

The Story of God and Us

1. How often do you read the Bible?
2. What is your relationship with the Bible like?
3. What have you been taught about how you should relate to the Bible?
4. How do you think your answers to questions 2 and 3 affect the answer to 1?

“The Bible is the love story between God and humanity.” – Fr Bruno Saint Girons

“The Bible is a record of how God continually tries and tries to awaken human beings to the full reality of who they are, namely, God’s beloved children.” – Fr William Barry, *God and You*

5. How do you relate to these 2 statements? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

“So how do we read the Bible? It is not asking “is this true?” but rather “is this loving?” How does this square with my understanding of God as revealed through Jesus? How does this square with the Bible being the love story between God and humanity, and how God tries to awaken us to the reality of who we are – God’s beloved children?

There are many parts of the Bible that run against the love commandment. Like when Samuel told Saul that God told him to utterly destroy the Amalekites in 1 Sam 15. Samuel said that God told him to tell Saul to utterly destroy the Amalekites. Did God really say that? I don’t believe that the God of love that Christ revealed, the God that commanded Jonah to preach repentance to Nineveh would have given such an instruction.

The Bible is a mirror that allows us to reflect. It helps us think about our actions and even guide our actions. Sometimes the Bible reflects the beliefs and values of the people who wrote it, rather than reflecting the character of God. And here, i will read against the text - that the utter destruction of anyone - much less genocide and - is out of character with the God i know and believe in.”

6. What do you think about reading against the text?
7. What guidelines do you think will help us do that without just reading the Bible the way we like and justify ourselves and our actions?
8. If the Bible is a mirror, is there a story you connect with in the Bible? Sit for a while imagining yourself in the scene. What is happening in the scene? What is this story about? Where is God? Where are you in the scene? How do you connect with what is happening? What does it say about your relationship with God? With other people? What do you think God is trying to tell you through this story?