

## International Conversation Café

Community Group:                Why and How Should I Read the Bible?

Here are some reasons why people read the Bible.

1. It is the world's best-selling book.
2. There are many types of literature: from poetry to biography to history.
3. Lots of people read it.
4. It might give insight to American history and culture.
5. It offers good advice.
6. Some feel it helps improve their English skills.
7. Others want to prove or disprove it.
8. Some want to understand who God is and how he relates to people.

*What would you like to gain from reading the Bible?*

### **Helpful Facts about the Bible**

1. The Bible is a collection of books. It has two major parts; the Old Testament and the New Testament.
2. This collection of books was written by about 40 men.
3. They were written between 1500 B.C. and 96 A.D.
4. It has many styles of literature: poetry, drama, history, proverbs, personal letters and messages, and autobiography.
5. It is the story of a loving God seeking a relationship with people.
6. Christians believe that God used people to write His words. Throughout the centuries, people recognized these writings as special. They preserved them, read and studied them, and even died for them.
7. God's word helps us. Psalm 119: 105 "Your word is like a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me."

## What are the Differences Between the Old and New Testaments?

### Old

39 books  
written in Hebrew  
completed by about 433 BC  
about the Jewish nation,  
Israel

### New

27 books  
written in Greek  
completed by about 95 AD  
about Jesus and the beginning of  
the church

### What you can find in the Scriptures?

Type of Literature	Books of the Bible
Ancient History	Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Joshua and most of the Old Testament
Poetry	Psalms (Chapter 23 especially well known)
Wisdom	Proverbs and Ecclesiastes
Jesus Christ, Gospel	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
Letters	Romans through Revelation in the New Testament

*What looks interesting to you?*

When you read the Bible, there are some important questions to keep in mind.

*Who wrote it, to whom was it written, and when was it written?*

*What is the main thought from the section you read?*

*What questions come to mind when I read it?*

*What does the passage say about people?*

*What do we learn about God?*

*How does the message change my relationship with God and others?*

The following passage is from the book of Proverbs, chapter 2. After you read it see how many of the previous questions you can answer.

My child, you must follow and treasure my teachings and my instructions. Keep in tune with wisdom and think what it means to have common sense. Beg as loud as you can for good common sense. Search for wisdom as you would search for silver or hidden treasure. Then you will understand what it means to respect and to know the Lord God.