



## Teaching the Bible Classically with Dr. Fred Putnam

### Lecture 14: Epilogue

#### Outline:

##### Is the Bible a great book?

- Yes! It is a classic.

##### Is the Bible literature?

- Yes!
- It can be studied the way that literature is studied.
- However, for Christians, the Bible is a word from God.
- For non-Christians, the Bible is so deeply engrained into the way we think, our art, expectations, into our relationships.
- Understanding the Bible is fundamental, if not essential, to be able to appreciate the fruits of human creativity.

##### Can we study the Bible classically?

- We can study as we study classic texts.
- We can study its poems as other poets.
- We can study the prophecies as prophecies of other classical authors.
- Biographies can be studied like those of Plutarch, Livy, and Augustine.
- “Those who talk of reading the Bible “as literature” sometimes mean, I think, reading it without attending to the main thing that it is about; like reading Burke with no interest in politics, or reading the Aeneid with no interest in Rome. That seems to me to be nonsense.” (Lewis 1958, 2-3).
  - This is from Reflections on the Psalms by C.S. Lewis.
  - The Bible is not just literature.
  - It is not meant to be studied merely for what we can get out of it.
  - It tells us that there is more to existence than what we can think, or see, or touch.

##### Classical Study

- Pedagogical Foundations
  - Trust the text that we are reading.
  - Read it sympathetically.
  - Trust the students.
  - Trust the process.
  - As teachers, we listen. Do not explain, fix, or lead.
  - We are in this together. The text, you, and I are in this conversation.



- Pedagogy & Study
  - Read. Read closely.
  - Discuss the text with respect.
  - Read with an imagination that is controlled by the text.
  - Read ancient primary sources.
  - Read about culture, history, and life of those times.