

Let's Discuss...The Bible

PART 7 Interpretation of Scripture



scan or click
me to watch
the video

Scriptures mentioned:

*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 the interpretation of Scripture. We discuss how throughout Church history, the plethora of ways to interpret Scripture has at times been a source of division, which is why we should approach it with humility. Our method of interpretation is key because it informs how we live our lives. A humble approach to interpretation of Scripture understands that we can't help but see it through the lens of our current cultural context. Did we mention humility is foundational to interpreting Scripture?

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...

- In what ways have your lenses (cultural context, worldview, background, circumstances, etc.) shaped your interpretation of the Bible? Can you see contrasts between your own view of Scripture and that of someone with a different lens?
- Have a read of the creeds (below) that were formed by the Early Church and embraced by wider Christianity since. Are there any concepts that you consider foundational to your faith that are not mentioned in the creeds? (For example, what do they assert about the authority of *Scripture?)
- 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 passage or spiritual concept? Are there any favourite authors or content creators who have helped support your understanding of Scripture?
- 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?
- Describe what it means to have an intentionally Jesus-centric hermeneutic. How does this reflect or differ from the way you've approached Scripture thus far?
- Rich mentions how different periods of Church history have emphasised different aspects of our faith. In 100 years from now, what do you think our 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 Father's and Mothers emphasized a return to a more Jesus-like faith, humbly practicing lives of simplicity, prayer, and service to others.

Let's Discuss...The Bible

PART 7 Interpretation of Scripture



scan or click
me to watch
the video

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 give us a daily dose of humility on our journey of learning how to interpret Scripture, allowing our lives to 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]
- **How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth** by Gordon Fee & Douglas Steward [book]
- **Historical Theology** by Alister E. McGrath [book]
- **Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible** by E. Randolph Richards & Brandon J. O'Brien [book]

Let's Discuss...The Bible

PART 7 Interpretation of Scripture



scan or click
me to watch
the video

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]