

Preaching Christ in Genesis

2022 European Leadership Forum

Bible Teachers and Preachers Advanced Network

I. Why Christ Should Be Present in Our Preaching of Genesis

A. New Testament authors saw Christ in Genesis

1. Jesus and creation (Gen. 1-2)

- a. Jn. 1:1-3: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. **All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.** (NASB)
- b. Col. 1:15-16: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. **For by Him all things were created**, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things have been created through Him and for Him.**
- c. Heb. 1:10 (quoting Ps. 102:25): You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands.

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2. Jesus and Melchisedek (Gen. 14:17-24)

- a. Heb. 5:6 (quoting Ps. 110:4): just as He says also in another passage, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedek.
- b. Heb. 6:20: where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchisedek.
- c. Heb. 7:1-28: And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchisedek, who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible life. (vv. 15-16)

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1. Jesus and creation (Gen. 1-2)
2. Jesus and Melchisedek (Gen. 14:17-24)
3. Jesus and Abraham
 - a. Jn. 8:56-58: Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad. So the Jews said to Him, 'You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?' Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.'

I. Why Christ Should Be Present in Our Preaching of Genesis

A. New Testament authors saw Christ in Genesis

B. Christ is the centre of salvation history

1. Jesus saw himself as the centre

- a. Lk. 24:13-27, 44-49: And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself... He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms. (vv. 27, 44)
- b. Jn. 5:39-40, 46-47: These are the very Scriptures that testify about me... [Moses] wrote about me. (vv. 39, 46)

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B. Christ is the centre of salvation history

1. Jesus saw himself as the centre

2. The Apostles saw Christ as the centre

- a. Rom. 16:25-26: ...according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith.

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a. Rom. 16:25-26

b. 1 Pet. 1:10-12: As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

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B. Christ is the centre of salvation history

C. Two Illustrations

1. Mystery revealed
2. Climactic turning point

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

A. Pay attention if the text comes up in the New Testament

1. Resources to use

- a. Cross-references (stepbible.org)
- b. Commentaries (Carson and Beale, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*)
- c. Personal time with the text

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

A. Pay attention if the text comes up in the New Testament

1. Resources to use

2. Mistakes to avoid

a. Be careful that you do not ignore broader connections in the text because you are hyper-focused on looking for connections to Jesus

Acts 12:24: But the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied.

b. Be careful not to force connections that aren't in the text

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

B. Trace the movement from promise to fulfilment in Christ

1. Examples: Gen. 3:15 and 49:10

- a. And I will put hostility between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring; her offspring will attack your head, and you will attack her offspring's heel.
- b. The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs; the nations will obey him. (NET)

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

B. Trace the movement from promise to fulfilment in Christ

1. Examples: Gen. 3:15 and 49:10
2. Mistake to avoid
 - a. Jumping immediately to Christ and missing the trajectory of the promise through the Old Testament
 - b. Galatians 3:8 and 16: The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the nations will be blessed in you.' ...now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as referring to many, but rather to one, 'And to your seed,' that is, Christ.

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

c. Highlight the promise-shaped patterns of typology

1. Examples: Gen. 22

- a. Abraham's only son offered as a sacrifice
- b. God will provide the sacrifice
- c. Isaac is silent on the way to his death
 - i. Matt. 26:62-63; 1 Pet. 1:23
 - ii. Isa. 53:7: He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth.

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

c. Highlight the promise-shaped patterns of typology

1. Examples: Gen. 22
2. Mistake to avoid
 - a. Falling into allegorical interpretations

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

D. Consider development through the covenants

1. Example: Gen. 29:31-30:24

- a. Now the Lord saw that **Leah was unloved**, and He opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. Leah conceived and bore a son and named him Reuben, for she said, 'Because the Lord has seen my affliction; **surely now my husband will love me.**' (29:31-32)
- b. Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, **she became jealous of her sister**; and she said to Jacob, 'Give me children, or else I die.' (30:1)
- c. [Rachel] said, '**Here is my maid Bilhah**, go in to her that she may bear on my knees, that through her I too may have children. (30:3)
- d. So Rachel said, 'With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and **I have indeed prevailed.**' (30:8)
- e. When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, **she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife.** (30:9)

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

D. Consider development through the covenants

1. Example: Gen. 29:31-30:24
2. Mistake to avoid
 - a. Focusing too much on the broader biblical context and neglecting the text that is being preached

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

E. Compare and contrast your text with Jesus Christ and the New Covenant

1. Examples

- a. Judah offering himself as a substitute (Gen. 44)
- b. Joseph resisting temptation (Gen. 39)
- c. Abraham deception of Abimelech (Gen. 20)

2. Mistake to avoid

- a. Calling believers to imitate good character or avoid bad behavior apart from the power of Christ in the gospel

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

F. Remember the people you teach and what they need

1. Different people need different things
2. Mistake to avoid
 - a. A one-size-fits-all approach to preaching Christ in Genesis

II. Practical Aids for Preaching Christ in Genesis

G. Ask for God's help to understand and believe Scripture

1. Example: Lk. 24:25

- a. How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

2. Mistakes to avoid

- a. Overestimating our ability as interpreters
- b. Becoming overwhelmed by the complexity of Scripture and a desire to get it right

III. Questions

IV. Case Studies

- A. Creation account (Gen. 2)
- B. Abram and Sarai in Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20)
- C. Abraham and the three visitors (Gen. 18)
- D. Joseph before Pharaoh (Gen. 41)