

Tuesdays Table

What is the role of the Bible in our lives?

The purpose of this resource is to help guide your engagement of the “Tuesdays at the Table” conversation. This is merely a frame for the conversation you’ll have or the raw materials to shape a conversation unique for the table you’re sitting at.

As you participate in the conversation...

- **Keep an open mind.**
- **Stay curious.**
- **Look for new ideas.**
- **Speak from your heart.**
- **Respect the ideas of others.**

Access a video of the “What is the role of the Bible in our lives?” conversation [here](#).

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Matthew 24:35

Let us pray.

In all we that say and do, may your word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our paths. Amen.

Guiding questions.

- What do you consider to be the Bible’s essential truths?
- Do you feel the Bible plays an active role in your day-to-day life?
- Is there a place beyond *condemnation* known as *wonder*? If so, how would you travel there?
- If theology is “the way we know and understand God”, what does it mean to understand the Bible as a theological book?
- What does it mean to understand the Bible as “a library” with respect to authors and literary styles?
- How has the translation of the Bible from one language into another helped our understanding of the text? How has it impeded our understanding?
- Dr. Dharmaraj said, “No piece of writing has its own voice.” When you read scripture, how do you remain faithful to the context of the original author and the context of the current reader?
- Can you “agree to disagree” with a brother or sister in Christ about your understanding of the Bible?
- How does our context influence how we understand scripture?
- Though scripture is primary, in our theological task we are also asked to consider tradition, experience, and reason in our interpretation of scripture. How do you understand the relationship and the use of scripture, tradition, experience, and reason in scriptural interpretation?

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Take action.

- Think of your favorite Bible verse. Do a little research and find out who the original author was. When were those verse written? Who were they written to? What message was the author trying to communicate to the original hearer? Now, ask yourself, “How does that original message influence my understanding of those verses in my context today?”
- Pick up your Bible. What translation is it? (E.g., New Revised Standard Version, New International Version, Common English.) Read your favorite Bible passage in your Bible. Find a different translation and read it in that one. What did you notice was different? Do a little research to find out what choices the editors made in the translation and interpretation when they chose the text for your Bible. You might find some of those answers in your Bible’s introduction.
- Find someone who’s views you disagree with. Ask for a conversation and consider discovering how many places you can find common ground.

Resources.

“The Articles of Religion” of The United Methodist Church (§ 104, *The Book of Discipline 2016*)

“Our Theological Task” (§ 105, *The Book of Discipline 2016*)

How to Interpret the Bible by James M. Efrid