# READING THE BIBLE LIKE A PAGAN

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**Category:** Africa

Dr. Platypus (what a fine name for a blog writer - do other monotremes blog?) has posted an excellent piece on the need for Africans to read Scripture through African eyes and not through the grid of Modern Western culture. As the good Dr points out, the writers of the Bible came from a background which was much closer to modern Africa than to the Industrialised world. It is an excellent, and densely argued post and it is rather difficult to pick a quote out in isolation, but this gives a feel for what he is saying:

> *Iâ€™m convinced there is much wisdom to be found in reading the Bibleâ€"as much as possibleâ€"through non-Western, pre-industrial eyes. At the very least, one wonâ€™t get far in understanding the values and motivations of the people who populate the biblical narrative without it. As surely as I am not an African, none of the heroes of the Bible were Americans!*
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> *Nor were the first interpreters of Scripture. Christianity in antiquity surely looked more like Imasogieâ€™s African theology than anything that came out of Germany a hundred years agoâ€"or 500! It is worth remembering that for most of its history, the church was made up of people whose worldview emphasized the immanence of the spirit, the power of symbol and sacrament, the fellowship of departed saints, and the availability of Godâ€™s grace not merely for the transcendent questions of ultimate concern but for everyday questions of uncertainty of the near future, crises of the present, and unknowns of the past. These are the issues that drive our lives most of the time, and traditional Western Christianity has not always done a good job of addressing them.*
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> *We in the West could learn a lot from Christians beyond our intellectual borders. (read more).*

One of the implications of this post is that people in the post-modern world may well find that they have more in common with the Biblical writers and their African brothers and sisters than they do with the categories of the Enlightenment dominated Western world. It fascinates me that much evangelical critique of post-modernism still seems determined to push us back into modernism, rather than seizing the opportunities that post-modernism brings to us.