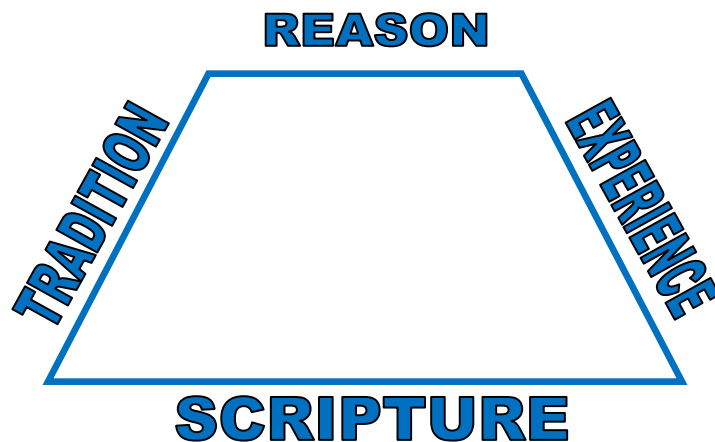


# The Wesleyan Quadrilateral

**How can we know God?  
How can we discern the truth of God  
to understand how God wants us to live?**

John Wesley used four sources to help answer these kinds of questions and put Christian faith into practice. The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church affirms that Wesley believed that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in Scripture, illumined by Tradition, vivified in personal Experience and confirmed by Reason. This discernment process has come to be known as the Wesleyan Quadrilateral. The Wesleyan Quadrilateral can be used to help us express and live out our faith and discern God's truth.

**Here are 4 good ways for Christians to test what they believe:**



***Why does scripture form the foundation of the quadrilateral?***

**Scripture:** *What does the Bible say about...?*

The Bible should be the first and most important source for knowing God and understanding salvation. The Bible helps us to know who God is, who Jesus is, and why we believe the way we do.

**Tradition:** *What does the UMC teach about...?*

Tradition includes both our Methodist faith and our Christian heritage and refers to the wisdom passed on by Christian witnesses of past generations. What do the traditional beliefs of your church tell you? How does this compare to what the Bible says?

**Experience:** *What do you believe about...?*

The Experience of God, our own as well as that of other Christians, helps us to understand God's truths. What have you learned from your life? How does your experience of God's grace help you think about what you believe?

**Reason:** *Now what makes sense to you...?*

*We use reason when we relate scripture to our tradition and experience so we can know God more fully. Reason is our God-given ability to reflect on all these things to form and express our faith. God gave us brains so we can keep searching and asking to discover what makes sense and understand how God wants us to live.*