

Navigating your way...

Top strategies you need for the journey of teaching Scripture



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The Bible is a library of books

Holy Bible. Photo by unknown author. Used under Creative Commons Zero / Public Domain license. <https://pixnio.com/objects/books/holy-bible-book-literature-library-book-education>

- Different authors
- Different times
- There are differences between Catholic and Protestant Bibles (46 books vs 39 books in OT)

[Top Five Benefits for Reading the Bible as a library of books.](#)

Is the Bible True?

Which direction are you thinking of going with that question?

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A Catholic interpretation of the Bible means...

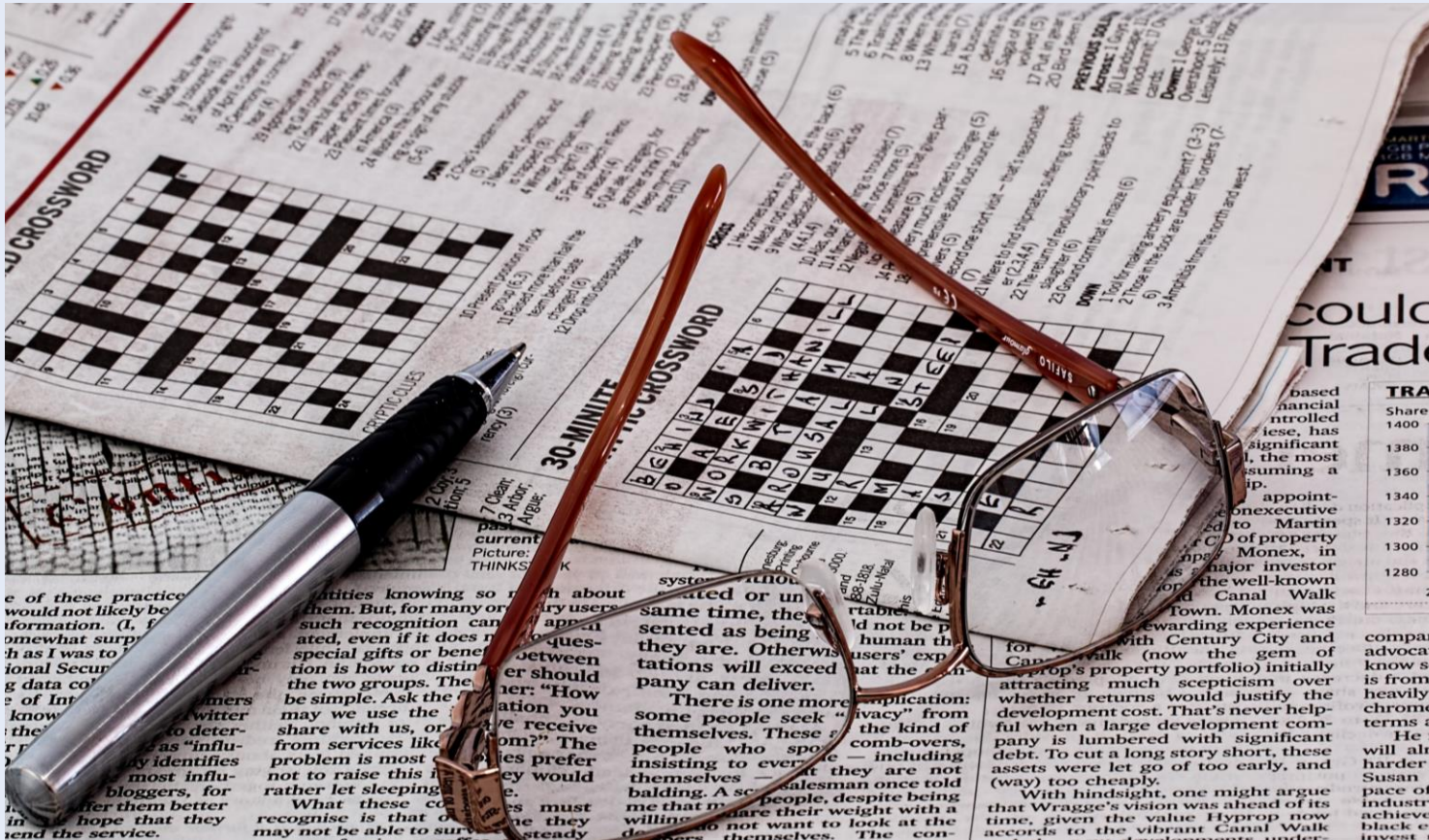
The Bible is written by humans, and inspired by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, texts are written from the author's experience of the world at the time.

The Bible is a theology book (not a history book), so it conveys theological truth. The key question is: What does the author want readers to understand about God? What does the Vatican say? See the [Interpretation of the Bible](#).



What different types of writing can we find in a newspaper?

Which direction is this question taking us?



Text types in the Bible

Eyeglasses on newspaper. Photo by unknow author. Used under creative commons zero license. <https://www.pexels.com/photo/frame-less-eyeglasses-on-newspaper-53209/>

- Narrative (a story e.g. Exodus)
- Poetry (e.g. The Psalms)
- Parables (a story with an unexpected ending; rule of 3)
- Letters (e.g. Paul's letters)
- Legal codes (books of laws)
- Myths (stories with special meaning for the community)
- Apocalypse (visionary)

Resource: An [Introduction to Biblical Genres and Form Criticism](#) by Felix Just SJ

- Many stories, many authors, texts accessible across cultures and time – all tell the one story. We call this 'big' story the meta-narrative.
- If you had to sum up this 'big story' of the Bible, what would you say in one sentence?



The Bible
is One
Story

The Bible is one story of God's relationship with people.



What
difference
would it make
if we knew
this, when we
teach one
story / one text
in the Bible?

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What is the purpose of teaching the Bible?



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The purpose of teaching the Bible :

- An analogy:

What could I teach about shoes?

But what is the purpose of shoes?

What could I teach about the Bible?

But what is the purpose of teaching the Bible?



Hiking Shoes Photo by Author Unknown. Used under Creative Commons Zero / Public Domain license
<https://www.maxpixel.net/Hiking-Hiking-Shoes-Shoes-Mountaineering-Shoes-1194882>

The purpose
of teaching
the Bible is
to find
appropriate
meaning.

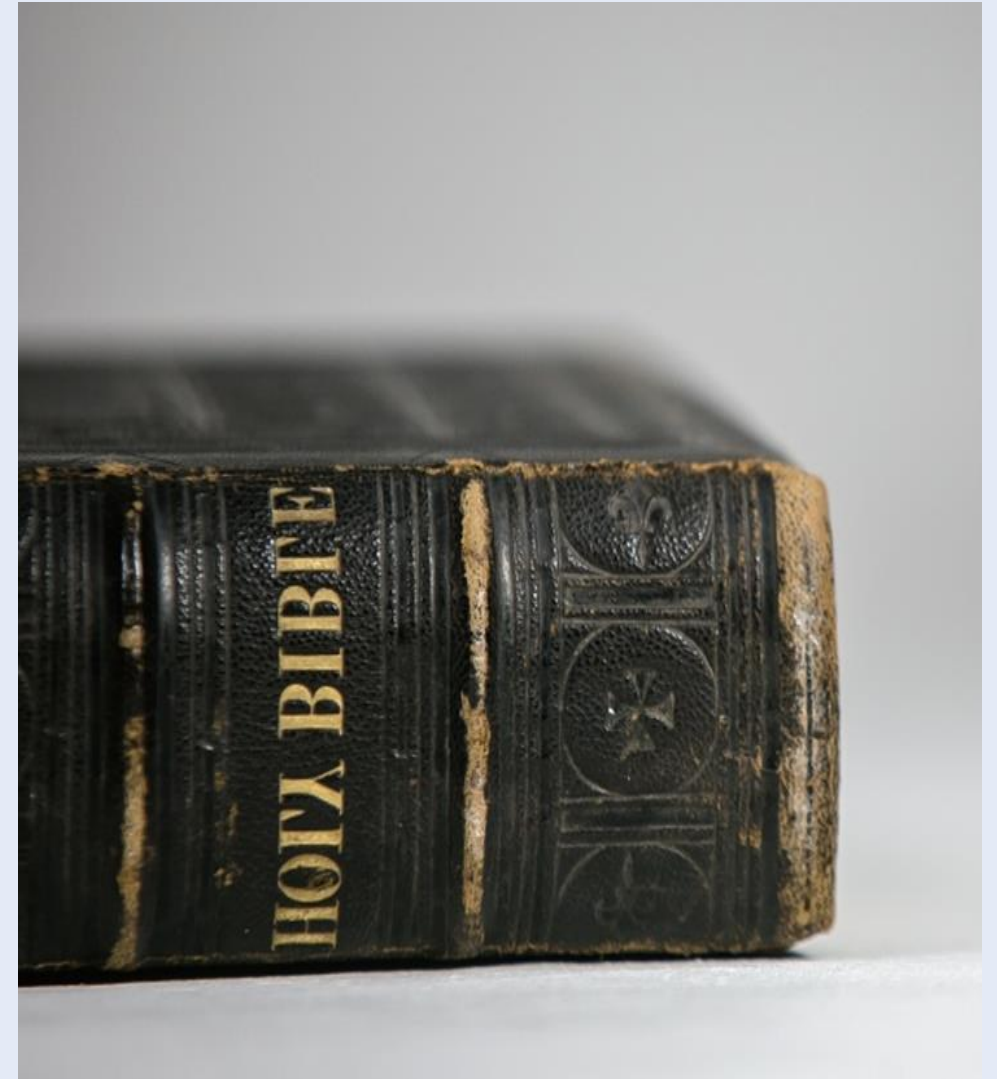


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To illustrate the human search for meaning:

“The Bible is the biggest bestseller in history. But after that, what else has topped the charts? Mao’s “Little Red Book” comes in at number two and then the surprises begin. While religion dominates the first half of the list, the rest is mostly fantasy”.

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/07/30/the-15-biggestbestseller_n_664029.html



Holy Bible. Photo by unknown author. Used under Creative Commons Zero / Public Domain license.
<https://pixnio.com/objects/books/holy-bible-book-literature-library-book-education>

A model for understanding how we make meaning from Scripture...

The World Behind the Text.

The World of the Text.

The World in Front of the Text.

Remember the purpose of teaching the Bible?



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Therefore...

Teaching Scripture well requires:

Leading students to find appropriate meaning in the text:

What different way of living in the world does this text present? Use answers to write a letter from God to your class (or individually write). What key message does God have? What action does God call your class to?

Good pedagogy to ensure student engagement:

[The A to Z Learning Strategies](#)

[Hot seating – bring characters to life!](#)

[Create a Wonder Wall](#)

Connection to the meta-narrative:

How does this story echo the meta-narrative (the ‘big story’ of the Bible)? Bring students back to the big picture. “Here we have another story about God’s relationship with people. What do we discover through this story?”



Great tools for teaching the Bible:

- Resources about the Gospels
- People in the Bible
- Use creative strategies to respond to literature
- Build up great books in your library: Bible maps; dictionary...



Statue of Children Reading. Photo taken by Hillarie. Used under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/hillarie/2322845318/in/photolist-4xgbZd-dScLFR-8UYfP-E6Tsr5-4tBk7m-cznnPm-4QaPgE-7AN2UC-8VJt6c-7RjyKs-ocvh2o-VXyaQg-kHmjRK-6jEJFb-7YlJUP-a2kdhi-b57eCF-6QtXVV-nVacRE-2deZfQK-9FeVxG-fAuon-nV9Xyd-QdG6p-GaQPqT-tDP49-brHLtL-nVaejQ-e8W1YG-5RFbWQ-61Sp8X-4JKCRM-9ddU8f-PgDGAY-61WD7Y-sq8LAW-7xrKfT-8iFbuF-6rdn7P-eM3NqQ-cAd7bE-nVbxhF-nVazMo-4NEsAu-s5hPpK-eM3NAU-o8dhqz-ecLF7t-fAvoj-sGG6ML>

There are different ways to read the text.

- Compliant reader (this is what is in the text so this is what happened)
- Resistant reader (this is the author's perspective and not mine)
- Sympathetic reader (we focus on what we agree with and avoid the parts we disagree with)
- Engaged reader (we enter into serious dialogue with the content of the text, seeing its strengths and weaknesses. We seek to understand the text rather than agree or disagree).


How do we want our students to read the text?

Read the text as a friend.

- Mark 16 New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE)

The Resurrection of Jesus

- When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.



Use these navigational strategies to take the fear out of teaching Scripture.

....Bring joy, hope and meaning to the lives of our students.