



Why Biblical Preaching in Today's World?

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Why Biblical Preaching?

- What is Biblical Preaching? (not just illiteracy)
- Authority of the Bible
- Cooptation of the Bible
- Preaching the Word of God



Preaching the Word of God

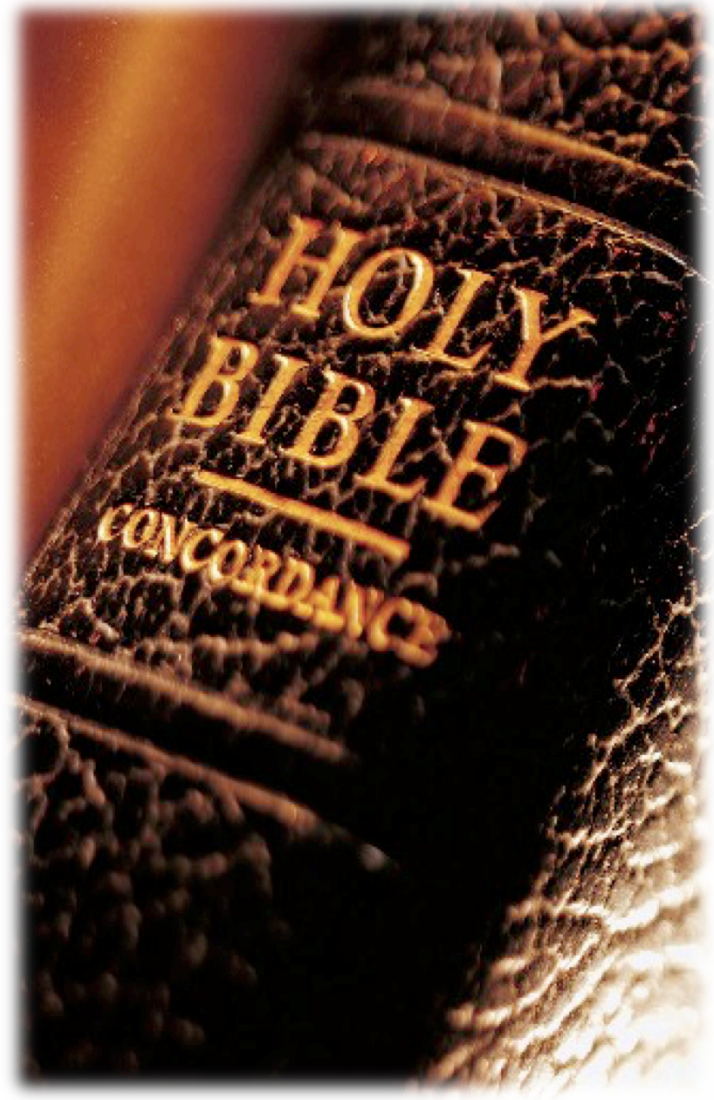
“Theology must always begin and always find renewal, not with words found in texts, but with the experience of actual human bodies.”

Luke Timothy Johnson

The Revelatory Body: Theology As Inductive Art

A new starting point?

Creed, Scripture, Experience



...Word alone

what does this mean?

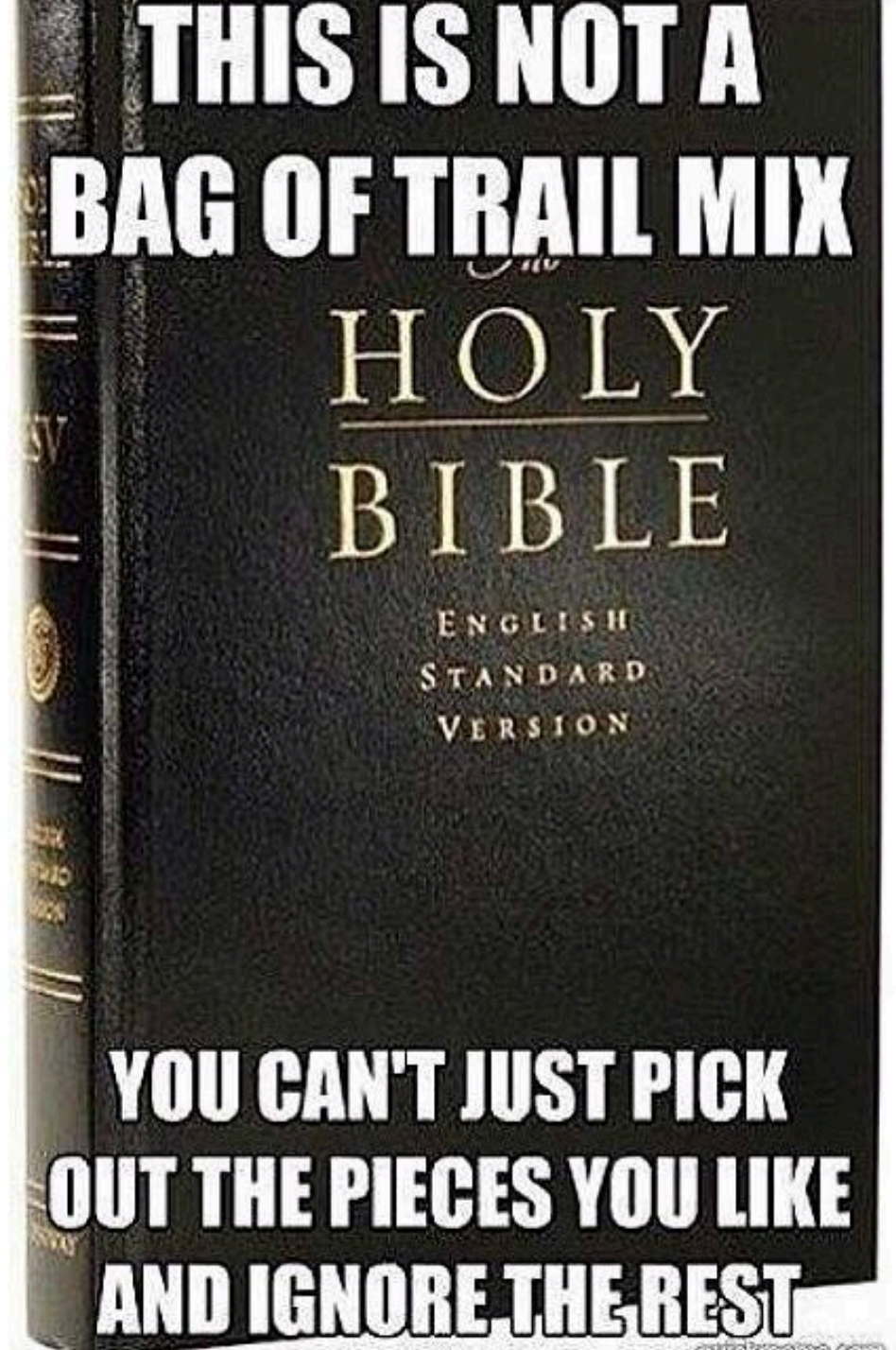
⌘ Inherent instability

⌘ Truth is experiential not propositional

⌘ Systematic theology is oxymoronic idolatry

⌘ Theology a description of life and not texts

Cooptation of the Bible



truth telling



WHITENER
COLORANT À CAFÉ OU THÉ

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**KEEP
MINNESOTA
PASSIVE
AGGRESSIVE.**

(Or not. Whatever you think is best.)



truth-telling...

- Prophets of the Old Testament
 - Historical books
 - Predictors of the future only insofar as there is truth in the present and the past
 - Cannot separate out pastoral and prophetic
- Jesus



Morality Gauge...



Platitudes, Pithy Sayings, and Proverbs



Divine Reference Book

If anyone ever asks you, "What Would Jesus Do?"



Remind them that flipping over tables and chasing people with a whip is within the realm of possibilities.

A photograph of a green metal signpost with two white rectangular signs. The top sign has a thick black border and the words "ONE WAY" in bold black capital letters. The bottom sign has a thin black border and the words "GOOD LUCK FIGURING OUT WHICH ONE" in bold black capital letters. The background is a blurred city street scene.

ONE WAY

CollegeHumor

**GOOD LUCK
FIGURING OUT
WHICH ONE**

Bible = *biblia* = little books

- Narratives
- Histories
- Poetry
- Wisdom Literature
- Prophecy
- Apocalyptic
- Gospels
- Letters
- Hymns, parables, miracles

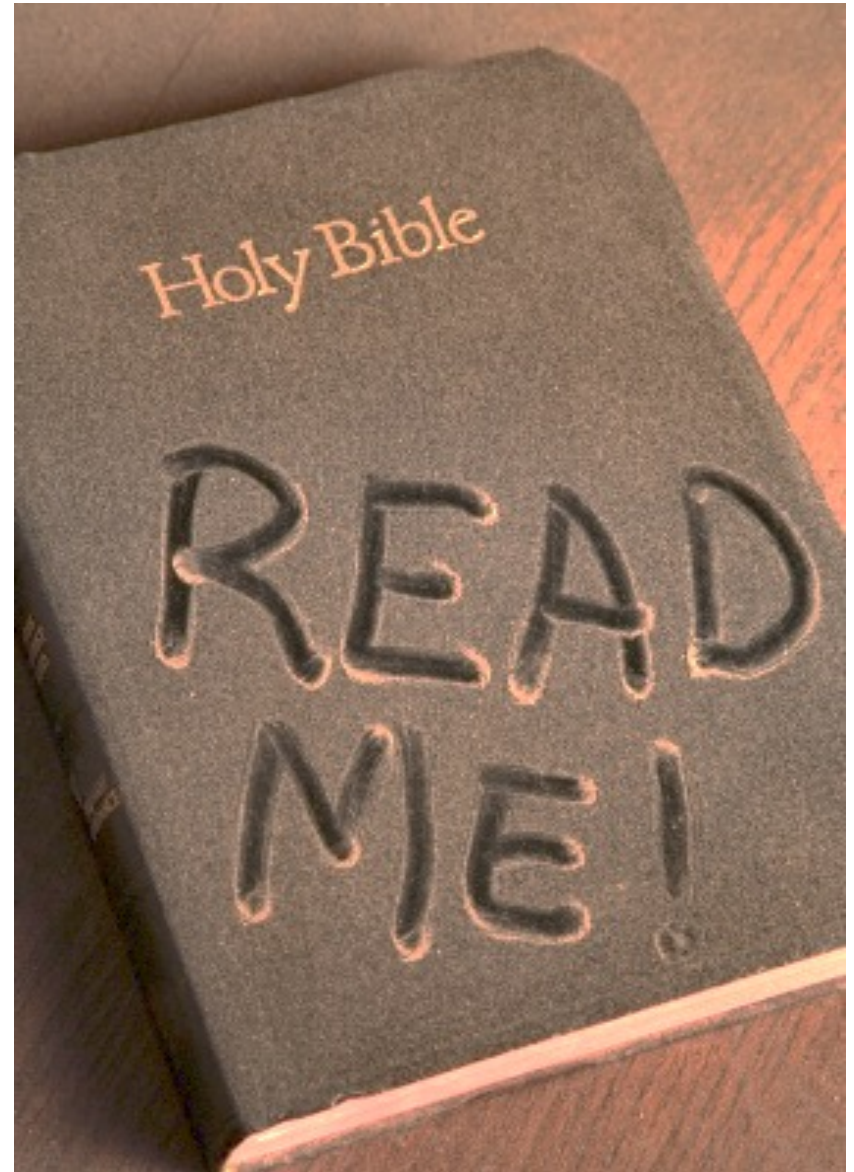


- There are 93 women who speak in the Bible, 49 of whom are named. These women speak a total of 14,056 words collectively -- roughly 1.1 percent of the Bible
- Mary = 191 words
- Mary Magdalene = 61
- Sarah = 141

Bible Women: All Their Words and Why They Matter

Rev. Lindsay Hardin Freeman

- *As a preacher, taking seriously your relationship with the Bible. What do you like and not like?*
- *If you don't preach on the Bible, somebody else will.*
- *At stake – the very definition of what it means to be Christian*



**The Nashville Statement skips past the depth
of God's expansive love and cloaks itself in an
arrogant and fearful Christianity that insists
that this is the will of God. Not true. Not
prophetic. Not biblical.**

Emilie M. Townes, Dean

E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Chair, Professor of Womanist Ethics and Society



VANDERBILT.

Divinity School



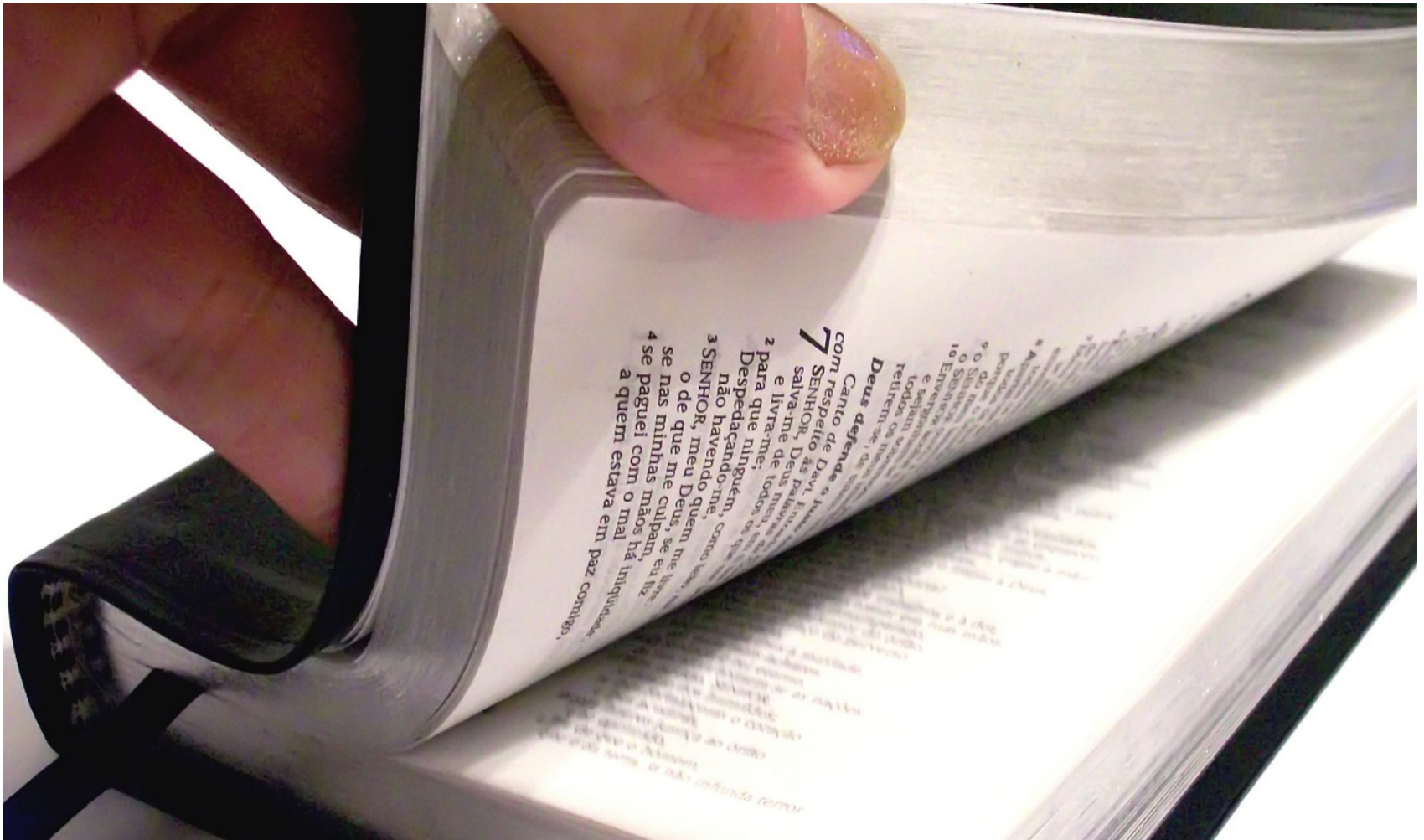
Know Your Bible... Some Truthful Questions

- ☐ What's in it and what do you care about?
- ☐ When was the last time you really thought about what it means to you?

What is your “go to”
biblical story?



Desert Island Canon



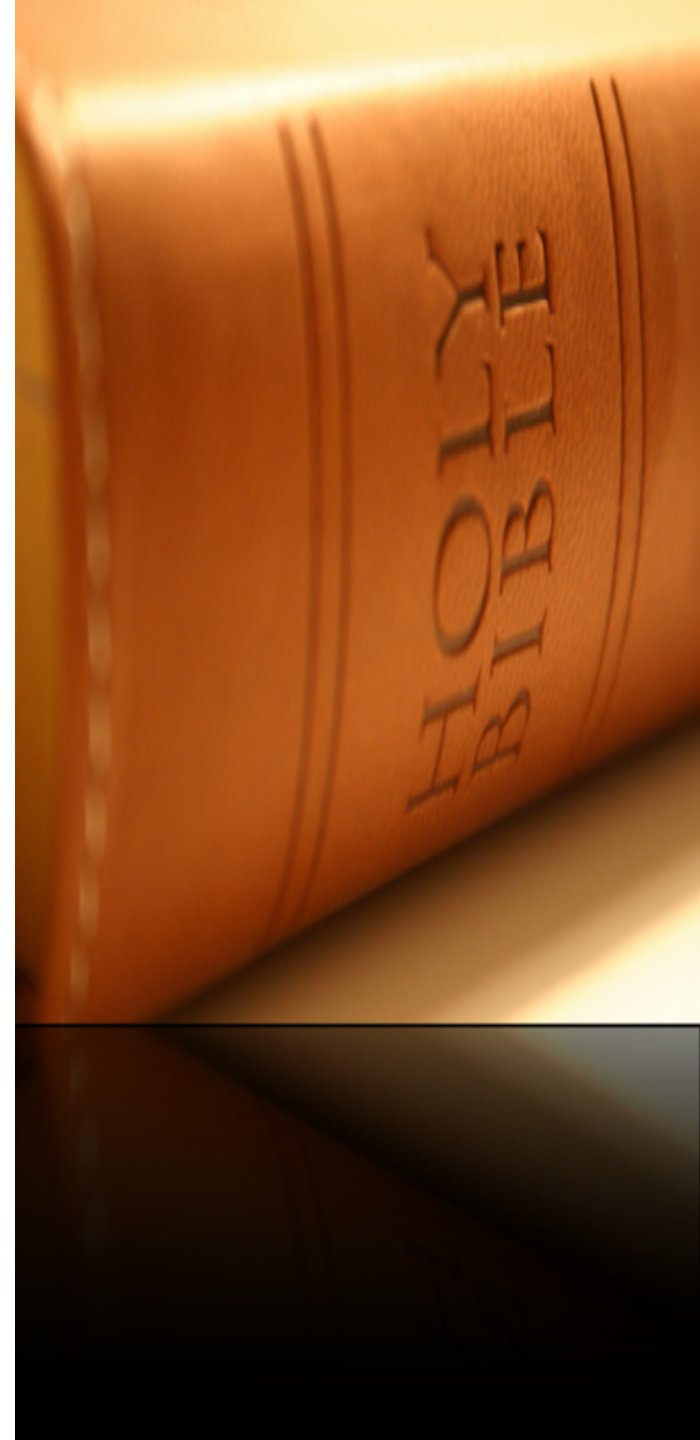
The Authority of the Bible

Not **that** the Bible is authoritative but **how**?



Assumptions

- ❖ To call a text authoritative does not mean that we read it uncritically
- ❖ In what sense authority of the Bible is derived from its subject matter – God
- ❖ God known by relationship
God has with God's people –
so, knowing God happens
outside of scripture –
experience

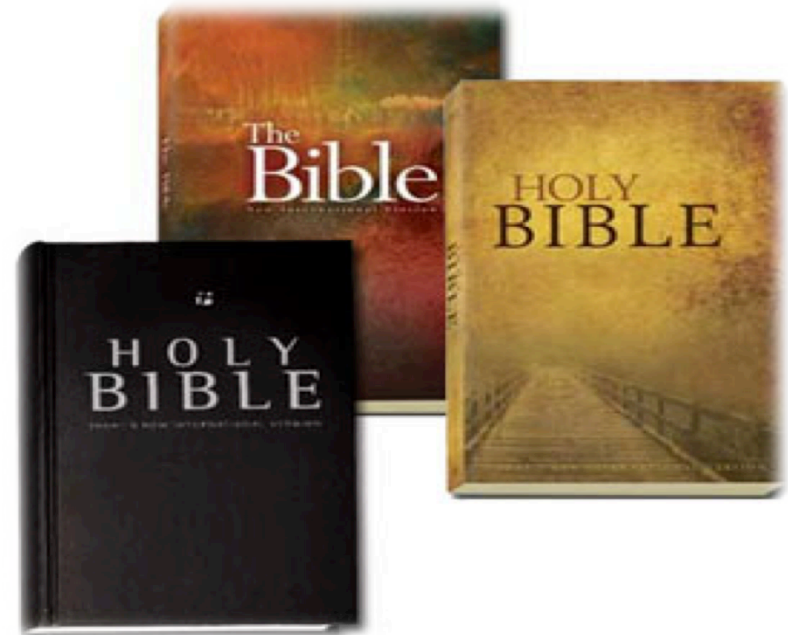


How is the Bible Authoritative?

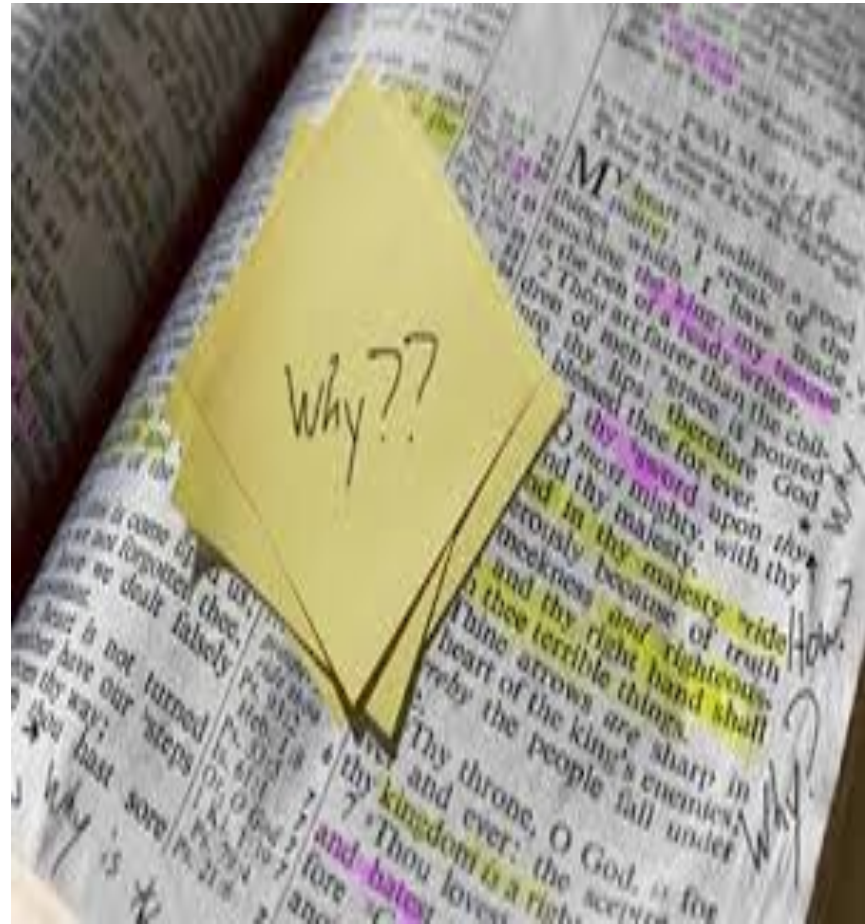
- ❑ In what the Bible says (e.g., about God and world)
- ❑ In what the Bible is (e.g., holy, sacred, a place to encounter God)
- ❑ In what the Bible does (e.g., sanctify, shape character, form community)



- ✧ To claim the authority of the Bible is to say that it helps you put into perspective or make sense of your experience of God.
- ✧ How this at work in the NT. Series of conversations about these tensions.
- ✧ Knowledge of God from Scripture
but now
knowledge of
God by experience.



- ◆ Scripture “authors” a certain identity
 - ◆ Invites us to enter the world that scripture imagines
 - ◆ Has a claim on living in a certain way rather than solving problems
 - ◆ Shapes who we are and what we do
- ◆ Scripture provides “authorities” for Christian discernment and decision



The Authority of the Bible

- To claim the authority of the Bible is to say that it helps you put into perspective or make sense of your experience of God.
- It helps you think theologically.



What is Biblical Preaching?

“Christians in modernity thought their task was to make the Gospel intelligible to the world rather than to help the world understand why it could not be intelligible without the Gospel.”

— Stanley Hauerwas



Cornel West (*Democracy Matters*), “Prophetic beings have as their special aim to shatter deliberate ignorance and willful blindness to the sufferings of others, and to expose the clever forms of evasion and escape we devise in order to hide and conceal injustice....”

“I am not surprised that most prophets were itinerant. Many budding prophets over time become harmless parish priests.”

Niebuhr,
*Leaves From
the Notebook
of a Tamed
Cynic*



B	I	N	G	O
Miriam	Solomon	Jeremiah	Anna	Deborah
Malachi	Esther	Obadiah	Jacob	Aaron
Sarah	Samuel	Free Space!	Joshua	Isaac
Hosea	Nathan	John	David	Isaiah
Noah	Abraham	Jonah	Moses	Hannah

“The dangers of prophetic preaching are obvious and not to be envied but that is what Jesus appears to be directing us to consider.”

Niebuhr, *Leaves From the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic*



Rejection
Just Ahead



An “idle” tale...
Luke 24:11