

THE BIBLE

Scripture is God - breathed
(2 Timothy 3:16-17)



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The Law of Love

“There are so many interpretations of the bible how do I know which one to believe?”

This is a question that many of us ask. St Augustine a fourth century philosopher said: “No interpretation of Scripture can contradict the love of God and the love of neighbour.” Augustine suggests some things that we can keep in mind when we are reading and trying to understand the bible.

1

GOD AT THE CENTRE

We need to have our focus on God and God's love

2

ONE STORY

Remember the the bible is one whole story. Taking out parts can change meanings.

3

DIG DEEP

Through prayer go beyond the obvious message to see what God is really saying.

St Jerome



‘To be ignorant of Scripture is to be ignorant of Christ’

Sacred Scripture



...leads us to God
YouCat 502

We find the true faith



in Sacred Scripture and in the living Tradition of the Church.

The Bible is HUGE!

Because the bible is so big it is hard to know where to start. Simple bible verses can be a way to enter into Scripture and learn how to read what God is saying to you.

Here is a craft that you can make to have some bible verses and questions on hand during your prayer time.

Bible Box Craft

1. Find an empty match box or mint box
2. Print off the bible passage and the reflection. Cut them out. (You may have to resize them to fit your chosen box)
3. Decorate your match box with the cover sheet or create your own design.
4. When you have prayer time choose a passage and spend 5 minutes reflecting on it. You may even want to look it up in your bible and read the text around it to help you get a deeper understanding.
5. Begin by asking God to help you hear the message of the scripture.
6. Read it through slowly once.
7. Sit quietly, did any word or phrase stand out for you?
8. Read it through again.
9. Listen. Allow space to hear God.
10. Read the reflection to help you look at things from a different perspective.
11. What message does God want to give you.
12. Finish by turning your thoughts and reflection into a prayer.



ST AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (344-430AD) AUG 28TH FEAST DAY

St Augustine was a man who turned his life around, from one of partying and sin to a Catholic priest and writer. He is known as one of the most intelligent people to have lived and his thinking has influenced our current Christian insights as well as how we gain meaning from the bible texts. He is recognised as a doctor of the church, which means he is acknowledged for his input into our understandings of God and faith.

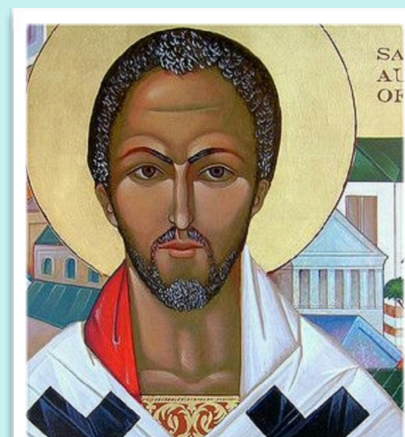


Photo Credit: Saint-augustine.org



Jesus went into the Temple and began driving out those who were selling.

LUKE 19:45

Jesus is frustrated with the way that people are 'polluting' the sacred, the good. My body is sacred, all life is sacred and our earth is sacred. What do I need to take better care of?



Then the other came, saying, 'Lord, here is your money. I wrapped it up in a piece of cloth, for I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man; you take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'

LUKE 19:20-21

Sometimes I am scared to do what is right. Jesus asks me to take risks so that I can share the message of the Gospel. Where can I take risks for God today?



Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan ...

MATTHEW 3:4-5

John was a man who did not have very much, and he could not be bought by things. Do you think that this is what made people trust him? Am I easily tempted by things that don't make life truly better?



An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you."

MATTHEW 2:13

Our news is full of innocent people who are forced to flee their homes because of fear of death. God asks me to love and welcome my neighbours. What can I do to support immigrants in my local community?



Jesus told his disciples a parable about the need to pray continually and never lose heart.

LUKE 18:1

When I pray continuously it's not because I need to tell God what's going on. God knows! I pray continuously so that I can learn to trust God and to see where God is and where God is calling me.



Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices.

LUKE 15:4-5

Think about how much effort and worry you put into finding something like your phone. This parable is an example to explain just how much value Jesus puts on his friendship with you. Can I name what makes me precious to God?



Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise person who built their house on rock. The rain fell and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.

MATTHEW 7:21, 24-25

It is tempting to take the shortcut for quick results. Two houses, one built on sand and one built on rock could look identical from the outside. Do I need to work on building my faith deeper so it can cope when times are tough?



When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?"

MATTHEW 21:23

Am I like the chief priest who tried to hold onto power and popularity? Or do I make space for respect and dignity in my friendships?



Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath..."

MARK 2:27

Jesus is showing us that people are more important than systems and structures. The best way for me to love God is to love my neighbours and my environment. How does Sunday Mass remind me of this love?



Blessed are those who trust in the Lord. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it will bear fruit.

JEREMIAH 17:7-9

Prayer is not only a way to get in touch with God, it is also a way to get in touch with myself. How can I spend regular time in prayer this week?



Jesus was to die for the nation – and not for the nation only, but to gather together in unity the scattered children of God.

JOHN 11:52

Each and everyone of us is welcomed to be part of Jesus' family – Jesus excluded no one. How can I include people or make them feel welcome?



Jesus says to them "It is I. Do not be afraid."

JOHN 6:20

Today in our world there is a great deal of fear and anxiety. Can I take Jesus' words to heart? Can I really trust that even though I don't understand why things are a certain way, God has a plan?



Jesus said to his disciples: "Peace I leave to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid."

JOHN 14:27

Jesus is an example of non-violent love and peace. How do I make and keep peace at home and at school?



So always treat others as you would like them to treat you; that is the meaning of the Law and the Prophets.

MATTHEW 7:12

How do I feel when people treat me with respect and dignity?
Can I share this gift with others?



It is steadfast love, not sacrifice, that God desires.

PSALM 50

Jesus puts an end to thinking that we have to earn God's love. God loves me – that is a given. All God asks is that I return that love, and participate in a relationship. How can I live my love for God?



God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life.

JOHN 3:16

I can spend a lot of time wondering what God is like, what did Jesus really do or say, what bits to take literally, etc? It's worth taking time just to be thankful that 'God loves me'. Can I even begin to understand the depth of God's love?



The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life; and they will never be lost and no one will ever steal them from me.

JOHN 10:27-28

If we believe in the words and life of Jesus we try to live our lives as he did. If I don't follow him he will do all that he can to lead me back. Can I see, that even though I turn from God, God never turns away from me?



I am the vine and you are the branches.

JOHN 15:5

A grape vine is a long trunk with heaps of branches breaking off from it. The vine is where the branches get their strength. Where do I get my strength from?