

Doing Biblical Theology Today

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[0 : 00] Welcome to our first session, if I could put it this way, of the Christian and New Testament theology.

Let me explain that statement. I have prepared this talk today as though it were, in a sense, the introductory session of a course I would love to teach someday, perhaps as a Sunday school class, that I would call the Christian and New Testament theology, for reasons that will become clear as we go along.

So this first talk is entitled, Doing Biblical Theology Today. Now I'm going to begin by just introducing myself again briefly, even though Bill gave you some of this info, I want to use my biography as a way to launch us into our subject for this morning.

My name is Keith Ganzer, and I am currently an MDiv student at Regent College, where I am also teaching this summer in the course on beginning Greek that starts in July.

And there's still room in that course, by the way. So, take seven weeks, and come learn to read the New Testament in its original language, because it will change your life and ignite your love for Scripture.

[1 : 19] I would almost guarantee that. You're never too old to do that. And I'm quite serious. It's my vision, perhaps, one day to be able to teach Greek and Hebrew in the Church, in the context of the Church, so that the people of God are most equipped to read the Bible for themselves.

But as Bill mentioned, I will be an artizo intern at St. John's beginning this fall, and I'm very excited to serve you and the Church in this way, and to learn and grow myself in that context.

Well, just being here with you is a reminder of God's great kindness to me. This fits into a story of His providence and love in my life. He brought me to Himself as a high school freshman in 1995.

I went to college then as a young Christian who was not raised in a Christian home. So, in a significant way, I grew up, as it were, on a Christian college campus in Wheaton, Illinois.

I graduated in 2003 as Bill mentioned, having studied Greek and Hebrew and some theology and biblical studies as well. So, I then continued there in the Wheaton Graduate School and graduated in 2004 with a Masters in Biblical Studies or Exegesis.

[2 : 37] And I met Emily at Wheaton, and we were married just over two years ago now. And she is a full-time student at Regent as well. And, in fact, she's the real reason we decided to come to Regent College, and that's a story to tell for another time, perhaps.

But, in short, the Lord led us to consider further graduate school, and so we chose to come to Regent, where I am currently, as I said, a div student with a desire to enter pastoral ministry in the future, likely with the Indian community.

It was during my years at Wheaton that I developed an affection for the Bible as I learned to read it in its original languages. This affection sparked an overwhelming passion to discover how the Bible fits together, to see how it speaks uniformly of the gospel of God.

And since then, my imaginary course that I'm calling the Christian and New Testament Theology began to take shape as I wrestled with that grand question.

You see, most of the initial teaching and instruction I received in the Baptist Church, in which I came to know the Lord, and every sermon I had heard for the first four years as a Christian came from the New Testament.

[3 : 59] So, it was at Wheaton College, when I began for the first time to ask myself, how do I read the Bible as a unified Old and New Testament?

Particularly, with a focus, because this is my interest, on developing a New Testament theology that deals responsibly with the entire biblical corpus. So, my key question, the starting point of it all, and really the conclusion at the end of it all, is to suppose that the key question when constructing a

New Testament theology is this.

What does New Testament theology look like when we read it, that is the New Testament, from two perspectives? First, from the perspective of the Scriptures.

The Bible of the early Church, which we today call the Old Testament. To them, it would have been their Scriptures, on the one hand. And what does it mean when we read the New Testament from the perspective of our own Christian commitments, on the other hand?

And so, my imaginary course title, The Christian in New Testament Theology, is a title that really brings together for me the two essential elements of studying the Scriptures.

[5 : 15] Namely, understanding New Testament theology within the perspective from which it came, namely the Scriptures. And so really, I'm all about constructing a biblical theology of the New Testament.

The theology of the New Testament comes from the Bible. And so, the New Testament can't be understood in a single word of it, apart from the Old Testament. People sometimes ask me, what, well, I was TA for the exegesis course at Regent in this past year, and they ask me, what commentary series should I get to study the New Testament?

And my answer usually is, well, buy the books of the Old Testament. Buy that commentary series. Read those books, and you'll understand the New Testament better. So, that's the first pillar.

Looking at the New Testament through the perspective of the Scriptures that inform it, a biblical theology of the New Testament. And the other perspective, of course, is our own Christian commitments.

And so, several times in my imaginary course, and just so you know, I've not developed anything beyond this. I'm just dreaming about what this course would look like. But in my imaginary course, I would pause and talk all along the way about what those theological affirmations mean to us as followers of Christ.

[6 : 39] So, it was during those six years at Wheaton College that I began to work seriously on developing my own biblical theology of the New Testament as a Christian. And with that beginning, all still in progress, of course, and always will be in progress, I'm now incredibly excited to have the opportunity to teach students this summer the beginning steps of how to read the New Testament in light of the Old Testament on the basis of its original languages and interpret it accurately within its own historical theological framework in this summer Greek course.

Just the beginning steps of that. And Lord willing, in some contexts, I want to do that for the rest of my life. So, all this leads me directly into our lesson together this morning.

What would be this introductory session of my biblical theology of the New Testament. How do you do biblical theology? When you open up the New Testament, what do you do?

How do you understand it? Where do you go for the key insights that will enable you to figure out what's going on? I'm sure you're aware of the fact that the very first time the Gospel is put in writing, the Gospel of Mark, begins with a very famous statement.

Not about Jesus, of course, but about John the Baptist. In fact, not about John the Baptist. But about John the Baptist in light of Isaiah. In fact, not in light of Isaiah, but in light of Isaiah, as Isaiah understands Malachi 3 and Exodus 23.

[8 : 18] Mark 1, 1 to 3. Often translated as an initial title before the first sentence really begins in verse 2. But really, that first verse is a dependent clause, and I think better to read it as one long sentence in this way.

The beginning of the beginning of the good news, that is the Gospel, of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, comma, I would put a comma instead of a period, as it is written in the prophet Isaiah.

See, or behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way. The voice of one crying out in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord.

Make his paths straight. To begin with, I just want to call your attention to one brute fact. You cannot understand who John the Baptist is, unless you understand John the Baptist, in light of this three-fold quote from Isaiah chapter 40, verse 1, Malachi chapter 3, verse 1, and Exodus chapter 23, verse 20.

See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way. The voice of one crying out in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight, is the framework through which we are to understand who John the Baptist is.

[9 : 46] And of course, John the Baptist becomes the framework through whom we are to understand who Jesus is. But the framework, then, for John and Jesus is this collage quotation from

Isaiah chapter 40, Malachi 3, and Exodus 23.

So your understanding of John the Baptist, and through John Jesus, will only be as good as your understanding of Isaiah 40, Malachi 3, and Exodus 23.

Now, it's not my purpose this morning to go into an exegesis of those three texts. But I was sensing that that would frustrate some of you. I have a handout that I'll give you at the end that talks a bit about those three texts in Mark 1.1.

But if I have time at the end, I'll come back to that. My point here simply is, at the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ is a collage quotation from three key books of the Old Testament, through which we are to understand John the Baptist, who then introduces us to Jesus.

And square one is knowing what these verses from the Old Testament are meant to speak to the people that were reading this book. And then when we come to the baptism of Jesus himself, when the Spirit descends upon him like a dove, verse 10 and 11 of Mark chapter 1, and a voice came from heaven, I think that's verse 11, and a voice came from heaven, You are my son, the beloved, or my beloved son.

[11:15] With you I am well pleased. First of all, we're not going to be able to understand what's going on at the baptism of Jesus, unless we put that against the backdrop, first of all, of Isaiah 63 and 64.

Therefore, the splitting of the heavens that takes place at Jesus' baptism is, of course, a fulfillment of Isaiah's prayer in Isaiah 63 and 64, where he prayed that God would once again split the heavens and come down and rescue his people, as he did in the beginning at the Exodus.

And as Isaiah looks forward to the final redemption of his people, he prays for a time when there would be a second Exodus redemption of God's people, where the heavens would split again, just like they did over Mount Sinai.

And as God came down on Mount Sinai and revealed his glory, Isaiah prayed that God would once again split the heavens and come down. So when Jesus looks up and sees the heavens split and the Spirit coming down, this is Isaiah's prayer being fulfilled.

And then the voice declares, You are my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased. And you can't understand Jesus unless you understand why the voice would quote at the inauguration of Jesus' ministry, Psalm 2-7 and Isaiah 42-1.

[12:42] So it goes from Isaiah 40, the primary text for John the Baptist, which is the key for understanding Malachi 3 and Exodus 23. We go from there to the baptism of Jesus, Psalm 2-7, Isaiah 42-1.

Jesus as the King, Psalm 2-7, who is also the suffering servant, Isaiah 42-1. And by the time you put together the expectations for the second Exodus, as outlined in Isaiah 40, culminating in Malachi 3 and Exodus 23, together with Jesus as King of Israel, Psalm 2-7, and the servant of Yahweh, Isaiah 42-1, by the time you put those things together, you're ready to start understanding who Jesus is.

So this is why we've got to do a Biblical theology of the New Testament. Because who Jesus is, and what he accomplished in his ministry, and what he will accomplish when he returns again, finds its meaning and significance only against the backdrop of the Scriptures.

So that the Word became flesh, is a living interpretation, application, and fulfillment of the Word written. And the Word written, of course, is the Bible, the Scriptures of the New Testament Church. Now I know this seems very simple and upfront, and you're probably saying, yeah, let's get on with it. But I just start with these basic, basic insights, because it has been my experience as a new Christian, and in meeting many other Christians since, that people tend to read the New Testament *tabula rasa*.

[14:21] They come to the New Testament, as if it can be understood apart from the Bible. Apart from the Old Testament, as I'll call it now in this session.

And so, my most fundamental point, if you only walk away from this with one thing this morning, and indeed if you were to take my whole imaginary course, and I taught it over 25 weeks or something, in Biblical theology, if you walked away with just one thing, this is what I'd want it to be.

The Old Testament is the key to the New Testament. Scratch any New Testament text, and underneath it you are going to find an Old Testament passage.

That is the only thing I want you to learn. So that from now on, every time you read a New Testament text, your first question is going to be, what do I need to know about the Old Testament

that makes sense out of this New Testament text?

And therefore, secondly, how does this New Testament text make sense of the Old Testament?

Remember when Jesus was talking about the significance of John the Baptist?

[15:34] Matthew chapter 11. I think this transitions us into number 4 here on our outline. Matthew chapter 11. Chapter 11. He said, Truly I tell you, this is verse 11 of chapter 11.

Truly I tell you, among those born of women, no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist. Yet, the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Greater than John the Baptist. So, John the Baptist is the greatest prophet. The greatest prophet of Israel's history. And yet, the least, littlest member of the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, is greater than John the Baptist.

Why is that? Verse 12. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. More would have to be said of that at a later time.

Why is that true? Verse 13. For all the prophets and the law, here's the key, prophesied until John came. And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah, who is to come.

[16:52] He is, in other words, the fulfillment of Malachi chapter 3 and 4. He is the last prophet of the Old Covenant. And since he's the last prophet of the Old Covenant, the least member of the kingdom is greater than John, because that person is a member of the New Covenant.

And so we begin to recognize that if we are going to understand ourselves, not just understand the New Testament, but even to understand ourselves as Christians, my second point, not only do we have to do a biblical theology of the New Testament, not only do we have to understand the New Testament in light of the Old Testament on the one hand, on the other hand, we have to read this thing as a Christian.

My course is the Christian and New Testament theology. We have to understand ourselves in light of the significance of Jesus as the one who brings the second Exodus redemption of God's people, right?

Isaiah 40, Malachi 3. Jesus is the one who brings in the second Exodus redemption of God's people. He's the one who inaugurates the New Covenant. We're not going to understand the second Exodus redemption.

We're not going to understand the inauguration of the New Covenant unless we can first understand what went on in the first Exodus and under the Old Covenant, of course. But having done that, having understood the significance of Jesus as the one who brings in the second Exodus redemption of the New Covenant, we have to ask ourselves, what does this mean for us as Christians?

[18:30] In other words, why are we, and in what sense are we, you and I, greater than John the Baptist? Simply because we're members of the New Covenant people of God.

How could we be considered greater than the greatest prophet who ever lived? Jesus ends that pericope in Matthew chapter 11, 11 to 13 by saying, let anyone with ears listen.

Better put, anyone who has ears to hear, let them hear. So in talking about all this and in teaching and preaching about biblical theology, I am much aware of the fact that understanding who Jesus is against the backdrop of the scriptures and understanding who we are in light of Jesus against the backdrop of the scriptures is wholly dependent upon the Spirit giving us ears to hear.

All of us can hear this and any other teaching at a literal, phonetic level. but only those in whom God is at work, only those who have their ears opened by the transforming work of the Spirit can hear the scriptures in a way that becomes life-transforming.

So anyone who has ears to hear, let them hear, is a great way to think about that first aspect of my title, the Christian in New Testament theology. We begin a study of this subject praying that God would give us ears to hear so that we learn, hopefully in community, not simply gaining information, not getting a bunch of data down, not accomplishing another course, but what we're trying to do is hear again who Jesus is, the significance of his ministry against the backdrop of the history of Israel so that we might recognize ourselves to be members of his new covenant and in so doing see again that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater even than John the Baptist.

[20:41] You've already picked up that I'm just going to leave a lot of questions unanswered in terms of my key questions of what New Testament biblical theology asks, like why are we greater than John the Baptist in the new covenant?

I can't really answer that in 30 minutes without giving a backdrop is my whole point. So I'm just trying to whet your appetite for the sorts of things that we need to be thinking about. So when we turn our attention then to the teaching themselves of the scriptures we've got to keep in mind John chapter 5 verse 46.

This is point 5 now in your outline. John 5, 46. You remember that in this controversy with the religious leaders Jesus at one point turns to them and here's what he says John 5, 46.

If you believed Moses he says you would believe me for he wrote about me but if you do not believe what he wrote how will you believe what I say.

We are going to have to understand Moses and believe Moses if we are going to understand and believe Jesus. So you might be surprised that a study in the Christian and New Testament theology would actually begin with the teachings of Moses.

[22 : 19] We would have to go back and start at the beginning. We would build a framework for New Testament theology by looking again at Genesis 1-3 in quite some detail because the original history of creation temptation and fall and redemption that is mapped out in Genesis 1-3 is fundamental for understanding what is going on in the New Testament because I've already mentioned two of the three primary paradigms primary models coming out of the history of Israel that we need to have firmly in view if we are going to understand the New Testament.

Three models that we have to have cemented in our brain every text we read in the New Testament and for that matter in the Old. I've already mentioned two of them.

I've already mentioned the first Exodus and the second Exodus and we're on the back side of the handout now if you want to follow there. I've already mentioned the first Exodus and the second Exodus.

Isaiah 40, remember? Isaiah 40. I'll just take a minute because it's so rich. Isaiah 40 is being addressed to the Israelites who are in exile from Babylon. In Babylon.

That's the key verse that Mark 1-1 hones in on when it talks about announcing the coming of John the Baptist to people already in exile. Understanding the relationship between the first Exodus and the second Exodus that Jesus brings to his people is critical for reading the New Testament.

[23 : 56] Isaiah 40, the primary text for understanding who John the Baptist is as John the Baptist introduces us to who Jesus is. Because that first Exodus looks forward to a second Exodus redemption of God's people for which Isaiah prayed and the beginning fulfillment of which as I mentioned was the baptism of Jesus when the heavens split and God comes down.

So we've got the first Exodus and second Exodus model to pay attention to. And I've also mentioned the Old Covenant and the New Covenant of course very familiar to us.

As we looked at Matthew chapter 11 that the law and the prophets remained up through and including John but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John.

I would argue that that reflects the basic Old Covenant New Covenant transition in Scripture. So we've got a first Exodus and second Exodus we've got an Old Covenant people of God and a New Covenant people of God.

The third model we have to keep in mind which is why I brought up Genesis 1-3 and why I think Jesus speaks of going back to Moses is first creation and new creation.

[25 : 13] first creation and new creation. So these are going to be the three primary models of biblical theology that we need to look at to help us understand what's going on in the New Testament.

And that's why in order to understand and believe Moses we need to go back to the first creation and temptation and fall and redemption that we might understand the new creation brought about and inaugurated in and through Jesus Christ.

Now these motifs of first Exodus and second Exodus of Old Covenant and new Covenant of first creation and new creation come together in a powerful way at the Lord's Supper in the Lord's Supper text and I'm just picking on Mark chapter 14 because it's so on the surface here in Mark 14. we notice how these three fundamental storylines of scripture and I'll back up for a second and just say that when I talk about doing biblical theology some people call it narrative theology where what you're doing is extracting from the story of the Bible the key themes that help you understand how it hangs together.

That's a different sort of approach than what a systematic theologian would engage in. Each have their place. For me, immersing myself in the story or narrative of the Bible brings out these three core themes that I've been mentioning as a way to access the content of the Bible not in a sort of

philosophical categorization but more in a story form.

[26 : 54] If you're really interested in the difference between biblical theology and systematic theology go to Regent Bookstore and buy Rick Watts' lecture that he just gave on Thursday on I can't even reproduce the title it was so long but it had to do with this very issue of rhetoric and New Testament theology and how do we engage people in our culture in a meaningful way and he was arguing that the best way to do that is through the story of the Bible not through a philosophical discussion about who God is.

So anyway Rick Watts' lecture Dynamite and it would be the backdrop to everything I'm just suggesting that we try to do if you're really fascinated in that. Mark 14 In Mark 14 we notice how these three elements come together.

In the words of institution concerning the cup Jesus says in Mark 14 verse 24 This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many.

The blood of the covenant Exodus 24 first covenant then of course and of course now being brought about into a new covenant in and through the life and ministry death and resurrection of Jesus.

And so now this is my blood of the covenant and if you remember in the Matthean parallel here it's the new covenant in Matthew it's explicit. Then in verse 25 Truly, truly I tell you I will never drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.

[28 : 30] So we've got first covenant second covenant this day and that day when I drink it anew that is this creation and the dawning of the new creation when he will drink with us the cup again anew and the last of course but not least is the first Exodus second Exodus combination when is the Lord's Supper taking place?

Well it's taking place at the time of the Passover of course the marking of the first Exodus Passover context of the Lord's Supper and that would be in verse 12 of Mark 14 on the first day of unleavened bread when the Passover lamb is sacrificed his disciples said to him where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?

So the Passover context the words of institution concerning the covenant the promise of the coming of the kingdom in all of its fullness when Jesus will drink this cup together with us again anew all of that brings together in one moment in a powerful way why these three elements we've been talking about are critical to understanding what Jesus is doing so how are we to get at it?

how are we to understand it? how are we going to begin to read the New Testament through the lens of the scriptures? of course we would have to look at specific texts that outline for us as clear as we can understand them first creation new creation first exodus second exodus and old covenant new covenant and once again Jesus is our model here and for this I go to Luke chapter 24 another very famous text and in Luke 24 on the road to Emmaus you remember in answer to their concern over why it was why it was that the one whom they had fought could have been the Messiah why it was that that one had died how he had been delivered up to be condemned to death and crucified the one whom they had hoped could redeem Israel that could not wrap their minds around such a fate and in the midst of their concern in the midst of their discouragement their perplexity and of course now in the midst of their bewilderment because some women from their company had gone to the tomb and they had found the tomb empty and they had seen a vision of angels and they heard the declaration that he was alive so in the midst of all that confusion what does Jesus say oh how foolish you are oh how foolish you are strong word in the Greek and how slow of heart to believe what all that the prophets declared was it not necessary that the Messiah or the Christ should suffer these things and then enter into his glory then beginning with Moses there it is again beginning with Moses and all the prophets he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures

I can't get over that initial statement oh how foolish you are and so slow of heart to believe all the prophets have declared that's the paradigm for doing biblical theology and for my imagined course to understand why it is that Jesus had to die and to be resurrected into his glory that we might become people of the new covenant and to answer that question not by closing our eyes and emoting about what Jesus might mean to us not by closing our eyes and emoting about what Jesus might mean to us but by opening our eyes to the text again and by looking at Moses and the prophets again and by thinking about who Jesus is and what he accomplished again not in terms of what Jesus means to us personally but in terms of who Jesus is and what he means historically and theologically against the backdrop of the scriptures that's the point of biblical theology the point is to

make our own feeble attempt and it will be feeble but to make our own feeble attempt at fulfilling in our own study together and individually what Jesus did with the men on the road to a maze to begin with Moses and the prophets to look again at these scriptures to ask ourselves constantly why do these texts what do these texts tell us about Jesus why did he have to die and then enter into his glory that we might become his people biblical theology is a path that starts in Luke 24 27 beginning with

[33 : 34] Moses and all the prophets he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures now I'm not Jesus and no one you know is Jesus obviously but we in his place under his lordship open up these sacred texts again to look at Moses and the prophets and to ask ourselves who Jesus is in light of these texts now just quickly three more introductory passages I want to convince you of this because if you don't like reading the new testament through the lens of the old testament then you won't like biblical theology because when I think of my own life I think of a text like 1st corinthians chapter 10 here's Paul writing to this ragtag band of believers in Corinth and as you know they've got big problems huge problems and Paul does not address them in the first instance fundamentally he does not address them as an advice giver or as a counselor he addresses them to solve their problems as a biblical theologian and this is another session on how to do ethics as a biblical theologian how to apply the scriptures to our own lives from the perspective of the new testament biblical theology how to follow in

Paul's footsteps knowing now that Jesus is the one who inaugurated the second exodus who has brought about the beginning of the new covenant who is created in the midst of the old creation a pocket of the new creation looking back at who Jesus is and the significance of his life and ministry death and resurrection when it comes time to apply what it means to be a follower of Jesus to the Corinthians Paul does biblical theology 1st Corinthians 10 where does he go in 1st Corinthians 10 he goes back to Moses and to Israel in the wilderness and again we won't take time looking at all of this now but here just verse 11 Paul having recounted the idolatry and judgment of Israel in the wilderness Paul says in verse 11 these things happened to them Israel in the wilderness to serve as an example and they were written down to instruct us he says on whom the end of the ages has come these things happened to them to serve as an example and they were written down to instruct us on whom the ends of the ages has come notice that last phrase the ends of the ages this is of course the fundamentally most important statement in the new testament about the significance of Jesus in a nutshell this is it who is

Jesus for Paul when he's telling the Corinthians you followers of Jesus look at what you have to remember who is Jesus he's the one who brings the end of the ages upon us he's the one who inaugurates the second exodus Isaiah 40 Malachi 3 Exodus 23 from the beginning of Mark he's the one who inaugurates the second exodus who establishes the new covenant who brings about the dawning of the new creation who brings an end as it were to this evil age and brings about in its midst the beginning of the age to come and it is to change the way the Corinthians live and we would talk a lot about this later on if I were to continue in my lecture series it's called inaugurated eschatology there's your fancy words inaugurated eschatology it's the fundamental insight of new testament theology that the kingdom of god is here the end of the ages has come but of course it's not yet here in all of its fullness which is why the men on the road to

Emmaus couldn't comprehend why Jesus would have had to die because if it was here in its fullness there would be no death of the messiah but of course it's not and this understanding of inaugurated eschatology that the kingdom of god has been inaugurated short of its consummation that the kingdom is here and not yet here in all of its fullness that we live therefore between the comings of Christ we live in this overlapping of the ages we live in this time when the kingdom of god is here already but is not yet here in all its fullness this living in between the comings of Christ means then not that the scriptures in the history of Israel become irrelevant to us but that they become the paradigm the key the signal the example the foundation of our instruction that we might understand what it is like to live between redemption and consummation between escaping from Egypt and going into the promised land and we'll see again and again that Jesus takes the experience of Israel and that Paul takes the experience of Israel between redemption and consummation between exodus and the promised land as a way to understand who we are and here Paul does that explicitly in first corinthians 10 what happened to Israel in the wilderness was written down for our instruction he says upon whom us the end of the ages has come we too like Israel have been redeemed from slavery but like Israel in the wilderness we are not yet in the promised land and

hence we must learn from israel what it's like to live in between and paul says we cannot we cannot be idolaters like them whose idolatry expresses itself in immorality that's how he advises corinthians and we'll see this when we study this more that there's this link an inextricable link between the first commandment thou shalt have no other god before the one true god and the last commandment thou shalt not covet anything that your neighbor has and we see this link again and again between idolatry and immorality and the key example of that is the history of israel between idolatry and immorality of covetousness that leads to all the other acts of immorality whatever they might be but that's not the point now the point now is simply to see that paul when it comes time to apply scriptures to our lives does it as a biblical theologian go back and think about israel he says think about what happened to her and why and why that's not to happen to us because the one who is least in the kingdom of god is greater than the greatest prophet of the old covenant so we would need to talk about as this developed the tension between continuity and discontinuity throughout the bible that we're like israel in the wilderness at one level that they are an example for us sometimes a negative example the level i've just announced that we're living like israel between the redemption and the consummation but we're radically unlike israel in another profound and significant way as members of the new covenant instead of the old covenant and so that continuity discontinuity tension between the old covenant and the new covenant first exodus second exodus first creation new creation there's points of continuity and discontinuity in all of them and that would consume us as we study biblical theology how are we like israel and not like israel at the same time if we can understand that then we can understand how paul could take israel's experience in the wilderness as a model for instruction in first corinthians 10 it's the model and then draw the opposite conclusion that we're not to be idolaters as they were we're not to be idolaters we're not to suffer the judgment that they suffered so we're like israel but unlike israel

the second exodus is like the first exodus but unlike it the new creation is like the first creation but unlike it there's just there's continuity and discontinuity well that's paul what about the other great apostle so paul the apostle to the gentiles what about the apostle to the jews think here for a moment about first peter chapter one another very famous text first peter chapter one verses 10 to 12 concerning this salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours made careful search and inquiry inquiring about the person or time that the spirit of christ within them indicated when it testified in advance to the sufferings destined for christ and his subsequent glory glory do you see the link between that and luke 24 that it was necessary for the christ to suffer and then to enter his glory the prophets were predicting the suffering of christ and the subsequent glory of christ it goes on it was revealed to them here's the key it was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you in regard to the things that have now been announced to you through those who brought you the good news by the holy spirit sent from heaven things which angels long to look into if you're a follower of christ the prophets lived and died for you they lived and died for you to provide the interpretation of the great acts of god in history by which you would understand why jesus had to suffer for you and be raised on the third day in this message of the death and resurrection of jesus proclaimed and announced to you by those who preached the good news peter's saying that is the apostles themselves peter and paul the two we might say anchor apostles peter the apostle to the jews paul the apostle to the gentiles here they are proclaiming to us the good news the good news that interprets and applies now the message of the prophets to us things that the prophets didn't understand you can now see if you're a follower of jesus christ these prophets literally died for you they were serving not themselves but you they announced to you the good news of the gospel of the death and resurrection of jesus as the climactic event within history fulfilling the message of the prophets so these prophets of the old testament were not serving themselves so as a believer you know more than isaiah you know more than malachi you can now see more than moises in fact you see more and understand more than even the angels peter says because you now the christian and new testament theology you from your perspective post christ can look back at the history of israel and see through the lens of jesus and the sufferings and his subsequent glory its necessity why all that was necessary and the implications and significance of it for our lives and see why jesus becomes the good news so peter like paul and jesus before him tells his community that he is doing nothing more doing nothing more than proclaiming to them the good news previously predicted announced interpreted proclaimed by the prophets the prophets have already done this and now it's fulfilled in christ so again it doesn't mean friends as i thought it meant for the first four or five years being a christian it doesn't mean that we just can read peter and don't have to read the prophets what it means is we've got to read the prophets to understand peter

to know what he's on about and last but not least hebrews chapter eight another famous text about the relationship between the old and the new covenants i just want to

[45 : 46] point out one thing here hebrews chapter eight verses six to thirteen in hebrews eight eight to thirteen we have a quotation from jeremiah thirty one one of the two premier passages in the old testament that outlined for us the necessity and significance of the new covenant in all man we have to come back to jeremiah thirty one and the parallel text in ezekiel many many times and thinking about new testament theology but here we have this quotation in verses eight to thirteen of hebrews chapter eight of this new covenant text from jeremiah thirty one in all of its fullness but why why why do we have a new covenant what i want to point out to you of course is that the introduction to this quotation in hebrews of the new covenant and its fulfillment in christ starts in verse six and seven where we read this hebrews chapter eight verse six and seven but jesus but jesus has now obtained a more excellent ministry and to that degree he is the mediator of a better covenant which has been enacted through better promises for if that first covenant had been faultless there would have been no need to look for a second one god finds fault with them god finds fault with israel though them is israel god finds fault with them when he says the days are surely coming says the lord this is jeremiah when i will establish a new covenant with the house of israel with the house of jesus not like the covenant i made with their ancestors on the day when i took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of egypt the exodus for they did not continue they did not continue in my covenant so i had no concern for them says the lord i hope this is clear as we work through what it means to do a biblical theology of the new testament as a christian we are going to see again and again that the very coming of the new covenant itself the very fact that it came at all is a divine declaration of who israel was and who we are apart from christ and it drives us it drives us back to christ the one who mediates for us this better covenant because god finds fault with them when he announces the new covenant now of course we haven't said anything about the way in which the new covenant is better we haven't said anything about what was wrong with the old covenant and we'd have to unpack that in quite some detail but please please don't draw any preliminary conclusions concerning what was wrong with israel or what was wrong with the old covenant because one of the primary problems we've got today one of the primary problems we've got today in doing a biblical theology of the new testament is that people think they already know it they think prematurely and they conclude that there was something wrong with the old covenant itself because we have a new covenant that there was something wrong with the old covenant itself but notice verse 8 in hebrews chapter 8 for he god finds fault with them

Israel when he says the days will come when I establish a new covenant it does not say the lord finds fault with his covenant when he declares the need for a new covenant so here's the million dollar question in what way is the new covenant better than the old covenant when the problem in the old covenant wasn't the old covenant the problem was Israel so what makes the new covenant better how does he compare the covenants if the problem with the old covenant wasn't the covenant it was Israel it's just another one of those questions that has to be answered when you think about a biblical theology of the new testament but I want to caution you up front please please as you think through the relationship of the old and the new come to the text again with your questions and your perplexities like those on the road to Emmaus with Jesus but please don't come already having decided that you know what the difference is between the old and the new covenant that you know what the difference is between

Israel and the church that you know what the difference is between John the Baptist and your own life as a member of the new covenant because I think that we'd be in for some surprises if we re-examine the text apart from all those pre-formed conclusions that we have already so as you begin to study the relationship between the first exodus and second exodus first covenant and second covenant first creation and new creation as you begin that study we want to ask then brand new once again from the beginning what was the nature and purpose of God's relationship with his people under the old covenant that's where it's at what was the nature and purpose of God's relationship with his people under the old covenant covenant why did he have to find fault with them under the old covenant and what therefore by contrasting comparison is the nature of the new covenant and why does he not find fault with us what is the difference between the old and new covenants so in our study together now at the end of this session

I hope here's what I hope I just hope it inspires you to refresh old questions about the Bible to ask them again and I'll just recap what we've come and what we've said that this was just my

introduction to biblical theology and really with relation to the New Testament specifically I know and really all it was in the end was a pep talk for you I just want you to see how unbelievably important it is for you to read the Bible how unbelievably important it is for you to read the Bible to never come to any New Testament text without having soaked yourself in the scriptures of the Old Testament so that the New Testament can begin to unfold like a flower in the springtime under the rain R-A-I-N dewdrops of the scriptures so we began by asking we've got these three paradigms Exodus Covenant Creation and we can see from the beginning of Jesus' ministry and John the Baptist the very annunciation of the ministry all the way through the application of the New Testament theology to the church whether it's Paul talking to the Corinthians or Peter or Hebrews or any of these other texts that from beginning to end this is scripture soaked material that is Old Testament soaked material that we won't understand who we are as Christians unless we can put the New Testament within the context of its Bible what we call the Old Testament understanding then who Jesus is and what he accomplished against the backdrop of those three pillar paradigms of the Old Testament creation Exodus covenant probably said that 50 times and hence in my outline we pick up New Testament biblical theology in Genesis chapter 1 and start there from first creation and maybe even before we do that it would be important to talk about the way in which biblical theology has been done in the 20th century because once we understand how biblical theology has been done in the 20th century we'll be able to see afresh why I plead with you not to start a study of

[53 : 31] New Testament biblical theology assuming you already understand how the Old and New relate together already assuming that you understand how Israel and the church relate together because there have been three fundamentally different answers to this question I'm not going to go through them now there have been three fundamentally different answers to that question and how that question has been answered has determined the way the Bible has been read in the churches in the 20th century and what I would do is suggest for you a fourth way to read the Bible to take elements of the three primary ways the Bible has been read but suggest a fourth one a new way of looking at creation Exodus covenant that I don't think is new at all but is the biblical model of using the Old Testament in the New that's a huge claim and I can't substantiate it at this point and you have to hear me try to do that later on and see why I would make that claim and why I think we're in big trouble in the way the Bible has been read in the last century and why

I think there's a need for a new paradigm so before you leave let me just encourage you to get out your Bible this week and read read some of the scriptures for yourself maybe you haven't read the book of Malachi lately read the book of Malachi and as you're reading it ask yourself three questions these are questions you could use in reading any biblical book where do I see the themes of creation and exodus and covenant coming to the fore in this text where do I see the necessity of the cross and the glory of the resurrection in this text and how using Malachi how does Malachi prepare the way for me as a believer in Jesus to live my life in Christ as I live between the redemption and the consummation waiting for that day when we will eat and drink with the Messiah in the kingdom of God in all of its fullness thank you very much for your time applause and I think I have this hand up that is my less than perfect reflections on Mark 1-1 1-3 using those free texts I wrote this a couple years ago for a course I took at Wheaton and it's alright but it it was a short question oh ok I didn't know that sorry because it is 10 o'clock I don't want anyone to be late for where they need to go but if you want to ask a question if you need to leave that's ok was I supposed to end at 9:45 and leave time for questions sorry I was so excited I couldn't have stopped at 9:45 yes is the language of 1st exodus old covenant first creation or three paradigms are they prophet priest and king or do you stay away from that vocabulary for reason are these more inclusive is the other two personal how do you decide on which biblical vocabulary to make yeah yeah and that's a huge question and there's no right one answer to that either and I want to emphasize that doing biblical theology as narrative theology means that there's many threads you could trace in the storyline

I don't think that the three I've suggested line up exactly with prophet priest and king but there's definite overlap between them what I what I've done is suggested those three because they are more I think sort of descriptions of the storyline as opposed to descriptions of three institutions within Israel and then how Jesus fulfills those which is totally appropriate and a great way to do biblical theology I like to try and find themes that as much as possible get at the fundamental overarching storyline of the whole scripture whereas you have to place prophet priest and king

within the storyline to understand why it's important that Jesus was a new prophet and the fulfillment of the priest and the fulfillment of the king and then you have to explain how that story developed prophet, priest, and king were essential to those so that's totally fine and appropriate but I like to try and pick themes that from the get go creation covenant exodus or creation exodus covenant sort of map out the fundamental meanings of the story in the

Old Testament and that's why I choose to use them because I like to talk in terms of story as much as possible but there's nothing that's people have spectacle biblical theology because they say well who decides what the key themes are well no I mean they're all complementary to one another you pick the ones that you find most helpful to unpacking the relationship of the testaments I pick those three because I find them to be the most overarching and helpful okay that it you're laying out a groundwork a greater work in when we come to reading the scriptures in the present age of people wanting instant information instant knowledge what do you think your success ratio is going to be increment and your preaching is required what is the general reaction of believers when you say you need to do more work well I'll tell you the reaction I've gotten and it shocks me every time and I'm speaking of believers in the church they want to understand the

[59 : 20] Bible they want to understand the Bible and they're tired of hearing superficial sermons that don't dig in to the storyline what's going on because it doesn't help them to go into their life day in and day out knowing that they're a part of a story that they're a part of these themes that we're talking about so I find I had a professor at Wheaton who was my Greek and exegesis professor and the mentor of my life and he taught me the Bible because I as I mentioned I had terrible instruction in the Bible as my first four years as a Christian terrible I don't think I knew the Old Testament I don't think I had heard one reference to the Old Testament in four years and I just didn't know any of this and he taught a Sunday school class at his church Wheaton Bible Church Wheaton, Illinois where he did exegesis for an hour I mean like Greek and Hebrew and diagrams and

I mean the top of the level stuff and it was the biggest class in the church not because everybody there understood every detail of what he was doing but because they could grasp and begin to sense the depth to which the scripture can speak so my reaction to that is I think frankly if you speak something genuine and true and deep people will listen because they don't they don't get it anywhere else they're not hearing that and I so I think it does I think yeah there's this idea of instant information but I think there's something fundamental to the human person that they just recognize that that can't be ultimately the way that the world works like there's something about life that narrates a story much bigger than instant information and so I think people are hungry for it and would be very important to enjoy it I've had very few people be frustrated with me because of trying to do more than I should some people say well I couldn't take all that in that's okay there's no need to feel like you have to absorb every detail in order to have benefited from looking deeply at something and I think that's the danger too people feel like you have to master every detail in order to make a step in the right direction and they don't they don't and I certainly in six years

I mean six years at Wheaton it took me three years just to get out of all the bad teaching I had in the church before that I mean I'm serious I have a messed up view of how the Old Testament and the New Testament relate I didn't think we needed the Old Testament I thought it was in fact I thought it was I mean I really did if I was really honest they would have said I don't think the Old Testament is helpful and I think it's actually not reflective of who God is that's what I would have said so I you know I'd say do it anyway yeah other questions yeah maybe a somewhat similar question people are also wanting to know how to apply how does this apply to me you know they kind of look at things somewhat academically but we could ask the same questions where you start with John the Baptist does John the Baptist recognize his role in all of this or is this centuries later somebody goes aha okay here's how all of these pieces fit together so you know and we look at that and how that applies to our life and how right let me just hit on something you said to me in there which is did John the

Baptist know that he was well I think he did because he did so many things that were Eliylike I mean the way he dressed the way he did all of it just is Eliylike well I don't know that you find too many other examples of that in that period of time in other words he did some really bizarre stuff that seems to me like he might have known but regardless whether he did or not this is the tension in exegesis where people feel like you know did they did did people at that time really understand everything that was going on well no because the people on the road to Emmaus had no clue but Jesus said you foolish people so I mean he was calling them on it they didn't know what was going

on so no I can't say for sure that you know there are people there who understood all these things about the way the Old Testament or the way their scriptures related no but do I think that that I still think that that ends up being the way it is in other words Jesus explains to them from the prophets of Moses all the way up why this had to be and it was there all the time there wasn't new things that Jesus was saying that had never been there before I mean the scriptures were there part of it is of course as he said the one who has ears to hear let them hear I mean there's there's a there's an aspect of this to which I can explain it crystal clearly and perfectly and you might say oh he got every detail of his biblical theology right which he probably would never say but about anybody because no one gets every detail right but you could say I agree entirely with him and I could explain it bit for bit and someone could walk away and eh doesn't matter like it's not going to change their life it doesn't do anything and it has nothing to do with how well I explain it as much as important as that is it has everything to do with the spirit of God opening the ears of people so I think in God's providence that in the time of

[65 : 09] Jesus people were not may I use this word permitted to understand exactly what was going on because of what God was doing in terms of the entire storyline and that this is why this is why I think Jesus why you have the messianic secret in Mark the messianic secret being where Jesus always says don't tell anyone don't tell anyone what you've seen don't tell anyone what I'm doing why because it was important that the news not get out too soon that they understand it too quickly because this was the eternal purpose of God which was not to be thwarted by people recognizing the you know there were there were things that even angels longed to understand that they couldn't understand until Christ's work was done until until the work of Christ was completed and we now have the full revelation of God in the scriptures and the New Testament authors put these pieces together for us in many many ways so I don't feel the need to say well they understood everything at the time they didn't and I'm okay with that nor do I think Isaiah understood what he was prophesying about sometimes

I don't think he had to in order for those prophecies to for us to be able to understand those prophecies that's why they were prophesying to us that's why they were living and dying for us because they were the ones who now have access to the entire revelation of the scriptures to put that together so that's maybe not what your question was I don't remember now but that's what I picked up on sorry okay yeah most of us have one or two good cross-reference models but they're still at the mercy of the selectiveness who puts it together and I would say that in part much of what you were saying can be picked up that way through cross-referencing the link between the old testament and the movement but a bigger question how do Christians avoid you were enthusiastic here you were out of breath I was out of breath listening to you how do we avoid Judaism can you clarify what you mean by that Judaism suddenly the desire to get back into the spirit or you might say do you know I mean or Leviticus okay that type sure I want to say two things about that first in relation to cross-references and violence they can be a great service to you but they can also be quite dangerous if someone has decided that this is the appropriate cross-reference to this verse and you're looking for the connection and you'll make it because your brain can be creative you know and so you'll make the connection and it could be good or could not be so use the cross-references but more importantly here's the danger is falling into oh this goes back to that verse and this goes back to that verse and missing the storyline which is the point the point is not oh here's the one verse that he was picking up from Isaiah no he quotes Isaiah because he expects his readers to know Isaiah he expects his readers to know the whole book and know how it fit in the scriptures and know why

Isaiah was saying what he's saying in other words it's not oh here's the key word it's how does this fit that storyline where it happened in other words New Testament authors when they quote Old Testament texts assume that their readers have a grip on the entire message of that book and therefore the entire message of the Old Testament so cross-referencing verse to verse can be really helpful as beginning insight but you never want to stop there because more important is that you see the fundamental overarching story of the Old Testament and how the New Testament can just at times does it all over the place just give little spotlights back into that story and expect that you can fill in everything in between that's the expectation so it's more important that you study the Bible with a sense of overarching storyline and then secondly in relation to how do we avoid Judaism well of course the earliest Christians were Jews that's no mystery you won't know that but the earliest

Christians were Jews who happened to believe the Messiah and that changed their Judaism but they were still Jews so as I mentioned there's this continuity and discontinuity and I didn't unpack that and we spent all kinds of time doing that but continuity and discontinuity between Old Covenant and New Covenant there's some stuff that's the same but there's some stuff that's radically different and 1st Exodus and 2nd Exodus they use the same storyline elements but there's some really different things going on now you know what are the you can just read Jeremiah 31 carefully when he talks about the New Covenant how does he describe the New Covenant and how is that different than what was happening in the Old Covenant what's the fundamental difference well the law is on their heart I'll put my law within that that I think becomes one of the fundamental differences and when he does that it's not to say see

[70 : 34] I dare not say things that will be confusing without unpacking them entirely so I'm going to try and do this carefully but I don't think there's any danger of going back to Judaism in the way that we think the way that I think you're talking about Judaism I think there's actually a great promise in going back to the Old Testament and understanding the storyline of that and understanding what was really going on in God's purposes and then how he redeems elements of that story in the new expression of the inauguration of the covenant in Jesus so I want to say that if we're careful I don't think that's a danger because there are big differences between the two and we dare not miss those at the same time you foolish galatians are what Paul said there he was concerned about something yeah well I think he was concerned with them misunderstanding the nature of the law in the Old

Testament I mean I think that actually Christians tend to misunderstand the law I think we totally miss it in terms of what the law was about what it was for how it was to be obeyed what the expectations were on and on and on I just think the church has totally missed it in terms of what the purpose of the law was you know you read the Psalms and the law is their life it's not their duty it's their life it's their and it's not about sinful perfect obedience there's sacrifice in the law I mean there's atonement provided for in the structure of the law of sin sin was never expected that they would be able to do this without sin that was known from the beginning that was built into the old covenant so I think we have a lot of thinking carefully to do about how we understand the law and why Jesus can say I didn't come to abolish the law I didn't come to abolish the law but to fulfill it it's not gone you know but we have a way of thinking about the law that puts it in an entirely other camp and you know this is

I'm treading on ice here because there's all kinds of ways to misunderstand what I'm saying and I want to be careful because there's a long history of reading the bible in a law gospel contrast sort of method right where it's all law no grace and then all grace and no law and that's the way that most of us are at one point or another are exposed to biblical theology as a law gospel contrast I don't think there is one if I can be that bold without clarifying why I mean that's like 20 lectures down the road but why I don't think fundamentally we have to posit such a contrast as that oh man that takes a lot so I would say don't be afraid of that don't be afraid of that because we can find points of contact and points of discontinuity in each of the three major themes I've spoken of and I think that that tension keeps us where we need to be okay church starts in 10 minutes oh 11

I was thinking 1030 oh great well I can stay for a while well thanks so much for the beginning of the 20 lectures hey yeah you're welcome and so you can hold me to it I'd love to do it well thanks so much Pete thank you great to be with you I'll put this in the back okay if you want