

How Jesus used scripture

1 Context

Monday evenings (once a month) in April, May and June!

To help us in our thinking, as a church, about new ways to reach out to people we will be looking at three different ways in which Jesus did that:

1. How Jesus used scripture (30th April)
2. How Jesus used stories (21st May)
3. How Jesus used situations (25th June)

And reflecting on the example of Jesus we will think about how we can do similar things in our context today.

These sessions will be at Belgrave and will start at 7:30pm. For each session there will be some preparatory “homework” and then opportunities to share and discuss together on the evening itself. Please come and join us as we seek to learn together and apply what we have learned to our lives.

2 Preparatory Homework

Please read the passages, reflect on what they are saying and think about the questions. And we’ll explore them together on 30th April.

While we will be focusing on how Jesus used scripture to reach out to people who hadn’t yet chosen to follow him we’ll start by looking at two different examples.

2.1 The temptation of Jesus

We get accounts of this in Matthew and Luke and on three occasions with the devil misusing or misquoting scripture, Jesus uses scripture to withstand and defeat him:

- Matthew 4:4, 7, 10
- Luke 4:4, 8, 12

Q1: What principles do we learn from this engagement between Jesus and Satan?

2.2 The Sermon on the Mount

On a number of occasions during the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus refers to what was written in scripture and then adds something to it – see examples in Matthew 5:21-46.

Q2: What was Jesus doing here? How can his example help us use scripture appropriately?

2.3 Reaching others

Some occasions when Jesus used scripture when speaking to those who didn’t yet believe in him were:

- Matthew 11:28 – where Jesus takes God’s promise in Jeremiah 31:25 to give rest to his people and applies it to himself
- Matthew 23:5 – where Jesus points out that people were doing things commanded in the Law (Numbers 15:38-39; Deuteronomy 6:8) for the wrong reasons

- Matthew 23:38 – where Jesus quotes scripture (Jeremiah 22:5) to make clear that God’s promises were coming true
- Mark 11:17 – where Jesus combines two different scriptures (Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11) to challenge and warn the people
- Luke 11:32 – where Jesus refers to an historical event (Jonah 3:9-10) to warn people about what was happening in their day
- John 19:28 – when Jesus, even suffering on the cross, was mindful of the importance of Scripture being fulfilled (Psalm 22:15)

Q3: What do these examples tell us about the importance of knowing the Bible? How seriously do we take this?

Q4: What do these examples tell us about how scripture can be used appropriately when engaging with others?

Q5: Jesus was primarily speaking to people who had a deep love and respect for their scriptures. We are in a different context, so how can this work for us?

Q6: How have you used scripture when speaking to someone who didn’t know Jesus and had no background in / thought for the Bible? How did it go, how could it have gone better?

Q7: What – based on what we have found out – are we going to do differently with regards to the use of scripture when seeking to reach others for Jesus?