Hearing God’s Voice in the Pages of Scripture
Antony Billington

UCCF Doctrinal Basis
‘The Bible, as originally given, is the inspired and infallible Word of God. It is the supreme authority in all matters of belief and behaviour.’

Session #3
The Literature the Bible Contains

How can we pay best attention to the literary features of the Bible in order to hear the trustworthy voice of God?

The Significance of Infallibility
UCCF Doctrinal Basis

‘The Bible, as originally given, is the inspired and infallible Word of God. It is the supreme authority in all matters of belief and behaviour.’

Song of Songs 2:1

‘I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.’

The Importance of Genre

Opening Reflections
'The clock on the mantelpiece said ten thirty, but someone had suggested recently that the clock was wrong. As the figure of the dead woman lay on the bed in the front room, a no less silent figure glided rapidly from the house. The only sounds to be heard were the ticking of that clock and the loud wailing of an infant.'

Who is the dead woman?

Who is the silent figure?
The clock on the mantelpiece said ten thirty, but someone had suggested recently that the clock was wrong. As the figure of the dead woman lay on the bed in the front room, a no less silent figure glided rapidly from the house. The only sounds to be heard were the ticking of that clock and the loud wailing of an infant.

- Who is the dead woman?
- How did she die?
- Who is the silent figure?
- Why is the infant crying?

Murder at Marplethorpe

The Personal History of David Marplethorpe

Genre...
Recognise that there are various literary types in the Bible

learn to identify them

become acquainted with ways of interpreting them

Which biblical genre do you tend to gravitate towards as your ‘default’ mode – letter, narrative, poetry, something else? Why do you think you do so?
Revelation 1:1–4

‘W’

The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

John,
To the seven churches in the province of Asia:
Grace and peace to you…

For Reflection

Basing your answer in 1:1–4, what kind of book is Revelation?

Book of Revelation

As an apocalypse

666
Start with the given: CUTE PURPLE DINOSAUR

Change all 'U's to 'V's (which is proper Latin anyway):

Extract all Roman Numerals: CVVLIV

Convert into Arabic values:

Add all the numbers: 666
Barney

1. Start with the given: CUTE PURPLE DINOSAUR
2. Change all 'U's to 'V's (which is proper Latin anyway): CVTE PVRPLE DINOSAVR
3. Extract all Roman Numerals: C V V L D I V
4. Convert into Arabic values: 100 5 5 50 500 1 5
5. Add all the numbers: 666

Thus, Barney is Satan.

Book of Revelation

As an apocalypse
As a prophecy

The Importance of Genre
Further Thoughts
Biblical Genres

Interpretation
Knowing how to read maps

Reading biblical stories
Observing biblical law
Praying biblical psalms
Enjoying biblical poetry
Living biblical wisdom
Heeding biblical prophecy
Following biblical gospels
Hearing biblical letters
Seeing biblical apocalyptic
God's law allows us to recognize instances of sin. The narratives, especially the highly condensed account of early human history in Genesis 4-11, show the rapid spread and universality of sin that spoils human relationships. The Psalms give us insight into the psychological dimensions of sin, for instance the sense of shame and the sense of guilt. They also remind us of the vertical dimension of sin: sin is ultimately against God. The prophets show that nations and peoples can be judged by God's Word as well as individuals, and that God is less interested in external conformity to the law than in heartfelt obedience.

The wisdom literature shows sin as foolishness, for nothing is more fruitless than trying to deny the very created order which sustains one's being. Apocalyptic literature depicts sin as a supramundane power that will be ultimately defeated only by God. Lastly, the epistles expose sin as a power and corruption that has been defeated by Christ and which no longer has a hold over those who are in Christ. The canonical forms say more together than they do separately, and systematic theology ignores any one of them to its peril.

Knowing how to read maps

Coordination

Knowing how to harmonise maps

Interpretation

Knowing how to read maps

Coordination

Knowing how to harmonise maps

Formation

Knowing how to ‘follow’ maps
How do we ‘follow’
Letters?
Genealogies?
Song of Songs?

How do we ‘follow’
Letters?
Genealogies?

How do we ‘follow’
Letters?
Genealogies?
Song of Songs?

How do we ‘follow’
Letters?
Genealogies?
Song of Songs?

Gospels?

How do we ‘follow’

Letters?
Genealogies?
Song of Songs?
Gospels?

Apocalyptic?

Biblical Genres

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Word alive
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