

Following Jesus



Reading the Bible Like Jesus

Do deal seriously with *what* the
Bible says we have to deal
seriously with *how* we read it



Meaning has BOTH a past and a
present



Author
Reader
Text
Community



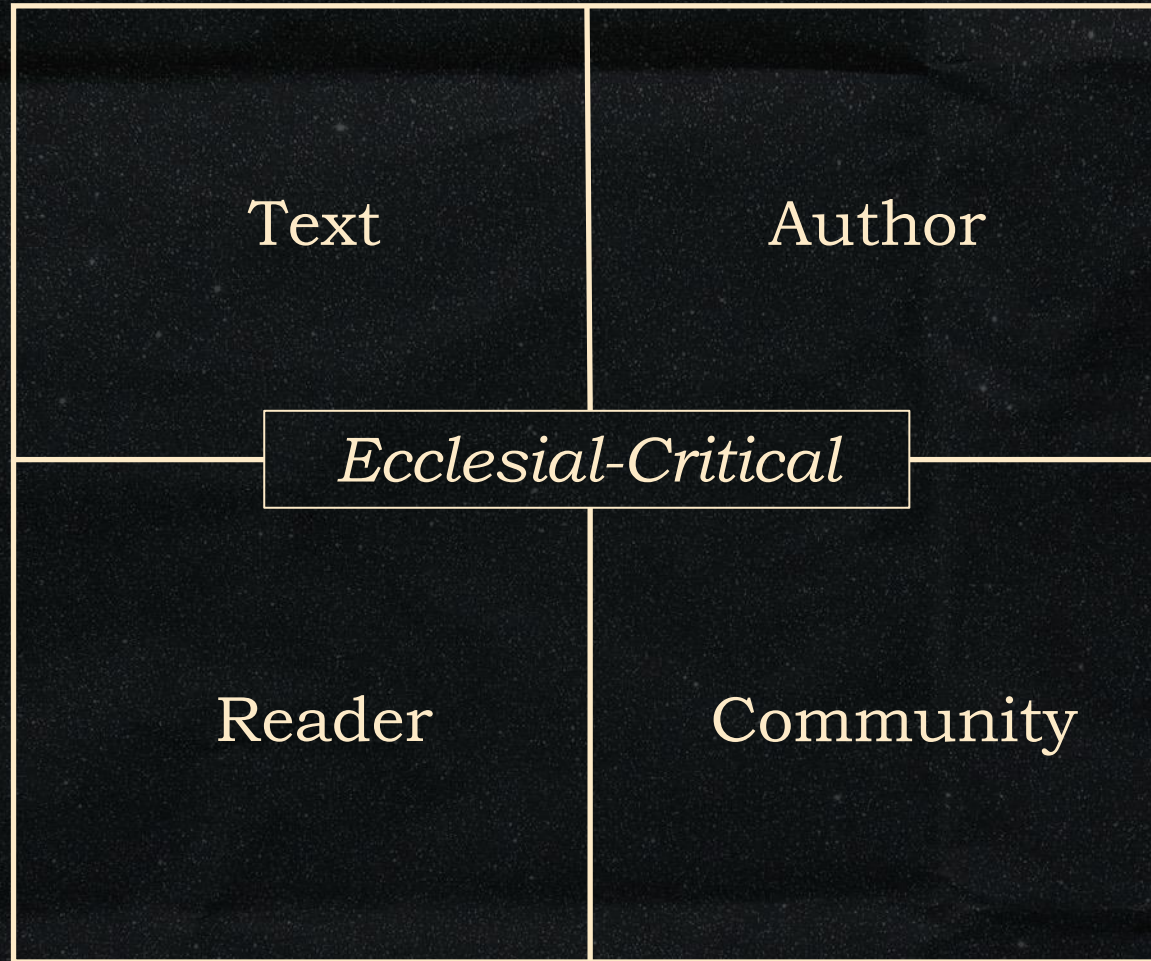
Critical

Text	Author
Reader	Community

Non-Critical



Critical



Non-Critical



Jesus employed critical insights to
serve a non-critical goal



What was the goal of Jesus' reading of scripture and who established it?



Luke 10:25-29



The community produces the book based on its real experience with God in time and space and reads the book for the continual shaping of their peculiar identity as God's people.





What does the church say is the non-critical goal of reading scripture?



Perceiving God Rightly Living Rightly



"It is therefore to be desired that each one according to his capacity will ever 'reach out to the things which are before, forgetting those things which are behind,' that is, will reach out both to better works and also to a clearer understanding and knowledge, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, to whom is the glory for ever."

- Origen, *On First Principles*; (4.3.14)



“Whatever there is in the word of God that cannot, when taken literally, be referred either to purity of life or soundness of doctrine, you may set it down as figurative. Purity of life has reference to the love of God and one’s neighbor; soundness of doctrine to the knowledge of God and one’s neighbor.”

- Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*; (3.10.14)



Perceiving God Rightly



From the beginning the church was convinced that the God of the Hebrew scriptures and the God revealed in the person of Jesus were of the same essential substance



New Testament Examples

John 1:18

John 10:30

2 Cor. 4:4

Philippians 2:6

Colossians 1:15

Heb. 1:3

1 John 5:20



This conviction became known as
the “Rule of Faith”



"But the following fact should be understood. The holy apostles, when preaching the faith of Christ, took certain doctrines, those namely which they believed to be necessary ones, and delivered them in the plainest terms to all believers...First, that God is one, who created and set in order all things...Then again: Christ Jesus, he who came to earth, was begotten of the Father before every created thing...emptied himself and was made man, was made flesh, although he was God."

Origen, *On First Principles Book I*; (1.preface.2-4)



"The Trinity, one God, of Whom are all things, through Whom are all things, in Whom are all things. Thus the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and each of these by Himself, is God, and at the same time they are all one God; and each of them by Himself is a complete substance, and yet they are all one substance."

Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*; (1.5.5)



The “Rule of Faith” became THE
central principle of biblical
interpretation



The Bible is about God

God and Jesus are of the same substance

Sometimes the Bible says stuff about God
that doesn't look like Jesus



"Moreover, even the simpler of those who claim to belong to the Church, while believing indeed that there is none greater than the Creator, in which they are right, yet believe such things about him as would not be believed of the most savage and unjust of men."

Origen, *On First Principles*; (4.2.1)



"Those things, again, whether only sayings or whether actual deeds, which appear to the inexperienced to be sinful, and which are ascribed to God, or to men whose holiness is put before us as an example, are wholly figurative, and the hidden kernel of meaning they contain is to be picked out as food for the nourishment of charity."

Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*; (3.12.18)



"Because of the predominate role played by the incarnation in the biblical account of salvation, the key to scripture was generally recognized to be the doctrine that the Son was of the same being, nature, or essence as the Father"

Kurz, William. "Patristic Interpretation of Scripture within God's Story of Creation and Redemption" in *Letter and Spirit, Vol. 7: The Bible and the Church Fathers: The Liturgical Context of Patristic Exegesis*. Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2011 (45).



Matthew 19:1-12



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