5. BIG PICTURE #5: Salvation history: All history can be divided into several major “ages” or “epochs” in salvation history

(not military history or art history or economic history or history of science, but salvation history: how was God relating to mankind at various periods in history?)

a. Therefore → read every passage of the Bible with a salvation-history time line in your mind, and remember where each passage fits on the time line. (And grow in understanding of what God was doing in each period, how he related to his people at each time.)

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<tr>
<th>OT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>Fall</td>
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<td>BC 2000</td>
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<td>Moses</td>
<td>David</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christ</td>
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<td>Millennium</td>
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b. Examples:
Lev. 11:7 not eating pigs
Lev 2:1-2 grain offering
Gen. 15:6 Abraham believed God
Gen 9:6 “whoever sheds man’s blood…”
Matt 10:5-6 go nowhere among the Gentiles
Matt 23:23 tithe mint and dill and cumin
Matt. 5:43-45 love neighbor
Ps 139:21-24 hate God’s enemies
Josh 6:20-21 Jericho completely destroyed
Gen 1:28 fill and subdue the earth; have dominion over it
Eph 4:1-3 walk in a manner worthy of your calling
Eph 4:25-28 speak the truth; don’t steal

c. → We are at the same point in salvation history as the people in the early church. Therefore there are more differences between the way the Bible applied the church in Corinth or Thessalonica or Ephesus and the Jewish people during Jesus’ ministry a few years earlier (Matt 10:5-6; Matt 23:23) than there are between us in 2005 and those first-century churches. We are at the same point in salvation history as all Christians have been from Pentecost (Acts 2) until today, and will be until Christ returns.

d. In doing topical studies in the Bible, it is always good to ask what the Bible can tell us about a topic before the Fall (that is, Genesis 1-2) and in the New Heavens and New Earth (after Final Judgment; especially in parts of Revelation, but also some prophetic literature). This helps us filter out the effects of sin and also helps us understand the effects of sin in this present age.

Examples:
subduing the earth
technological development
wealth and poverty
equality of possessions?
6. BIG PICTURE #6: Themes: Because the Bible is a unity (one divine author though many human authors), there are many themes that develop and grow from Genesis to Revelation.

Therefore, for each significant element in any text, it is helpful to ask: (a) Where did this theme start in the Bible? (b) How did it develop? (c) Where is it going to end in the Bible?

Example:
Matthew 2: wise men
Matthew 8: stilling of the storm
other?

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The Witness of the Old Testament to Christ
How does the whole Old Testament point to Christ?


A. How does the whole Bible fit together?
1. One useful approach: summarize its teaching on various topics: "systematic theology"
2. Another useful approach: trace the historical development of themes from Genesis to Revelation:
   this is sometimes called "Biblical theology"

3. "Biblical theology"
   a. emphasis on the "history of redemption"
   b. attempts to understand how God was teaching people through patterns or "types" that looked forward to Christ (see 1 Pet. 1:10-12)
   Romans 5:14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type (τυπος, "type, pattern, model") of the one who was to come.
   Clowney, p. 14: "A type is a form of analogy that is distinctive to the Bible. Like all analogies, a type combines identity and difference."

4. The goal: to view every text in the light of the whole "Genesis-to-Revelation" sweep of the history of redemption
   a. The whole of the Bible is God-centered: therefore look in each text for what God is doing, for what it shows us of him (2 Tim 3:16; Rom 15:4)
   b. The whole of the Bible is historically structured: therefore look in each text to see how God is gradually unfolding his plan for history

5. This will take thought and study: Even those who lived with Jesus during his earthly ministry were slow to understand how the whole of the Old Testament pointed to Christ (Luke 24:25-27)

B. Examples from the Old Testament

1. Adam & Eve: Gen. 1:26-27; Gen 1-2
   son; ruler; image; marriage: exclusive love
2. The Fall: Gen 3
   temptations
   mercy
   promise of an "offspring" (3:15) who would gain victory over serpent


4. Noah & flood: Gen 6-9: note fulfillment in 1 Pet 3.18-21 and in final judgment
5. Abram: Gen 15:1-6

6. Abraham and Isaac: Gen. 17:15-21; Gen. 22 (Clowney, pp. 48-59)


13. Water from the rock: Exod 17: 1-7; but: Num 20:7-13 (Clowney, 120-126); also 1 Cor 10:4

20. Jericho: Josh 6

21. Samson: Judges 13-16; see 15:9-17; also Judg. 16:1, 4, 23-31

22. David: 1 Samuel 16 - 1Kings 2

23. Solomon

24. Jonah

25. Psalms - several kinds (see Clowney, p. 163): they foreshadow Christ as: Suffering servant of Lord (Ps 22); King (greater than David); Shepherd (Ps 23); the Lord who is both Creator and Redeemer (Ps 102:25-28); the Second Adam, true Son of Man (Ps 8:4-6); the Lord of Glory (Ps. 24)

C. New Testament passages: look back to find the fulfillment of Old Testament themes and look forward to find the completion of those themes in God's final plans for history

1. The wise men: Matt 2:1-12

2. Healing: Matt. 8:14-17

3. Stilling the storm at sea: Matt. 8:23-27


5. The Transfiguration: Matt. 17:1-8

D. What are the benefits of this approach?

All of the class lessons and outlines are posted on the class website [http://www.christianessentialssbc.com](http://www.christianessentialssbc.com).