

Welcome to an adventure! Fun, stimulating; designed for spiritual growth.

### 1. Importance of attending sessions

37 sessions covering 66 books, including Introduction

Please wear your FUMC-Georgetown name tag (or prepare and wear one) each week

Format: 60 minutes lecture, 30 minute discussion

*Bring your Bible with you*

### 2. Why Study the Bible

A. Methodist/Wesleyan heritage: “Methodists as people of *one book*”

B. It is the *God-breathed* Word of God

- II Timothy 3:15-17
- II Peter 1:21

C. It is our *reliable, unchanging* source of *spiritual authority*: Psalm 119:89; Isaiah 40:8; I Peter 1:25

D. It contains all we need for *faith* and *practice*

- *Light*: Psalm 119:105; II Peter 1:19
- *Sword*: Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12
- *Cleansing Water*: Ephesians 5:25-26;
- *Mirror*: II Corinthians 3:18; James 1:23-24
- *Food*: Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4

### 3. How to read the Bible

A. Find a Bible you can understand

- *Translation* – word for word, verse by verse
- *Version* – translation commissioned by an authorizing group
- *Paraphrase* – not a verse by verse translation; texts restated in other words

All translations, versions and paraphrases have prejudice

How to find the Bible for you:

- Take several out on consignment and compare
- Read the introduction
- JT recommendations for “Study Bibles”: The Renovare Spiritual Formation Study Bible (NSRV translation), The New Oxford Annotated Bible (NSRV), The New International Study Bible (NIV); and a warning: *Beware of “Study Bibles”*
- Choose one that you are willing to mark up

B. Develop a reading pattern you are willing to make a habit

3 chapters a day, 5 on Sunday (1189 Chapters)

Reading assignments in outlines each week

### 4. How to Interpret the Bible

The task is *double translation*: translate words from dead, ancient language into English; then translate the message from a dead culture to our modern culture

Principles of interpretation:

A. Don't get hung up on what you do not understand; instead look *for the things you do understand*

B. The *simplest, most plain understanding* of the text is usually the correct one

C. Interpret the scripture *literally* according to *what kind* of scripture it is: simile, metaphor, hyperbole, anthropomorphism, historical narrative, parallelism, personification, poetry, proverb, parable, allegory, apocalyptic

D. Read for *transformation* not information: seven questions

- Is there a *promise* to claim?
- Is there a *lesson* to learn?
- Is there a *blessing* to enjoy?

- Is there a *command* to obey?
  - Is there a *sin* to avoid?
  - Is there a *prayer* to pray?
  - Is there a *thought* to meditate upon?
- E. “Spiritual reading” – Eugene H. Peterson, *Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading* (Eerdmans 2006) (Revelation 10:9-10; Jeremiah 15:16; Ezekiel 2:8–3:3)

## 5. Overview of the Bible

### *Christian Old Testament / Hebrew Bible*

- Christian Old Testament (look at your Bible’s index)
  - 5 Law: Genesis – Deuteronomy
  - 12 History: Joshua – Esther
  - 5 Poetry and Wisdom Literature: Job – Song of Solomon
  - 5 Major Prophets: Isaiah – Daniel
  - 12 Minor Prophets: Hosea – Malachi
- Hebrew Bible
  - 5 Law: Genesis – Deuteronomy (Torah)
  - 4 Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel (1 Scroll), Kings (1 Scroll)
  - 4 Later Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea – Malachi (1 Scroll)
  - 11 Writings: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra–Nehemiah (1 Scroll), Chronicles (1 Scroll)

### *Apocrypha* (accepted by Alexandrian Jews; rejected by Palestinian Jews)

Roman Catholic list: Tobit, Judith, additions to Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Barruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Additions to Daniel, I & II Maccabees

Others considered sacred by the Orthodox churches: I, II, III, IV Esdras, III & IV Maccabees, Prayer of Manasseh, Psalm 151

### *New Testament*

4 Gospels: Matthew – John  
 1 History: Acts  
 13 Pauline Letters: Romans – Philemon  
 8 General Letters: Hebrews – Jude  
 1 Apocalypse: Revelation

### *Drama of Redemption* (Hebrews 1:1-2)

- Prologue (Genesis 1-11) Creation and Fall
- Act 1 (Genesis 12 – Deuteronomy) Establishment of the Old Covenant community
- Act 2 (Joshua – Malachi) Failure of the Old Covenant community
- Act 3 (Matthew – John) Establishment of the New Covenant community
- Act 4 (Acts – Jude) Life in the New Covenant community
- Epilogue (Revelation) Recreation

### *Timeline*

2000-1700 BC Period of Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob  
 1700-1500 BC Prosperity in Egypt  
 1500-1300 BC Slavery in Egypt  
 1300-1200 BC Exodus, beginning of conquest of Canaan  
 1200-1000 BC Age of Judges  
 1000-900 BC United Kingdom: Saul, David, Solomon  
 900-586 BC Divided Kingdom: Judah (South), Israel (North)  
 722 BC Conquest of Israel by Assyrians (10 lost tribes)  
 587 BC Conquest of Judah by Babylonians; exile  
 537 BC Remnant of Judah begin returning from Babylon  
 516 BC Dedication of the Second Temple  
 444 BC Nehemiah’s governorship  
 397 BC Ezra the scribe  
 333 BC Conquest by Greeks (Alexander the Great)  
 142-63 BC Maccabean revolt against Greeks

63 BC	Conquest by Romans
4 BC	Birth of Jesus
30 AD	Jesus' crucifixion (April 9) and resurrection (April 11)
35 AD	Paul's conversion
35-38 AD	Paul's time in Arabia
38 AD	Paul's conference with Peter and James (Jesus' half-brother)
38-46 AD	Paul's years in Tarsus
46 AD	Barnabas brings Paul to Antioch
47 AD	First missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas
47 AD	Council of Jerusalem; Christianity becomes a separate cult
50 AD	First NT book written (I Thessalonians)
65 AD	Paul's martyrdom in Rome
66-70 AD	Jewish revolt against the Romans
68 AD	First Gospel written (Mark)
70 AD	Destruction of Jerusalem by Roman general, Titus
90 AD	Hebrew Bible canon closed, council of Jamnia – issues: (1) Hebrew/Aramaic (Daniel 2:46-7:28; Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Jeremiah 10:11) (2) Ruth and Esther
90-100 AD	Last NT book written (II Peter or Revelation)
397 AD	NT canon closed, Second Council of Carthage, issues with James, II John, II John, II Peter, Jude

Material on which the Bible was written:

Tablets – Exodus 32:15-19

Scrolls – Ezekiel 3:1-3; Luke 4:16-17; Revelation 22:18-19) – 2 types: skins, papyrus – no chapter or verses, no capitals, no punctuations – added with Johann Gutenberg Bible, 1456

#### 6. Schedule of Daily Readings

	<u>Option One</u>	<u>Option Two</u>
Monday:	Genesis 1-7 -----	1:1-2:3
Tuesday:	Genesis 8-14 -----	3
Wednesday:	Genesis 15-21 -----	15
Thursday:	Genesis 22-28 -----	22
Friday:	Genesis 29-35 -----	27
Saturday:	Genesis 36-42 -----	37
Sunday:	Genesis 43-50 -----	50