

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

22 November 2015

## Topics

### A.M. Bible Class:

Summary of "I am a church member" series

### A.M. Lesson:

The prince of this world (John 12:27-33)

### P.M. Lesson:

The prophet (Deuteronomy 18:14f)

### Wednesday:

Two kinds of wisdom (James 3:13-18)

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

*Great are the works of the Lord,  
studied by all who delight in them. Psalm 111:2  
Please silence your cell phones and other electronic devices.*

## So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead

Luke T. Johnson, comments on James 2:17-26

The last phrase of 2:17, "faith simply by itself," provides an important clue to James's understanding. In the ensuing dialogue, he pillories one who equates faith with "right belief" as though it were simply confession or an assent of the intellect, rather than essentially a response to God made up of loyalty, trust, endurance, and obedience. Thus his response to a person who "has faith" of the confessional sort is ironic: "you *do* well" (2:19). In fact, such belief is meaningless, since it is compatible with a life hostile to God. Even demons confess truly that "God is One"—and shudder (2:19). For James, authentic faith is simply faith enacted.

Luke Timothy Johnson, "James," in *HarperCollins Bible Commentary*, HarperCollins, 2000, p. 1164.

## Moses wrote about me

Neil Short

One of the puzzles of Scripture appears in John 5:46. It quotes Jesus as saying, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about

me."

Let's look at some context. In John 5:15-18, Jesus defends his authority for healing people on the sabbath by arguing that God (his Father) works on the sabbath and so, being his Father's son, he also works on the sabbath. Jesus' explanation disturbed the Jews such that they wanted to kill Jesus. Jesus responds to the Jews. One of his charges is that the Jews do not correctly read the Scriptures.

John 5:39-47

**39** "You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. **40** Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. **41** I do not accept glory from human beings. **42** But I know that you do not have the love of God in you. **43** I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. **44** How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? **45** Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. **46** If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. **47** But if you do not believe what he

wrote, how will you believe what I say?"  
(NRSV)

We are a bit challenged to find where Moses wrote about Jesus.

It is generally assumed by Jewish and Christian tradition that Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). The Torah (first five books) never claim internally to be written by Moses, nor does any other Scripture attribute the authorship of the Torah to Moses. Furthermore, there are some blatant internal contradictions to the assumption of Mosaic authorship of the Torah (e.g., Genesis 36:31).

If Jesus meant that the entire Torah was written by Moses, then we could comfortably cite Genesis 3:15 in which God tells the serpent that the seed of the woman would strike him on the head and the serpent will strike the woman's seed on the heel.

The most direct Torah passage that seems to prefigure Jesus is Deuteronomy 18:15-22. That passage is all about the qualifications of a true prophet. Moses, in his speech, is informing Israel how they will receive the word of the LORD. They will not go to sorcerers or practice divination in order to learn the oracles of God. No. They will listen to the prophets. First century Jews, naturally, expected the coming Messiah to fulfill the requirements of Deuteronomy 18:15-22. The passage is referenced and applied to Jesus in the New Testament.

Acts 3:22-23

Moses said, "The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you. And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people."

Acts 7:37

This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, "God will raise up a prophet for you from your own people as he raised me up."

Is this the passage Jesus referenced when he said, "Moses wrote about me?" Very possibly. It looks like this quote along with *most* of the book of Deuteronomy (including chapter 18) was written down by Moses:

Then Moses wrote down this law, and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord,

and to all the elders of Israel.  
Deuteronomy 31:9.

Jesus was prefigured by Moses. The Jews, who revered Moses, should have recognized Jesus as a prophet like Moses.

Moses wrote the law he heard from the LORD on the mountain (Exodus 24:4) which had to do with the rule of the LORD and with proper treatment of fellow human beings. Jesus was all about that; so we can comfortably recognize that the things we know were written by Moses directly prefigured Jesus, God's Messiah.

Kingdom mission is church mission is gospeling about Jesus in the context of a church witness and a loving life. Anyone who calls what they are doing "kingdom work" but who does not present Jesus to others or summon others to surrender themselves to King Jesus as Lord and Savior is simply not doing kingdom mission or kingdom work. They are probably doing good work and doing social justice, but until Jesus is made known, it is not kingdom work.

Scot McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*. Brazos, 2014, p. 142.

## **News:**

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday collection is next Sunday. The special contribution funds will go to the Lakeview, Portales and Manuelito children's homes.

## **Extended prayer list:**

*John Cunningham—cancer*

*Jacey—recovery*

*Norma Robinson—health*

*Linda Boling—health*

*Tatyana Knowlton—macular degeneration*

*H.L. Boling—general health and complications from leukemia*

*Nic and Ani Self—health and personal needs*

