



## A One-Page Introduction to the Bible

### *What is scripture?*

That's a good question! We believe scripture is God's written Word, uniquely inspired by the Holy Spirit, which bears witness to God's living Word, Jesus Christ. As attested by the early church and subsequent councils, scripture is the trustworthy record of God's revelation. It consists of the sixty-six books of the Old Testament (also known as the Hebrew Bible) and the New Testament.

### *Why read it?*

We believe scripture is a means of grace. By reading, hearing, and meditating on scripture, we can receive the gifts of grace and truth from God. By bearing witness to God's presence and activity in the history of Israel, the person of Jesus, and the growth of the early church, searching the scripture can help us get a better sense of how God is living, moving, and breathing with us today.

### *Where can I get a Bible?*

If you swing by the Welcome Table on Sunday morning, we'll be glad to give you a free Bible. To access additional translations of scripture, check out [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com). When you join the church, we'll provide you with a Wesley Study Bible as a gift. This version of the Bible includes insightful commentary from a Methodist perspective.

### *What translation should I get?*

For personal devotion, we recommend the Common English Bible translation because it is written at a comfortable reading level for most people. It "represents the work of a diverse team with broad scholarship, including the work of over one hundred and twenty scholars - men and women from twenty-four faith traditions in American, African, Asian, European and Latino communities."

For deeper study, we recommend the New Revised Standard Version because it provides a more accurate translation of the original languages (Hebrew and Greek). It was translated by an ecumenical group of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Christian and Jewish scholars, and it accounts for a set of manuscripts known as the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were discovered in 1947.

### *Where should I start?*

You might feel tempted to read the Bible from cover to cover, starting with Genesis and ending with Revelation - but if you're new to scripture, we recommend starting with these three books: Genesis, Luke, and Acts (in that order). There's a lot of wisdom to be found in scripture, so it's important to read slowly, ask good questions, and participate in a community of interpretation.

### *What if I have questions?*

If you have questions about what you're reading, welcome to the party! We have big questions, too – and while we can't promise to have all the answers, we do have a seminary-trained pastor who can explore those questions with you. We have several Bible Study groups that meet on a weekly basis, and we have biblical commentaries that you're welcome to borrow at any time.

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