



Teaching the Bible Classically with Dr. Fred Putnam

Lecture 3: Narrative (I)

Outline:

Introduction

- Half of the Bible is story.
- The word “story” does not mean fiction or something that is untrue.
 - A story is something that is related about what has happened literally or figuratively.

Challenges

- Assumed familiarity
 - We assume that we know the stories that we are reading. It becomes difficult to attend to the story. We go on automatic pilot by the title.
- Media
 - Veggie Tales and Prince of Egypt do not help when it comes to reading Bible stories. These are distorted pictures of the stories.
 - Read the story out loud and have the students write out the story in their own words. Then have them compare their story to the Bible story.
- We read the Bible pragmatically, rather than to study and understand it.
 - We use the Bible instead of reading and paying attention to the whole text.
- Authors assume familiarity with their world.
 - We read the names of places and the names don't mean anything.
 - The author assumes we know how things are done, how long things take, how far places are from one another.

“The story *is* the message” (Ryken)

- We need to let the text get through.
- We are looking at the story that is written.

Kinds of Information

- Stories tell more than what happened.
 - They introduce characters.
 - They tell us about places.
 - They make commentary.



- The story is when it happens, how it happens, who the people were, and what didn't happen.

Asking Questions

- What are we being told?
- Why are we being told this here?
- What happened? Let's work through this step by step. What was involved?
- How much time did it take? Example: Genesis 38

Offering Information

- If students need background information, point them towards it.