



Sunday Teaching Discussion Guide: THE BIBLE 10.14.2018

Recap:

- Many of us have questions and doubts as we read the Bible. Those questions and doubts are not necessarily bad. We are meant to be a people who wrestle with questions together.
- The Bible was written over a span of a thousand years and was written two thousand years ago. We can see the Bible as a library written by 60 authors and communities of people in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Koine Greek. We are removed from the original writing in time, space, and culture. So, understanding what is written can be difficult.
- The different ways a verse or passage is translated can change our understanding of a text.
- One way to help us understand a passage is to consider the acronym “rest”, which stands for the tools of reason, experience, scripture, and tradition. When we use those tools, we can wrestle with scripture, ask hard questions, and rest.

Discuss:

- What are some stories, passages, or verses in the Bible that you struggle or wrestle with?
- What translation of the Bible do you use? Have you used other translations previously?
- Why do you think different translations of the Bible exist?
- READ the various translations of Genesis 1:1-2:
 - NIV: 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.
 - NRSV: 1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2 the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.
 - The Message: 1-2 First this: God created the Heavens and Earth—all you see, all you don't see. Earth was a soup of nothingness, a bottomless emptiness, an inky blackness. God's Spirit brooded like a bird above the watery abyss.
- What similarities and differences do you see in the various translations of the first two verses of Genesis from the popular translations above?
- Do you think the verse is different translated “a wind from God” versus “the Spirit of God”?
- The Message was created in an attempt to use contemporary slang and idioms that may have been used if the Bible were written today. What pros and cons of this approach do you see?
- Why do you think seeking to understand what the Bible is saying is more powerful for your faith than simply reading?
- The acronym “rest” stands for the tools of reason, experience, scripture, and tradition. How can using these tools help us “rest”?

Pray: Invite members of your group to share prayer requests. Give a short prayer thanking God for your group discussion and asking God to be with the requests that have been shared.

Read at Home: Additional Readings about Trying to Understand God

- Isaiah 55:6-13 Job 36:22-26 Hebrews 11