

A Helpful Way of Doing Bible-Study – 4 Cs

Context:

Text & Readers inhabit actual historical contexts. How was it then? How is it now? The Bible text is not just an object of study – but a resource for its reader's lives.

In reading – these contexts may fuse or clash. In the encounter the way the Word of God interacts with the lives of its readers will create new understandings of the text & new challenges.

Community:

How we read the Bible together matters. Gathering together to read is closer to the oral traditions which lay behind & shaped biblical texts; gathering together & telling (seeing our stories) in the light of the story told in Scripture of the people of God, recovers the importance of testimony. We are shaped in interaction with the testimonies of others. (God's Spirit at work in us and amongst us) – a dynamic understanding.

Community offers both challenge and support as we seek to become responsive to God's Spirit.

The community of Christian believers embodies something of the 'New Community' that Jesus came to establish. It can contain & help to make sense of the chaos in our individual lives.

Critical Study: There are some things about the biblical text that it is helpful to know. Knowledgeable & 'trained' guides can shed light on some difficult texts and guide groups in good and helpful exegesis. They can also guide in choosing the right texts to address particular issues.

Change: The purpose of bible-study is not to study for study's sake. But to be open to the Spirit transforming us through what has been learned in the engagement with the bible text and other participants.

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