

I'm pretty sure that all of us in this room have at some point in our life anticipated something that happened, right? We've all anticipated something in our life. For example, you're in high school, and what do you do? You anticipate that day you get to graduate and that day you get to go to college. That's something I don't really understand now that I've been through it. You have it pretty good with your mom and dad. They cook for you. They pay for everything.

And then you get to college having a lot of fun, and what do you do next? You anticipate that day that you can graduate and that you can get that job. Or maybe you're a girl here today. I see a lot of you in the room. And you're anticipating, and you're waiting for this guy to ask you out. All right? But you're like, "Dang, man, this guy's being passive right now. He needs to man up." Or you're eagerly anticipating that day that you're going to get married, and you're looking forward to it. Ask my wife. There's probably never been a woman who has anticipated a wedding so much.

Or you might be waiting for that job to call you back. You work your whole life, and then you're waiting for retirement. And then you retire. And hopefully, if you've been walking with the Lord your whole life, you're waiting for that day that you die and you go to be with your Lord because you love him.

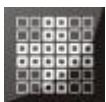
So there's nothing wrong with anticipation. It's how God has made us, okay? My point this morning is that the Old Testament – that's what we're going to be talking about this morning – how the Old Testament promised the Messiah would come. It's all about anticipation. It's all about hope. It's all about a Messiah that would come to redeem a people from their sin.

So now we're going to open up to the text, and I'm going to read to us 1 Peter 1:10-12, if I can get there. I lost my place. 1 Peter 1:10-12. Peter's talking here, and he says:

¹⁰Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹²It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

So what's the main point of this passage in a nutshell? It's to show believers of his day – that Peter was going to show believers of his day how the Spirit of Christ worked through the Old Testament prophets to predict the coming of Christ, to predict the coming of Christ in order to serve New Testament believers. And he wrote this for their confidence and for their joy. And what he wants to do here is he wants to inform their minds so that they would set their hope on Christ, so they would set their hope and anticipate the day of his coming.

And that's my goal for this morning. My goal for this morning is to show you how the Old Testament points to Christ so that your hope would be in Christ so that you would be amazed at your salvation. Why? Because your salvation amazes the prophets and it amazes angels. These are people that long to look into the things that you now have. So let's go back to 1 Peter, and let's start at the beginning.



Okay, so concerning this salvation – this is what Paul’s referencing here. He’s referencing your salvation. What is your salvation? Men and women are born into this world dead in sin, okay? And our only hope is that a redeemer would save us from our sin, because God is good and holy. And he will have to judge sin. And Jesus Christ came to this earth, and he died. And God’s wrath was poured upon him, and God treated his Son Jesus Christ as if he had sinned every sin every believer would ever commit so that he can treat us as believers as though we had lived the perfect, righteous life of Christ. And if you’re a believer here this morning, you’ve been saved from your sin and God loves you. That’s your salvation. And apart from salvation, your life is basically meaningless. And you live your whole life a vain life and you die and you go to hell.

So what could be more important than your salvation? There’s nothing more important than your salvation. There’s nothing more thankful to be for. And we’re coming up on Thanksgiving here, and this whole week everyone’s going to be talking about thanking something for the things we have. And the point is what we ought to be thanking is thanking God, thanking God for all the good things that he’s done for us. And we’re to be thankful to him, so it’s very important. And Paul gives us some reasons why in the text.

So Number 1, value your salvation, because the prophets spoke of the grace to come. You can write these points down. Value your salvation, because the prophets spoke of your grace to come. Let’s look at Verse 10 again.

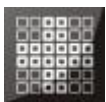
The prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully.

Now, who were the prophets? The prophets are all of the prophets of the Old Testament, from Moses to Malachi and in between. What is the grace that he’s speaking of here? He’s speaking of the grace that was to be yours. He’s speaking about the Gospel here, the grace that’s been provided to us through the substitutionary atonement of Christ. All right, so then what is the Old Testament all about? It’s all about what I mentioned before. It’s all about anticipation, anticipating the coming of Jesus, anticipating the coming of Christ.

What is the New Testament all about then? The New Testament is all about Christ being revealed to us. It’s all about his life and his work and his ministry on earth and his path to the cross.

So then what is the Bible that you’re holding in your hands all about? The overarching message of the Bible is a person. It’s Jesus. That’s what the Bible is all about. And Jesus talked about this at length with the Pharisees. In John 5:39, Jesus says this. He’s speaking to these Pharisees, and these Pharisees are men who were just steeped in the knowledge of the Old Testament. Many of them, you can imagine, had memorized the entire thing. Most of us can’t memorize a paragraph. These men knew their Bibles. And this is what he says to them.

³⁹ *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you might have life.*



All right, and by this statement what Jesus does is he discounts any study of the Word of God that does not directly point to him. So when you read the Bible, specifically the Old Testament, how do you do it? You read looking for Christ. Every text, every jot, and title in some form or fashion points to him. And when you read the New Testament also, you're reading that revelation of Christ. So a lot of us get confused as to how we ought to be interpreting the Old Testament. And the secret to interpreting the Old Testament is to read the Old Testament through the lens of the New Testament. All right, that's your theology lesson for the day.

Number 2, value your salvation, because the prophets searched diligently for the Messiah. Verse 11 in 1 Peter. I really need to mark this, guys. This is really getting crazy. I know, you guys can laugh.

¹⁰Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

Okay, so what did these men do? They searched. They inquired carefully. They studied trying to determine what the timing and circumstances of this Messiah. Who was he going to be? How was he going to come? When will he come? These men desperately longed for this man. But what happens is this Messiah is not fully revealed to them, and we're very fortunate. He's been revealed to us. Therefore, what we ought to do is we ought to rejoice. We ought to rejoice, because the Messiah has been revealed to us.

But why did they have to study? It's a good question. I mean, didn't they understand the writings that they had received? Daniel 7:13-16, this is a prophesy that Daniel receives about the son like a son of man. Daniel 7:13. It'll be on the screen, I believe.

*¹³"I saw in the night visions,
and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days –*

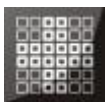
There came one like a son of man. Like a son of man. Jesus often referred to himself as the Son of Man, and he even refers back to this text to describe himself.

and he came to the Ancient of Days –

God the Father, that's who that is.

and was presented before him.

*¹⁴ And to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,*



*which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed.*

He receives this vision. And in Verse 15, what does he say? He says:

¹⁵*"As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me.
¹⁶I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things.*

So Daniel receives this vision. And this vision is a prophesy of Christ to come. He doesn't really understand what he gets here. But this vision alarms him. He doesn't know what's really going on, and he seeks to study the truth concerning this passage. And when you read through the rest of the book, Daniel is on this constant mission, really, to study these visions. But these truths about the Messiah were given to him in shadows. They weren't totally revealed to him. And these are the things that have been revealed to us. And this should cause us to rejoice.

All right, Number 3, value your salvation, because Jesus predicted that he would come. Look at Verse 11.

¹¹*inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ –*

See that? Catch that? The Spirit of Christ in them, the Spirit of Christ being in the prophets.

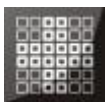
– in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

Now, that's amazing. That means it was Jesus Christ from the beginning working through the prophets predicting his own coming. Kind of interesting.

Now, how did he do this? I mean, how did Jesus do this? What do we have in the Old Testament to show us that Jesus was going to come? I've got five examples for us this morning. Genesis 3:15, we'll go there. Genesis 3:15.

Now, what happens in Genesis 1 and 2? Man falls into sin. Well, God creates the world for fruitfulness and blessing. Everything is absolutely perfect. Okay, everything's perfect. Man and woman are walking together. They're worshipping God. Things are going well. And then in Chapter 3, man and woman meet the serpent. The serpent is Satan, and he tempts them to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And they fall into sin. They rebel against God. And as a result, God told them that, "Hey, if you eat of this fruit of God you're going to die. You're going to die. And you're going to be curse. I'm going to cast you out of the garden."

And then right here in Verse 15 of Chapter 3, in the midst of these curses, what God does here is he preaches to Satan and he preaches to the man and the woman, Adam and Eve, and he preaches the first Gospel. This is the first evidence of Christ coming that we have in all of Scripture. Theologians call it the protoevangelium, the First Gospel. And he says this.



*¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."*

So "Satan, there's this offspring. There's this son that's going to be born of Eve, and he's going to come. And he's going to do battle with you, and he's going to bruise your head." What does that literally mean? That means, "He's going to crush your head, Satan. He's going to be victorious in this battle that he has with you. But he's not going to win this battle, apart from getting hurt himself. He's going to be bruised in the heel. But he is going to be victorious."

So what we have here is we have a couple things. We have hints of the virgin birth. You notice in 3:15 that there's no mention of a man being the father here. And all throughout the Old Testament, you have its patriarchal genealogies, really, where we record who the fathers are. There's no recording of a father here. So we have a hint of a virgin birth. We have already here 4,000 years before the incarnation hints of a virgin birth. And we have hints of a Savior that's going to come and suffer and die. But we don't have it all yet. We don't have it all yet.

Next, Isaiah 7:14 is the next prophesy I want to look at this morning about the coming of Christ. 7:14, Isaiah 7:14:

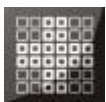
*¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and shall call his name Immanuel.*

What does that word Immanuel mean? It means "God with us." "God with us." This text is even referred to in the Gospel of Matthew to refer to Christ. It says, "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive." And that doesn't happen every day. My works in LND. I don't think she's having any virgins come in. So this is unique.

So what are we looking for now? We're looking for a man to be born of a woman. We learn that in Genesis 3:15. And we're also looking for a virgin to conceive. So now we're looking for this offspring. Things are starting to narrow, aren't they, as to who this man's going to be, who this Savior's going to be that's going to come and save God's people. And Christ fulfills this.

Next passage I want to look at is Isaiah 53:5. This is another prophecy concerning Christ. And this right here, Isaiah 53:5, this is perhaps one of the most explicit, obvious prophecies concerning Christ in all of the Old Testament. There are Jews who will take this out of the Bible, because it's obviously talking about Christ. No one else it could talk about. It says this.

*⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his stripes we are healed.*



So we learn it's going to be a man. It's going to be born of a virgin. And this man is going to suffer as a substitute for his people. He's going to undergo substitutionary suffering. God is going to take the transgressions of his people. He's going to throw them on this man's back, and he's going to crush him. He's going to crush him. He's going to undergo substitutionary suffering. He's going to be wounded for us. He's going to receive the wounds that you should receive. And then we move on through the Old Testament, hundreds of years now later.

And we arrive in Micah 5:2. And we learn another thing about the coming Savior. We learn this. I think we have it on the screen.

*² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,*

Little podoke town. Think a little town outside Tarboro or something, you know.

*– from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.*

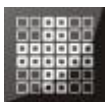
Ancient days, what's he talking about there? He's talking about eternity, not just a long time ago. No, no, he's talking about eternity here. "You, O Bethlehem, from you is going to come the ruler of Israel. From you is going to come this Messiah that's going to come and save people from their sin and reverse the curse of sin."

So we now know it's going to be a man. He's going to be born of a virgin. He's going to undergo substitutionary suffering for his people. And we now know what town he's going to come from, Bethlehem. And where was Jesus born? Bethlehem.

Now, we go to the last book of the Old Testament. Now, after Malachi was written, it was like 300 or 400 years before Matthew was written. So we're in Malachi now, Malachi 3:1. And we see another prophesy concerning Jesus. It says this:

¹ "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

So who's the messenger that's going to prepare the way of the Lord? John the Baptist. He's preparing the way for Christ. We definitely have read that in our Bibles. And who is the messenger of the covenant? That's Jesus. He's talking about Jesus here. He says he's going to go to his temple. He's going to go to his temple. What happens after Jesus gets baptized? He goes to the temple. He begins preaching himself from the Scriptures they had, which was the Old Testament. So we have now here another prophesy concerning Christ.



So those are five examples of how the Old Testament points to Christ and promises that the Messiah would come. Now, this is a big book, right? I mean, you could spend your whole life studying these prophecies concerning who he was. But thank God that God inspired the New Testament writers to do the interpretive work for us, you I know? They go through and interpret the Old Testament and show us these things, show us these things that these men of old who loved God didn't have.

So let's continue. Number 4, I want you guys to value your salvation, because these prophets, like I mentioned before, they served us in it. They served us in it. They served New Testament believers. Look at Verse 12.

¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you.

All right, interesting. Okay, the prophets served us. They served New Testament believers. So all the prophecies that we read briefly this morning were written for us. So Jesus has some evidence to back himself up. For example, we all carry around personal identification. We carry around licenses, right? What do those licenses do? They show us who we are. So the prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Christ kind of act in the same way. They're there for us in the New Covenant era so that we might know that Jesus is the real deal, that he is who he says he is, that he is God in the flesh come to save sinners like me and you. It's like his evidence to back him up.

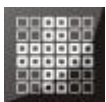
And it's pretty astonishing, you know. I mean, we've received this. The Old Testament was written over thousands of years. And Peter says that it was written to serve us in the New Covenant era. Things have been revealed to us that weren't revealed to them. And that should cause us to pause and contemplate these things.

Number 5, value your salvation, because now it's been fully revealed to us through Holy Spirit empowered preaching. Verse 12, the second half of it:

¹² in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

So the same Holy Spirit that predicted the incarnation of Christ now preaches to us today through preachers who preach the Word of God. And it's happening right now. In fact, it happens here every Sunday when Ben gets up and preaches the good news of the Gospel. You're seeing a completion. You're seeing a completion of something started thousands of years ago, where we are preaching Jesus Christ, God the Son, fully revealed.

We don't have shadows like the Old Testament prophets did. We have Jesus Christ fully revealed to us now. Fully before our eyes. And he has come, and he's been born of a virgin into this world to save us. And for believers, I'd say to take a moment. Pause and contemplate these things. Think about the Gospel. Think about what Christ has done for you, for unbelievers. I'd say when it comes to the Gospel, not to resist the Gospel, not to resist these truths, but to repent and believe in Christ and to be thankful for your salvation.



Number 6, value your salvation, because the angels long to look into it. Look at the end of Verse 12.

¹² preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

This is one of my favorite phrases in all of Scripture. The things that you have in Christ, the things that have been revealed to you, are things that angels long to look into. They long to gaze into what you have. The heavenly realm literally stretches their necks out – that’s what the Greek – I’m not a huge Greek guy, but when you look at it “to gaze into” or “to long to look into,” they stretch their necks out to gaze into the things that you have in Christ.

Now, shouldn’t we long to gaze into it ourselves then? I think so. It’s pretty amazing. It’s pretty amazing, all right? See, the angels are onlookers in this redemptive drama. They haven’t received the benefits. They haven’t received it. It amazes them, and it ought to amaze us.

So the challenge this morning is this. We’ve looked at the Old Testament. We’ve looked how the Messiah has been promised to us. Are you thankful to God? Do you sit around? Do you contemplate these things? Do you use your mind? Do you preach the Gospel to yourself? Have you taken time to think about these things? Have you gazed into the Gospel and searched hard and diligently like the prophets do? Have you taken the time?

And my prayer this morning is that the Holy Spirit would open your eyes, and he’d allow you to gaze into these things, that he’d help you. Because I know we all need help in this. So I want you to take this afternoon. I want you to take this Thanksgiving to think about these things, to think long and hard about them, to study how the Messiah was promised in the old covenant and how he’s been fully revealed to us as well, and to thank God for the mission that he’s accomplished in his Son Jesus.

You’re all benefactors. Or the believers are benefactors. You’ve received grace in Christ. So love him for it. Let’s pray.

