- Having completed Module 12 after 6
 years of teaching and 12 years of
 journeying I thought it would be good
 to look at journey preparation with
 the benefit of hindsight
- Many of the things I believed at the beginning of my journey have been deconstructed by my encounters with God Himself

- Many doctrines and theological positions became untenable by the cognitively dissonant experiences I had during the last 12 years
- I guarantee if you don't bail out you will face the same cognitive dissonance where your experiences don't match your beliefs.

- The Engaging God programme is as its name suggests about engaging God personally and allowing God Himself to reveal and unveil the truth through your personal encounters with Him
- Don't let the Bible interpret God let God interpret the Bible

- We have the Holy Spirit of Truth in us and with us as our guide
- We have Jesus the way, truth and life in us and with us to disciple us
- We have our loving Father in us and with us to Father us into sonship
- Agape love should be what we use to measure and test everything against

- The essence, nature and characteristic of God who is Father, Son and Spirit as love is the foundation for all the teaching modules
- Creation's beginning and consummation is totally centred on Jesus the Alpha and Omega

- Col 1:16 .. all things have been created through Him (Jesus) and for Him. 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself,
- Eph 1:10 the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.
 In Him

- 1 Cor 15:28 When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.
- Col 3:11 but Christ is all, and in all.

- Jesus is the beginning and end of time and the logos or plot of time
- We were always destined to be included in Jesus as God is transcendent outside of time in the eternal now is continually bringing good out of all our decisions even the bad ones

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

 Eph 1:3 Let's celebrate God! He lavished every blessing heaven has upon us in Christ! 4 He associated us in Christ before the fall of the world! Jesus is God's mind made up about us! He always knew in his love that he would present us again face-to-face before him in blameless innocence.

 Eph 1:5 He is the architect of our design; his heart dream realized our coming of age in Christ. 6 His grace-plan is to be celebrated: he greatly endeared us and highly favoured us in Christ. His love for his Son is his love for us. (The Gospel is not about telling people how lost they are, but reminding them of how loved they are!)

 2 Tim 1:8the gospel according to the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

- There are many difficult and thorny questions in relation to who God really is and what is His purpose.
- What about the old testament (OT) version of God
- We need to read and interpret the Bible through the lens of Jesus and love

- The God of the old covenant is the same God of the new covenant.
- Hebrews 1:1. "In the past, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe."

- Some fundamental basic foundational truths that frame the journey
- God is good. Only good. Always God
- God did not create evil
- God does not use evil
- God will not allow evil
- His only connection with evil is to overcome it through the power of the cross

- Phil 2:13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.
- God is at work in all His children according to His good pleasure creating that good free will so we will make the right choice in the end
- What is His good pleasure?

- Col 1:19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,
- Heb 10:8 After saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have not desired, nor have You taken pleasure in them"

- Love is the highest governing principle of all creation
- Therefore when debating truth and interpreting the Bible love should still be the highest governing principle in bible interpretation
- Love keeps no record of wrongs neither should we even in diversity

- God is love this vital truth must be the rule for all Bible interpretation
- Bible interpretation should deepen our appreciation and experience of God's love
- Any Bible interpretations that lessen or diminish God as love must be inherently and fundamentally flawed

- The use of love as our hermeneutical tool will lead to a deeper understanding of the very nature, essence and character of I am that I am by revealing love as God's intrinsic glory
- Making love conditional reveals a critical judgmental quality that makes love based on obligation and obedience

 Using this truth it is easier to decide which doctrinal truths and theological positions are aligned with God is love and those that are man made deceptions of the religious mind-set that we may have assumed and presumed to be true

- In my process of engaging the reality of God's love by experience I found many assumptions and presumptions
- As the Father deconstructed my mind from its frameworks He asked me how much of what I knew about Him and Christianity came directly from Him and how much from others teaching, books, sermons or my own studies

- I ask the Father what do I use when interpreting the Bible - LOVE
- If it is not unconditional love it is not Me
- If it is love it is Me and love must be unconditional and otherly otherwise it is not love at all

If your theology doesn't lead you to love people more, you should question your theology.

- I am a consuming fire passionately expressing My love there are no depths, heights or widths that I not willing to go to remove every obstacle, barrier and defence against My love.
- Son nothing can separate My children from My love and presence I am love and I will not be denied.

Rom 8:29 He pre-designed and engineered us from the start to be jointly fashioned in the same mould and image of his son according to the exact blueprint of his thought. We see the original and intended pattern of our lives preserved in his Son. He is the firstborn from the same womb that reveals our genesis. He confirms that we are the invention of God.

Rom 8:30 Jesus reveals that we pre-existed in God; he defines us. He justified us and also glorified us. He redeemed our innocence and restored the glory we lost in Adam. 31 All these things point to one conclusion, God is for us! Who can prevail against us? 32 The gift of his son is the irrefutable evidence of God's heart towards us. He held nothing in reserve; but freely and undeservedly gave everything we could ever wish to have; this is what our joint sonship is all about.

 Rom 8:35 What will it take to distance us from the love of Christ? You name any potential calamity: intense pressure of the worst possible kind, cluster-phobia, persecution, destitution, loneliness, extreme exposure, life-threatening danger, or war?

Rom 8:37 ... His love has placed us above the reach of any onslaught. 38 This is my conviction; no threat whether it be in death or life; be it angelic beings, demon powers or political principalities, nothing known to us at this time, or even in the unknown future; 39 no dimension of any calculation in time or space, nor any device yet to be invented, has what it takes to separate us from the love of God demonstrated in Christ. Jesus is our ultimate authority.

- Old Covenant vs New Covenant thinking.....
- Old Covenant love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind and your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10:27)
- This a statement of obligation not one birthed by loving desire

- Loving God is not the greatest thing you can do -- that was the greatest commandment under the law.
- You will only end up frustrated and condemned trying to love God with all your heart, soul and mind because it's a legalistic approach.

- John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
- This is a response to being loved so that freely we have received freely we are inspired and empowered to give love

- The law was a ministry of death and condemnation. We are under grace not the law.
- New Covenant we love because He first loved us (1 Jn 4:19) when we focus on His love for us and grow in our experience of that, then love for Him will naturally, effortlessly be our response

- The Greek word, conventionally translated as "commandment," has the root meaning of "the implanted goal," or "imparted goal." it is not an old covenant law
- Jesus, inclusive of us, has reached the goal for us and as us in His human experience,

- Rather than thinking in terms of the finished work of Christ, we ought to think of Christ, God's finished Man, inclusive of us.
- He has already given us the glory that He had with the Father before the world began, and has given that to us in our union with Him.

- The starting point is the love of God for you... out of that love you will be able to love Him, yourself, and others.
- The delusion of still being under the law has kept God's children in bondage and restricted true sonship

- God IS Love... it's His nature, it's who He is. He can't be anything else.
- He's NOT part love and part something else.
- He is ALL Love for ALL. And EVERYTHING He does flows out of Love.

- God is NOT insisting or requiring that you love Him... His love is unconditional.
- He loves you regardless if you ever love Him back.
- That is the basis of grace and mercy it is unconditionally given

- We can only hear what we are willing and ready to hear. Some are neither because of the real cost of the implications of that love message.
- What God is revealing about Himself and love is challenging to the old religious mind-sets

- As our relationship and intimacy with God as our heavenly Father deepens in face to face innocence and is redefined so will our biblical interpretation
- Encountering unconditional love will help us in the ongoing process of experiential revelation of God as love

- So many view God wrongly by incorrectly interpreting the OT
- Many people today find it difficult to reconcile the OT with the NT because it seems to be such a wrathful document of hate which paints God as some kind of a bipolar monster.
- That perspective is understandable when we only interpret the OT literally

- A literal reading of the OT can be dangerous and counterproductive to knowing who God really is
- There is a better way to read the OT which avoids "the killing letter" by embracing "the life-giving Spirit" as revealed in 2 Corinthians 3:6.

- 2 Corinthians 3:6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- How have different people through history interpreted the OT?
- How did Jewish Rabbis of Jesus day read what we call the OT?

- If we want to truly understand how they wrote, we need to first understand how they read.
- The Rabbis did not read texts in the same "closed" and "narrow" and "unimaginative" ways as many evangelicals and others do today.

- The Jewish scholars of Jesus' day used a multi-varied hermeneutic which later came to be known by the acronym "Pardes" (a late Biblical Hebrew word borrowed from a Persian word meaning "garden, or orchard").
- Pardes described a dynamic by which the reader could legitimately interpret
 OT texts on 4 different levels:

- This info is from The Jewish Study Bible: Tanakh Translation
- 1) "Peshat" ("simple" meaning) is the first level, which meant reading Scripture for its "plain sense meaning" or "contextual sense."
- This equates to what we would call the historical-grammatical meanings.

- 2) "Remez" ("hinted at" meaning) is the second level. This is basically what we today call allegorical reading.
- It is predicated on the assumption that Biblical texts frequently say more than what the literal text says or other than what the literal text says. Types, shadows, symbols, and metaphors all happily congregate here.

- 3) "Drash" ("search after" meaning) is the third level. It incorporates personal insights from the reader which cause him to subjectively interact with and then insert meanings and personal proposals and interpretations into the text.
- We call this eisegesis today. This allows the reader wide discretion in making the text relevant for today, here and now.

 This focuses not on the text's historical truth and original grammatical meaning, nor even on the allegorical subtext. But, rather, drash (or midrash) focuses on subjectively finding divine truth and direction for the present moment.

- This is why this level is considered homiletical, the subject of sermons which modernize Scripture to better align with modern sensibilities.
- This allows for the reader to "fill in gaps" of ancient writings by loosely paraphrasing, or even rewriting, the text to comport with current sensibilities.

- 4) Sod" ("secret" meaning) is the fourth level.
- This is where hidden coincidences and meanings lay hidden in Scriptures waiting to be perceived through an epiphany or mystical extrapolation.

- This can include but is not limited to, Gematria, to unveil esoteric secrets divinely embedded in the text.
- Gematria is an alphanumeric code of assigning a numerical value to a name, word or phrase based on its letters. A single word can yield multiple values depending on the cipher used.

- It is crucial to see that these four levels were not viewed as necessarily antagonistic, but often complementary and supplementary to each other.
- The Jews believed that "Each of the four levels incorporates the other levels."
- This was common in the ancient world, to read texts on multiple levels which were not mutually exclusive.

- How did the early church mostly
 Jewish to begin with interpret the OT?
- Mostly in the same multi-layered approach as the Jewish Rabbis and Paul who was from a rabbinical school did.
- The early church fathers had this interpretive background

- There were six known Christian theological schools in the early church: Alexandria, Antioch, Caesarea, Edessa/Nisbis, Ephesus, and Rome/Carthage.
- The early Church's hermeneutic, except for the Antiochan school, largely held to a similar multi-level hermeneutic.

- The church fathers held to four interpretive levels which later came to be formally known as the Quadriga in the Middle Ages
- Literal: What the passage says about past events,
- Allegorical: What the passage can tell us about Christ

- Tropological: What the passage can teach us about how to live,
- Anagogically: What the passage tells us about our ultimate fate.
- St. John Cassian, for example, demonstrates this four-fold exegetical method on the meaning of the word "Jerusalem"

- Literally it is the city of the Jews;
- Allegorically it is the Church of Christ;
- Anagogically it is that heavenly city of God which is the mother of us all;
- Tropologically it is the human soul, which frequently under this title is either blamed or praised by the Lord.

- Some of the church fathers held to three interpretive levels
- Origen: the bodily level, the soulful level, and the spiritual level
- Irenaeus: the literal, vertical allegory and horizontal allegory.

- Some of the church fathers held to just two levels (Justin Martyr and the Apostle Paul both spoke simply of the literal and the spiritual meanings).
- The early Alexandrian Church believed that the primary way to read Scripture was in a non-literal way.

 The greatest Biblical scholar of these Church Fathers was the 3rd Century martyr Origen. He, following the Apostle Paul's lead, wrote that the key to rightly understanding the OT was to read it Allegorically rather than Literally.

- Other church fathers who advocated this way of reading include Ignatius, Barnabas, Justin Martyr, Clement, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose and Augustine.
- These church fathers believed that we must allow the character of God to define Scripture rather than allowing the dead letter of Scripture to define God's character.

- To read the Bible with an allegorical eye does not mean we never read it literally, or for immediate historical context.
- It just means that we don't read it solely that way.
- Karl Barth once said something to the effect that he loved the Bible too much to just read it literally.

- Allegorical Exegesis was the predominant way Christians read the OT up until the 17th-18th centuries, at which time Literal Exegesis came to the forefront.
- Cold rationalism and clinical empiricism replaced the mystical sacred gifts of imagination, intuition and epiphany which had so filled the early church father's readings.

 These Church Fathers and their progeny believed that the key is to read Scripture by the Spirit and not by the dead letter, for the letter kills (and makes God out to be a killer), but the Spirit gives life to the Scriptures. 2 Corinthians 3:6.

The early Church Fathers did not read the OT by the bare letter, nor should we.

- Unfortunately, today what was intended to be a four way method of interpretive has been largely reduced to a restrictive one way where the only legitimate Bible reading is literal "dead letter" exegesis.
- This exegetical and hermeneutical methodology has created the image of a wrathful God.

- If we are to read the OT we need to adjust our methodology so it can become relevant again to NT believers.
- We need a Jesus or love or new covenant Hermeneutic if we are to reconcile that God is love and be embraced rather to fearfully avoided

- This interpretative method says that all Scripture must be interpreted according to, by and through the revealed nature of Jesus.
- The revelation of Jesus is the revelation of the nature of God.
 When reading the OT, allegory is the key.

- "Allegory is language that says one thing and means either something more than what it says or something other than what it says."
- Sometimes then, the OT passage spiritually means exactly what it literally says.

- But, on other occasions, it can mean more than what it literally says or other than what literally says.
- And, on still other occasions, the passage can mean "both" other and more than what it literally says.

- The indwelling Jesus as love is the sole plum-line of Biblical interpretation.
- Here, we allow the character of God to interpret Scripture rather than allowing the bare letter of the OT to interpret God's character.

 To avoid making wrong assumptions about God's character, we need to change our interpretation so the OT is totally consistent with revelation of Jesus in the NT.

- First, we need to realize that the OT had a largely undifferentiated view of God and Satan, which caused them to often wrongly attribute the works of Satan to God.
- Second, we need to see the OT contain embedded types which all point to Christ.

- Third, we need to see that the Old Testament often provides us negative examples which we are not to follow.
- And fourth, we must re-designate the speaker of certain Old Testament dialogues, which though on their face may appear to said by or about OT characters, are in reality heavenly utterances said by or about Jesus as the logos word of God.

- When reading the OT we need to recognize that its authors had a largely indistinguishable view of God.
- We must use the Jesus or love hermeneutic to reverse-engineer any and all passages which misattribute the works and directives of Satan to God.

- It is well documented by both Jewish and Christian scholars that the OT saints did not have a fully discerned view of God and Satan.
- They wrongly thought Satan was God's left hand, His official minister of wrath, an obedient angel just doing God's dirty work.

- Jesus cleared that up as totally wrong when He came and revealed Satan as a cosmic rebel who was the author of all death and destruction.
- Jesus came to reveal and destroy the devil's works, not commit them, and to show us to be mistaken if we ever thought otherwise.

- The major misconception the OT saints had about Satan was that he worked for God instead of against Him.
- This caused occasionally errant descriptions of where destruction came as from "the Lord" rather than from "Satan." Jesus cleared that misconception up in John 10:10.

- In this view, God is both dark and light, both good and evil, both loving and wrathful, and both forgiving and vengeful.
- Satan is wrongly seen as the minister of God's wrath, the enforcer of God's curses, and the executioner of God's judgments.

 So, for the OT saint to say, "The Lord called down fire from the sky," or "The Lord brought down curses on a person," or "The Lord struck someone down with pestilence, sword, famine or death" all simply meant that they believed "Satan" did the destructive act at the Lord's command. So, when God is quoted in the OT, it could either refer to "Yahweh" or to "Satan."

- An example was the incident in which King David sinned by numbering Israel.
- This incident is first recorded in 2 Samuel 24:1, and then centuries later in 1 Chronicles 21:1.
- In the earlier entry, David's sin is caused by "the anger of God," while in the later passage "Satan" is the cause of David's sin.

- The same sin, same event, entirely different cause. This is consistent with this dipolar view of God in the OT
- The Jews may have begun to see that they could not attribute both sin and punishment to God, good and evil to God, love and hate to God.

- If, Satan's destructive activity is wrongly attributed as God's wrath, that leaves us falsely accusing God of all sorts of evil events, motives and destructions.
- God is blamed for all that Satan does, while Satan gets partial credit for the good God does.

- The end result is that the character of God is clouded and men are unable to fully see, trust and rejoice in his love and forgiveness.
- The OT saints wrongly thought "Satan speaking" was "God's angry voice."

- Since they assumed Satan was God's official "minister of wrath," they attributed everything that worked death and destruction as coming from God
- The disciples still held this view while Jesus was still with them

 When James and John wanted to call down fire on the Samaritan village for rejecting them, Jesus had to show these two disciples that OT saints frequently did not know which spirit they were operating out "of."

- Jesus showed them that not everything in the OT that is called "God's fire," or "God's wrath," or "God's judgment" is in fact "of" God's Spirit.
- We also need to re-route and re-divide all death, darkness and wrath passages to Satan's spirit and all life, light and love passages to Jesus' Spirit, no matter what they literally "say."

- The goodness of God is based on this foundational truth
 — God never kills, ever
- He warns us not to kill, either physically or even within our heart's imagination, and that by so doing, we will be "perfect" like our Heavenly Father. - Matthew 5:38-48.

- In John 1:18 it says that nobody prior to the Gospels had truly seen God at any time—because all had wrongly blended the nature of Satan into their image of God.
- The result was that nobody had a pure understanding of God's absolute love and goodness.

- We need to realised that the OT contained imbedded shadows, symbols, metaphors, enigmas and types which all point to some facet of Jesus and the Kingdom of God.
- This is the type of allegory in which the OT text means more than what it is literally saying.

- Jesus frequently allegorized the Old Testament.
- Using key imagery from OT passages which were only seen as literal, He would then totally change their literal meaning into an allegorical application toward Himself.
- You have heard it said but I say...

- He referred to Himself as:
- The Temple of God (John 2:19-22),
- The true manna from heaven (John 6:50),
- Jacob's supernatural ladder (John 1:51),
- The sign of Jonah (Matthew 12:38-40),

- The I AM burning bush of Exodus 3 (John 8:58),
- The great shepherd of Psalm 23 (John 10:11),
- The Brazen Serpent in the wilderness who was lifted up on a pole to provide healing for all (John 3:14-15), etc.

 On the road to Emmaus, Jesus told the two disciples "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He (Christ) interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself...And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; Luke 24:26-27, 31-32.

- Now, we know that Jesus is literally nowhere explicitly to be found by name in the OT. But, allegorically, He is everywhere to be found.
- Jesus allegorized the Scriptures to these two disciples. And their hearts burned within them as they finally understood the true importance of the OT in the light of Jesus.

- Paul was clear that the OT literal events were prophetic pre-figures, or types, of a later NT reality revealed in and through Jesus Christ who fills all things.
- Paul established this truth. He wrote that Biblical revelations occur first in the natural (OT), the truer and deeper meanings of which are then unveiled in the Spiritual (NT). 1 Corinthians 15:46.

- Examples:
- Literal foreskin-circumcision in the Old becomes spiritual heart-circumcision in the New (Romans 2:29).
- Keeping the literal-Sabbath in the Old becomes instead a spiritual-Sabbath of abiding in divine rest in the New (Hebrews 4:4-11).

- The Law written on literal-tablets of stone in the Old becomes the Law of Christ's love written on the spiritual-tablets of our heart in the New (2 Corinthians 3:3-9).
- The literal-temple in the Old becomes the spiritual-temple of our living bodies in the New (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). And the list goes on and on.

- First in the natural OT, then in the spiritual NT fulfilment.
- First the shadow in the Old, then the substance in the New.
- First the type in the Old, then the anti-type (or "real deal") in the New.

- First in the externalized Law and the Prophets, then in the internalized in the Kingdom of God within us.
- The Jesus love Hermeneutic says that there is something to be gleaned in every OT passage about Jesus, His victory over Satan and/or His Kingdom of light, love, and learning.

- Sometimes the OT says it perfectly without allegorical adjustment.
- Other times, the passage needs to be allegorized as saying more or other than what the literal text says.

 Even the violent passages in the OT can reveal truths about spiritual warfare never to be taken literally against flesh and blood enemies, but rather they instruct us on how to better battle and vanquish our inner enemies

- Everything can be viewed from the perspective that Jesus came to destroy the woks of evil and restore our lost identity
- Our Goliaths of fear, our personal Philistines of affliction, and our demonic Egyptian enemies seeking to destroy our lives and enslave our souls, etc.

- The Jesus love lens, then, is simply the light and love of God revealed in Christ.
- It makes all things new, even the OT!
- When it comes to tough OT passages, remember to allegorize.

- Many question are also resolved by having face to face encounters with God Himself where His essence, nature and character are reveal through personal experience and deconstruction
- The fact that God is love and inherently good is put into question through a very literal interpretation of the OT

- Using love as the lens of interpretation brings clarity to the distorted view of God created by man's own understanding and theology
- Enjoy this amazing adventure as a pioneer who will be a gateway of heaven into the earth

- Live loved
- Love living
- Live loving
- Be at rest

Restoration of All Things 2

- Rest is the key to restoration and revelation
- Start to focus on your breathing slowing it down and start thinking of the name of God YHVH
- Breathe in deeply and exhale slowly Yod
- Breathe in Hei and out Vav

Restoration of All Things 2

- Repeat in Hei out Yod in Hei and out Vav
- Be still and know that I am God
- I am love, I am joy, I am peace
- Invite love, joy and peace flow in you and through you to create an atmosphere of rest around you

