

Reading the Bible
for understanding and transformation
October 1, 2021
Class 1 outline

Opening remarks.

Aim of the course.

- To give us opportunity to read the Bible.
- To think about and focus on how God uses the Bible to transform us.
- To name and address potential obstacles that may hinder your Bible reading and engagement.
- To refresh and renew our commitment to asking God to change us through engagement with Holy Scripture.

Introduction.

1. Engaging Holy Scripture is a central way to grow in Christ.
2. The Bible can be challenging and intimidating.
3. And yet, “the Bible is a broad and deep river. It is shallow enough for lambs to wade in and yet deep enough for elephants to float.” (a paraphrase)

A proper orientation: humble eagerness.

A potential obstacle: technical efficiency

Scripture Engagement

Psalm 1

- 1 Blessed is the man
who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, *
nor stood in the way of sinners,
and has not sat in the seat of the scornful;
- 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, *
and on his law will he meditate day and night.
- 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the waterside, *
that will bring forth his fruit in due season.
- 4 His leaf also shall not wither; *
and look, whatever he does, it shall prosper.
- 5 As for the ungodly, it is not so with them; *
but they are like the chaff,
which the wind scatters away from the face of the earth.
- 6 Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand
in the judgment, *
neither the sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
- 7 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, *
but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

A guided reading:

Begin by asking God to guide your reading of and thinking about this psalm.
Ask him to help you hear him speaking to you.

General questions you can always ask about Scripture:

- 1) What does it say?
- 2) What does it mean?
- 3) How do I/we live in its light?

Questions specific to Psalm 1.

- What are the movements of the righteous “man” with respect to the wicked? (vs. 1)
- What does he **not** do? (vs. 1)
- Why do you think this verse speaks about these actions?
- What does the righteous one do instead? (vs. 2)
- What do you think is the significance of “day and night”?
- A synonym for “meditate” is “ruminate.” What does that do to your understanding of this passage?
- What images are used of the blessed man’s life? (vs. 3-4) What do they communicate about the spiritual life?
- What image is used of the “ungodly”? (vs. 5)
- Where is their life headed? (vs. 6)
- Why are these things true? (vs. 7)
- Are there other passages of Scripture this Psalm reminds you of? How do they relate? What do you learn about Psalm 1 when thinking about these other passages? What do you learn about these other passage in light of Psalm 1.
- What do you want after reading this Psalm?
- What do you believe God is calling you to do?
- Is there something you would like to say to God after thinking about this Scripture? (Go ahead: Say it to him!)