

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

Song—Thy Word

Section Divina—John 6:50-69



I. Introduction and Syllabus

II. The Problem—Bible as controversy

- A. Individualism
- B. Velveteen Rabbit
- C. Modern Problems (Bible as science, Bible as instruction manual)
- D. Ouija Board

III. Petter Enns—*How the Bible Actually Works: In Which I Explain How an Ancient, Ambiguous, and Diverse Book Leads Us to Wisdom Rather than Answers—and Why that is Good News.*

- A. **Contextual and Ancient Document**—Enns emphasizes that the Bible is an ancient and contextual document, deeply rooted in its own time and culture. He argues that understanding the historical and cultural context of the Bible is crucial to interpret it correctly. (Geoffrey's way: A text without a context is a pretext!)
- B. **The Bible's Ambiguity and Diversity**—The book highlights the inherent ambiguities and contradictions within the biblical texts. Enns suggests that these aren't flaws but are instead intentional, serving to invite readers into a dialogue and a journey of faith. (Example: Proverbs 26:4-5)
- C. **Wisdom Approach to Scripture**—Enns proposes a "wisdom" approach to reading the Bible. Instead of seeing the Bible as a rulebook or a straightforward guide to theology, he suggests it should be viewed as a source of wisdom, encouraging continuous exploration and interpretation.
- D. **The Role of the Reader**—A significant emphasis is placed on the role of the reader in interpreting the Bible. Enns argues that understanding the Bible is not about uncovering a single, definitive meaning but engaging with the text in a way that is relevant to modern contexts and experiences. (Listen to God!)
- E. **The Bible and the Life of Faith**—Finally, Enns frames the Bible as a companion in the journey of faith rather than a strict set of instructions. He suggests that the Bible's real power lies in its ability to foster spiritual growth and transformation, rather than merely providing clear-cut answers. (Not an owner's manual or rule book—it is a wisdom book)

IV. Geoffrey's List

- A. *Lectio Divina*—The purpose of reading the Bible is to hear from and be united with God.
- B. A Generative Word—The word of God always creates.
- C. Word makes faith—word makes church
- D. Why do we read the Bible? To have a relationship with God.

V. Closing Prayer

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.