

Let's Discuss...The Bible

PART 7 Interpretation of Scripture



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Key Bible verses:

*I can do all things through
Christ who strengthens me.*
Philippians 4:13 NKJV

EPISODE SUMMARY

In this episode, we talk about the humility that is required when it comes to interpreting the Bible. We discuss how throughout Church history, the many ways of interpreting Scripture have at times caused huge disagreements, which is why we should approach it with humility. The way we interpret the Bible is important because it affects how we live our lives. If we're truly humble, we recognise that we can't help but read the Bible through our own perspective - how we grew up, where we live, where we're from, etc. Did we mention humility is foundational to interpreting the Bible?

DEFINITIONS

creed: a statement or system of beliefs

hermeneutics: the practice of how to interpret the Bible to understand the author's intended meaning

LET'S DISCUSS...

- Can you see how different people might read the same Bible verses and interpret different things? Why do you think this might be?
 - » Hint: Think about how you read your own Bible and your own situations and background. Do these things affect your reading?
- Have a read of the creeds (below) that were formed by the Early Church and still used by Christians today. Would you say that you hold these beliefs to be true? Why or why not?
- Hannah mentions asking questions of people who are wiser than her. Do you have people in your life who you go to for help understanding a Bible passage, spiritual concept, or something you're struggling with in your faith?
- Mims talks about how she didn't hear and understand the love of God for her personally until she was in her 20s because the Christian context she grew up in had different emphases. How has your understanding of God's immense love for you personally grown or changed over the years? Do you think you've come to a life-changing realisation of how much He loves you?

Bonus!

- What do you think it means to have a 'Jesus-centric hermeneutic'?
- Rich mentions how different periods of Church history have emphasised different aspects of our faith. In 100 years from now, what do you hope your generation of Christians will be known for having emphasised?

Check out just some of the unique ways God worked through different people and cultures to bring about important movements in the Church:

The Desert Fathers & Mothers – Egypt, 3rd-5th centuries

In response to Christianity becoming the official state religion of the Roman Empire, the desert Fathers and Mothers emphasized a return to a more Jesus-like

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faith, humbly practicing lives of simplicity, prayer, and service to others.

The Protestant Reformation – Europe, 1500s

Unjust practices within the catholic church led reformers to call for less emphasis on the authority of the institutional church and more emphasis on the authority of “sola scriptura”: Scripture alone.

The Anabaptist Movement – Europe, 1520s-1530s

In opposition to a state church, war, and coercive measures, Anabaptists advocated for peace-making and discipleship. They believed baptism should be reserved for adults who had freely decided to put their faith in Christ.

The Divine Healing Movement – USA, 1870s-1890s

Also known as “Faith Cure”, Christians in this movement rekindled the belief that in response to prayers of faith, God could supernaturally heal diseases, illnesses, or injuries.

The Pentecostal Movement – Worldwide, 1900s

Pentecostals believed that every Christian should seek to be empowered by God through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, often evidenced by speaking in tongues. They taught that this was a direct, personal experience that any Christian could have.

**Note: Each of these movements were (and still are) controversial in the Church, the wider body of believers worldwide, largely due to differences in interpretation and application of Scripture.*

LET'S PRAY...

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 NIV

- Today we ask God to help us become humble on our journey of reading and understanding the Bible. Pray that our lives will be shaped by the wisdom of our ancient tradition.

“One humiliation a day keeps the pride away.”

LET'S GO DEEPER...

- **3 Minute Theology 2.4: How do we interpret the Bible?** by Three Minute Theology [video]

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THE CREEDS

Within Christianity, two of the most commonly agreed upon creeds are **The Apostles' Creed** and **The Nicene Creed**.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

developed from 341 AD – early 700s AD

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day He rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

THE NICENE CREED

developed from 325 - 381 AD

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through Him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

**Note: The biblical canon that we recognise today was developed over the course of the 2nd - 4th centuries AD, and finalised by around 382 AD. However, both the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic churches have different canons of Scripture. For more on this check out:*

- **How the Biblical Canon Was Formed** by Museum of the Bible [video]

