

Dear Fellow Pilgrim,

You may not think of yourself as a “pilgrim,” especially if the first image that word brings to mind is of gray hats and old sailing ships. But in deep sense we are all pilgrims, people traveling on a journey, on a quest. The church’s particular form of quest, of pilgrimage, has always involved the exploration of a story, the scriptural story of God’s creation and ongoing involvement with his beloved yet troubled world. I invite you to follow that story from beginning to end this year by reading through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

Why read straight through the Bible in one year? Why not read some Old Testament and some New Testament passages each day? Many people suggest the latter approach, often because most people are less familiar with the Old Testament and find it harder to read. Covering a bit of New Testament terrain each day is thought to make the journey more palatable. Alternatively, some think that it is important to read each day not just from the Old Testament but from the New Testament as well because the New Testament is seen to interpret, correct, or perhaps even supersede the Old Testament. We would do well to remember, though, that the most famous passage about the authority of scripture, 2 Timothy 3:16, is talking about the Old Testament, not the New!

One reason to read all the way through from Genesis to Revelation is to learn the entire scriptural narrative and to see the parts in relation to the whole. We hear or read bits and pieces of the Bible in sermons and studies; seldom do we see those bits and pieces in their larger literary context. Yet context is as important to a good understanding of scripture as location is to the purchase of a home. Context influences everything else. Another reason is to read the Old Testament first so that the multiple allusions to that book will make much more sense when encountered afterward in the New Testament.

So, from one pilgrim to another, I hope you find this daily reading guide to be a helpful roadmap for your journey. Prayerfully welcome the Holy Spirit as your teacher in the quest for fellowship and friendship with God, through the one to whom the Old Testament points and the New Testament bears witness, even Jesus Christ.

Bon voyage!

*Pastor Steve Matthies*