

Essentials A

Christ in me - the Gospel **IN**bound

- True life change happens where?
In the **heart**. **Want** drives action. Want on fire = worship. Our group objective is **to fuel our desire for Christ**. As a short prayer our objective is, "Lord, deepen my/our love and life in Christ."
 - Step 1 - see our **Driven by Desire** PDF & review often

- What happens when Christ is our **highest affection**?
We enter our destiny. WSC-Q1, "...to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."
Thus, our **lifeCORE motto**:
Christ is Our Redeemer & Ruler. Enjoy!

And our key verse: "Weren't our **hearts ablaze** within us while He was talking with us on the road and explaining **the Scriptures** to us?" Luke 24:32 hcsb. We still have the same tool (and more) King Jesus used to set their hearts ablaze – the OT&NT Scriptures.

- Our affections are fueled and re-shaped primarily by what tool?
Wholly Scripture – soak the mind and heart in both OT&NT.
 - The OT&NT is primarily about what **key Person**?
Christ. Thru Christ the King we know Yahweh, triune. The Bible comes alive w/ a Christo-centric focus. He is its *Alpha & Omega*. This is why we emphasize the doctrine of **Union with Christ**.
"...sum up in one all things in Christ..." Eph 1:10 (notice the prepositions)
 - The OT&NT is primarily about what **key idea**?
The glory of God thru grace in Christ (see lifeCORE study on Eph 1).
God's GRACE for his GLORY is the BIG idea that illumines all others.
"To the praise of his glorious grace...to the praise of his glory" Eph 1:6,12,14
 - The OT&NT is primarily about what **key story**?
Kingdom Redemption Story – The Story of a King who dies to redeem his rebel people. We first read *Living The Cross-Centered Life* to be reminded of this.
"...all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all...? Eph 1:22

see page 2 for 5 key distinctions in learning Essentials A

In addition to the above essentials we see necessity in practicing the following 5 distinctions. These 5 distinctions help us to avoid getting off track and to “keep the main thing the main thing.” Christ, His Gospel of Grace and the Story of Redemption are the main thing. Our desire is to live in those core truths. Additionally, these 5 distinctions are helpful in reading Scripture with clarity and also helpful in how we practice the Christian life and do church.

The **Law & Gospel** distinction.

This is one of the most important distinctions when reading Scripture. It also affects how we practice the Christian life and do church. Avoid these mistakes:

- Not, **Law in OT** and **Gospel in NT**. These 2 run parallel thru the Bible
- Not, **Law in OT** and **grace in NT**. These 2 run parallel thru the Bible.
- Not, **Law – Gospel – Law** again
- Do not **mix Law & Gospel**. Learning to see how Indicatives usually precede Imperatives helps in avoiding this mistake.
- Making Law & Gospel **primary**. Do not let a theological idea take front stage to the distraction of Christ. Our love and loyalty is to Him, not ideas.

The **Primary vs. Secondary** distinction.

Primary or foundational truths are non-negotiable. Those are the core doctrines of the Church. Secondary matters are important, but not in the same way as the primary. Primary truths are typically stated in **the Creeds** of the Church: Apostle’s Creed, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed and Symbol of Chalcedon. Various Confessions of Faith or Catechisms have both. A few come to mind: Westminster Shorter Catechism, Heidelberg Catechism, 39 Articles, Canons of Dordt, London Baptist Confession, Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, Luther’s Small Catechism or The Gospel Coalition Affirmations and Denials.

The **Old Covenant and New Covenant** distinction.

These are both similar and also very different from one another. Learn how the OC anticipates the NC. Discover how the NC is more expansive and durable than the OC. See how the NT unfolds the blessings of the NC. Above all else observe that the OC has been completely been done away with. We live in the NC era.

The **Commands or Wisdom** distinction.

Not everything in Scripture is a command. Not everything is rule. Many things in Scripture simply illustrate or describe or give general guidance or wisdom.

The **Exposition before Application** distinction.

Our first question for any text or passage of Scripture is “What does it say?” Many Bible readers begin with “What does it mean to me?” This is a good question, but knowing **what the text is saying** in its own context is the first step in fueling our heart with the Word. *Knowing Scripture* by R. C. Sproul is a good resource.