. God doesn't really care if you eat Ezekiel bread. Are you familiar with that? Do you know what this is? I'm familiar with that. Can I see hands? Okay, yeah. You can get this at Walmart. That's how big this is. The Bible's at Walmart. Ezekiel 4:9 contains a recipe for bread, and it ended up being marketed as God's own recipe.

It's so much better than that gluten-filled, ultra-processed, Sarah Lee stuff that you get at the grocery store. You need to get you some Bible bread. But this recipe is not in the Bible, and There are videos about this. There are YouTubers getting their likes and follows on this and how it's really better for you. Even buying this out of a bag, you actually don't want to do that. Here's how you can get the grains to sprout and hit this He's like, What are you doing? This recipe is not in the Bible so that we can have the best possible health now, especially with the way that the Lord instructed Ezekiel to prepare it. You're familiar? To follow this recipe, you're supposed to produce something first to bake it over. Ezekiel is like, Lord, please not that. He's like, All right, so you can get some cow patties and use those to cook it over. Anyone who really wants to do this, I doubt that this was cooked over cow pies. Just guessing. Also, while Ezekiel was eating this bread, he was supposed to lie only on his left side for 390 days. If you're a left-side sleeper, you're like, No problem.

I got I've been doing that my whole life. But we get all into a bread and we put the reference on it, and Christians will buy it now like it's Bible bread, and we miss the whole point. He's picturing the siege of Jerusalem and God's coming judgment because of his people's sin and that all they'll have to eat is this bread that you can get from what's around, and all you're going to drink is water. If you really If you want to do this, you need to eat about eight ounces of this bread and drink about 8 ounces of water, and that is your daily provision for the next year plus, if you want to be biblical. Or is there maybe a different way of thinking about being biblical. Whatever that passage is about, it's not about the bread. The Bible doesn't tell us everything about everything, but it tells us everything we need to know to trust in Jesus for eternal life. That's what the disciples were absolutely convinced of, that Jesus was the Messiah who had been promised in Moses, the prophets and the Psalms. Of course, Jesus said as much himself as he's arguing with the pharisees in John 5, John 5: 39.

He says, You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is they that bear witness about me. And he goes on in that same passage to say, Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you, Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me. With his two disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24, as they're saying, We thought Jesus was the Messiah, but he died, and we don't know what to think about that. He tells them, 'Oh foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?' ' And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. Beginning with Moses, the Pentateuch, and all the prophets, that's a reference to all the rest of the Old Testament, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things that are about him. Similarly, later in chapter 24, as now he is with all his disciples, he says to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms, again, all the Old Testament, must be fulfilled."

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer, and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sin should be claimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

In the Scripture, God has revealed everything we need to know to Trust in Jesus and everything we

need to know to live for Jesus. This word indeed is profitable for instruction, for reproof, for correction, for training. It's good for those things, that we can be complete, that we can grow up to maturity in Christ, not apart from Christ, but with him, trusting in him. The Scriptures reveal God's character and his will. Why did he give us the Old Testament? Well, 1 Corinthians 10:6 tells us that these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. So yes, as we're reading Old Testament stories, as we're seeing promises, as we're seeing patterns, as we're seeing pictures, we need to learn, we need not to do what they did, but we need to trust in Jesus, who was supposed to be their hope, though they didn't know his name yet, and is supposed to be our hope.

The Scripture reveals God's character and will. We learn what God is like and what he likes, and so we need to pay attention. And it's profitable, most of all because it points us to the living Word, Jesus Christ, our only savior. So as we pay attention to the Lord speaking through his Word this week, here's a tip. How do you think about this? Well, a professor that I had an undergrad wrote a book on finding Jesus in the Old Testament. He called it beginning at Moses. Interestingly, he did not begin at Moses. He called it beginning at Moses because of the Bible verse that says that's where Jesus started. But he actually started with a section called Whom? Because he was proper with his grammar, 'Whom to look for.' And he gave us a New Testament sketch of Jesus. What's he like? What's his character? What's revealed about him? What did he do for us? So that having that sketch, now we can look back at the Old Testament and see how he is there. It's like having a sketch or a picture when you're trying to find someone that you haven't seen before.

Now, there are really bad sketches I was reminded of this week, but after I had sent the PowerPoint, I was reminded of the courtroom sketch from when Tom Brady was in court over the Deflate Gate scandal back when you guys were all children. It's really bad. If you're like, Who is that supposed to be? I would never find that guy. And he's one of the most famous football players around at that point. We want our sketch to come from Scripture, not our idea of who Jesus is. So hopefully it's a good sketch or you'll never find him. It's also like reading the ending of a detective story, a murder mystery, or any other story that has a big reveal. Have you ever watched a movie and you're watching, you're going like, Okay, I'm not quite sure. I'm following it or I'm trying to figure it out. And then at the end, you have the big reveal. Can you think of one? Okay. When you go back and watch the second time, if it's well made, you see it everywhere, right? Yeah, okay. I hear some people saying names of some. Got to be careful with which ones and how they're rated.

I got to be careful with what I say up here. So you think of the ones you know. We're like, That's how. The whole movie, you're going, How do they do that? Other characters are going, How is this happening? And then all of a sudden, it's revealed. And then you realize That's why no one looked at that character. He was dead the whole time. Or you realize that's why that guy acted so differently in different situations. There were two of him. You go, whoa. But then when you see it, once you know it, you see it everywhere. Once you know the ending, you see things that you didn't see on the way. Once you know who did it, that second read or watch is completely different. When you know what you're looking at, everything changes. And so there's something... Apologies to those who had narrative with me last semester, you have seen this before, and maybe some others of you have. But I want to show you a logo. Are you familiar with this logo? This one you've seen a lot. Do you know why I'm showing you this logo? How many of you right away...

You already know. Okay, you know why. How many of you are like, Why are we the FedEx logo right now? Anybody? Okay. Have you ever noticed... Well, keep looking. Do you see anything maybe in the white space, in the negative space? Do you see an arrow? How many of you just saw the arrow? Okay. How many of you... Okay, some of you just saw it now. Okay. Did you know that that arrow has been there since before you were born? No way, right? That arrow has been there since before you were born. And now, the next time you see a FedEx truck, you'll see it. And guess what? It was there all along. It was always there in the negative space. So how do we find Jesus in the Old Testament? It's not like finding any piece of wood and making that the cross. It's by seeing him in the specific promises like we think of in Isaiah 53. But it's also seeing him in the patterns that we see, in the pictures, in the sacrifices, in the Exodus. Jesus is the culmination of all of these things. When you see sinners who need to be rescued, you're seeing the set up for the savior.

When you see judgment, you see God's Holiness and the great cost of sin and rebellion against him. When you see sacrifices being made for sin, you're seeing a picture of what Jesus accomplished on the cross. In Colossians 2, Paul calls them shadows and says that Christ is the substance. Those shadows, they're the negative space, but he's there. And so it's not pulling a rabbit out of a hat. The best Christ-centered preachers aren't one to at the end, you're like, I never could have seen that. It's, How did I not see it all along? It was always there. We have everything we need. From over 40 human authors, over a thousand years, there's one divine author who's telling the one story of salvation through Jesus Christ. He's the second Adam who obeys all God's commands and through whom many are counted righteous. He's the Ark who provides safe passage through the waters of God's judgment for everyone who trusts in him. Jesus is the lion of the tribe of Judah. He's the Passover lamb who dies so the people can be forgiven and live. He's the perfect priest who offers himself as the sinless sacrifice on behalf of the people.

He's the prophet like Moses, the coming king who rules in righteousness, justice, and equity, the true vine, the true Israel. He's the suffering servant of Isaiah, the righteous branch of Jeremiah, the good shepherd who gives his life for the sheep, the Comforter who brings peace, the rock on which we stand. He is all that and more. And in his mercy, he brings us into his fellowship and blessing. We are in him, and he is in us. We are his, and he is ours. And by his grace, all that's his is ours. What grace, what a savior.

Let's pray. God, would you help us as we look to your word day by day to see Jesus in all the ways that he is there? And would we be changed to look like him, to live for him by the power of your Spirit? It's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen.