

Question: Your column answers questions about “What would Jesus do?” In response, you often quote from Paul, the Old Testament proverbs and other things in the Bible. Can you explain why you do this?

Although many Bibles print the direct words of Jesus in red while the remainder is in black, this does not mean that only the words printed in red are authorized by Jesus. The direct words of Jesus, as well as the entire Holy-Spirit-guided scriptures contained in the Bible come from the same source: God, the Heavenly Father. All of scripture can help us know something about what Jesus would say or do because he always did only that which was the will of the Father (John 8:20).

When the time came for Jesus to leave the earth and return to the Father, he promised his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth. He told them: “He will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you” (John 16:13-15). When the apostles and New Testament writers spoke, they claimed to be speaking only those things given to them by the Holy Spirit sent from the Father and the Son (2 Corinthians 2:12-13).

In addition, Jesus often quoted from the Old Testament (cf. Mark 12:10; Luke 4:21; John 7:38) because, as Peter explained, “. . . no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:20-21). When Satan tempted him, Jesus quoted the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy, saying, “Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD” (Deuteronomy 8:3; cf. Matthew 4:4). Of his own ministry, Jesus said: “I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say” (John 12:49-50).

I do not believe that we can overstate the importance of Jesus and his words for life. Because he is now

Lord, God has chosen to speak to us through him (Acts 2:36; Hebrews 1:1-2); and Jesus has declared himself to be the way to the Father (John 14:6). As Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). Since some of my readers may not understand that the entire Bible expresses the will of Jesus, the Son of God, as well as the will of God the Father, I try to use the direct words of Jesus as much as possible. However, when seeking to know what Jesus would do, we must reflect on everything in the Bible as consistent with the general character and teachings of Jesus. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to explain this. I hope you will continue to read this column.

[Send questions or comments to University Church of Christ, 801 N. 12th, Murray, KY 42071 or phone 270-753-1881. This article is reproduced on the web: www.nchrist.org] 2014/10/17