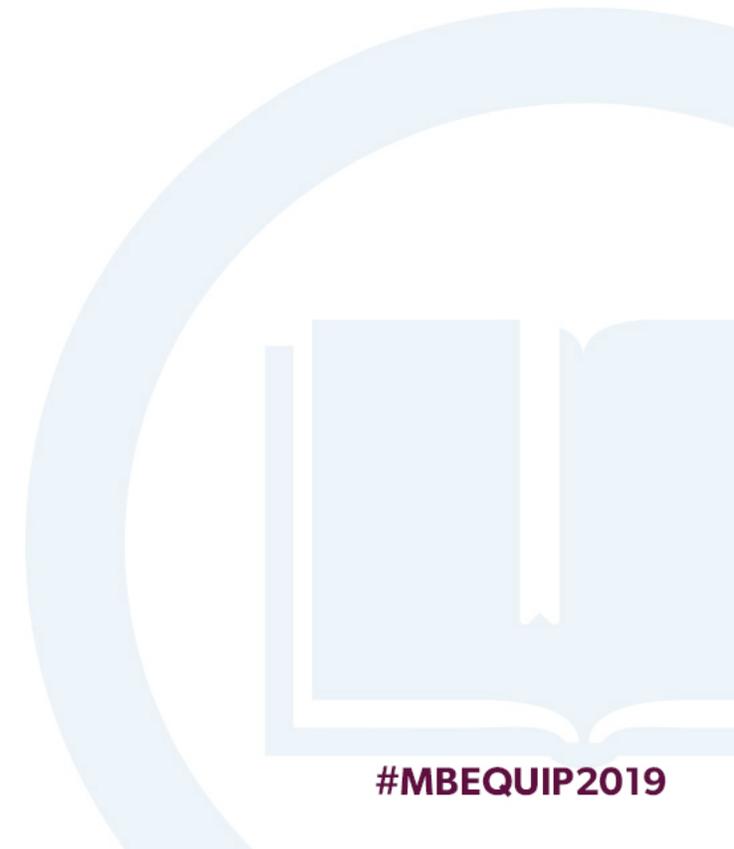


# Christocentric Preaching

Kristal Toews

# Why Christocentric Preaching?



#MBEQUIP2019

*After Jesus' resurrection, he said to his disciples:*

“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.”

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. **Acts 24:44-47**

Similar ideas in Luke 24:13-27, John 5:39-47, 1 Cor 15:3-5

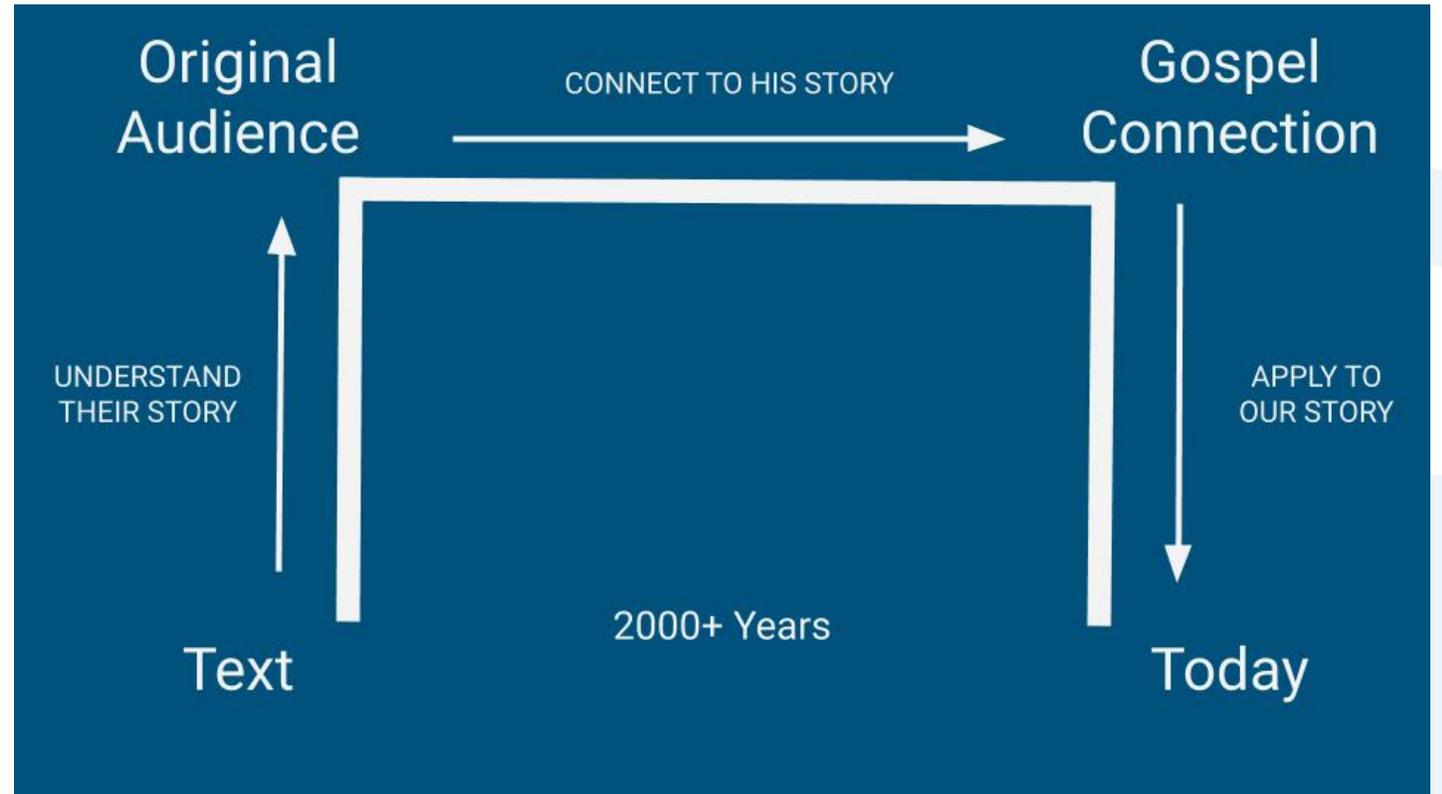
# The aim of Christocentric Preaching:

- To determine the legitimate link between any biblical text and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

# 3 Steps for Christocentric Preaching:

1. Understand THEIR story.
2. Connect to HIS story.
3. Apply to OUR story.

Pathway to Preparation:  
Modified from materials created  
by The Charles Simeon Trust



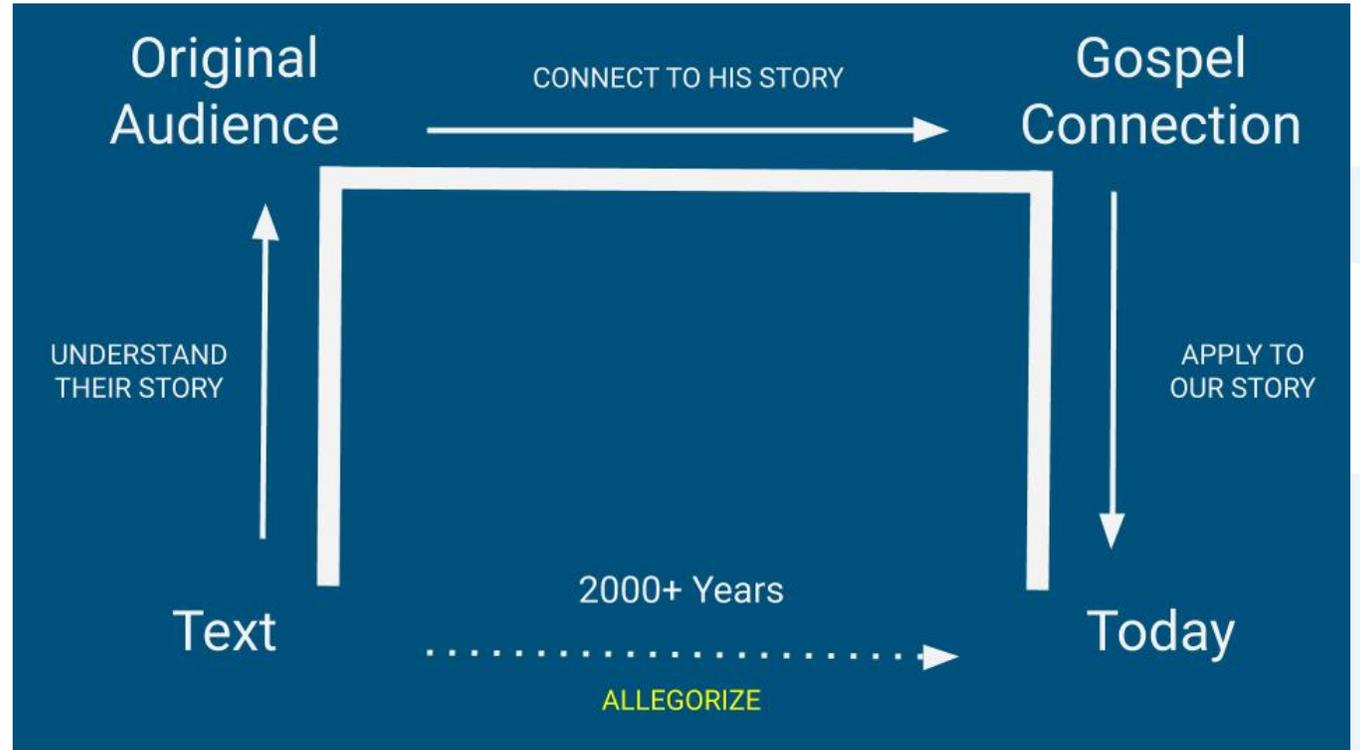
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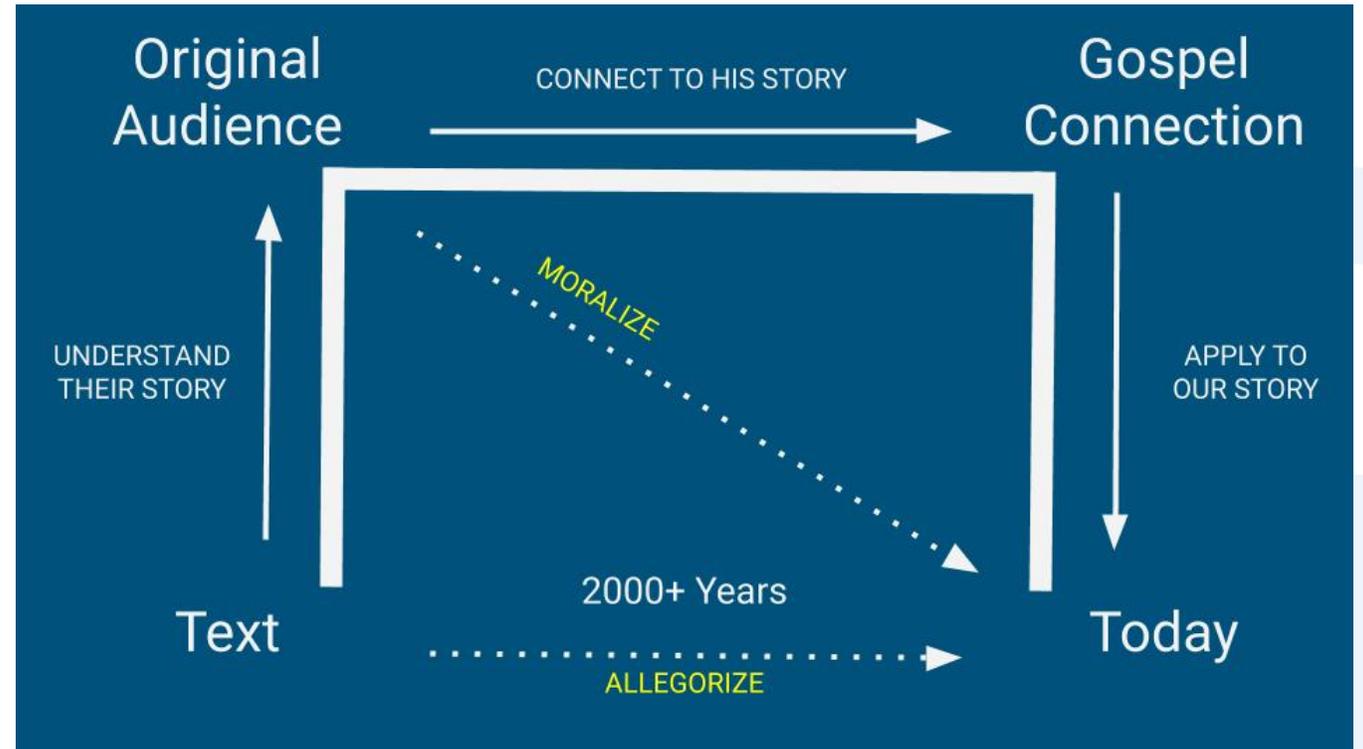
# Illegitimate Links:

## 1. Text to Today Allegorizing



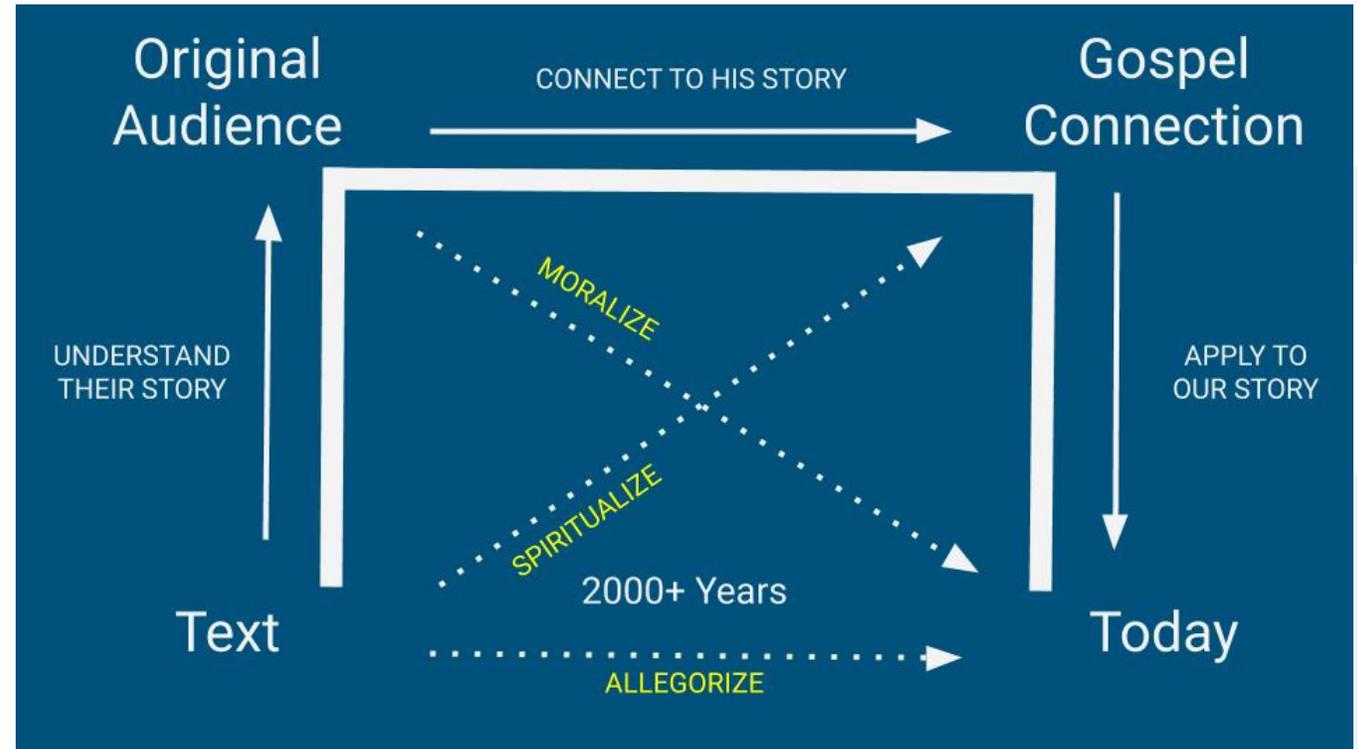
# Illegitimate Links:

1. Text to Today
2. Text to Original Audience to Today  
Moralizing



# Illegitimate Links:

1. Text to Today
2. Text to Original Audience to Today
3. Text to Gospel to Today  
Spiritualizing



# Christocentric Preaching:

making legitimate links between any biblical text and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ

Is their story...

1. PREPARATORY for
  2. PREDICTIVE of
  3. REFLECTIVE of
  4. RESULTANT from
- ... the work of Christ?

Chapell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*

# Is their story **PREPARATORY** for the work of Christ?

- Any texts that affirms that people cannot save themselves, that they are fallen, fallible and need a Savior PREPARES its original audience and us for the work of Christ.
- Ask: What does this text tell me about...
  - The nature of sin?
  - Our need for a Saviour?
  - How God Saves?

# Is their story **PREDICTIVE** of the work of Christ?

- Any texts that directly predicts or prophecies about a future saviour...
  - Messianic Psalms or passages from Prophetic or Apocalyptic Literature)
- OR which directly prefigures the work that Jesus will do.
  - Blood of the Passover lamb painted on the doorposts of people's homes so that the angel of death would pass over their homes.

# Is their story **REFLECTIVE** on the work of Christ?

- Does this text reflect directly on the person or work of Jesus? If so...
  - What do we learn about who Jesus is and what He has come to do?
  - What response is Jesus calling from those he meets?

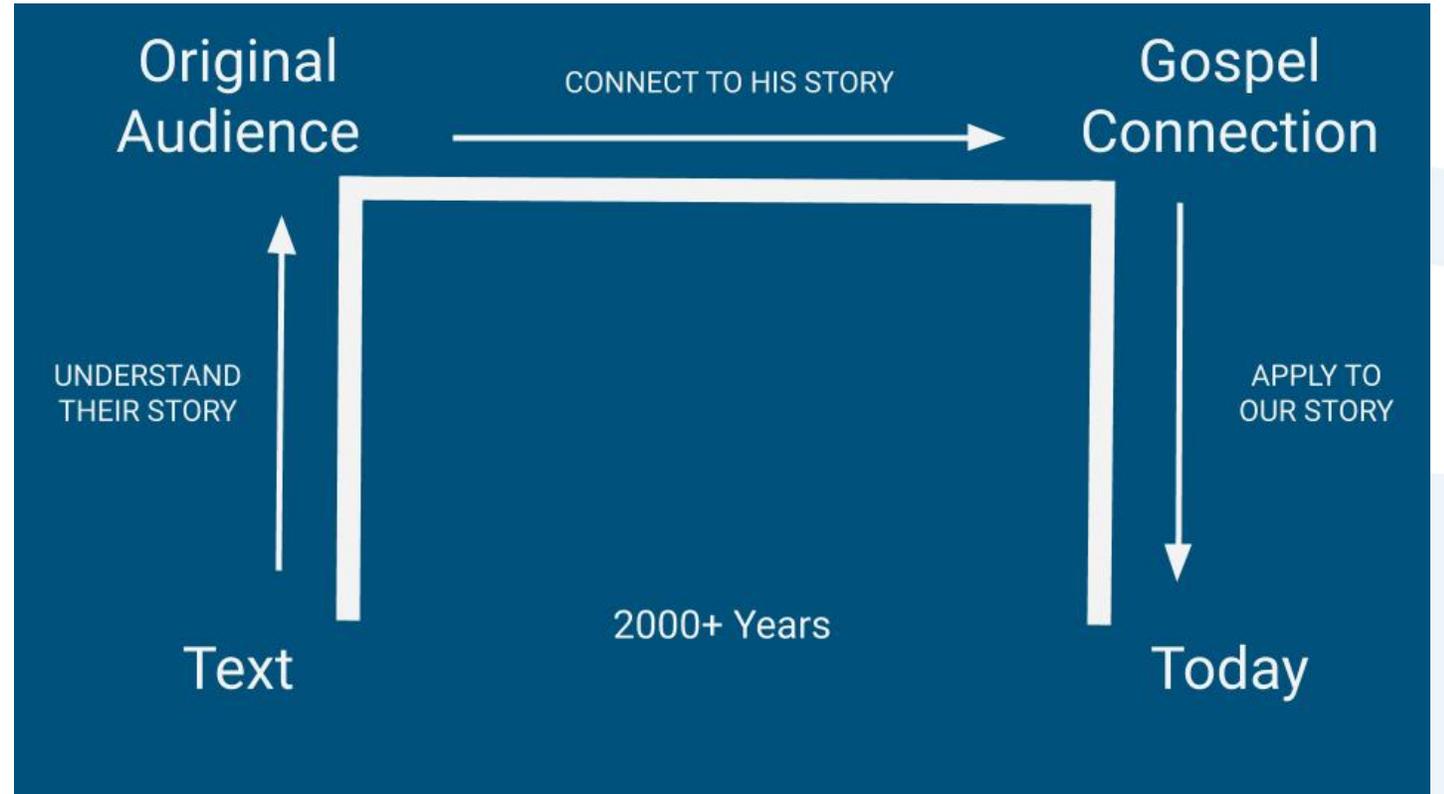
# Is their story **RESULTANT** from the work of Christ?

- Does the text discuss what it looks like to obey Yahweh (OT) or Jesus (NT) as a result of what God has done, or will do through the ministry of Jesus Christ?
  - In both the OT and NT obedience is a response to relationship
    - God gives the 10 commandment and the law after he rescues people from Egypt and brings them to himself (Exodus 19:4-6)
  - Indicatives (what is true about us) drives Imperatives (what we should do).

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# Christocentric Hermeneutics is different than a Cruciform Hermeneutic.

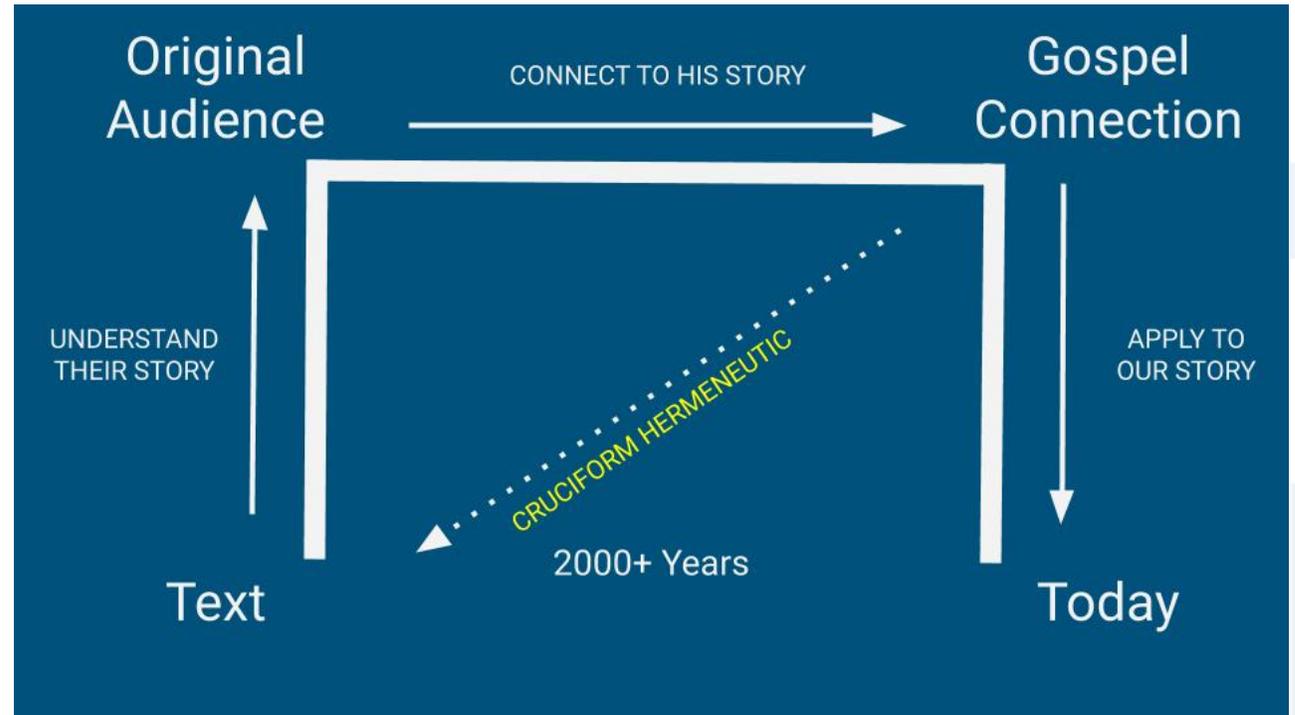
Boyd, Greg. *Cross Vision: How the Cross of Jesus Christ Makes Sense of Old Testament Violence*.

Jesus is not part of what the Father has to say or even the main thing that the Father has to say. As the one and only Word of God (John 1:1), Jesus is the total content of the Father's revelation to us. For this reason Jesus must be the sole criterion to assess the degree to which previous prophets were catching genuine glimpses of truth and the degree to which they were seeing clouds (p 21).

# Christocentric Hermeneutics is different than a Cruciform Hermeneutic.

The degree that any portrait reflects the cruciform character of God... I label it a direct revelation.

Conversely, to the degree that the surface of a biblical portrait fails to reflect the cruciform character of God ... I label these indirect revelations (page 59).



# Christocentric Hermeneutics is different than a Cruciform Hermeneutic.

Issue with this approach:

- Boyd inaccurately quotes scripture passages to prove his points – often quoting texts out of context, selectively, or with incorrect chronology.
- He calls into question the trustworthiness of the Biblical witness by asserting that Moses / Jeremiah / Isaiah / Paul and others were ‘culturally conditioned’ when they speak of God’s wrath, anger or retributive judgement.
  - “Now given their ANE context, we can understand why Joshua and the Israelites sincerely believed Moses. But the important question is, *should we?*” (pg 117).
- His approach doesn’t do justice to the reality of life experienced by people living in a broken world.

*“My lingering question is, “How does God judge in history?” Boyd dedicates an extensive amount of space rehearsing the Church’s terrible actions over the centuries and how the Bible has been appropriated for awful ends. No one can dispute those facts.... but in terms of life on the ground and the yearning for peace, I believe he has missed the point and power of the biblical text. Let me explain.*

*In the Old Testament world, war was a terrible fact of life. It was not something far away, fought half-way across the world by a volunteer army. They saw and lived war, lost loved ones in battle or as collateral damage, endured the horrors of siege warfare, and some experienced forced migration into exile. It is not surprising that the Old Testament speaks so often of widows and orphans. The Old Testament offers us vivid scenes of those realities, and God accompanied his people in their lives of want, pain, and death.*

*“The people (then and today) cried out to Yahweh to actively save them, to step into their history powerfully and personally, to protect them, and to make things right. And the Old Testament says that he does, as the incredible number of first-person verbs in reference to God and other passages make clear. If I read Boyd correctly, however, their clammering was misdirected and their cries grounded in a mistaken theology. The best God would and could do, from his perspective, was to withdraw and allow evil to consume itself. Every Old Testament scholar knows that Yahweh indeed does withdraw on occasion ... and that in many cases there is a sin—consequence relationship inherent in creation and the very nature of things, but that answer is not enough. Boyd has taken a slice of the kinds of reactions of God in the Old Testament and generalized it to be the only way God truly acts.*

*His cruciform hermeneutic is a limited (but very logical!) post-eventum, post-crucifixion theological construct that does not respond to the cries of the Israelites suffering in Egypt, to the starving mothers in the siege of Jerusalem, or to the children on the streets of Aleppo.”*

M. Daniel Carroll R. (Rodas), PhD  
Blanchard Professor of Old Testament, Wheaton College and Graduate School  
*“Reflections from a Christotelic Pacifist on Greg Boyd’s Christocentric Pacifism”*

# The aim of Christocentric Preaching:

To determine the legitimate link between any biblical text and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In order to rightly teach the biblical text, we must be committed to understanding THEIR story before we connect it to HIS story and apply it to OUR Story.

