

THE NARRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE, PART 1

“For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.” (Matthew 13:17, NIV)

LAST SUMMER, our staff gathered for meetings and a bit of predictable recreation in Mission Viejo, California. We keep talking about how Links Fellowships are the centerpiece of what we do. All our resources, including these Friday studies, are intended to support those Fellowships.

But there is an even deeper core, and it is the *people* in those Fellowships. For the most part they are people who have already considered Jesus and the Scriptures that speak of him and have said, “Yes, I believe.” But there are others, both in the midst and on the fringes of those Fellowships who aren’t so sure yet.

With these men and women in mind, our staff asked Links Players president Jeffrey Cranford to demonstrate how he would walk them through the Scriptures, so they could recognize the unfolding of God’s plan, from creation and the fall through to the provision of redemption and the promise of eternity.

Today’s accompanying video is the beginning of that conversation. We will present it to you in full over the next eight Fridays. And we will support the videos with the devotions and Bible studies.

To open, what you need to recognize are two matters, both advantages having to do with vision—that is, with our ability to recognize God’s plan.

The first of these advantages is found in Jesus’ words ahead of explaining the Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13. It is that those of us living now, with both of Scripture’s testaments complete and available for our review, are able to see the plan of God from beginning to end. This is an amazing blessing, and one that should humble us before the ancient men and women of God, who believed with far less of the narrative available to support their understanding.

The second advantage is that our believing eyes are opened not in our own ability but by the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 2:9-10). This should keep us humble and patient as we share with those who do not yet “see” it. We should pray as much as we proclaim, asking God to give the eyes and mind of faith to those who still are seeking him.

Opening questions What is the most meaningful part of traveling with friends? Where does your conversation turn most? Who helps you set courses of action in your life?

READING 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, 1 Corinthians 10:1-11, 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Understanding God’s plan
How does Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 2 help us understand the difference between having the Spirit of God and not having him? What kinds of knowledge belong to those who have the Spirit?

Understanding God’s plan
According to the passage in 1 Corinthians 10, what is part of the value of knowing the Old Testament accounts and how God worked in them?

‘According to the Scriptures’
In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul wrote that the most important things has occurred according to the Scriptures—that is, according to the Old Testament. What does it mean to you that God’s plan existed from the beginning of time?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2015 Links Players International. A 5-minute video accompanies today’s study at <http://youtu.be/jD6701FIOA8>