

Talk It Over

SMALL TALK

1. Has your concern about what others think about you ever been problematic for you? Under what circumstances?

VIEWPOINT

God set the stage throughout history with promises, prophecies, and prototypes to demonstrate that the reality was no human invention.

2. **READ Genesis 3:15.** In the beginning of history, what bad news prophecy to the serpent about the “offspring” of Eve was good news prophecy for us and how did Jesus fulfill it?
3. **READ Genesis 22:18.** Around 2,000 B.C., what good news prophecy about “offspring” was given to Abraham and how did Jesus fulfill it? What prototype event took place just before this prophecy was given?
4. **READ 2 Samuel 7:12–13.** About 1,000 B.C. what good news prophecy about “offspring” was given to David and how did Jesus fulfill this?

GETTING PERSONAL

5. Does knowing how God set the stage for Jesus in History help you want to gladly give Jesus the center stage of your life story? Why or why not?

MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)

6. Which words and phrases of Galatians 2:20 can you relate to VVCC’s 5 core statements?
 1. Love God Wholeheartedly
 2. Do First Things First
 3. Don’t Do Life Alone
 4. Saved People Serve People
 5. Followers Say, Follow Me!

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Center Stage: Who's on center stage of your life?

"An Open Letter to My Fear of What Others Think," by Jessie Rice (11-23-11)

Dear Fear-Of-What-Others-Think:

I am sick of you, and it's time we broke up. ...

I'm tired of trying to sound more clever, funny, and important. I'm sick of feeling anxious about what I say or do around people... all in the hope that they'll like me, accept me, praise me. ...

Because of you, I go through my day with a cloud of shame hanging over my head, and I never stop acting. The spotlight's always on, and I'm center stage, and I'd better keep dancing, and posturing, ...or else the spotlight will move, and I'll dissolve into a little, meaningless puddle on the ground, just like that witch in *The Wizard of Oz*. ...

And all of this is especially evil because if I really stop and think about it, and let things go quiet and listen patiently for the voice of my Savior who loved me and died for me, it turns out I'm actually—profoundly—loved and valuable...

So ..., Fear-Of-What-Others-Think. You and I are done. ...Or at least, that's what I really, really want, God help me.

Paul also describes a break up, but he uses language that goes much deeper than a break up.

Galatians 2:20 (NIV) I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

THIS IS NOT AN EASY FLOW OF THOUGHT

Q: What does it mean to say “I have been crucified with Christ”?

A: Paul gives a more detailed explanation in Romans 6. When we said “I do” to Jesus in baptism, we united ourselves in Covenant to Jesus. This uniting is with him, who he is, and what he has done. When we enter into a covenant union with Christ, like in a marriage the two become one. The me-life changes to a we-life. The old me-life is no more. And yet, even the best of earthly marriages are a mere shadow picture of the covenant reality in a union with Christ when it is lived out. By saying “I do” or “yes” to Jesus' covenant offer, the “two become one” in a spiritual reality where Jesus enters our lives and offers his Name, life, and character through his Spirit.

Q: What does it mean to say “I no longer live”?

A: The all-about-me-life is crucified, dead and buried, (by what Jesus did) and we are given a new resurrected life (also by what Jesus did) so that we can now live a life that is all-about-Jesus.

Q: What does it mean to say “I no longer live but Christ lives in me”? If I no longer live, does that mean Christ calls all the shots? Are we now like marionettes and Christ pulls all the strings?

A: NO. Paul describes it as “*The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me*”. So, there is a life “I now live.”

Q2: Why does Paul describe it as “The life I now live in the body,” What would we be missing had he simply said, “*The life I now live . . . , I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me*”.

A1: The resurrection that has already taken place for those united to Jesus is **only on the inside (for now) until completion.** We still function within earthly bodies, and our bodies are still part of a fallen world. My new aches and pains and challenges that come with age are reminders of that. However, we will receive imperishable immortal resurrected bodies later.

A2: What has taken place INSIDE of us makes all the difference even for our bodies. We were never made to function like marionettes. We were made to function like people fully in love with Christ. The church is the bride of Christ, in love, and willing to orient life to him because he loves us so much.

This week I pondered how *Obedience is so ... BODILY.*

God NEVER makes my body obey! I MUST, with His help. He did not create us to be like marionettes on strings moved solely by his hand. He doesn't force his love. He's good. He's a gentleman. **Obedience is my responsibility, and obedience is not PASSIVE.**

God made humanity to reign and rule. First, we reign under him, and in his Name. Second, through his name we can rule ourselves. Self-Control is the fruit of the Spirit!

Although he does not make us, he has done it all for us, and gives us everything we need. The life of faith asks for help, and actively trusts and depends upon all that Christ has done, and is doing in us. **Christ enables us, and empowers us, but he does not make us.** As Paul puts it in Philippians 2:12-13, **We learn to work out what God works in.**

When I'm all out of sorts, it is because in some way I'm back on center stage, and I am not trusting Christ on Center Stage of my life. It doesn't take much to repent, and praise and worship Christ, I've stepped off center stage, centered on Christ again. It's like a realignment. When I live my life as if it's all about me, I'm all out of sorts again.

To see him for who he really is helps us gladly give him center stage...

- Week 1: Jesus Is Greater Than Moses
- Week 2: Jesus Is Greater Than David**
- Week 3: Jesus Is Greater Than Expected

God set the stage throughout history with promises, prophecies, and prototypes to demonstrate that the reality was no human invention.

I. **One son of David would reign FOREVER**

David was a national hero for ushering in the “golden age” of Israel. King David was Israel's gold standard by which all their kings were measured. And yet, he received this prophecy!

2 Samuel 7:12–13 (NIV) When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

- God promised that one particular offspring of David would be the one (not David) to build a house for his NAME. And this could not be merely about Solomon's Temple, because there was more.
- God would establish this particular son of David's throne and kingdom forever.
- This promise is repeated throughout the Old Testament (long after Solomon).

There are even detailed prophecies about the timing of this from Daniel.

That is why by the time the events of the New Testament begin, the people were filled with such great expectations. The atmosphere was electric, it was nearly time for the Messiah to arrive and establish his Kingdom. Then comes this lowly peasant carpenter who starts teaching all about God's Kingdom.

II. **Jesus was the THAT son of David**

Jesus was the fulfillment of these promises, prophecies, and prototypes.

The New Testament begins this way:

*Matthew 1:1 (NIV) This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah **the son of David**, the son of Abraham:*

*Luke 1:32 (NIV) He will be great and will be called **the Son of the Most High**. The Lord God will give him **the throne of his father David**,*

Then in Luke chapter 2, Luke tells us how the prophecy of Micah was fulfilled.

*Micah 5:2 (NIV) “But you, **Bethlehem Ephrathah**, though you are small among the clans of Judah, **out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.**”*

This is only a small sampling. Peter preached Jesus as the fulfillment as the **son of David** in Acts. Paul wrote it in Romans and Timothy. John wrote it in Revelation. Jesus himself claimed his kingly title in the Gospels, and in Revelation. If so, then...

III. Why was Jesus so QUIET about his identity?

Mark 8:28–30 (NIV) They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.”²⁹ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

Why did Jesus do this kind of thing so frequently?

Answer #1: Practical Timing. His crucifixion would have happened too early if he publicly declared himself too early in his Mission. Jesus needed time for teaching his Apostles and laying very important foundations.

Answer #2: He was anointed by God not Human Campaigning

This is a major theme in the life story of David. David, although anointed early in his life, did not assert his kingship or take it with power from King Saul, David humbled himself, and awaited God’s timing.

Jesus did also.

Philippians 2:8–11 (NIV) ...he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!”

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus is the center of all of history and he can be the center of your story too, but for this to happen you must see him for who he is, and gladly give him the center stage of your life.

Series Challenge: Memorize Galatians 2:20.