

May 4/5, 2024
"Against the Flow"
Pastor Aaron Buer



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2024 Challenge: Finding Jesus in the Old Testament

May: Read the story of David to see how situations and events point to Jesus

Day 1 [2 Samuel 7:1-17](#) | Finding Jesus in David's Story

"Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever." 2 Samuel 7:16

This year, we look for Jesus in the Old Testament to see how God's plan always included Jesus saving us from our sins. This month, we read David's story to see how the events of his life point to Jesus.

Shepherd. David's is a humble shepherd from an ordinary family. Following God's directions, the prophet Samuel arrives to anoint the next king. David's family doesn't even call him inside. They do not think David could be the Lord's chosen one ([1 Samuel 16:11](#)). Similarly, Jesus is born into a humble family who does not always recognize him as the Lord's chosen one ([John 7:5](#)). David's life as a shepherd foreshadows Jesus. Jesus even refers to himself as the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep ([John 10:11](#)).

Son of David. David wants to build a house for God, but God turns the situation around and instead builds a house through David. This promise points to a son who will build a house for God's name and whose kingdom will endure forever. While Solomon later builds the temple, Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of this promise ([2 Samuel 7:13](#)). Jesus comes from the line of David ([Matthew 1:1](#)). Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of David," and many others also assign him this title ([Mark 12:35](#), [Matthew 21:9](#)). Jesus is the son who proclaims God's name and builds an eternal kingdom.

Warrior King. Scripture describes David as a warrior king. His kingship is a [type](#) that represents Jesus's complete victory over God's enemies. He is a man of prayer and "after God's own heart" ([Acts 13:22](#)). His dependence on the Lord foreshadows the intimacy of Jesus and the Father.

TODAY: David's life provides rich pictures of Jesus's coming. Commit to reading this month's passages prayerfully. Ask God to open your eyes to all the ways David points to Jesus.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [1 Samuel 16-17](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider David's occupation as shepherd and defeat of an enemy who defies God.

Day 2 [2 Timothy 2:14-26](#) | Against the Flow

Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness." 2 Timothy 2:19

Paul deliberately places Timothy in a strategic location. Ephesus is one of the largest and most significant cities in the Roman Empire. It's also an incredibly religious city. About 600 years before, a massive temple to Artemis was constructed. It still dominates city life during Timothy's time. Believers in Ephesus have their work cut out for them. Paul reminds Timothy that he has to go against the flow. The culture isn't going to point people to Christianity. What's even more challenging are false teachers inside the church itself. Timothy needs to teach the church the truth. Paul's instructions are clear. Timothy is to correctly handle the Word, gently instruct those who disagree and make sure the people in his church are ready for God to use them.

There's good news and bad news for us here. The bad news is that, like Timothy, we're going to have to go against the flow. Our culture isn't going to point us to Jesus. There are even voices in the greater Christian community that might lead us the wrong way. The good news is that we aren't alone, and we're not the first to face such challenges. Christians have been going against the flow since the church began. It's possible. We can do it.

TODAY: Pray for courage and strength to go with God and against the flow. Join the Ada Bible Worship Team as they sing "[Singing in the Victory](#)." We can find the strength and courage to go against the flow when we remember the victory Jesus won for us.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [1 Samuel 18-19](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider David's victories and his suffering at Saul's hands.

Day 3 [2 Timothy 2:14-15](#) | Correctly Handle the Word

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

Paul instructs Timothy by using the example of a hard worker who doesn't need to be ashamed. When they do good work, workers can step away from a job feeling good about all they have accomplished. For Timothy, a key part of being a good worker includes correctly handling the Word of God. It's like there is a way to handle Scripture that is approved and another that is not. Paul tells Timothy to do it the right way.

The way we handle Scripture is critical. We regularly encounter beliefs and values that could pull us away from what Scripture teaches. Correctly handling the Bible means putting in the work to know what it says and means. Studying the Bible isn't always easy, but it is vital for our faith. This includes reading the Bible on our own and learning where to go to help us understand what we're reading. When we study the Bible, we invite Scripture to inform our feelings and beliefs. Our culture tells us it should be the other way. Culture says our feelings and beliefs should be the key to interpreting Scripture.

TODAY: Commit yourself to studying God's Word. If you feel like you need help, consider who in your life seems to study the Bible well and ask them to teach you. If you can't think of anyone, reach out to our men's or women's ministries and ask about a mentor who can help (men@adabible.org and womensministry@adabible.org).

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [1 Samuel 20-21](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider David's encounter in the Tabernacle and receipt of the consecrated bread.

Day 4 [2 Timothy 2:23-26](#) | Gently Instruct

And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 2 Timothy 2:24

God's servants should be kind. That's what Paul writes to Timothy regarding arguments in the church. Paul frames the conversation through the lens of a servant. If Timothy can remember he is God's servant and that it's about what God wants to do, he can be kind, gentle and hopeful. Paul reminds Timothy that God is the one who brings repentance. Timothy has a role to play— it's to be kind and gentle. He's to leave the rest to God. It's gentleness motivated by hope.

The way of Jesus is the way of a servant, but our culture frowns on servanthood. Our debates often forsake kindness or gentleness. We tend to focus only on being right. But it's possible to be right and completely wrong in *how* we are right. Our posture matters as we engage people who don't believe or live the way we do. We must see ourselves as God's servants. A posture of servanthood leads to kindness and gentleness. It helps us remember the other person is someone God loves and created in his image. We can take a breath and pray to ask God to help us when we feel like we may be headed toward being quarrelsome or unkind. It's not abandoning truth but being gentle in how we present it because we have hope that God is doing something in them.

TODAY: Grab your journal and write down topics or people who cause you to struggle with kindness and gentleness. Note a few reasons for these struggles. Write a prayer asking God to help you remember you are his servant and are called to be kind, gentle and hopeful in those situations.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [1 Samuel 22-23](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider David's continued suffering at the hand of his own people.

Day 5 [2 Timothy 2:20-23](#) | Cleanse Yourself

Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. 2 Timothy 2:21

Paul's teaching is so practical. He instructs Timothy by using dishes as a tangible example. It's about whether something is for a special purpose or for common use. Paul is telling Timothy that God wants his followers to be people whom God can use for special purposes. But to do that, Paul gives some instructions. Paul uses the image of cleansing dirty dishes. He's saying there is effort involved in following Jesus. It requires a commitment.

God wants to use us, too. He created us to be part of something bigger. In today's passage, there are practical ways to prepare ourselves for God to use us. The first is to *flee*, getting away from the things we shouldn't be doing. The second is to *pursue*. This means seeking a relationship with Jesus and seeking the things that help us grow as followers of Jesus. The third is to do life *with others*. This means finding people who have the same goals as you and who will encourage you to follow Jesus. We could sum up following Jesus with these ideas. Following Jesus requires us to flee and pursue and to do this with other believers.

TODAY: Reflect on flee, pursue and with others. Is there something you need to flee or pursue? Have you found a connection with other followers of Jesus? If you're interested in talking about how to take Paul's instructions seriously, reach out to your campus pastor or email us at <mailto:info@adabible.org> to start a conversation.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [1 Samuel 24-25](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider David's obedience and lack of retaliation against Saul.