



Teaching the Bible Classically with Dr. Fred Putnam

Lecture 1: Introduction: Is the Bible a Classic Text

Outline:

Study and Devotions

- Devotional reading is for the sake of asking what the text is saying to me.
- Studying the Bible as a text is to look at the Bible as literature in order to understand what it is saying, how it is saying it, and then why is it saying it the way it is.

Is the Bible a classical or classic text?

- The Bible is not a classical text.
- The Bible is a classic text.
 - It is old.
 - It has survived. Thousands of people have copied the Bible by hand. It has been printed more than any other book.
 - It is deeply embedded into our culture.
 - It is part of who we are and part of how our culture thinks.
 - It asks the questions about who we are as human beings.

What about archeology and the Bible?

- Archeological data can go out of date fairly quickly.
- What are we looking for in archeology?
- Things are so rare we should be surprised that we find anything.
- Very little of what existed in the past remains. Many of the sites that were lived in and that were important in antiquity are yet unidentified.
- Even when sites are identified, they are not always excavated.
- There is political interference with archeology.
- There is the problem of material remains that have to be interpreted.

We run into things that are offensive in books from other cultures.

- Ideas like polygamy and slavery are offensive.
- When we read an old book, we bring it into our culture and judge it by our norms. Rather we can look at a book as inviting us back into a different culture and giving us an opportunity to look around.
- What can I learn from it despite these things?



- How would other cultures view our fascination with crime as entertaining and satisfying?
- What does this tell us about the nature of human relations? What does it tell us about what it takes to make a nation? What does it tell us about God's relationship with his people?