

Scott McKnight
The Blue Parakeet

Rethinking How You Read the Bible

Small Group Bible Study | Read Chapter 1

The Book & I

How, Then, Are We to Live Out the Bible Today

Foot Washing

Let's Start Talking: Has there ever been a time when someone washed your feet?

Read: John 13:14-15

¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.¹⁵I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you **.**

Q1: Is this a command that Jesus expects us to be obedient to it?

Read: 1 Timothy 5:9-12

⁹ No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, ¹⁰ and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, **washing the feet of the Lord's people**, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.

¹¹ As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry.

Q2: If foot washing was an activity practiced by the early church, by Jesus command and their example shouldn't we be practicing that today?

Surrendering Possessions

Read Luke 14:35 -

In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

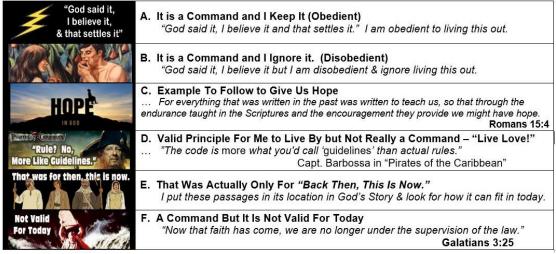
Q4: How did you decide that this statement belongs "back then"?

When you read something directly from Jesus, you would think that He expects you to do it. In the Blue Parakeet, Scot McKnight takes a number of examples like this and talks about how inconsistent Christians can be in reading Scripture. Listen to this quote: (p 13) Read -

"I know this sounds out of the box and off the wall for many, but no matter how hard we try to convince ourselves otherwise, it's true. **We pick and choose.** I believe many of us want to know why we pick and choose. Even more importantly, many of us want to know how to do this in a way that honors God and embraces the Bible as God's Word for all times."

Q3: What do you think about Scot's claim that Christians "pick & choose"?

Q4: Walk through the following responses and think of different scriptures that fall under that category.



Q5: Are people afraid to question how they read the Bible? What are they so afraid of? Do you have anyone in your life that challenges how you read the Bible? Explain.

Closing Reading: -- Overview by Trevin Wax - (see <u>www.thegospelcoalition.org</u>)

Do we all pick and choose, or another way to say it, do we "adopt and adapt" what we're to obey in the Bible and how we're to obey it? (p 11) After seeking to demonstrate the truthfulness of his claim that we all pick and choose, Scot will lays down some ground rules that help us understand *why* we pick and choose, and how we should pick and choose *biblically* – in "a way that honors God and embraces the Bible as God's Word for all time." (p 13)

As you read your copy of <u>"The Blue Parakeet"</u>, Scot McKnight will expose you to the hypocrisy of Christians who say they believe in the Bible without doing what it says. What good is inerrancy if you don't do what God says? How many of us know doctrine about the Bible but don't do what the God of the Bible says? Good questions. So Scot challenges us to figure out how we know what in the Bible is applicable today and what is not.

Next we will see how Scot uses the story of a blue parakeet as the central metaphor for the book. A blue parakeet once came into Scot's peaceful backyard. The mere presence of the parakeet terrorized the sparrows. Scot thinks that we have tended to cage and silence the "blue parakeet" passages in the Bible – those passages and commands that make us uncomfortable or challenge our current notions. We will discover that Scot believes that if our interpretation of the Bible does not lead to good works, we have aborted what the Bible is designed to produce. "If you are doing good works, you are reading the Bible aright. If you are not doing good works, you are not reading the Bible aright." (p 112)

Can you image what could happen if we stopped asking, "What does *the* Bible says?", but asking, "What is God saying to me in that Bible?" *The* difference is a difference between paper and a personal relationship with God.

Additional/Optional Material

Read - Scot's Personal Story with The God of the Bible



"But one morning, we were asked by our cabin leader to go spend a little time in prayer before breakfast. ..and I finally sat next to a tree, and prayed what my cabin leader told us to pray: **"Lord, fill me with your Holy Spirit."** ... The Lord to whom I prayed that prayer caught me off guard. To quote the words of John Wesley, "My heart was strangely warmed." ...When I prayed, something powerful happened, and I went to breakfast a new person. Within hours I knew what I wanted to do for my life. On that hot summer day, I unexpectedly became a Bible student with a voracious appetite to read the Bible." (page 9-11)

Q6: What did you find interesting about Scot's personal story with the Bible?

Q7: Do you have a personal story with the Bible? What was happening when you had an appetite to read the Bible?

<u>Read:</u> James 1:26-27

²⁶Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not **keep a tight rein on their tongues** deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to **look after orphans and widows** in their distress and to **keep oneself from being polluted by the world**.



Q8: What would you tell someone if they asked you, "What is pure and faultless religion?"

Q9: Like Scot McKnight, were you ever disturbed when you saw that Christians were not consistent in how they lived out their reading of the Bible?

Q10: Can you make a list of things that created questions for you concerning the Bible. Were you ever taught...

- 1. Your denomination was the only one doing it right & going to heaven?
- 2. Changing the style & how you sang in worship made God mad. Nadab & Abihu's Strange Fire
- 3. You must be silent where the Bible is silent no additions.
- 4. The King James Bible is the only authorized translation.
- 5. Share other examples of things that trouble you:

Close with Prayer: