

## **BOOK IT**

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### **STUFF YOU WILL NEED**

- copies of the Quiz you create for “Checking In”
- large sheets of paper
- pens
- paper
- markers
- Bibles
- examples of prayers of illumination (see “Sharing in Prayer”).
- cardstock
- scissors

### **CHECKING IN**

Before you meet together, take a few minutes to be still and to pray. Pray for each person in your small group. Open the session with the exercise below, and then talk about the questions that follow.

Before the session, create a Bible quiz. Make a copy of the quiz for each person, or write the questions on a large sheet of paper. Give people a pen and a copy of the quiz or a sheet of paper on which to record their answers. Include questions such as these:

- How many books are in the Bible? (*66*)
- Name the first and the last books of the Bible. (*Genesis, Revelation*)
- What does NRSV stand for? (*New Revised Standard Version*)
- What does NIV stand for? (*New International Version*)
- How many Psalms are there? (*150*)
- What is significant about the words that are printed in red in the “red letter” Bible? (*they are words attributed to Jesus*)
- What are the four gospels? (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*)
- Which book is a continuation of the gospel of Luke? (*Acts*)
- What is the name for Paul’s letters? (*Epistles*)
- Name six disciples. (*Simon who is called Peter; Andrew; James, the son of Zebedee; John; Philip; Bartholomew; Thomas; Matthew, the tax collector; James, the son of Alphaeus; Thaddaeus; Simon, the Zealot; and Judas Iscariot*)

When everyone has completed the quiz, read the answers aloud. Then discuss these questions:

**How much of the Bible have you read?**

**What is your favorite book? your favorite verse?**

**What do you enjoy about reading the Bible?**

**What keeps you from reading more of the Bible?**

## **EXPLORING THE WORD**

Write on a large sheet of paper these scripture references: Psalm 119:18, Psalm 119:104–105, Romans 15:1–6, 2 Timothy 3:14–16, 2 Peter 1:16–21, 1 John 1:1–4.

Distribute paper and Bibles, and post two large sheets of paper. Ask everyone to read the scripture passages and then to complete these two sentences:

**Scripture is** \_\_\_\_\_ .

**The purpose of scripture is** \_\_\_\_\_ .

Invite people to work in pairs to read, combine, and revise their definitions. Next, ask each pair to join with another pair to collaborate on writing a single definition of scripture. Then ask the groups to write their definitions on the large sheets of paper.

Bring the groups together. Ask a volunteer from each group to read aloud the group's definition, and then invite people to discuss the similarities and differences of all the definitions. Encourage people to talk about how they helped one another with the task, when they compromised, and how the scripture influenced their definitions.

## **SHARING IN PRAYER**

Explain that a prayer of illumination is a brief prayer offered before the reading of scripture. It asks God to prepare individuals or a congregation to hear the words of scripture as if for the first time and to listen for God's wisdom and call. Provide examples of these prayers, perhaps from your church's bulletin, your denomination's book of worship, or websites such as <http://takomaparkpc.org/prayer4illumination.html>.

Distribute markers and cardstock, cut in two-by-four-inch strips. Encourage each person to write on the cardstock a personal prayer for illumination, creating a bookmark to place in his or her Bible or copy of **devozine**. Conclude the session by offering a prayer of thanksgiving for the Bible.

## **TAKING IT FURTHER**

Each time you read the Bible this week, pray your prayer of illumination; and expect God to speak to you through the scripture.