

How Not to Read the Bible: Interpretation  
February 16, 2025

As you join this discussion, let the Holy Spirit guide you. Share your thoughts and reflect on the message. Work through the guide by reading Scripture and answering a few questions.

### **Open Up:**

- Have you ever received a message that totally changed the way you saw something?"

### **Read Together:**

#### **Hebrews 4:12**

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart

#### **Jeremiah 29:11**

For I know the plans I have for you, "declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

#### **Jeremiah 29:12-14**

Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

#### **Philippians 4:13**

I can do all things through him who gives me strength.

#### **Philippians 4:10-13**

I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the

secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. <sup>13</sup> I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

### **Acts 2:42**

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer.

### **Discuss Together:**

- What stood out to you in the message this week?
- Did you have any questions or new observations from the message?
- The message describes **"the river of interpretation."** What are some differences between the world of the Bible and our world today? How do those differences impact how we understand scripture?
- What are some **dangers of reading scripture out of context**? Can you give examples where this might happen?
- Philippians 4:13 is often quoted, but its context is about **contentment** rather than achievement. How does reading the whole passage (Philippians 4:10-13) change its meaning?
- Why is it important to read the Bible **in community** rather than just alone? How can others help us see things we might miss?
- Augustine said that all understanding of scripture should lead to **loving God and loving others**. How can we make sure our Bible reading is leading us to live that out?
- If the Bible is meant to transform us, what is one passage that has significantly **shaped your life**?

### **Pray:**

Pray that God would open your hearts to hear His voice clearly and give the courage

to respond in faith. Pray for Him to help you recognize how He speaks through Scripture, circumstances, and the people around you.