

May 11

Scriptures: Read Luke 15 & 16

Key Verse: "... if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead." (Luke 16:31)

Overview

It's amazing but true: there still are "Christians" who have a distinct prejudice against (if not an out-and-out hatred for) Jews. Three or four times a year, I receive mail from these anti-Semites. Usually their letters are more like tomes—overstuffed manila envelopes with articles, essays, facts and figures, all designed and tailored to make me believe there is a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world. It is hateful and disgusting. What's more, it's sinful.

Jesus was a Jew, and I love Him; I also love His people. That's one reason why my family and I gave seven years of our lives to living and working in Israel.. I also have the highest respect for the disciples and the Apostle Paul (all Jews)—so much so, that I follow their teaching and base my life on their interpretation of the words of Jesus. On top of that (or should I say, "foundational to that"), is my high view of Moses and the prophets. The "Old" Testament, as we call it, is the very root system of my Christian faith. Take the Old Testament away from me and you've uprooted me—focus only on the New Testament and you may appear alive for awhile, just like your Christmas tree appears to be living for a week or so in your house at Christmas-time, but eventually my branches will turn brown.

In Luke 16, Jesus tells the story of the rich man and Lazarus. He quotes Abraham as saying that if "Moses and the prophets" can't convince a person of the reality of Heaven and Hell, then the resurrection won't do it either. Jesus' life and ministry was a fulfillment of the Old Testament. You can try to take Jesus out of the Old Testament—but you cannot take the Testament out of Jesus. Like love and marriage, they are inseparable. But don't call it a "mixed" marriage. Sure, the Old Testament is Jewish, but so is the New!

Prayer

Dear Lord, in our reading in Luke 15, You spoke again and again of finding that which was lost. Help us to help You look for the lost, bringing a precious person to You today.