

WHAT'S THE CONTEXT?

A SKIT AND DEVOTION ABOUT SCRIPTURE

CHARACTERS

Zappy- The peppy hostess with the mostest

Louis- Contestant who talks without listening.

Shelby- Christian contestant.

(ZAPPY, LOUIS, and SHELBY are all stage. Optional to have LOUIS and SHELBY behind a podium. SHELBY has a Bible)

ZAPPY: Helloooooooooo America! I'm your host, Zappy McFrazzleton, and we're here to play everyone's favorite game: Prove it! Where the only rules are to be right and be LOUD! Let's meet our contestants, shall we? *(to LOUIS)* Contestant 1, What's your name? Tell us about yourself.

LOUIS: *(very smugly)* Well, my name is Louis, and I am the most right person I know. I went to Argue Academy for several years where I graduated with a B.A. in assertion and a minor in being LOUD! So, yes, I think I'll be very good at this game.

ZAPPY: Very impressive! Contestant two, tell us about you.

SHELBY: Well, I'm Shelby, and I-

LOUIS: *(cutting her off)* Forget about HER, let's just start the game. You don't want to waste any time on the soon to be loser.

ZAPPY: What confidence! Let's see if you can keep up that momentum!

LOUIS: Oh, I can.

ZAPPY: Our first topic is reading. Prove or disprove this statement: reading is important.

LOUIS: Oh, that's an easy one. Not important.

SHELBY: Why's that?

LOUIS: *(as if obvious)* Uh, cause if it's really that good it's been made into a movie. People weren't meant to sit and stare at words on pages all day.

SHELBY: *(sarcastically)* Right, they were meant to sit and stare at SCREENS all day.

LOUIS: *(not picking up on her sarcasm)* Yes! Exactly! Case closed, no argument, I win.

SHELBY: Some books are a little too big and complicated to be turned into a movie. *(holds up Bible)*

LOUIS: What is that? A Bible?

SHELBY: It is.

LOUIS: Thank you for helping prove my point further. No one, not even Christians, read the Bible! I mean have you, Shelby, read the Bible, cover to cover?

SHELBY: No, but-

LOUIS: Exactly! They're all just running around, saying they believe something they haven't read! If reading was important you would spend more time doing it. I bet you don't even know what's *in* there. Did you know that In Deuteronomy 22:11, the Bible forbids people to wear different fabrics together, and no one listens to that rule? Why is it that some rules matter, and some don't?

SHELBY: We should spend more time reading the Bible because it is God's Word to us. You have to read more than just one verse to prove your point. Did you read more than that verse or chapter? Enough to see how God's Law plays out throughout the whole Bible?

LOUIS: What?

SHELBY: That's just one verse. You're totally taking it out of context. You're not caring about what's happening before, during, or after. You're taking a phrase without seeing the whole story.

LOUIS: Well, what IS the whole story, smarty pants?

SHELBY: God made laws for the Jews of the time to remind them that they are special and set apart from the other people of the day for the purpose of bringing the Savior into the world. They were His chosen people for the special work of bearing Christ. When Jesus came, the purpose of Israel and its laws were fulfilled.

In Acts Chapter 10, God told Peter there was no longer "clean" and "unclean". Jesus has bridged the gap between the Jews and Gentiles and the purpose of all those rules and regulations for Israel were fulfilled in Jesus. There are rules that still apply to us today, to all people, like the Ten Commandments, and God's command to love the Lord your God your heart and with all your mind and with all your strength.

ZAPPY: Wow! Points to Shelby for really proving it with her knowledge of God's Word!

SHELBY: That's the thing, though. It's always great to have knowledge of who God is and what God has done for us. It helps you understand your Baptismal faith and share it with others. But it's not about "proving it." Faith in God is never about proving by yelling and fighting. It's about God's gift of faith to us, experiencing God's love, salvation through Jesus and serving and

spreading the Gospel through the Holy Spirit whenever possible. If it's helpful to have knowledge about him to do those things, then that's awesome, but what saves us is Jesus.

LOUIS: If you want this "knowledge" so bad, why don't you read the WHOLE Bible, Hmm?

SHELBY: It's something I aspire to do, but I admit it can be difficult. We all fall short of God's law, including reading the Bible. But we are forgiven and try with the Holy Spirit to dig into the richness of scripture and giving it the time we should. That's why we have study Bibles, Bible studies, and other materials and programs to help you study the Bible. Plus, there's always pastors to ask questions to since they have studied God's Word extensively and in the original languages.

ZAPPY: Wow! Incredible! Look at all we've learned today!

LOUIS: Does this mean...I lost?!

ZAPPY: I mean you didn't win.

LOUIS: Not fair! She cheated!

SHELBY: How?

LOUIS: She used reasoning and inference to come to a rational conclusion!

SHELBY: ...Do you mean logic?

LOUIS: Whatever it is, I didn't like it. I, personally, think the loudest person should win.

ZAPPY: Well, that's all the time we have. Until next time, I'm Zappy McFrazzleton, good night!

DEVOTION

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. – 2 Timothy 3:14-15

How many times have you been half listening to instructions at school or misheard some words from your parents? Or overheard just one or two lines from a conversation that only left you with questions? It happens to the best of us. We get only part of the communication and it leads to confusion, at best, and could be potentially dangerous, at worst. It can depend on the message and what is at stake.

Hearing from God in the Bible is of the utmost importance for us as it is God's living and active word to us. As one of the means of grace, God gave us the Bible so we can know Him and know how He has saved us from our sin. The Holy Spirit is present in God's Word to help teach and guide us as we read.

Reading the Bible can be difficult to work through alone. It can be frustrating, confusing, or just feel like work. Yet, we shouldn't just let that discourage us. We should remember that God's Word is a gift to us so we can meditate and learn from it. We can study it with other Christians, ask our pastors and other leaders to help us, and use books like the Catechism or Study Bibles to help us make sense of what we read.

Most importantly, we cannot take bits and pieces of God's Word out of context. We can't pick and choose what verses we like better than others and ignore the parts that are harder to grasp. If it is in the Bible, God put it in there for a reason: to bring us to saving faith in Jesus and to equip us as His children. We need to read the Bible in the context of its purpose, not as a collection of random verses. The more we read, the better we get at understanding God's Word not as bits and pieces, but as a part of a whole.

God wants us to get to know Him through His Word. It's important to know about God to help you better share about Him to others. "Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it." (1 Peter 3:15 NLT) God is always there to help guide us, and through His Word is one of those ways. God is present in the Bible in every word you read, fueling you spiritually, so you can take on the mission field that is our world.

QUESTIONS

- When is it hard to take the Bible as a whole?
- How can we rely on God instead of worldly opinions?

TAKE AWAY POINT

God's Word is a gift that is given to us that should be read in context and not be broken out to prove a point.

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for giving me Your Word. It's a wonderful gift that I don't always use like I should. Help me to meditate on Your Word more, reading the Bible as a whole and not just picking the parts I like better than others. In Jesus name, Amen.