

Understanding the Bible / Scriptures

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[0 : 00] All right, good morning everybody. It's been a good weekend so far. Yesterday was just incredible.

Got to spend a lot of time outside. We went for a nice walk. And the bugs weren't even that bad. You get the catch-22, right? The weather gets nice, then the bugs get really bad.

But yesterday was kind of perfect for us. Storm damage? Storm damage? No. Oh, you guys had, yeah, I think it was mostly north of the 70 up here.

Yeah, so any stories? John? The lights went out where? Here? Okay.

John? On a farm next to Fulgen Farms, two pivots got partially knocked over. Two pivots? A set of pivots irrigation systems.

[1 : 03] Oh, okay. And there was insulation from mire all over the farm. Oh, it just got blown from mire? Wow. Mire got hit by? Mire got hit by. They're aware of his pivots.

They flipped his distribution center right there. It collapsed. Wow. I didn't realize that. It got hurt, though. That's good. Okay. Okay. Yeah, we went down into our basement because the, when was that?

Wednesday night? But we didn't get much of anything in Cedarville. So, but yeah, we were keeping track.

It was going past Tip City and they were seeing, what do they call them? Funnels. Funnels. Yeah. So, but I, did anybody, did anybody get hurt?

No. Yeah. Not at mire anywhere? Okay. Good. Praise the Lord for that. Well, we're talking about keys to understanding scripture.

[2 : 02] I think we'll just do two more weeks. Actually, next week, we'll be having Tim Board here, right? He's going to be doing both Sunday school class and the main service.

And then we'll kind of finish up this little series in June, the week after. But we're just going to continue on keys to understanding the Bible or keys to understanding scripture. One resource I'll pitch here is this book called Knowing Scripture by R.C. Sproul.

It gets into some of the stuff that we've been talking about. Things like hermeneutics and kind of how to study the Bible, looking at the culture in the Bible, practical tools for Bible study.

It's a pretty accessible book. I've had this for, I don't know, 10 years or so. And it's been good. My kids probably think, what, R.C. Sproul?

Isn't he, isn't he a false teacher? Yeah, he's a Calvinist. So, I'll sometimes bring that up. But, you know what, you can't just read books by people that you only agree with on everything.

[3 : 19] If you do that, you're not going to read any books except for the Bible. And then you're in big trouble. So, always be open to learning from anybody.

Even people you might disagree with strongly on things. So, but let's get into this here. My notes.

Okay, so we talked about figures of speech. We talked about context last week. Today's just going to be a bunch of, like, kind of little things. I mentioned that word hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics is kind of an academic word for the, of interpreting scripture. But hermeneutics is actually about interpreting any book, any type of literature.

And the book, or the Bible, is just like any book in that we want to understand it correctly, how it should be understood. And in a lot of ways, the Bible is like any other book.

[4 : 26] In some ways, it's not like any other book. But in many ways, it is. And so, there are principles for interpreting any kind of literature. And the Bible is a book with, of many books, right?

It's a collection of books. And they're all of different sorts and kinds. We have historical narratives. We have poetry. We have songs in there. We have more of, like, instruction.

Instruction, we call that didactic teaching, where you're just, you know, teaching principles, things like that. If you look at the epistles in the New Testament, those are more didactic.

We have legal, we have, like, legal codes in the Bible. And each of those can be, I think, understanding what type of literature you're reading when you're in the Bible can be helpful to interpreting it.

The first thing we're going to look at is, in understanding the Bible, we need to understand and look at the objective meaning of what's being taught.

[5 : 34] The objective meaning. There's, and that's looking at what did the author intend to convey when they wrote this.

And whenever you're looking at the Bible and who the author is, we need to consider that there's actually two authors, right? There's the human author, right?

The person, because the words that are written in the Bible were not written directly by the hand of God. You can maybe make the case for that with the Ten Commandments of the law, right?

They were written and inscribed by the hand of God. But the rest of the scriptures were written down by human persons as they were inspired or given direction by God.

So there's the human author, and then there's the divine author, God himself. And so we need to, when we look at the scripture, what is the objective meaning? What was the author intending to convey?

[6 : 37] There's, if you open up to 2 Peter, Peter talks about the prophets and how they gave some of the scriptures.

2 Peter 1.19. We'll actually maybe look at a little bit of the context.

I like to at least read one or two verses before to provide a little context. Or actually, this is 19 through 21.

So it says this, The Bible uses that figure, that metaphor a lot.

The scriptures, God's word is a light in a dark place. Until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation.

[7 : 45] For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. So this speaks to the two authors. A man wrote it down, but he was moved, inspired, directed by the Spirit of God, by God himself.

And so, when the words were written down, it wasn't some man saying, Well, these are my ideas about God.

No, these are God's ideas about God. And that's what was written down. So, if that's the way that they were written, then that's the way that we should read them.

Right? If they were written as God's ideas, and what God meant to communicate, then we need to read it that way.

So, if the scriptures are not written according to a man's private interpretation, the way that a man is interpreting events or doctrines, and then in the same way when we read, when we study the same words, we should do it in a way that we understand what the author is intending to communicate.

[9 : 07] I'll just give one example where, and I see this fairly often, but if you turn to Romans 11.29, try to give as many examples as I can of some of these principles, because it, you know, examples, when you apply examples to things, they're easier to understand, applying examples to principles.

Jamie and I, we met in church, and I remember so vividly, this scripture was brought up quite a bit in talking about you have a calling in your life, or maybe God has given you a special gift.

It might be a miracle working gift of some kind, or just some other kind of gift, and you have these, this spiritual gift, or a calling in your life.

Let's say a calling to be a missionary, or a calling to be a pastor, or a calling to be an entrepreneur in the, in the work, in the workforce, or in the workplace.

And so, this scripture was brought up. It was never, it was never read with the other scriptures. It was always read, or quoted just by itself.

[10 : 37] And it would be taught that the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. If God calls you to something, then that will never change.

And that's, repentance means to, to turn, to change your mind. So if God calls you to something, he's not going to change his mind. He's not going to call you to do something different. And so, is that what this Bible verse is doing?

teaching? Well, you don't know if you just read the Bible verse by itself. And like we talked about last week, you should never read a Bible verse, right? Always read at least a few. And, if you can, a lot more than a few. So this, what did I say? 11:29. So this scripture is in, it says, it's talking about Israel.

this chapter 11 here. And so, verse 26, and so all Israel will be saved. As it is written, the deliverer will come out of Zion. He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.

[11:49] He's talking about his commitment to Israel. Concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. This is the gospel, is the gospel to the Jews? He's talking about the gospel to the Gentiles.

Concerning the gospel to the Gentiles, the gospel of the grace of God, they are enemies for your sake. But concerning the election, the election of, this is a specific election, the election of Israel. They are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. And so this verse is not teaching anything about spiritual gifts.

or, you know, whether you're called to be a missionary or anything. This is talking about Israel. And Israel was called to be the people of God.

And they were given gifts. The gift of the law of Moses. And so, Paul is trying to communicate here because in Romans, he's been communicating, well, God can call out a people from anybody he wants.

[12:56] Right? And so, he's saying, God can call out the Gentiles to be his special people as well. Just like he did the Jews. And he can cut off the Jews if he wants.

And he actually did. But he wants to communicate also, that doesn't mean that God's going to cut off the Jews forever. Some people might get that idea, right? So he's saying, no, God called the Jewish people and he's not going to repent of that.

He's not going to change his mind. But does that mean that God doesn't change his mind about anything or about any calling? One of the things that comes to mind is, who did God call to be the king, the first king over Israel?

Saul. Right? And he called Saul and he was going to make sure that Saul and his lineage and line was going to be on the throne forever, right? Nope.

No. In fact, Saul did something. What did he do? He disobeyed God. He offered sacrifices, I think, right when he wasn't supposed to. And God got really upset and sent Samuel and said, you know what?

[14:05] I would have established your throne forever, but because you did this, forget about it. And so that calling to call Saul to be king over Israel, he cut short.

So, but then there was another guy, David, and then later on, David, or God did establish David's throne forever, didn't he?

So anyway, that's one example. A verse taken out of context. We don't just take a verse and say, well, I'm going to apply this to me and that's how I'm going to use the verse. Verses in the Bible can and should be applied, but only when we understand the objective meaning of the verse.

And so we can know something about God and his commitment to promises, right, from this verse. His commitment to promises. We can know something about that, but we can't just take this and say, well, I'm just going to apply this to anything that I want.

Nathan? Yeah. I have a perfect example. Miles covered it of rules of Bible interpretation. Yeah. Very good. Yeah. Thank you. I thought you pointed that out. And by the way, anybody else have any comments?

[15:23] Just let me know. So number two, the number two kind of principle for today is scripture is useful for interpreting scripture.

There's this principle that you can interpret scripture with scripture. This is something that the reformers spoke to a lot because this is going back to sola scriptura, scripture alone because there was, it was common teaching in the Roman Catholic Church specifically that the only way, or, I don't want to say the only way, but the big way to understand the scripture was to, for the traditions of the church or the leaders of the church to explain the Bible.

And, and with sola scriptura, well, if, if you can't have somebody explain the Bible to you, then who's going to explain the Bible?

And the idea is, well, the Bible explains itself. It's self-interpreting. You can understand what the Bible is intending to communicate just by the Bible itself.

And if there are confusing parts in the Bible, is there anything in the Bible that's kind of cloudy, confusing? I've seen some head nods. Yeah. Yeah.

[16:48] You like, read the scripture and you're like, what in the world is going on here? I have no idea. This is, sometimes, you know, and there's a, there's a, a spectrum of, some things are just very clear and some things are kind of cloudy.

But we can use the scripture to make, to take the things that are very clear and help us to understand or to interpret things that are less clear.

Does that make sense? I've got one, just one example here. By the way, one point to keep in mind with this is the assumption with the idea that scripture interprets scripture is the assumption that the Bible is internally consistent.

consistent. It's consistent with itself. Some people don't believe that. Some people think, well, the Bible just has all these different ideas and they conflict sometimes and well, that's okay. But that's not true.

The Bible, there may be conflicting ideas, but we just need to understand why. If we understand the big picture, and this is what dispensationalism a lot is about, right?

[17:58] Is understanding, well, there was something for these people that's different maybe for these people and we need to understand why that is.

But God himself is consistent and that makes the scriptures consistent. So there's a debate about divorce, divorce and remarriage. Does the Bible allow divorce and if you get divorced, are you allowed to be remarried?

And I guess in this case, well, I guess we'll look at both of these. But if we look, open up your Bibles to look at Mark, Mark chapter 10.

And let's see, verse 11, where should we start?

We'll just kind of see what's going on here. Verse 4, they said Moses permitted, well, they're just asking questions about divorce.

[19:11] In verse 4, they said, Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and to dismiss her. And Jesus answered and said to them, because of the hardness of your heart, he wrote you this precept.

But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.

So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man separate. Now this is very, very clear, very distinct, very assertive.

In the house, his disciples also asked him again about this same matter. So this was later, privately.

So he said to them, whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her.

And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery. That seems very cut and dry, right? Is there any room at all for any kind of divorce?

[20:17] Not here. He doesn't provide any kind of exceptions to the rule. He said, here's the rule. Marriage was intended to be permanent and he even references the Old Testament, right?

Or the Genesis. And it says, marriage was intended to be permanent. And there's no reason whatsoever you should get a divorce.

And so some people teach this and don't allow divorce for any reason. But let's go over and look at the book of Matthew.

Matthew chapter 5. And we'll start in verse 31.

Furthermore, it has been said, whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce. So he's saying, this is what has been said. But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, for any reason, causes her to commit adultery.

[21:37] And whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery. Shiloh's looking at me funny. Why are you looking at me so funny? Oh, I skipped. Did I skip something?

This is, for any reason. Oh, except for sexual immorality. So in this, this is a different part of the Bible. In fact, I think this is a different, a different time when Jesus is talking about divorce.

And in this, in this instance, he gives an exception to the rule. So there's a rule, you want not to get divorced. Is that a good rule? Yes, divorce is horrific.

It's painful. It's, it causes all kinds of, it brings a lot of negativity, destruction in its wake. But Jesus said, there is a case where it's appropriate, or it can be appropriate, to divorce, to separate a man and a wife.

And that is in the case of sexual immorality, where there's sexual immorality. So, what do you do with these two passages? Do you go with the one, or do you go with the other?

[22 : 51] You say, well, I'm going to go with the book of Mark. I think Mark was right. Or do you say, well, I'm going to go with the book of Matthew. I think Matthew was right, and Mark was wrong. How do we interpret this? Well, when we, when we present rules, for example, when I tell my kids, um, you're not allowed to leave the house.

Your mom and I are going out. I don't want you being playing outside, because somebody might run out in the road, so you guys need to stay in the house. Your mom and I are going on a date. We're going on date night, and I don't want any of the kids.

I want you to just stay inside. Um, that's a general rule, right? And, but what happens if the house catches on fire?

Are the kids going to stay in the house? Would they think, man, mom and dad really told me we need to stay in the house, so there's no way I'm leaving. I'm just going to stay here, and we're just going to, we're just going to combat this fire.

Is that what they're going to do? Not at all. Would you do that, Isabella, or would you run outside? Run outside. And that would be wise, right? And so, we have rules, but with most rules, there are exceptions, right?

[24 : 11] Not all rules. Some rules have zero exceptions. But with some rules, there are exceptions, and there ought to be, and it's, it's, it's proper that there should be. And so, and with many exceptions, they're easy to understand.

That one's pretty easy, right? You don't have to think a lot about that one to know what the exception is. And so, sometimes, we might talk about the exceptions, right? And so, when mom and I go out, do we need to go through every exception to the rule of staying inside the house?

Do we have to do that? Because there are probably dozens of exceptions, right? I mean, it's not just a fire. There could be all kinds of things, right? There could be a locust swarm that goes into the house and all kinds of, you know, bizarre things.

Some of them are kind of easy to think about. For some are, you know, might be obscure. But, we don't need to go over all the exceptions. We can just talk about the general rule.

And the same thing happens in the Bible. Sometimes, in the Bible, whether it's Jesus or anybody else, the general rule, the general principle, is presented without the exception. And sometimes, you read the exception.

[25 : 19] Sometimes, you actually never read an explicit exception. You just have to realize and use a little common sense to know that there should be this proper to have certain exceptions.

So, anyway, this is just one example of Scripture interpreting Scripture. We can read one Scripture and it might cause some confusion or, you know, maybe a little bit, something might seem a little bit hard-nosed.

And then, we read another one and it adds a little bit more clarity. It adds a little bit more color, a little bit more information to help us along the way. mostly, this comes into play, well, I was going to say, another example is when you read in the Bible where the Jews stayed in Jerusalem when Jesus told them to go into all the world.

some people look at that and they're like, why did the Jews stay in Jerusalem when Jesus told them to go into all the world? And there are other Scriptures that will help you understand that.

And that kind of leads into the next one. Number three is prioritizing the narrative context.

[26 : 53] So, there's lots of context in the Bible, but one of the things that can provide context is just the general story. And so, if you understand the story of what's going on in the Bible, why did the Jews not leave Jerusalem?

You see that in the book of Acts, right? There's an explanation. So, that's Scripture interpreting Scripture. Knowing historical narratives, stories, and this is so interesting because the Bible could just be a book of ideas and principles and that's all.

In fact, if you look at most other religious literature, that's what it is. If you read like the Bhagavad Gita or I'm trying to think what's like some of the Hindu texts.

Anybody? I can't remember. Or even like the Muslim Koran. It's not a lot of stories. It's mostly just kind of this didactic teaching of principles and concepts and ideas.

The Bible is actually a huge section. I don't know what the percentage is, but it's just historical accounts and narratives of history, whether it be ancient history.

[28 : 17] I mean, I guess all of it is ancient history, but what happened in the beginning, what happened with the kings of Israel, what happened with this nation of Israel, the Gospels are a narrative of Jesus and what he did in his life.

There is didactic teaching in there where he teaches his disciples and others different things, but it's a story. And sometimes individual teachings can be obscured.

They can be hard to understand when you just use words. In fact, we have a saying that a picture is worth a thousand words, right?

So a single picture can explain something that it might take a thousand words to explain. Using words is difficult. And the Bible does this.

The Bible uses stories to explain what God's like, who he is, how he deals with us, what we're like in these just stories.

[29 : 18] And so, have you ever heard this concept, there are people who are Christians and this is, we've been talking about this lately. In fact, I just had a conversation this last week with a guy who's kind of getting into like a more progressive type of new age kind of Christianity.

And there are people who teach, well, God is love. And that's true, right? God is love, isn't he? God would never judge or condemn anyone, right?

So the Bible says God is love and love is patient and love is kind and God's patient with everyone and he's kind to everyone. And love thinks no evil, keeps no record of wrong and God is love so he would never hold anything against anybody.

There would never be a judgment day where God's going to judge the world. There's no hell where God's going to separate people from himself because God is love.

And you can see how people might twist the scripture with something that's true but kind of pervert it, take it too far or twist it in some kind of way.

[30 : 32] but when you look at the stories that are in the Bible, those are much harder to twist. The story of Noah and the flood, right?

Can you honestly say when you read the story of Noah and the flood and you just have a picture, you have a picture of a boat with waves crashing and people over here on rocks who are being destroyed by the flood waters and these other people being kept safe in the boat.

That's a vivid picture. And what's it a picture of? It's a picture of God's judgment on the earth. And so that story explains something about God and what he's like, that he's committed to justice, that he hates wickedness and evil and that he is willing and able to judge the world, to condemn the world.

But at the same time, there's another picture, right? And this is one that we'll put up on our walls. We typically don't have pictures of the flood going on like on our walls at home, right?

But you might see a picture of Jesus on the cross, right? And that's another picture. It's a story of God coming down, becoming a man, humbling himself, and then dying for the sins of the world.

[32 : 08] And that is love. And we could have read, if God was like the way the more progressive Christians or New Age kind of folks present it, then the kinds of stories that we would read in the Bible would be more akin to like Santa Claus in his sleigh, right?

Writing through and passing out candy and toys to everyone. And that's it. But are those the kinds of stories we read in the Bible? Not at all. I love C.S. Lewis and the books that he writes and he wrote the Chronicles of Narnia.

And one of the most important things that he put in that book is he represented God as what? A lion, right? Was he a lamb?

No, but the Bible, you know, he is the lamb of God, isn't he? But he represented him as a lion. And what did he say about the lion? Aslan the lion.

He's not a tame lion, right? Such a wonderful picture of God. He's strong. He's not tame. He's not like a lamb.

[33 : 18] He is like a lamb, but he's not just like a lamb, right? He is a lion who is fierce. And so these stories, these narratives, that anybody who's familiar with the Bible, anybody who's been to a Sunday school class, or even sometimes anybody who's just watched a movie, right, understands

some of these storylines in the Bible, and they can know so much about God, even if they've never even opened up this book and read a word in it, just by understanding God judged the world in a flood, that must mean that God takes sin seriously.

And when God loved the world, did he do it just by forgiving everyone's sins? Just by sweeping his hand across and saying, I forgive everybody their sins.

Is that what he did? In some ways, you might think, well, how come he didn't do that? That would have been a lot easier, right? But he actually sacrificed himself and he showed his love in sacrifice, soaked with blood.

It's a very ugly thing on the cross. And so that tells us something about God's love, that his love is in the context of a commitment to justice, that he's not willing to just overlook everything, that he's committed to justice.

And so something had to be done legally to make atonement for the sins of the world. So anyway, the narrative of the story, the narrative storyline of the Bible helps us understand some of the details.

[34 : 55] Where words, individual words and sentences can sometimes be twisted, storylines provide a lot of clarity. Interestingly enough, as I was flipping through and kind of re-familiarizing myself with this book, he says the exact opposite.

But I don't think we disagree. But he says that the individual scriptures or didactic teaching should help us understand the historical narratives.

and I think he's right as well. And you can go both ways, right? One can help inform the other in both directions.

One of the things that, and I'll use this explanation to talk about that. Does anybody remember the, this was what, 20 years ago? When everybody had bracelets with WWJD on them?

What does WWJD stand for? What would Jesus do? Anybody know where that came from? There was a book that, Shelton, yeah, what's his first name?

[36 : 08] I can't remember, but it was, what was the name? Oh, In His Steps, I think. Is that what it was called? So there's a book called In His Steps. And, man, I'm going to see if I can get this right.

It was a book about, I think it was some kind of biographical thing about people who were doing something, and they kept asking themselves, what would Jesus do, right?

Am I getting that? Okay. And so, and if I remember correctly, man, I don't want to speak out of turn because I, I just, but if I remember, Shelton was somewhat of, took the Bible somewhat, you know, wasn't the most conservative Bible interpreter.

But, I may be wrong about that, but that's kind of what I'm, I'm remembering. But that was, that was a big thing, right? People would wear the bracelets and what would Jesus do?

Everybody was asking, what would Jesus do? And that's not a horrible question, right? We can ask ourselves, what would Jesus do in this situation? But when we read the Bible and you read history, so specifically looking at the life of Jesus, is everything that Jesus did, when you read in the Gospels, are all those things that we should do?

[37 : 27] No, not at all. Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day, right? Is that something that we should do? I'm trying to think of just examples, I don't have any written off the top of my head.

Anybody think of anything else? That Jesus, he was celibate, that's a good one. He didn't have a house. Didn't have a house. He didn't have a job. Didn't have a job.

That's right. Any others? I'm sure we could, I mean, we could probably come up with dozens and dozens of things that Jesus did, that it's not really appropriate that we would do.

Jesus taught, somebody was healed, right? And he said, well, you need to go give the turtle dove sacrifice or whatever when you're healed. That was part of the law of Moses.

Jesus taught people to keep the law of Moses, right? Is that what we should do? So, it's not that we should always do all the things that Jesus did.

[38 : 29] It's also common for people to do this with people in the Bible. And sometimes even godly people, like David, for example, he was a godly man, right? In general, right? And so, some people might make the mistake of thinking, well, anything that David did in the Bible, we should emulate that because he was a godly man, right?

What? Part of the time, right? Yeah, he was. And there are certain things that we should emulate with David. But that doesn't mean that everything that he did, we should say, oh, well, this is something that we should emulate.

Because there might be some things that we're not sure. Some things are obviously immoral. His adultery with Bathsheba, obviously, that's very wrong. His repentance after that, we should emulate that, right?

But other things that he might have done, and I don't have any explicit examples. You know, it's not a foregone conclusion that just because David did something, that we should emulate that. So instead of WWJD, I wrote down a different acronym, we should have bracelets that say WWJHMD. What does that stand for?

[39 : 47] What would Jesus have me do? That's how we should approach it. What would Jesus have me do? Not what would Jesus do, even though sometimes what would Jesus do is appropriate, we should do what Jesus did, but not always.

All right. Number four, some scriptures are spiritually discerned, and I think this is important to understand. Proverbs 1.7 says this, for sake of time, we won't turn there, but it says, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Did you know that you can go to Harvard? Harvard has a history. Do you know what's the history? Harvard started out as what? A seminary, basically, right? It was a Bible instruction school.

Yale, the same way. Princeton, the same way. There are still seminaries at Harvard and Yale. And did you know that if you go to those seminaries, and I'm just going to throw out a number, but probably half of the professors don't believe in God.

It's bizarre. Or are not Christians, or don't believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That's kind of important to being a Christian, right?

[41 : 03] And so are you going to get good Bible teaching from those professors? No. They're going to come up with all kinds of bizarre ways of interpreting the Bible, because their foundation is wrong.

They're not spiritually discerning things because they are at enmity against God, many of them. And this can be true, right, even for other seminaries that maybe aren't quite as liberal.

people. We won't read all of this, but in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, there's a lot about Christians understanding things not carnally, but spiritually.

He says you're not carnal, but spiritual. Verse 13 says this, these things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

In John chapter 8, verse 43, Jesus says this, why do you not understand my speech? I think he's talking to the Pharisees.

[42 : 18] because you are not able to listen to my word, you are of your father the devil and the desires of your father you want to do. So he's saying, I'm not saying anything super complicated, how come you don't understand me?

It's because your heart is not right. Your heart is towards your father the devil and not towards the Lord. And so if we want to understand the scripture, this is for people who reject God or who are really of their father the devil, enemies of God you might say.

And so those kinds of people aren't going to understand the scripture at all. But we need to have humble hearts. There are some great prayers of Paul. There are two actually in Ephesians where Paul prays for the Ephesians.

One is in chapter 1 and the other is in chapter 3. And I guess we'll just, maybe we can finish up with this. So we'll go ahead and turn there.

Ephesians. Starting in verse 15.

[43 : 30] Therefore I also, after I, so Ephesians 1.15, therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.

Paul says, I pray for you. And what is his prayer? that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

I want you to be wise. I want you to grow in knowledge. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe.

love. And we'll stop right there. But he's saying, I pray for you that the eyes of your understanding would be open. I want you to grow in spiritual maturity so that you can understand the things that

I'm teaching, understand the things that God has for you.

He says something similar. He prays for them also in Ephesians 3. Start with verse 14. For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man.

[44 : 57] Spiritual, right? That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height, to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians was that they would grow in their knowledge of God. They would grow in their spiritual maturity. These are things that are spiritually understood.

These are things that we can pray for ourselves. When we open up the Bible, God, open up my understanding to understand these things. These things are spiritually understood. Sometimes we tend to think in fleshly ways.

We tend to think in worldly ways. But God, open up my eyes to think in spiritual terms, to think in eternal terms. And so when we come to the scripture, we can ask God for his help, for his guidance, that we would understand things spiritually.

The last thing I had was on the purpose-cuity of scripture. What in the world is purpose-cuity? I'm not even sure I'm saying that right.

[46 : 14] But maybe we'll look at that next time. I'll leave just a minute or two. Any other thoughts or questions or comments?

John? Go ahead, John. You raised your hand. Yeah. It is good, yeah, to understand.

Yeah. We talked about figures of speech previously. And like sometimes all means, sometimes there are things that seem 100% absolutely exclusive. exclusive. And you really need discernment and wisdom to know when it is completely exclusive.

Yeah, some people say, well, Jesus is one way, and here's a few others. No, no one comes to the Father. And that is meant to be 100% exclusive. And we can look to other scriptures, I think, to help inform us on that, right?

Roger. And on several of the examples that you have used, you noticed there was a direct conflict with the verse you started with in 2 Peter, which is no scripture is given that it's a pure private interpretation.

[47 : 44] I don't get to make it up. Right. that's not my privilege. And I think also, I was thinking regularly about Romans chapter 12, the first two verses, where we are exhorted not to think like the world thinks, including in interpreting scripture or reading anything.

truth. Yeah. Um, most of us here have people in our family, someplace down the line, usually younger, who have been indoctrinated to believe there is no objective truth, that you get to make it up.

Yeah. Here it makes up to me. right that's a big part of our culture today isn't it yeah exactly yeah that's a huge part of our culture I get to decide what gender I am right and that's the big thing going on today and so there it's all what what it means to me you know go ahead Oprah yeah yes and she she promotes all kinds if you go on the Oprah she's got like a book list right stay away from all those books or you can read them but just understand that they're going to be full of all kinds of nonsense almost always I we don't have time but I had some interesting conversations this week with a Christian who's really going down the wrong path and really getting pulled into some of this Oprah the kind of stuff that you might hear on Oprah or from some of those books so all right thanks everybody