

Going Deeper — Part 1 – September 25th

Becoming Church: Five Ways



Readings

Psalms 119

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,



2 Peter 3:

15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.



Job 32:

6 "I am young in years, and you are old; that is why I was fearful, not daring to tell you what I know. 7 I thought, 'Age should speak; advanced years should teach wisdom.'



8 But it is the spirit in mortals, the breath of the Almighty, that gives them understanding.

9 It is not only the old who are wise, not only the aged who understand what is right.



Col 1: 9

We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, 10 so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way:

Overview

As we begin looking at going deeper into scripture, it may be helpful to reflect on the motto of St. Anselm: "faith seeking understanding". This has been described as "an active love of God seeking a deeper knowledge of God."

I offered two propositions...

- "The further from the original culture you are, the greater the chance of strangeness"
- "The greater the focus and the greater the isolation, the greater the chance of strangeness"

... to illustrate that we are more likely to distort the meaning of scripture when we remove it from its historical and cultural context, or from the text that surrounds it, or when we remove ourselves from balanced discussion with others.

Questions for personal reflection and group discussion

Consider these three statements:

"You can make the Bible say anything you like"

"The Bible is a Map Book / User's Manual / Instruction Guide"

"The Bible says it, I believe it, that's good enough for me!"

Have you heard these (or similar) before? How far do you agree and how far do you disagree? In what ways could these statements be helpful and how might they be unhelpful?

Do you find reading scripture easy or difficult, enlightening or a bit boring? Be honest! What aspects give you greatest joy or greatest trouble? You may like to discuss this with others and see if they have similar experiences or helpful guidance.

What other resources have you considered to help study scripture: Commentaries, notes, internet resources, teaching series, preaches on tape / CD / Mp3 etc? What (if any) have you found most helpful and why?

Feedback and Questions

- If you have anything to share out of all of this – any stories, testimonies, creative works or whatever – please let us know. You may be a huge encouragement to many other people.
- You can submit comments and questions to the church office, via your home group leader, or make a note and put it in the offering boxes. There is a special section on the Church website (www.opengate.org.uk) on the 'Forum' page to discuss any issues relating to the church.

Going Deeper — Part 1 – September 23rd

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