

It is for this reason that Jesus placed so much stress on the attitude that He desired His followers to take in relation to the Bible. We have noticed how strongly He rebuked Peter when Peter refused to accept the Word of God as given by Jesus Christ Himself, the Second Person of the Trinity.

Another striking evidence of our Lord's attitude toward the Word of God--this time toward the Old Testament--is contained in the last chapter of the Gospel of Luke, where we read about the appearance of the risen Lord to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We are told that Jesus drew near to these men, so disguised that they did not recognize Him. After some conversation, they told Him how disappointed they felt about having lost their beloved Master, who had been crucified a few days before. On the occasion described in Matthew 16 and on other occasions, Jesus had clearly told His disciples that He would be crucified and raised again the third day. Yet their remarks showed that they had not taken this in at all. If you or I had been in His place, I can readily imagine what we might have said. We would probably have felt quite irritated at the disciples for not recalling our words, when the events actually occurred. But Jesus took quite a different attitude. He wanted to impress upon the disciples the great importance of the Old Testament. Instead of finding any reference to His previous remarks, we read in verses 25-27:

Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Thus we see that in this case Jesus used very strong language, calling the disciples "fools and slow of heart." But the thing He criticized them for was not their failure to recollect what He had told them--important as that was--but rather their failure to have studied the books of the Old Testament in such a way as to gather from them the vital message that God had placed there.