



into the Melting Pot

the question is more important than the answer

Sunday 17 November 2013

Can We Trust The Bible? – How to Read it.

Two stereo-type descriptions of ways of reading the Bible, the former depicting an earlier literal-factual view and the latter an emerging historical-metaphorical paradigm.

Literal-factual

- 'Is the story true?' became 'Is it factual; did it happen?'
- If the Bible is true, then it must be literal-factual truth.
- The Bible is the revealed truth, with divine authority, of doctrine and morality
- Faith – the Bible is true because it says it is (2 Timothy 3:16)

Historical-metaphorical

- The Bible was not written for us – what is the historical context?
- The truth it contains is 'more-than-literal' – whether the story happened or not, what is the story saying, and what does it mean for us today in our context?
- The Bible is a record of two communities response to God, searching for the sacred and how transformation comes through relationship with God
- The historical-critical method: understanding the Bible by setting it in the context of its time of writing, how it came into existence, and what were the purposes of the authors

Checklist for the preparation of leaders' notes for On-Line@9 adult discussion notes

- What was the historical and cultural background for the author, the text, and the original audience?
- What was the author's intention at the time of writing?
- Which version/translation of the Bible do you find most helpful?
- In what way(s) does the passage:
 - challenge us?
 - reassure us?
 - inform us?
 - help in our faith journey?
- Is there a particular Methodist doctrinal viewpoint?
- What is the message to us today?

Doubting Thomas

John 20:19-24

Matthew 28:16-20

(Mark 16:14-18)

Luke 24:33-39

Peter Walks on Water

Mark 6:45-52

John 6:15-21

Matthew 14:22-33