

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WOW: call on Jama

ANNUAL CELEBRATION: next Saturday!! Sign-up to bring a dish online (link will be resent in an email and is also on the Events page as a QR code.)

FOTW is the Fuchser family!
Chris, Lorrie and Chloe

COTW: Sharon Seventh-day Adventist Church pastor Jonathan Smith. A multi cultural Church in mid-town who would love to see their people come back to worship in person now that the pandemic has passed.

THSTH19 - Messianic Prophecies
The Spirit of Christ

Review...

- | <u>Bible Book</u> | <u>Holy Spirit's Role</u> |
|-------------------|---|
| • Genesis | The Spirit of Life (The Breath of Life) |
| • Job | The Spirit of Understanding |
| • Exodus | The Spirit of Deliverance (Delivered and... Established!) |
| • Leviticus | The Spirit of Holiness (Be Holy, as God is Holy) |
| • Num/Deut | The Spirit of REST |
| • Joshua | The Spirit of Leadership |
| • Judges | The Spirit of Strength |
| • 1 Samuel | The Spirit of Responsibility (Responsibility of the Anointed) |
| • 2 Samuel | The Spirit of Humility |
| • Psalms | The Spirit of Creativity |
| • Prov/Ecc | The Spirit of Wisdom |
| • SOS | The Spirit of Intimacy |
| • 1 Kings | The Spirit of Blessing |
| • 2 Kings | The Spirit of Power |
| • Joel | The Spirit of Prophecy |
| • Jonah | The Spirit of Compassion |
| • Isaiah | The Spirit of Christ |

In our series, we have established the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of prophecy.

- Not only does the NT tell us the Holy Spirit gives the gift of prophecy, but we see he did so in the OT as well.

- Zec 7:12 They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the LORD of hosts.
- It has been estimated that 1/3 of the Bible is prophecy.
 - Not all Messianic prophecy, but prophecy to Abraham, about Israel's future (short and long term), about God's discipline and consequences of sin, about the second coming, and about all that happens AFTER Christ comes again.
 - Every prophecy in scripture has either already come to pass, or is yet to come to pass.
 - There isn't ONE prophetic word about Old Covenant living that didn't already happen before Christ.
 - And many NT prophecies regarding the church age have already been fulfilled as well.

Roughly 1/3 of all OT prophecy is Messianic Prophecy.

- Messianic prophecy means prophecy about the coming Christ.
- Jesus fulfilled all 350+ prophecies about who the coming Messiah would be!
- The classic **"Messianic Prophets"** who wrote books are **Isaiah, Zechariah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Micah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggia, and Malachi** - the latter 4 I will deal with on their own in the upcoming weeks.

God has led me to write a message today titled **"Christ Makes Sense."**

- It is based on the Holy Spirit's work through prophecy, as well as the Holy Spirit's role in our lives today, and the Spirit's role in our future.
- It is also based on that phrase God has given me just in the last few years - to share with people (Christians and unbelievers alike) about reality and the meaning of life.
 - It's not enough to even simply say "Nothing else makes sense."
 - It is much more accurate to simply say "Christ Makes Sense."
 - Yes, life involves
 - Faith
 - Suffering
 - Sacrifice
 - Heartache
 - Confusion
 - Frustration
 - Dealing with death around us
 - The suffering of loved ones is often harder than our own suffering
 - Why them, Lord? Where are you?
 - Times of wandering
 - Times of questioning
 - Times of great trial and great loss
 - And in that - often DOUBT.
 - Not for everyone - but for many Christians, doubt still creeps in.

- You and I have different lives, but we experience everything I just mentioned in this fallen, sinful world.
 - But in all of that, we are given this Truth (Bible) that every thinking person ever born has put to the test, and with every life, God passes that test.
 - I intend to show you the tests that man has put to God - about Him and about Truth - and to reveal that God's way is and always will be the ONLY way to live.

You might ask, "Why 'CHRIST' makes sense?" and not "The Bible" or "God's Truth" or...

- Because the Bible says EVERYTHING is about Christ.
- Colossians 1 says (15) **He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (16) For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. (17) And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (18) And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. (19) For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, (20) and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.**
 - CHRIST MAKES SENSE.

So throughout our time together, I'll emphasize **"Christ...."** and you'll say **"makes sense!"**

And I have a "twist" to the application portion of my message at the end.

- **I'm going to ask YOU to apply this truth to your life with one word or short phrase.**
 - Not because I couldn't think of one, but because I can think of MANY!
- IOW, because Christ Makes Sense, therefore... what?
 - So as I'm teaching, please do begin thinking of personal applications.

I'm going to give you **7 solid, confirming reasons why Christ Makes Sense.**

1) Creation

- As I've said, the title of my message today isn't "Nothing Else Makes Sense."
 - But when discussing creation, the "answers" that oppose the Genesis account are really, really weak - even scientifically speaking.
 - The most renowned secular scientists and A-theistic leaders in this world STILL come back to the fact that earth's beginnings HAD to come from some higher power.
 - The Big Bang Theory is only believed by 20% of Americans today.
 - As much as Intelligent Design has been maligned over the years, it's still the fall-back answer for most atheists, according to evolutionnews.org, though they HATE it.
 - When scientific theory points to ID, scientists often reject it out of hand. And yet it leads there - every time.

- All the “what ifs” have been answered, but the answers are unsatisfactory to scientists looking for ANY answer that doesn’t involve ID.
- The Creation account in scripture is Awe-Inspiring, Supernatural, and for a human being - seems impossible, and yet, that’s our God!
 - And when one studies the origin of life and earth for years and years, no other answer satisfies other than that of a higher power creating all things.

2) His time-trusted and constantly tested word

- No Book of Antiquity is run through the wringer more than the Bible
 - And works like McDowell’s “Evidence that Demands a Verdict” and Lee Stroble’s “The Case for Christ” have hundreds of resources to help us see that indeed, it takes more faith to be an Atheist than it does to be a Christian.
 - Why? Because Christ... Makes Sense.
- One of the most telling discoveries about books of antiquity (very old books from Greek and Roman Empires) is that while nobody questions the writing of Socrates, Homer, Plato, and others, we only have 8 authentic manuscripts of the greatest of their works.
- But we have 24,000+ authentic manuscripts - by the same standards of authenticity - of the Gospel of Mark alone!
- God’s Word is True!
 - And every time it is tested, it passes perfectly.

3) God is in charge of life and death

- From skeptics and even Christians wanting a genuine answer that matches up with the overall character of God in the Bible - **I get more questions about His wrath, war, and commands to kill thousands at a time in the OT** - even of his own people - than I do about probably any other subject.
 - It’s a head-scratcher that the God of Love can also be a God of war and deadly wrath over human beings He created in love.
 - I had those questions for years myself.
 - When we read about large groups of people having their lives ended by the command of God Almighty, we’re troubled.
- Now, this isn’t going to be a treatise in the theology of God’s judgment - we just don’t have time for that in the larger context of my message today - but I’m glad to spend time over coffee or a meal if you want to talk further with me on this.
 - But let me say this:
 - **When God’s wrath is exercised in OT scripture, it never says that the people on whom His wrath landed went to hell.**
 - In fact, there are very few scriptures that mention even the idea of hell in the Old Testament.
 - This is incredibly significant, so stay with me.
 - **Sheol was a place for both the wicked AND the righteous.**
 - **Psalm 9:17; 31:17; 49:14; Isaiah 5:14, Genesis 37:35; Job 14:13; Psalm 6:5; 16:10; 88:3; Isaiah 38:10.**

- God's wrath was poured out, and people died, but their eternal soul - the BIG DEAL of life - isn't snuffed out. Ever.
- God used such moments to cleanse his people from those he knew would not repent, would not turn from their ways - and instead of allowing them to corrupt the living, He took them out.
- We must not assume God condemned them to hell.
 - We have NO scriptural basis to do that.
 - God is in charge of life and death.
 - God knows the heart.
 - 1 Thess 4, 1 Cor. 15, and Rev. 20 all remind us that dead people will rise before we do in the last days!
 - Specifically the dead "in Christ."
 - The Bible gives us no teaching on how the dead "in Christ" - before Christ - come to be believers.
 - 1 Peter suggests Jesus went to the depths of hell to preach the gospel, but it's a weak claim, to be honest.
 - And no such thought is expressed elsewhere in scripture, so we have to be careful not to build a rather large theology about dead people hearing the gospel based solely on ONE verse alone.
- The point: **Earth is not the final life.**
 - God is the judge of the soul - let Him do his job.

4) The problem of sin - and God's answer

- I've heard it said that everyone, in the wrong place at the wrong time, in a poor state of mind, in the wrong circumstance - everyone has the propensity for even the worst of sins, even murder.
- Our problems in this world all come back to one reality: SIN.
- The classic question: "If God is good and almighty, he would not allow his creatures to suffer, and there would be no evil in the world."
- The world has answers:
 - Be a better person.
 - Stop doing bad things.
 - Psychologists dig into your emotions, mental capacity, brain function, your tendencies to making bad choices, all for the purpose of "fixing" you.
 - **The world says you can fix yourself.**
 - The problem is that nobody has. Ever.
- Worldhistory.org reiterates other historians' findings of The Pharisees' theology of sin:
 - They had an idea in the years leading up to Christ that if all the Jews were to somehow be able to eliminate sin that there would come a day when all Jews would finally reach sinlessness, and THEN Messiah would come, destroy everyone else, and usher in the new days of life without sin.
 - The Pharisees - by all OT standards - had created their own version of Judaism - a new religion, really.

- If MAN finally conquered sin, Messiah would come.
- Other religions also have their own “answers” to the problem of sin:
 - **The Koran** says God created sin and suffering - get through it on your own, and paradise awaits you.
 - **In Greek mythology**, Fate was even greater than the gods. While the gods were believed to occasionally meddle in the affairs of men and create evil/sinful circumstances, ultimately, evil was in the hands of Fate. therefore everybody deals with it, and if you’re lucky, you won’t deal with it as much. There is no cure. And good luck in the afterlife - if there is one for humans.
 - **Buddhism** has no answer for the origin of sin and evil, but has precepts and practices as to how a person can gain insights and power within themselves to get over it, including rebirth.
 - **Hinduism** is the religion marked by Karma - which derives from human free will. Again, the origin of sin is unexplained. What goes around comes around, and if you have evil happening to you, even though you don’t deserve it, well, you must be lying.
- God’s answer:
 - Sin entered the world through human kind’s rejection of God’s plan for life without it. Man chose it - and always has ever since.
 - In God’s LOVE, he allows us a way out: Life for Life. His Life for ours.
 - No other religion or answer to the problem of sin and evil even comes CLOSE to not only making sense, but also addresses the ONLY possible answer for how sin can be defeated!
 - God - in love - allows for human free will - and when we chose it, He immediately stepped in - in love - and provided a way for its elimination.
 - Himself. His blood spilled. His death in place of ours. The innocent for the guilty. Paid in full for all who accept God’s love.
 - **Christ... Makes Sense.**

5) Jesus fulfilled 350+ prophecies!

- [Jesus fulfilled 351 OT prophecies](#)
- It has famously been asserted that even for one man to fulfill just 8 of the most straight-forward, easiest to comprehend prophecies (He’ll come from Bethlehem, in the direct line of David, “out of Egypt,” Betrayed by a friend, 30 pieces of silver, execution by crucifixion, no bones broken, raised from the dead) - it would be a 1 in 10-to-the-17th-power chance!
 - By comparison, you had a one in 300M chance (8 zeros) in winning the \$1.6B lottery a few years ago.
 - 10 to the 17th power has 17 zeros!
- Now consider that even the majority of unbelievers considered all of Jesus’ words to be “wise counsel.”
 - Unbelievers BELIEVE Jesus’ words - if only to accuse believers of hypocrisy - but they’re simply missing the point that EVERYONE needs a Savior. That’s why

we're Christians - not because we're striving to not sin, but because we acknowledge we HAVE, and need saving from it.

6) Christ in us

- The idea that God dwells within humans - no other religion asserts such a thing.
 - That we are given the challenge and call and giftings to share God's good news with other humans - that we partner with God to proclaim it by the power of Christ in Us - that's crazy! And makes total sense!
- And "Christ in us" also relates to prayer, to relationship, to total and complete access to God's throne.
 - God's love is overwhelming, and He invite me into Kingdom Work - done by His power in and through me.
 - Christians who experience that know the power of God THROUGH THEM.
 - As Paul said in Romans 8, "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (38-39)"

7) The Case for the Resurrection

- Yes, I stole that from Lee Stroble, and yes, I highly encourage you to read that book if you haven't yet.
- God's complete Word - from beginning to end - in dozens of contexts about eternity - never contradicts itself.
 - The hope of the Resurrection of Christ - the Son of God - and His showing Himself to 500 witnesses over 40 days before ascending into Heaven and being again seated at the right hand of God - is detailed extensively throughout scripture. In Acts, dozens of eye-witnesses joyfully underwent persecution and death to proclaim this truth.
 - Most of the letters written to Christians were in the context of holding the line of truth because they ALL were losing family members to various governmental authorities threatened by the fact that Jesus was KING, and their subjects believed it.

So there it is! **CHRIST... Makes Sense.**

Now, Faith is still necessary

- It's called the Christian FAITH on purpose.
- Even with all the above truths about God's Worldview in comparison to all other attempts to answer the questions of life, FAITH is still required.
 - I will still go through hardships that result in my crying out to God as to why.
 - I will still hear of tragedies and wonder what God is up to.
 - I will still wonder why God couldn't do whatever He's doing in a different way.
 - But I will remain ALWAYS knowing God's way is wiser than mine.
 - The practical and logical reasons I've laid out make sense.

- And therefore, as I live by faith in the Son of God - not knowing how God will do things, why God will allow for things, and what God is doing every moment of the day, I can have a pure faith that never questions His existence, or His wisdom, or His LOVE for me and every human being.

So there it is! **CHRIST... Makes Sense.**

- Think for a moment:
- **What does this truth - Christ Makes Sense - do for you and in you?**
 - How can you sum up your personal application in one word? Or a very short, easy-to-remember phrase?
 - You might do it like this: **“Because Christ Makes Sense, then _____.”**
 - You don’t have to say it out loud to all of us.
 - But I do challenge you to tell the person next to you.

Pray

Reading Plan: Isaiah 1-30, Micah (7) (5 chapters PD)