

# DISCOVERING CHRIST & THE GOSPEL IN SCRIPTURE

The entire Bible is about Christ, the Trinity, and God's plan of redeeming the world to Himself for His glory. We often look to find ourselves in the story of Scripture, usually as the protagonist -- the main character. However, in reality, we're either minor characters in the story, or worse, we are actually represented by the antagonist! Though we can have positive attributes, and these stories are examples of godly men and women that we can and should model, the Bible ultimately is a book about God, and we should see it as such! Every story and character (and often objects) in Scripture point beyond themselves to One who is greater -- Jesus Christ. Many symbols, analogies, objects, people, places, and events are foreshadowing Christ. He is the true and better example and the only one who can reconcile us to the Father. When you read the Bible Christologically (seeing Scripture in light of the Gospel and through the lens of Christ) your heart will be drawn to worship God as you see how the entire Bible testifies about Him (John 5:39).

So, how do you remove yourself from the center and strive to discover Christ and the Gospel as you read? Use the acronym EFAP described below as a tool in your Scripture reading to help you in this process:

**E**

## HOW IS CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW? (HE SHOWS US HOW)

*"For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps." - 1 Peter 2:21*

Is there something or someone described that reminds you of the person or work of Jesus and stands as an example of Him in which you should follow? This doesn't have to be limited to the actual person of Jesus, but often the characteristics of other people or objects that point to Christ. Every command Christ completes to perfection. Every strong character quality Christ has in full. Every warning against sin Christ never does. Christ is the complete and perfect example for us.

**F**

## HOW HAS CHRIST FULFILLED WHERE WE'VE FAILED? (HE DOES WHAT WE CANNOT)

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." - Matthew 5:17*

Are there roles, relationships, or characteristics in the Bible that are ruined by sin, wickedness, or mistakes? Although there may be good people or neutral objects in Scripture, the holistic story is that they're never good enough. Jesus contrarily fulfills every single promise and does perfect every command of the Law; something we could never do. He is the true and better leader, king, friend, husband, Passover lamb, rock of our salvation, servant, priest, prophet, temple, etc. Watch this video for more examples of how Christ is the True and Better by [Dan Stevers](#).

**A**

## HOW DID CHRIST MAKE ATONEMENT FOR OUR SINS? (HE TAKES OUR PLACE & GIVES US HIS RIGHT STANDING)

*"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." - 2 Corinthians 5:21*

Not only did Jesus make right all of our wrongs, fulfilling what we couldn't do, He also traded places with us, taking upon Himself the wrath that sin deserved for our lawlessness, and giving us the righteousness of God that should only come from perfection. As you read, do you see ways in which Christ actually takes the undesirable position or punishment even though He did no wrong? In order to do this properly, you have to be able to see yourself as the one deserving of judgment...which can be hard for some of us to do. We are often not the hero in the story; we're more likely the enemy. Can you see how Jesus, the innocent One, traded places with Barabbas, the one who actually did commit sins worthy of crucifixion? Or how Pharoh, the enemy of God's people, was drowned in the Red Sea and yet we, who are enemies of God (Rom 5:10), are instead saved by the blood of Christ, His death for our life?

**P**

## HOW DOES CHRIST GIVE US HIS POWER TO WALK IN? (HE GIVES US HIS POWER)

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." - Acts 1:8*

Oftentimes, we end the Gospel narrative at the death of Jesus on the cross for our sins, but that's not where the story ends! Jesus rose from the dead and the same powerful Spirit that was in Him now lives in us as believers! When reading Scripture, can you see how Christ gives us His power as He invites us to partner with Him in the ministry? In other words, now we can actually follow His example originally set for us, and if/when we fall short, we have the gospel that forgives. For example, Joshua led the people of Israel to march around the walls of Jericho, trusting the Lord's promise, and the walls fell down in their victory over the enemy! We too have the same power to knock down the walls of oppression and sin in our lives and the lives of those around us. We are not Joshua -- he's the Christ figure -- but we are the people who followed him and joined in the fight!

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## 1 SAMUEL 17: DAVID & GOLIATH

One of the beautiful things about scripture is its depth. You can read the same verses over and over and find something new with each pass. Often there is not just one example of Christ in each story, but multiple ways we can see the person and work of Christ. Below is one way to see Jesus as our example, fulfillment, atonement, and power in the story of David and Goliath.

### **E** IS THERE SOMETHING OR SOMEONE THAT REMINDS YOU OF THE PERSON OR WORK OF JESUS AND IS AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW?

*Often the characteristics of other people point to Christ. Christ is the complete and perfect example for us.*

- 1 Samuel 17:14-15 "David was the youngest...went back and forth from Saul to feed his father's sheep..."
- 1 Samuel 17:19-19 "Take for your brothers...parched grain...ten loaves...ten cheeses..."
- 1 Samuel 17:32 "... 'your servant will go and fight!'"
- 1 Samuel 17:37 "...The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me..."

David was tasked with keeping watch of his father's sheep as a shepherd (v14) and as the youngest, delivering provisions to his brothers in Saul's army (v15, 18-19). He was ready and willing no matter the ask, even if it meant fighting the feared Philistine, Goliath, for Israel (v32). He had seen the provision and power of God in his own life (v37) and therefore trusted and acted in obedience. David, like Christ, was a servant willing to go. Jesus too has seen the Father's work throughout eternity and trusted in His plan. He obediently carried out the work set before him, even unto His death. We, too, must trust our God and be willing servants who will go and do the work He calls us to.

### **F** ARE THERE ROLES, RELATIONSHIPS, OR CHARACTERISTICS RUINED BY SIN?

*Jesus fulfills every promise and command of the law; something we could never do. He is the true and better leader, king, friend, husband, Passover lamb, rock of our salvation, servant, priest, prophet, temple, etc.*

- 1 Samuel 17:5 "...he was armed with a coat of mail..."
- 1 Samuel 17:51 "...took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him and cut off his head with it."
- 1 Samuel 17:25 "...the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and he will give him his daughter and make his father's house free..."

In v5, the coat of mail can be translated as scales. The fight between a man and a serpent is not a new one. Adam and Eve listened to the serpent and sinned, destroying our right relationship with God (Genesis 3). But God promised in Genesis 3:15 that although there will be enmity between the woman and the snake, there would be someone who would come and crush the head of the serpent and restore the relationship that was broken. David, in the battle, takes the scale armored Goliath's own weapon and uses it to kill him by removing his head (v51), essentially crushing the "serpent." But Jesus is the true and better warrior. He took His enemy's weapon, sin, and death and used it against him to gain victory. Christ took on the punishment for sin we deserved, but in rising from the grave, He defeats the snake once and for all. David did what the people of Israel could not. He won them the victory. Christ likewise did what we could not. He has given us His victory over sin and death. V25 reminds us of what we have received because of Christ's fulfillment. We share in the riches God, the king, has lavished upon his son. God has given Christ his daughter/bride the church (that's us) and made those of his family free (that's us too). The broken relationship is restored in Christ!

### **A** DO YOU SEE WAYS IN WHICH CHRIST TAKES THE PUNISHMENT EVEN THOUGH HE DID NO WRONG?

*Jesus traded places with us, taking upon himself the wrath that sin deserved for our lawlessness and giving us the righteousness of God. We are often not the hero in the story we're more likely the enemy.*

- 1 Samuel 17:11 & 24 "...they were dismayed and greatly afraid...fled from him and were much afraid..."
- 1 Samuel 17:22 "And David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage and ran to the ranks..."
- 1 Samuel 17:42 & 43 "...he disdained him...the Philistine cursed David by his gods."

We often think of ourselves as the hero in the story, but we are not David. With Satan as Goliath, do we even make an appearance? Yes, we most relate to the Israelite army dismayed, afraid, and waiting in the wings (v11 & v24). David was a shepherd, not a warrior. He wasn't responsible for fighting the war against the Philistines, yet he left the things he oversaw to run to the battle and be with his brothers (v22). V42 & 43 tell us that David was mocked and cursed by Goliath, and though the odds were against him, he, by God's strength, defeated Goliath. Christ is a shepherd and warrior but likewise left His charge, His heavenly throne, to join the ranks as a human. He took our place in the battle and was undeservedly mocked, scorned, beaten, cursed, but unlike David, He gave up His life (Matthew 27:28-31, Galatians 3:13). Though it appears He was defeated, we know His resurrection on the third day brings us salvation (Matthew 28:1-9)!

### **P** HOW DOES CHRIST GIVE US HIS POWER AS HE INVITES US TO PARTNER WITH HIM IN MINISTRY?

*The same powerful Spirit that was in Jesus now lives in us as believers! Now we can actually follow his example originally set for us, and if/when we fall short, we have the gospel that forgives.*

- 1 Samuel 17: 52 & 53 "And the men of Israel and Judah rose with a shout and pursued the Philistines...the wounded Philistines fell...they plundered their camp."

David's victory led to the engagement of the Israelite army. They were empowered and strengthened by David's victory to join the battle relentlessly pursuing the Philistines. Though we have nothing to offer, Christ too empowers and strengthens us through the gift of the Holy Spirit to join the fight. We can now confidently pursue the destruction of sin in our lives and in our community. We may lose a battle or two along the way, but we have the gospel that forgives and keeps us fighting. We know that our God wins the war.