The Christian's Perspective of the Bible

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Alright, next week we're going to do it in alphabetical order and really mess you up.

Make you go around and get organized by birthday months or something. Now, I just want you to be able to pray with some different people. I want you to be able to get to know other people who come to our church, be able to hear other people's heart, get to know them and get to pray with and hear others pray.
And so, you know, one of the things I love about Sunday Night Church is it's a group of people who can kind of self-identify as the core of the church.
You don't have to be invited to do it. You don't have to be asked to do it. You don't have to be voted on to do it. You don't have to be certain quality. If you want to be at the core of the church Sunday night, here you go.
This is the chance for people that, not that someone who doesn't come on the Sunday doesn't love Jesus. I'm not saying that. I'm just saying it's a chance for people to say, I want to be a part of the core. I want to be a part of the central inner circle of what is going on.
[1:18] And part of how we do that is through praying together, sharing our hearts with each other, connecting with relationships together. I love getting a chance just to see the body of Christ function in that way, reading and praying and sharing.

So thank you for doing that and being flexible. And you did a really good job of getting in groups of four to six. You're doing really well. You're doing very well.
By next semester, we're going to have it so complicated, you won't be able to see straight. But you're doing good. Turn with me to 2 Peter chapter 1. 2 Peter chapter 1.
We finished the book of Lamentations. And so we're going to take a few weeks here before the semester comes to a close and just focus on the Bible.
At the beginning of the semester, Joey with our teenagers did a two-week study on the Bible. I got to hear part of that. And I asked him to share those two messages here on Sunday nights.
[2:30] Because of schedules being a little bit strange and with family matters and different things going on, it got a little bit disjointed. But a couple of weeks ago, Joey did part one.

Next week, he's going to do part two. And I want to share tonight on the Christian's perspective on the Bible. And then the last Sunday in November, I want to share how we see the gospel in the Old Testament and New Testament.
And we'll take the Lord's Supper together that Sunday evening as well. So we're going to end up spending all together about five Sunday nights that just deal with the Christian and his Bible.
How we know it, how we understand it, what it teaches, and how the gospel is clear within it. So tonight, I want you to think with me about the Christian's perspective of the Bible.
I just got through teaching our Men's Institute class on our last class session before their final exam. And we're looking primarily at the prophets, that time period between 931 and 400, from the time of the kingdom splitting until Malachi.
[3:45] And just before we came in here, I was just talking to the men about the importance of, as believers, we want to be students who are servants. That's important for us.

Because if we're students who don't serve, don't obey, don't apply, don't live out, then our knowledge will just make us puffed up and arrogant.
If we are servants who aren't students, then we'll be busy trying to worship a God that we don't know. That doesn't work very well either.

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So we want to be students who serve. And as I just got through sharing with those gentlemen, it's a biblical way to see it, because the Bible says in 2 Timothy, to study to show yourselves approved. The posture in the New Testament of a worshiper is not a mystic. It's a student. God has revealed His Word to us in a book to be read.
[4:50] Now, I don't want to press that further than we should, but I do think there's something to that. If the Lord wanted His Word to be revealed to us another way, He could have done so.

He chose to have His Word revealed in such a way that it would be written down, collected, preserved, and read. In the New Testament, when the Lord wanted to speak to Christians, the Holy Spirit inspired authors to write Scripture that would be sent to churches and be read.
Now, that's instructive for a number of things, one of which is it was the assumption that if you were a believer, you would gather with the local saints. That's how the Word was read.
In the book of Revelation, when the Spirit wanted to get His Word to churches, letters were written to the churches, because the people of God would gather in local assemblies.
And that Word was to be read. And if we say, well, I'm just not a reader, there is a problem with that.
[6:09] And the problem is, God revealed Himself to us in a book. And a book is to be read. So Christians ought to be readers.

Now, for some of you, reading is a great joy. And for others of you, it's a discipline. It's all right. Either way is however the Lord has wired you.
But we are, by an act of obedience, to be readers. There are different ways that people learn.
But no one is going to become a fully devoted follower of Christ apart from reading. That's how God chose to reveal Himself.
So, the Holy Spirit inspires these men as they write. Now, understand, God is inspiring the writings more than the writer. It's not that every single thing Paul wrote was Scripture.
[7:12] He's inspiring the writings. Not everything the Apostle John wrote is Scripture. Scripture. The Gospel of John is.

First, second, third John is. Revelation is. So, John's responsible for five of our New Testament books. But it's not the only thing he wrote. God, the Holy Spirit, is inspiring the writings.
Using that writer. But it's not as though every single thing Paul wrote is Scripture. We know that. There are letters that were written that are not a part of Scripture.
They're often referred to as the lost letters. I would say they're not lost. The Holy Spirit knows right where they are. But they weren't intended to be a part of Scripture. So, there are some certain ways the Christian approaches his Bible.
This is the Word of God. This has been superintended by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is inspiring the human author in their writings that are a part of Sacred Scripture.
[8:16] And they are writing, the Bible says, as they are born along, moved along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Timothy, the words of God are breathed out by God.

We are reading the words of God as He has revealed His heart and mind to us. Now, there are some cultural views of the Bible that are not biblical.
There is what we could call the kind of genie view of the Bible where you just kind of hope the Bible is good luck. And so, you put some Bible verses on your wall and some Bible verses in decoration on your office or on your calendar.
And you just kind of view the Bible as a kind of good luck charm. There is kind of a decorative view where culturally, where we live, even though things are getting darker all the time, it is still not abnormal at all to find a Bible in somebody's house or find a Bible laying out somewhere.
It is oftentimes seen by people as a story or a collection of good stories or of advice or of kind of life philosophy.
[9:37] There's the view that people have in our culture today that you can just kind of cherry pick the Bible and you like this verse and so we claim that verse and we don't like this verse and so we don't claim that verse.

I'm kind of confused on what that exactly means when you claim a verse but not this one or I believe this or not that. The Holy Spirit who inspired one inspired all, it's all God's Word in the Scripture, it's all true but for many people they want to pick and choose which parts they believe.
All of that is happening but for the believer it's different. We have a different perspective of the Bible. We see this as the revealed heart and mind of God and if that's true then we must also see it as authoritative.

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So, 40 years ago there was this major battle in our denomination about the inerrancy of Scripture known as the conservative resurgence.
Then the idea back then 40 years ago or so roughly was this recommitment that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. That's true.
[10:56] I believe that with all my heart. That it's the inerrant Word of God and that's true. I believe that with all of my heart. But one thing that is often left out when people talk about inerrancy or inspiration is the part of that that must also be included that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God.

And sometimes Christians can find themselves or churches find themselves arguing that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God yet not seeking it as their authority.
I've shared this before but I think back to when Marce and I first moved to Mustang it was I don't remember the exact year but it was very early on after we moved here maybe within four or five years of moving here.
And there was this big controversy about a local elementary school that was not being allowed to do a nativity in their Christmas play here in Mustang.
And it was this big big controversy. Local news I even heard about on the national news and there was a certain lady who was very very upset that the school was not being allowed to do a Christmas play here at the public schools that was a nativity.
[12:20] And I was at the pickup line one day so it had to have been a Friday that was my pickup line day as I recall and she knew I was the pastor and so she was telling me how upset she was and she couldn't believe you know how secular our culture is becoming and I can't believe that people are trying to keep children from doing the nativity scene at Christmas time that's what Christmas is all about it's all about the birth of Christ anyway and we're just doing this terrible disservice to our kids if we don't let them do that and I said to her what church do you attend and she said you know where this is going well I don't I don't go to church and I'm thinking wow you're very very wound up about this you don't go to church and she said well no I you know I just I just worship God in my own way which is code for disobedience right that's you don't worship in your own way if there's anything the

Bible is clear on it's this you don't get to worship in your own way God has been very clear on how he is to be worshiped God has been very clear on how you approach him God is very clear on what truth is and how it should affect us and what the local assembly is to do and what the Christian life looks like now it's true the Bible doesn't tell us how long a service should be or how many songs to sing it doesn't give us those kinds of specifics but the Bible is very clear on how you approach a holy God and when someone says I worship my own way what they're saying is I'm not interested in worshiping the way God has revealed for us to worship him which means whatever you're arguing for you don't see the Bible as your authority this is a very very subtle theological sleight of hand that the devil seeks to do on people to try to get them to buy the lie that it's okay to see the Bible as good as long as you see it as less than authoritative this is a massive problem in our nation to see the Bible as a collection of wisdom sayings good advice but not see it as our authority and so when somebody says they're very angry and upset about the things of God yet they don't want to gather with God's people what they are saying is I want to do religion my way and pick and choose how I seek to follow and that is the exact opposite of what God has revealed to us in scripture so we've got to make sure that in our zeal we're biblical in our convictions we're biblical and that we see the
Bible yes inspired yes inerrant but also authoritative what God's word says defines who we are so one of the things that the New Testament tells us is that we are to gather with God's people that's clear that's easy that's that's simple and when we gather we are to sing and when we gather we are to pray and when we gather we are to proclaim and teach the word of God and when we gather we are to read the scripture publicly it's amazing how hard it is to find congregations that read the Bible publicly it's literally the only part of our service that's flawless is when we read the scripture and so we see the Bible as authoritative what it says we are to do we are to do how it says we're to live we are to live that's the
Christian perspective on our Bible and so if you're open here to 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 2 says may grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord so there is a part of our faith that's absolutely about knowledge we're supposed to read we're supposed to study we're supposed to learn we are to have the knowledge of God you can't have that without listening

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and reading and studying verse 3 his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence by which he has granted to us precious and very great promises so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desires so there are precious and very great promises that we are to have great promises like anything you want to do in life you can do it because you can do all things through [18:42] Christ who strengthens you right wrong no one in this room is becoming an NBA player you're just not I don't care how many times you quote Philippians 4 13 you're not well the Bible says that I can do all things through Christ it does within the context of Philippians 4 and when the Bible says in 2 Peter that we have great and precious promises we have to understand that that comes through what he twice refers to as the knowledge of God verse 2 multiply to the knowledge of God verse 3 through the knowledge of him who called us we've got to be knowledgeable and studious yes there are great and precious promises but if we don't see the Bible as our authority then we'll just pick and choose what verses we like and make it say whatever we want it to say now we're the authority not the scripture and that is pagan not

Christian so we claim great and precious promises like Habakkuk 1 5 God is always doing a great work that is so wonderful you won't even believe it right wrong Habakkuk 1 5 is the promise of coming judgment to disobedient Judah and the Babylonians are about to come and destroy them how do we know that we know that by studying by reading by gaining knowledge and that comes from the perspective that we have to have of the Bible that we want to study it and understand it that God's word is granted to us to use the language of verse 3 that God's word is precious to us to use the words of verse 4

Peter uses that word precious in his letters to speak of the blood of Christ in 1 Peter 1 to speak of Christian character 1 Peter 2 to speak of a godly woman 1 Peter 3 these are precious things we receive his gift of the word of God and we hold in high regard the things he has given to us there's a true story of a man who lost his hands and eyesight in a work incident he was most upset because by losing his eyesight he can no longer read his Bible he heard of a lady in England who had learned to read Braille with her lips he set out to learn how to do that only to find that even his lips had lost enough sensitivity in the explosion to be able to read it in trying to learn that he discovered that the very tip of his tongue still had the ability to feel he learned to read

Braille with using the tip of his tongue and the only way he could read his Bible was literally by licking the pages and he read the Bible in its entirety four times that's when you understand how precious the word of God is we tend to take it so casually but the Christian's perspective on the Bible is that it is a privilege for us to have this it is a precious gift that he has given to us and we are to grow in the knowledge of God verse two in the things he teaches us about life and godliness verse three to grow through the knowledge of him all of this verse four that he has granted he has given to us these precious promises that we can know through the study of his word so

God's word is a privilege for us and second God's word is our direction it's our privilege and our direction I've read the story of a licensed pilot who was flying his own private plane on a cloudy day he was not very experienced in instrument landing and so he talked to the control tower and was telling them that because of the storm that he had encountered he could not see enough to fly the plane he was thinking about all the hills and the towers and the buildings in the way and he began to get very panicked because he could not see clearly enough to be able to land the plane and a very calm but stern voice came through the radio to the airplane saying this you obey the instructions let us take care of the obstructions it's a good word for how we see the bible let God take care of the problems let God take care of all the obstructions in the world around us our obligation is to obey its instructions but too many times if we don't see the bible as authoritative what we will do is convince ourselves that the obstructions in the world around us excuse us from obeying its instructions so we say well I know that

[24:47] I'm not being very nice and kind but it's because this person makes me so mad I know that I'm not honoring my husband or honoring my wife but it's because she just won't listen to me or I know that I cheat and steal a little from the company but after all if they paid me what I was worth I wouldn't need to do that I know I don't pray and I should but my life is so busy in this season I just don't have time to do that or I know that we're supposed to read and study God's word but I'm just not a reader we'll come up with an endless list of excuses and that happens when we focus on the obstructions rather than simply seeking to obey the instructions and what the Christian must do

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when he approaches his Bible is he sees it as a privilege but he also sees it as our direction this is how we are to live this is how we are to obey again back to verse 3 all things that pertain to life and godliness we can find in God's word everything I must know

I find in the Bible now the Bible doesn't claim to tell you everything in the world I have no idea how to cook a meal I'm not going to be instructed how to be a cook in the Bible but we have drive-thrus so I don't have to but the things I must know for life and for godliness are in the Bible now if I don't see the Bible as authoritative what I will tend to do is I will say which books of the Bible do I enjoy reading which parts of the Bible do I most feel encouraged by and if you don't see the Bible as authoritative what you will do is you will leave out the parts that you don't like to read and then what we do is we set ourself up as the judge of what scripture we must know and what scripture is superfluous we wouldn't use those words but that is the way that it works practically but the Bible says that all of scripture is given to us by God and is profitable for doctrine and reproof and correction and training in righteousness so if we see the Bible as authoritative we've got to read it it's not only a privilege that's been given and granted to us it is the very direction for how we are to live it gives us theological direction how we can know who God is how we can understand biblical doctrine it gives us parental instructions the kind of character a godly parent should have it tells us about husbands and wives how we're to relate to each other it tells us important things about our jobs and our money and the way that we see worldly things tells us how to deal with emotions and bitterness and anger it tells us to not be quick to be angry
James chapter one be slow to speak quick to listen slow to speak slow to become angry it tells us in our anger do not sin and if you see the bible as authoritative then you're going to seek to devour it because we want to know and obey all that is in here because we love the one who gave the word so the christian's perspective on the bible absolutely sees it as authoritative but it sees it as authoritative in a love relationship we love the one who gave it we worship the one who gave it so we want to know what it says if i get a text from my wife i know she loves me i want to read what she says to me and whatever it says i trust it because it comes from her but i also care deeply of what she's saying because i know her heart for me and in the same way as a christian we read our bible and if there are things that it calls to that are hard we understand this is from a god who loves us and wants what is best for us and if you don't understand who god is and his love for his people you're going to be tempted to think that the parts of god's war that are hard are just kind of the the temporary punishments we're straddled with until we get to go to heaven that's the wrong way to view scripture all of scripture is profitable for us it's helpful it's good it trains us it equips us a very common conversation i'll have with particularly with young people that are wanting to talk to me about what school they should go to or what to major in or who they should marry or what job they should take in conversations they'll say something like i just wish god would speak and tell me i often will respond to that with are you reading his word now genesis to revelation you can read it cover to cover it's not going to tell you where to go to school it's not going to tell you what job to take what it is going to do is convict you of your sin and lead you to repentance and to live and walk in humility and to seek first his kingdom and to live for his glory not your own it's it's seeking to transform you from the inside out because the most important part of you is not what school you go to it's your character it's not what job you take it's your heart and when we see the bible as authoritative what we begin to understand is that this book is not only a privilege it's our direction and so we want to devour the word of god so that we can best know the lord and live in the way he's called us to live again go back to verse 3 here in 2nd peter his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him you cannot know how to live apart from studying your bible you cannot know
what to do in life apart from being a student of god's word and so we see god's word as authoritative authoritative from the god who loves us who wants us to know him and has given us his word as a gift it's a privilege it's direction and thirdly god's word for the believer is our food it's our daily food job 23 12 says i have not departed from the commandment of his lips i have treasured the food we are to take in and digest the word of god so many people even people who would call themselves believers are just ignorant of the bible and so many people like to say well the bible is just confusing well there are some parts that may be harder than others to understand but it's amazing to me that the more that we read pray and study the more we understand of what it says and most of the time when people say the bible is just too confusing they never open it well of course it's confusing anything you don't study and read would be and so we are to see god's word

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our perspective is that god's word is our daily food speaking of the scripture in the old testament it says speaking of god's word this is no idle thing this is your life the christian's perspective on the bible is this is our very life we can do without a lot of things but we cannot do without the word of god we can give up a lot of things but we cannot give up the intake of god's word so many people are just uninformed of what god's word says because they don't read it we want to be readers our perspective on the bible is that we read it because it informs us it teaches us it guides us and it's what helps us know that we belong to him you're still in second peter one look at verse ten therefore brothers be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election for if you practice these qualities you will never fail for in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our lord and savior jesus christ it's of course not that you can earn or work your way into heaven it's that one of the ways we know we belong to him is that we love him and if we love him we love his word we love his word if my wife were to text me all throughout the day and [35:38] I never read it and she sent me 15 texts and I got home from work and I hadn't read them and I said well honey I love you and she says well you never responded to my text you ignore me oh I didn't ignore you I just didn't read it well why didn't you read it well I just don't really care what you have to say but you said you loved me well I do love you well if you loved me wouldn't you care what I have to say how many people claim to be believers and the truth is they don't know what God says because they just don't really care what he has to say and we'll get up in arms to protest nativity scenes!

because that's kind of heroic but to wake up every day and open a Bible when nobody but God sees and nobody but God knows and we just say there are things I can do without but I cannot do without your word today I know your heart for me is good I know your word is for my prophet and I want to know what you say!
That's how a Christian reads his Bible it was William Bradford the governor of the Plymouth colony of the pilgrims who said this those who believe in the holy scriptures are bound to observe its teaching those who do not are to be bound by its consequences most of the Old Testament is a story of God's people disobeying being warned and then dealing with the consequences and remember even as we were walking through lamentations we saw this they never became irreligious they kept going through the ceremonies they just stopped obeying and caring for the heart of God the Christian sees his Bible as a privilege as his direction as his daily food because he loves and trusts the one who gave it and then one last thing we see about the
Bible is that it changes us through the work of the Holy Spirit it changes us that as we read the Bible we should be loving more serving more giving more generously helping more faithfully forgiving more easily the work of the of the spirit as we intake the Bible on a daily basis transforms us if we know and love the one who gave it to us now again let me go back to the one central word tonight the Christian's perspective on the Bible I'm wanting to drill home tonight that we see it as authoritative that when we read the word if we really believe this is revealed to us from God the Holy Spirit it's authoritative and so whatever we read our heart's desire is to obey not to pick and choose which parts we'll take seriously not to pick and choose which parts the
Bible will be binding on us but we would truly want to say all scripture is given to us by the inspiration of God and all scripture is authoritative and all scripture is profitable for us therefore all scripture is something that we should heed and seriously obey and when we do that we begin to live out the reality that we belong to God so when Romans 8 says that the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit letting us know we are children of God it means when the Christian reads his Bible we understand this is God speaking to us!
[39:59] and when you pick up your Bible each day you're not picking up merely!

a collection of philosophy or merely a collection of wisdom sayings or merely just random encouraging words you're picking up what has been super intended by God the Holy Spirit inspired and preserved for us that we could read it and know who he is and grow verse 2 in the knowledge of God verse 3 because he granted it to us verse 3 through the knowledge of him who called us verse 4 that we would be given precious and great promises so that we have everything we need for life and for godliness so here's what it comes down to it's really two things number one do you desire to live a godly life and if you do number two the way you would prove that is by seeing the Bible as your authority and seeking to know it so you can honor the one who has called you into a relationship with himself the

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Christian's perspective on the Bible is so critical because if you don't see the Bible the way the Bible reveals itself it instead will become for us heavenly homework I've got to read it I've got to keep up I've got to make sure I keep up with my reading plan I've got to make sure I can answer the question if somebody asked me it just becomes heavenly homework that was not the intention of scripture it was given that you may know God and that you would receive and live in the great and precious promises he has given us that we could know him and that we could live a godly life so we see the Bible as a privilege and we see the

Bible as something that is our instruction this is how we are supposed to live and we would see the Bible as our food and then the Bible through the Holy Spirit changes us as we seek to live out that which we know so when you wake up in the morning or tomorrow night before you go to bed no one's going to applaud you if you read your Bible and no one's going to mock you if you don't and you're not going to have five thousand dollars fall from the sky if you finish reading through the Bible in a year and you're not going to be zapped to a pillar of salt if you dropped out Leviticus so when no one is watching and no one is applauding and no one is condemning how do you see your Bible well the testimony of Scripture is that it is a gift granted to you by the Lord for you to understand his great and precious promises that you would live in the daily joy that comes from knowing his word and seeing it as your authority that in so doing you would honor him and reflect him to a world desperately needing to know the truth of his word with that perspective let us become students of the word who study and show ourself approved a workman not needing to be ashamed Lord we thank you for your word to us thank you for giving it to us for preserving it thank you for the work of men who gave their lives that we could have it in our own language while we this need to be done for us to be one thing we can see as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as as

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