



Introduction

About ABC

Mission

Answers Bible Curriculum was developed to present the gospel, beginning in Genesis, to all generations; to train believers to know, obey, and defend God’s Word; and to encourage believers to become conformed to the image of Christ.

Overview

The 2009 book *Already Gone* by Ken Ham and Britt Beemer (and the scientific study on which the book is based) reveals the reasons why young people are leaving the church. In much of the teaching today in our churches, the Bible is disconnected from the real world, and the authority of Scripture is undermined and replaced with secular reasoning using man’s ideas.

The church has failed to teach the Bible as relevant fact. We have—intentionally or unintentionally—taught the Scriptures as nothing but “stories” that relate to spiritual matters but have avoided engaging the challenging questions from the secular world that bombard church children and adults the other 166 hours of their week. As a result, children are beginning to doubt the Bible—and the gospel message that it presents—as early as elementary school. Many studies confirm that more than 60% of young people leave the church after they graduate from high school.

Answers Bible Curriculum is designed and written to provide answers to the questions and issues that confront youth (and adults) in school, in the media, from friends, at work, etc. It is our hope and prayer that God will be pleased to use this curriculum to instill in them a lifelong trust in the Bible and in the God who authored it.

Guiding Principles

Certain principles guided our writers, editors, and reviewers as we developed *Answers Bible Curriculum*. These principles are reflected in the teaching, activities, and illustrations presented throughout the curriculum.

We can trust all of God’s Word beginning in Genesis.

- God’s Word is true; God does not lie.
- The historical record of the Bible is confirmed often by historical, archaeological, and scientific support.

God’s attributes are displayed throughout the Bible.

- God’s sovereignty is demonstrated in history as He fulfills His purposes through people and events.
- God’s attributes (including His holiness, justice, love, and mercy) are demonstrated through His dealings with people.

The Bible presents true history.

- The Bible presents real history, showing the unfolding plan of God to redeem a people for Himself.
- The historical accounts of the Bible intersect with secular history.

We must carefully and accurately interpret the Bible.

- The proper use of hermeneutics helps us understand the Bible accurately.
- Understanding the Bible requires time and effort.

God’s plan of redemption is woven throughout Scripture.

- God’s plan of redemption is presented throughout the Bible, beginning in Genesis.
- Many accounts in the Old Testament connect to the New Testament and point to Jesus and the gospel message.

We must be ready to give a defense for what we believe.

- Students and adults must be equipped with answers to questions skeptics ask.
- We can use science, history, archaeology, etc. to confirm the accuracy of the biblical record.

We are to live in light of what the Bible teaches.

- God’s Word is applicable today.
- We can learn from scriptural examples of obedience (and disobedience) to God’s Word.
- Believers are called to walk in obedience to God’s Word.

Bible Version

Answers Bible Curriculum uses the English Standard Version of the Bible.

Scope & Sequence

Answers Bible Curriculum is a 200-lesson curriculum that covers the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, in chronological fashion. The first 120 lessons survey the Old Testament, and the final 80 lessons survey the New Testament. Where appropriate, lessons include apologetics material confirming the accuracy of the biblical record, as well as historical background and life application.

Summary

- 200-lesson, four-year curriculum (50 lessons per year); but take as long as you need to complete it
- Available in six age levels: Pre-K-1, Grades 2-3, Grades 4-5, Middle School, High School, Adult
- Chronological Bible teaching for all levels
- Synchronized lessons—all ages study the same Scriptures each week
- Based on the English Standard Version (ESV)

How to Use ABC

Components

Answers Bible Curriculum includes all the elements needed for you to teach your students with excellence while engaging them in the learning process. Each unit of lessons includes the following items:

Teacher Guide—Ten lessons with lesson overview, lesson background material, lesson preparation instructions, scripted lesson, activity instructions, etc. The tenth lesson of each unit is a review lesson.

Student Guide—One 60-page book for students with lesson background material, space for taking notes in class, and application questions.

Teacher Digital Resources—Digital download that includes all of the classroom handouts, teacher aids, craft instructions, etc., and any video or audio clips used in the lessons.

In addition, a set of large classroom posters enhances the lessons and provides visual reminders of important truths. The classroom posters for Unit 1 include:

The Books of the Bible

The Attributes of God

Game Board

Optional Resources

You may purchase these additional resources from AnswersBookstore.com or by calling 800-778-3390.

Books of the Bible Flashcards—Sixty-seven 5 x 7 flashcards. Each card has a colorful illustration on the front, and the back features key facts about each book's author, date of writing, key people, main message, and what each book reveals about God and His character.

Books of the Bible Trading Cards—The same as the Flashcards, but each card measures 2.75 x 4.

Books of the Bible Coloring Book—Children will have fun coloring these scenes based on the accounts of Scripture. All 66 books of the Old and New Testaments are represented.

Seven C's of History Timeline—This large wall chart covers biblical and historical events from Creation (4004 BC) to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. It follows the chronology of Archbishop James Ussher and helps students to understand the flow of history and to see how biblical events fit with secular events.

Teacher Digital Resources

When you purchased *Answers Bible Curriculum*, you received access to a digital library that contains items such as student class notes, game and activity instructions, lesson illustrations, video clips, PowerPoint presentations, review questions, and skits. These may be accessed at MyAnswers.com/abc-resources using the Resources Code inside the back cover of this Teacher Guide. Be sure to leave enough time to look at the Lesson Preparation section of the lesson so that any needed items can be printed or gathered prior to class.

You may also purchase these resources on a USB flash drive from AnswersBookstore.com or by calling 800-778-3390.

Memory Verse Songs

We teamed up with Seeds Family Worship to produce original Memory Verse songs! You can access MP3s, lyric videos, and split-screen hand-motion/lyric videos for the two Memory Verse songs in this unit at MyAnswers.com/abc-resources using the Songs Code inside the back cover of this Teacher Guide. CDs and DVDs for students and teachers are available for purchase at AnswersBookstore.com or by calling 800-778-3390.

Teacher Guide

We have designed the lessons so that they are easy to teach and provide everything needed to successfully guide your students in understanding the Bible and knowing God—the author of the Bible. Here is a breakdown of what is included in each lesson and how to get the most out of it as you prepare and teach.

Lesson Overview

Lesson Focus—Each lesson has a short statement summarizing the content of the lesson for that week.

Key Passages—These are the Bible passages that will be studied in the lesson. Sometimes it is just one passage, but often it is several passages. Your teaching will be more rewarding and fruitful if you commit to familiarizing yourself with the Key Passages before class.

Objectives—Each lesson presents specific learning objectives. These are what we hope (expect!) the students will understand by the end of the lesson.

Memory Verse—Students will work on memorizing two passages per unit. Our hope is that this will enable the students (and the teachers!) to really learn these Scriptures—to hide them in their hearts—and to know them well enough to recite them from memory not only at the end of the week but at the end of the year!

Lesson Preparation

This handy chart shows you everything you need to do to prepare for each week's lesson and the materials needed. Be sure to consult this several days before class so you can choose games, gather supplies, and print necessary materials from the Teacher Digital Resources.

Optional Supplements—Many of the lessons include optional hands-on activities, a PowerPoint presentation, and/or video clips. These should be previewed and then incorporated into the lesson where appropriate. Slide numbers provided in the lessons are for the PowerPoint presentations.

All pages that are instructions for the teacher will have the word "Teacher" in the footer, while student pages will have the word "Student." This should make it easy for an assistant to know which pages get multiple copies for students.

Real World Skit—Some lessons include simple skits that present questions and answers your students might encounter from their friends. Have two students perform the skit (or have

older students perform the skits for younger students). This will model for them that answering questions about their faith is not difficult—it just takes confidence in knowing who and what they believe in.

Prepare to Share

We have provided background information to help you understand the biblical and historical context of the passage being studied. Where appropriate, we have also included apologetic information that will confirm the truth of the Scriptures. You can get more information on many of the lessons and topics by accessing the Online Resource Page at www.AnswersBibleCurriculum.com. We encourage you to be prepared for teaching each week by taking advantage of these resources.

Lesson Elements

The lessons are broken down into several elements to make it easier for you to teach and to allow for flexibility. We realize that some teachers have the luxury of a full hour (or more!) for Sunday school, while others may have only 20 minutes of teaching time. We have planned our lessons to take about 45–50 minutes to teach. Of course, this will vary greatly depending on your class size, student maturity level, etc.

For those who have more teaching time, we have included Optional Supplements for most lessons. These may include hands-on activities and videos. We have also provided a short PowerPoint presentation for each lesson with the Key Passages and the main points of the lesson.

Come On In—The Come On In is usually a question for the students to start thinking about or for you to discuss with those who arrive to class early.

Memory Verse—We encourage you to practice the memory verse every week with your students. Sing along with the Memory Verse Song lyrics or hand-motion video or the mp3.

There are also a number of games you can choose from for the students to play. Some games use Memory Verse Flashcards or other materials you can print from the Teacher Digital Resources.

Studying God’s Word—This is the main teaching part of the lesson. We have written it in a Say–Ask format. Inexperienced teachers, or substitutes, will easily be able to step in and teach the lesson by following the script, while experienced teachers will want to become familiar with the content and “make it their own.” Throughout the lesson you will see margin notes with teacher tips, definitions, reminders, and other lesson elements. These are included to assist you in planning and teaching the lesson.

Lesson Review—We encourage you to review the lesson with your students. Each lesson includes a set of Review Questions. There are a number of games you can choose from for the students to play to help review the lesson. These can be found in the Teacher Digital Resources or in the Appendix at the back of this Teacher Guide.

Applying God’s Word—This is an essential element of each lesson and should not be skipped. It reviews the lesson and presents relevant application points. The sections include:

- **What You Heard in the Word**—A summary of the lesson’s main points, restating the information that addressed the objectives.
- **God’s Word in the Real World**—A discussion on how God’s truth can be applied to your

students’ lives, how they can share these truths with others, and how they can answer questions from a skeptical world.

Group Prayer Time—We encourage you to pray with your students before they are dismissed. Use the prayer points as a springboard for your own prayers—appropriate for your class. If time allows, you may want to take prayer requests from your students at this time.

As you teach and pray, you have the opportunity to model a humble heart and dependence on God through confession, thanksgiving, praise, and supplication.

Online Resource Page

We have established pages on our website where you, your students, and their parents can find links to articles with more background information on some of the lessons. This page can be found at AnswersBibleCurriculum.com. This is also where we will post any corrections, additional worksheets, supplementary materials, etc.

It is our prayer that these lessons will encourage you, challenge you, and enable you to teach God’s Word effectively, and that your students will develop a lifelong faith, founded on God’s holy Word, so their lives will demonstrate a deep trust in Christ and reflect His character. To God be the glory!

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only and does NOT include reproduction rights for pre-printed teacher books, student guides, student take-home sheets, or posters, except on an emergency basis when purchased quantities are not sufficient for a given week.

Leading a Child to Christ

Many of the lessons in *Answers Bible Curriculum* present an ideal opportunity to share the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ with your students. Every teacher should be ready to clearly present the gospel and counsel those wanting to learn more. Children are usually soft-hearted toward things of the Lord, and some will be interested in becoming followers of Christ. Be ready, because eternal matters matter most!

Before

Pray. Salvation is God's work, not ours. We cannot bring about salvation for anyone. We need to ask God to prepare the children and open their hearts to Him.

Prepare. Learn more about presenting the gospel and counseling a child about salvation.

During

The gospel is clearly presented in many of the lessons. You may give a group invitation or choose to share with a child one-on-one or with a small group of children. When you explain the gospel, please keep the following in mind:

- Becoming a child of God involves repenting of one's sin and having faith in the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Repentance involves understanding what sin is (disobeying God's commands) and desiring to turn from that sin.
- Use your Bible to explain the plan of salvation. Children need to see and hear God's Word, so have your Bible opened and marked ahead of time with the appropriate Scriptures.
 - Avoid abstract phrases like "asking Jesus into your heart." Instead, use terminology

like "becoming a child of God." Most children still think in concrete terms and need examples that are easy to understand.

- If a child indicates an interest to know more after hearing the gospel, determine if the child has an understanding of his sin. This is very important. A child who cannot verbalize sin, who does not seem to be repentant toward God because he is a sinner, or who does not realize that he must turn away from his sin cannot fully understand his need for a Savior. Ask questions about sin that require more than "yes" or "no" answers:
 - Do you know what sin is? Can you explain it to me?
 - Can you think of some sins you have done?
 - Are you sorry for your sins? Who are you sorry to?
 - Why are you sorry for your sins?
 - What do you think you should do about these sins in your life?
- If you are not satisfied that God has revealed to this child that his sin is an offense against our holy God, we recommend that you present a booklet we have developed for children that explains the gospel further. It is called *How Can I Become a Child of God?* It can be printed from the Online Resource Page at AnswersBibleCurriculum.com or purchased at AnswersBookstore.com.
- If the child does seem to be sincerely sorry for his sins, you can proceed with more questions like the following:
 - Why did Jesus come to earth? Why did Jesus need to die? Why did Jesus rise again?

- Why do you want Jesus to be your Savior?
- Why should God let you into His family? (Make sure the child understands that salvation is not based on what he does but is a gracious gift of God through faith in the death and Resurrection of Jesus.)
- When a child seems to have a basic understanding of salvation (belief in Jesus's death and Resurrection, admission of and repentance from sin, and a desire to follow the Lord), encourage him to talk to his parents about what it means to become a child of God (if they are followers of Christ). Encourage a child who comes from a non-Christian home to verbalize his understanding to the Lord through prayer. There is no one prayer that should be prayed. Encourage him to ask the Lord to forgive him and help him know he is a child of God.
- Let him see in your words and your face that you are excited that he wants to become a child of God! Read Luke 15:10 to him.
- Some children may not be ready to make a decision for Christ but may want to learn more, to be assured of salvation, or to confess sin. Read Romans 10:9–10 and John 10:28–29 with children who are seeking assurance of their salvation. Encourage them to ask the Lord to help them know they are His children. Read 1 John 1:9 with children who want to confess sin and encourage them to ask the Lord to help them know they are forgiven when they repent.

After

- Review what it means to be a child of God.
 - How long does God keep His children? (Hebrews 13:5b, John 10:28–29)
 - Can anything separate God from His children? (Romans 8:38–39)
 - What happens when God's children sin? (1 John 1:9)
 - What do children of God believe? (Romans 10:9)
- Explain that Jesus loves His children and wants to spend time with them. Discuss practical ways to grow as a child of God. Provide him with the booklet *Growing Up in God's Family*. It can be printed from the Online Resource Page at AnswersBibleCurriculum.com or purchased at AnswersBookstore.com.
- Share the following:
 - Read your Bible, and obey what you read. (Make sure he has a Bible at home, and if not, provide one. Write his name, the date, and the occasion on the presentation page.)
 - Pray every day. Prayer is talking to God.
 - Go to a church that believes and teaches the Bible as the Word of God.
 - Tell others about Jesus. Tell your friends, family, and neighbors how they can become children of God.
- Stay in touch with the child through postcards, visits, or phone calls.

Unit 1 Syllabus

Lesson 1	God's Word Is Our Foundation	Psalms 19:7–11
Lesson 2	Attributes of God	Exodus 34:4–8; Romans 5:8; Psalm 115:3
Lesson 3	We Can Know God Exists	Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:13–15; Romans 1:18–23
Lesson 4	The Trinity	Genesis 1:1–3; Psalm 33:6; John 1:1–5; Isaiah 44:23–24; Matthew 3:13–17
Lesson 5	God's Word Guides Us	2 Peter 1:19–21; Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16–17
Lesson 6	God Preserves His Word	Luke 24:13–32; Jeremiah 36:1–4, 36:16–19, 36:22–27, 36:32
Lesson 7	God's Word Is Complete	John 14:25–26, 21:24–25; Revelation 22:18–19; Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32; Proverbs 30:6
Lesson 8	Don't Change God's Word	Deuteronomy 18:20–22; Revelation 22:18–19; John 1:1; Acts 17:10–12
Lesson 9	The Gospel Is Good News	1 Corinthians 15:1–5; Genesis 1:31–2:2, 3:6–7, 3:21–23; Romans 5:12, 5:18–19; Genesis 6:5–8, 11:1–9; Romans 3:19–26; John 1:14–17; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Revelation 21:1–8
Lesson 10	Unit Review	



God's Word Is Our Foundation

God's Word—the foundation for our lives—is the standard we use to judge every thought.

Lesson Focus

The Bible is perfect and true, the completely trustworthy starting point for understanding the world. Though our own viewpoint is distorted, the Bible gives us perfect wisdom and can change our lives.

Key Passage

Psalm 19:7–11

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognize that the Bible is true and can be trusted because it is God's Word.
- List qualities of God's Word.

Memory Verse

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Write on the board, “What do you base your decisions on?”

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Down the Line | <input type="checkbox"/> Review Card Relay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Look Behind You | <input type="checkbox"/> Stack Em Up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Now You See It | <input type="checkbox"/> Your Turn |

Print and/or gather necessary items.

Play the Memory Verse song (audio or video) to help your students learn the Memory Verse.

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Stand Off | <input type="checkbox"/> Pick a Point |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board Game | <input type="checkbox"/> Toss for It |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draw Dice | |

Gather necessary items.

If time is short, you may simply want to ask your class the review questions without playing a game.

Go to Prayer

Dear Lord, I know that you have given us your Word, and it provides all we need in order to trust and obey you. Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Help my students to fall in love with you and your Word. Move in their hearts and give them understanding so they will allow God’s Word to guide their lives.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under **Lesson 1**. Game instructions are also included in the **Appendix** in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

- Introduction
- Studying God’s Word
- Optional Video Clip

Small Group

- Come On In
- Memory Verse
- Optional Activity
- Lesson Review
- Applying God’s Word
- Group Prayer

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

Ever since Satan in the form of a serpent cast doubt on God's instructions in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1–4), people have questioned the authority of God's Word. As descendants of Adam, we have inherited a sinful nature (Romans 5:12, Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8–10), which corrupts our human reasoning, questions God's authority, and prevents us from embracing the truth.

The Bible says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). This reminds us that we cannot move along the path of life without God's Word providing the light of truth to guide us. The Bible enables us to see the world as it truly is. Without the understanding that Scripture gives, we are lost in the dark, wondering how to accurately interpret good and evil, God and man, right and wrong. We are left with a distorted view

of history, science, and society. The testimony of the Lord, however, is undistorted and sure (Psalm 19:7).

In Psalm 19, King David powerfully reveals the supremacy of Scripture. The perfection of the Word leads to conversion of the soul, the surety of the Word brings wisdom, the righteousness of the Word rejoices the heart, and the purity of the Word lights the way. The Word of God is clean, true, and righteous, producing the fear of the Lord necessary for repentance. Verse 11 summarizes the intention of the Word—that we may be warned to keep the commandments and achieve the promised reward.

Those who stand in awe of God, who are bound to Him without compromise, and who submit their minds to the teaching of Scripture are those who have a solid foundation and are able to connect the Bible to real life.

Our response to God and His Word should be to join the Psalmist in praying, "Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name" (Psalm 86:11).

Historical/Apologetics Background

The proper role of apologetics is to confirm what we know of God through His Word. It is not a series of explanations attempting to prove that the Bible is true or that there is a God.

As Christians, we start with the assumption that God exists and that His Word is true. This serves as the starting point for our beliefs. This is called *presuppositional thinking* because we are presupposing that what God says about Himself is true.

Jesus set the example for us in this way of thinking through His life, ministry, and teaching. All of Jesus' messages presupposed that the Scriptures were true.

He knew the Scriptures so well that learned men marveled (John 7:15). He quoted Scripture as historical fact, referencing some of the most attacked accounts in the Bible, including creation (Matthew 19:4–5), Noah and the Flood (Matthew 24:37–39), Sodom and Gomorrah (Matthew 10:15, 11:23–24), Lot and his wife (Luke 17:28–32), and Jonah and the fish (Matthew 12:39–41).

He said the writings of Moses are more powerful than even someone rising from the dead (Luke 16:29–31).

He defended Himself against Satan with God's Word (Matthew 4:4–10).

In the same way, we must rely on God's Word as the starting point for all of our judgments and beliefs. Others may insist that we "leave the Bible out of it" when discussing God, creation, absolute truth, morality, science, or the Bible itself. However, we cannot and must not. Christians stand on the Word of God—it is our foundation (Luke 6:47–49). Everything we believe and how we live are based on what it says.

Disregarding the Scriptures would result in disaster because our foundation would be destroyed. Our starting point is and must always be the Bible. We see the importance of this from the very beginning. Even in the Garden of Eden, the battle was over the authority of the Word of God. The serpent asked Eve, "Did God really say that?" (Genesis 3:1).

We are facing a crisis of unbelief among young people in our culture today. One reason for this is that so many have discounted the book of Genesis. They are asking, “Did God really do that?” and being told, “No, He did not, and you don’t have to believe it.”

This is a sad state of affairs. It wasn’t too long ago that Genesis was taken literally and there was little controversy over its interpretation. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the history of Genesis came under attack by scientists who began to accept the idea of millions of years of history rather than the thousands of years God records in His Word.

This interpretation brought compromise in the areas of biology—Darwinian evolution replacing God’s creation of kinds; geology—millions of years replacing the Flood history of Genesis; anthropology—man descended from ape-like ancestors replacing God’s creation of man in His own image; astronomy—the big bang replacing God’s amazing account of speaking the universe into existence.

As our culture has adopted these secular views, the Bible has been disconnected from reality and consequently is becoming less and less relevant—especially to the younger generations. These compromises have torn down the foundations of biblical authority and trust in God’s Word. The result? Jesus gave us the answer when He asked Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (John 3:12)

Many no longer believe the earthly things that Jesus was referring to. And, consequently, even the heavenly things—redemption, hope, eternity with God, forgiveness, Christ’s Resurrection, the Trinity, and judgment—are no longer of any interest to us. It is time to get back to the foundational beliefs of the Word of God, beginning in Genesis.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.

 Slides #1–3

Come On In

Write on the board, “What do you base your decisions on?”

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song (audio or video).

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Introduction

Hold up a Bible. This is a special book. Some people love it. Some hate it. But not many people know it well. I mean really KNOW it! This is not just a book with interesting characters and exciting plots. This book was written by God to reveal everything we need to know about Him. It gives us the answers to life’s toughest questions—answers about the beginning of time and about what will happen in the future. It has answers about God and His plan for your life and answers for those who feel hopeless and those who wonder why there is so much death and suffering in the world. If you want answers, you can find them in this book!

- ▶ Encourage your students to take notes in their Student Guides during the lesson.

Studying God’s Word

Knowing God’s Word well is so important that today we are going to start studying the Bible a little differently. We are going to study it in order—from the beginning to the last book—because when we study it in order, we can see how God’s plan to send a Savior is woven throughout the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament. Plus, studying the Bible in order helps us understand the world around us better. AND each of these lessons will help us learn—and practice—how to live for God in our world today.

I’m excited to learn from God’s Word right along with you. This is really the only book that can be completely trusted. It has never changed. It was written by God Himself. He is perfect and so is His Word.

It may be overwhelming to think about studying the Bible from beginning to end. But it’s also exciting! God used words to communicate His life-changing message to humankind, and we get to discover that message together. It may even affect your eternity!

If you aren’t excited yet, you aren’t alone. God’s Word isn’t very popular in our world.

- ▶ Don’t forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

- ? What are some ways you can tell that the Bible is really not very admired? *Encourage answers such as violence, terrorism, abortions, bullying, hate, racism, crime, anti-god media. Sin, wickedness, evil in the world. No regard for God or His holiness.*

Most people today choose to ignore God's Word. But I hope you won't ignore it as we consider that the Bible is true and very important to everyone.

Psalm 19:7-11

 Slides #4-6

- ? Open your Bibles to Psalm 19:7-11. Who can read that passage for us? *Assign readers.*

Keep your Bibles open so we can look at each verse closely.

- ? In Psalm 19:7-9, there are five different words that are used to refer to God's Word. Let's start with verse 7. What are they? As we find these words in these verses, I want you to write them in your Student Guides. *Law, testimony, precepts, commandments, and rules. Write these on the board as students find the answers. Have the students write them in their Student Guides.*

 Slides #7-8

- ? Good! Now look in Psalm 19:7-11 for all the words or phrases that tell us what God's Word is like. The first one in verse 7 is "perfect." There are eight of them all together. As we find them, you can write them in your Student Guides, too. *Psalm 19:7-11. Call on students to answer. Perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true, righteous, more to be desired than gold, sweeter than honey. As students answer, have them write down the words in the Student Guides.*

 Slides #9-11

So, in just five verses, we read that God's Word is perfect, sure, right, pure, true, and righteous. And it is more to be desired than gold and sweeter than honey! That is why we should be diligent to study it. That is why it can and will change those who read it, love it, and believe it!

- ? We've talked about what God's Word is. Now let's look at something in these verses. What does it do? Look in Psalm 19:7 for the answer. There are two things listed in that verse. *It revives the soul and makes wise the simple.*

- ? What does that first part mean? What does "reviving the soul" mean? *Allow discussion.*

 Slide #12

God's Word provides new energy and life to those who read it and study it.

- ? How can God's Word change us? *Allow thoughtful discussion.*

Knowing and loving God and His Word will change what you think is important in your life. It will change what you really want. The world and all of its treasures will not be quite as appealing to you. God's Word will change what you hope for and what you want out of life. His Word in your heart will work to make you more like Jesus!

Revive: to provide with new energy or life

Testimony: telling an account of what you know happened

? Look back to Psalm 19:7. The Word of God is called a “testimony.” What does that mean? *Allow discussion.*

? Where have you heard of a “testimony” being given? *Allow discussion. In court.*

? What is a “testimony” in court? *Telling an account of what you know happened.*

Yes. A testimony in a court room is usually someone’s eyewitness account of events.

? If that is the truth about the Bible, whose eyewitness account is it? *The Lord’s.*

? And what does the Lord’s sure testimony make us according to Psalm 19:7? *Wise.*

That’s right! God’s Word is His testimony. And that is where we need to go to find and learn from God’s wisdom.

? The question on the board at the beginning of class was “What do you base your decisions on?” How would you answer that? *Answers will vary but will likely focus on what they like or love; what they want to do; what feels good; what others are doing; because it's right to do; etc.*

? Let me ask you, do you think the choices you make are pretty good? Do you make the right decisions about things? *Allow discussion.*

? You all will have some pretty important decisions to make in the years to come—about your life, your future, your career. Do you think you’re ready for those? Where are you going to go for wisdom and advice on these things? *Allow discussion.*

Well, many of you have great resources for advice. You have your parents, maybe older siblings, teachers, pastors, other friends—but there is a PERFECT source of wisdom. And that is the Bible. It is God’s Word. And whatever advice you get from whomever you get it—please remember to compare it to what God’s Word suggests.

Wisdom comes from God’s Word. But there is more.

? Look again at Psalm 19:8. What do the precepts and commandments of the Lord do for us? *Rejoice the heart and enlighten the eyes.*

Do you see? The precepts of the Lord can bring joy to our hearts. Many people have that joy in spite of very difficult circumstances. It is a joy that often can’t really be understood or explained.

? And Psalm 19:8 also says the commandments of the Lord enlighten the eyes. What do you think that means? *Allow discussion.*

“Enlightening the eyes” means the Bible helps us understand—like light brightens a dark room. God’s Word shines light on the things around

us. It helps us to see truth more clearly, and we begin to know more about God.

That is still not all! Someone read Psalm 19:9 again. *Assign a reader.*

- ? What does this verse say about the fear of the Lord? *It is clean and endures forever.*

Yes! The Word of God will show us how to properly fear, love, and worship the Lord. That fear and love for God that we learn from God's Word will endure forever.

- ? What does Psalm 19:9 say about the rules of the Lord? What are they? *True and righteous.*

- ? What do you think that means? That God's rules—His Word—are true and righteous? *Allow discussion.*

It means they can be trusted. They are good. This psalm tells us clearly that the Word is something very valuable and worth studying.

- ? In fact, Psalm 19:10 confirms that the Bible is priceless to those who love it. Will someone read that again? *Assign a reader.*

- ? What is the Bible worth according to Psalm 19:10? How should we desire it? How does this verse describe God's truth? *More to be desired than gold. Sweeter than honey.*

- ? So, do any of you like food? *Allow response.*

- ? Do any of you like money? *Allow response.*

Yes, of course! We all do. But this verse is telling us that God's Word is to be treasured more than money or food! And we should desire it more than these things. God's Word is special. It's more valuable than anything else.

- ? Let's move on. Will someone read Psalm 19:11 for us again? *Assign a reader.*

- ? This verse moves from what God's Word is to how we should respond to it. What should we consider the Word of God to be in light of Psalm 19:11? *A warning!*

Yes! God's Word—His rules, His precepts—it warns us. It warns us that we should live lives according to what it says. We should stop doing things we know displease God and start doing things that please Him. There are consequences to disobeying and ignoring God.

- ? But the Word of God is not just a warning. There is a promise here as well. Look at the end of Psalm 19:11. What does God promise to those who hear God's warning and keep His Word? *God promises a reward!*

- ? A great reward! What is the reward that God promises? Some of the rewards are listed in the verses we read. *Allow discussion.*

Discover the Truth

The great reward God promises to believers includes what we have read in Psalm 19. The Word of God will change us; it will help us to better understand God's wisdom; it will bring joy to our heart; and it will help us to see the truth of God's Word!

And, best of all, loving, believing, trusting, and keeping God's Word will present a final and glorious reward—in heaven! God's Word promises to bring sinners to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. And those sinners will then be welcomed into heaven to spend eternity with God!

There is great change and great reward for those who know and love God's Word.

- ? What is your favorite part about God's Word? Look at the verses and tell me what stands out to you. *Allow discussion.*

There are many wonderful parts to God's Word. But really every word of God is special. We need God's Word to help us understand the world we live in. There is no book like it. And as you get to know it better, it will become your favorite book and the foundation you stand on as you search for answers and face life's challenges.



Lesson Review

We all learn best with review and repetition! We encourage you to review the lesson with a Lesson Review Game.



Applying God's Word

What You Heard in the Word

The Bible is true and can be trusted! It is God's Word. Psalm 19 tells us that God's Word is perfect, sure, right, pure, true, righteous, more to be desired than gold, and sweeter than honey! It is like no other book ever written.

The Bible is what God uses to revive us and teach us. It reveals truth. It makes us wise and gives us joy and direction.

- ? What happens if we don't read it and study it and obey it? What will be missing from our life? *Truth, direction, wisdom, joy, understanding, etc.*

Without God's Word, people just do whatever they want or whatever they see other people doing. Sometimes people spend their whole lives rejecting God and His Word and seek pleasure and meaning in the temporary things of this world.

- ? What are we without wisdom from God? *Foolish.*
- ? Without joy what are we? *Encourage thoughtful answers.*

Without joy from God and His Word, we go looking for joy in the wrong places, and that causes us to be emotionally unstable and to put our hope in the wrong things.

- ? And what about direction that God's Word gives? What happens if we don't have direction in our lives? *Encourage thoughtful answers.*

Without God directing our lives, we will wander through life without hope and purpose. We will do whatever we want even if it's not what's right. Now you know why we should desire God's Word more than gold and why it is sweeter than honey!

The Bible is like no other book ever written. When we read it, it changes us, and that brings glory to God. If we know God's Word, we will learn to make wise choices—choices that will honor God and glorify Him. His Word will help us to determine what is true and what is not as we hear and learn things. This is very important because so many people do not stand on the authority of the Bible.

But through God's Word, you will gain the confidence you need to stand for God's truth. It takes commitment to read and learn the Word. I pray you will make that commitment today to search for answers in the one true history book of the universe—God's Word—the Bible.

God's Word in the Real World

- ? Remember I said at the beginning that many people hate God and His Word? Why do you think people feel that way about the Bible? *Allow thoughtful discussion.*
- ? Do you think it could be because people don't want anyone to tell them what to do? *Allow thoughtful discussion.*
- ? For many reasons, people just don't believe God's Word. So, what if someone who does not believe God's Word tells you something is true. Will you believe them? *Allow thoughtful discussion.*

 Slides #13-14

Just because someone doesn't believe the Bible doesn't mean everything they say is untrue. But we must be careful. We might be tricked to believe a lie if we don't know God's Word well.

- ? What's the way to avoid being tricked? *Allow answers.*

You should always see what God's Word has to say about the subject! Finding answers from your Bible is the way you can know the real truth. Don't be afraid to ask for help finding answers in your Bible to tough questions. When you do that, you are standing on the authority of God's Word and seeking wisdom in the perfect book of wisdom.

I hope as we study you will begin to learn to tell the difference between the truths of God's Word and the false wisdom of this world. I hope you will begin to read your Bible at home throughout the week. We are going

to study God's Word and find out how it applies to the real world. And we will encourage and help each other to tell others about God and His Word through skits and conversations like this.

We are on a wonderful journey! And I look forward to the year ahead with you.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students before you dismiss them.

- Praise God for His unchanging character.
- Thank God that His Word is the perfect sources of wisdom.
- Ask God that each person would have boldness to share the hope of Christ with others.



Attributes of God

*God's attributes are demonstrated
and described in Scripture.*

Lesson Focus

God's attributes are demonstrated and described in Scripture. We must understand God for who He is according to His Word or we will contrive a false god based on our fallible thoughts and emotions.

Key Passages

Exodus 34:4–8; Romans 5:8; Psalm 115:3

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe some of the attributes of God.
- Explain why it is important to understand who God is according to the Bible.

Memory Verse

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Write, "What is God like?" on the board, and encourage people to discuss this idea as they wait for the lesson to begin.

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game.

- Down the Line
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Print and/or gather necessary items.

Play the Memory Verse song (audio or video) to help your students learn the Memory Verse.

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game.

- Bible Stand Off
- Board Game
- Draw Dice
- Pick a Point
- Toss for It

Gather necessary items.

If time is short, you may simply want to ask your class the review questions without playing a game.

Go to Prayer

Father God, holy Creator of the universe, you are incomprehensible in all your ways. As we study your Word, help us to learn more about you. Please allow my students to grasp some of your amazing power, wisdom, mercy, love, and knowledge! Help them to see your love, mercy, holiness, and justice in the truth of your gospel. Bring them to salvation through your perfect, spotless Son.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under **Lesson 2**. Game instructions are also included in the **Appendix** in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

- Introduction
- Studying God's Word
- Optional Video Clip
- Real World Skit

Small Group

- Come On In
- Memory Verse
- Lesson Review
- Applying God's Word
- Group Prayer

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

What is God like? How can we presume to answer this question? Our God is incomprehensible—He can never be fully understood. In fact, as believers we anticipate an eternity of discovering new things about Him.

David said of Him, “Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable” (Psalm 145:3). And, “Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all” (1 Chronicles 29:11). We can’t say it any better than the Apostle Paul, “Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways” (Romans 11:33)! The glimpses of God we observe from His Word are far from complete.

Historical/Apologetics Background

Because there is no way to comprehend the vast depth of our holy God, we are at risk of conjuring up in our minds what we want Him to be. This is not acceptable. We can only begin to know who God is by the revelation of His Word.

One attribute of God is all-loving (1 John 4:7–21). But this attribute has been skewed by many Christians and non-Christians alike. The tendency of many is to make God a type of butler—one who waits at our beck and call and exists in order to answer our demands for blessing and comfort. In our world today, we seldom witness the awe and wonder His very name deserves.

This attitude reeks of misunderstanding the holiness of God. His holiness demands that He despise each and every sin committed. Knowing His frightful hatred for sin should bring us to a reverent and godly fear of the one who is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:28–29). Only true fear of the Lord will bring knowledge (Proverbs 1:7).

It is not until we fear God for who He is that we will humbly begin to understand the depths of

Question 4 of the historic Westminster Shorter Catechism, penned in the 1640s asks, “What is God?” The answer? God is a Spirit (John 4:24), infinite (Jeremiah 23:24), eternal (Psalm 90:2), and unchangeable (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17), in His being, wisdom (Psalm 147:5), power (Revelation 19:6), holiness (1 Samuel 2:2), justice (Psalm 7:11), goodness (Psalm 107:8), and truth (Deuteronomy 32:4).

When the Lord descended in the cloud to speak with Moses, He gave testimony to His very character—He proclaimed Himself as merciful, gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness, always truthful, forgiving, and at the same time, just—not clearing the guilty (Exodus 34:6–7).

Knowing God and knowing that He is perfect in every one of His attributes is imperative to maturing in the Christian faith. That is why we have incorporated teaching these attributes as part of this Bible curriculum, so the next generation will know, love, honor, revere, and fear the God of all creation!

His love—which is beyond all love. It is amazing that He would love us so much to send His only Son to die a horrible death in order to provide forgiveness to all who would believe (John 3:16). Because of the depth of His love, He was willing to offer the life of the one who committed no sin, yet was made sin for us—despicable sinners—so that we could be made the righteousness of God (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

God is love, yes. But His definition of love goes way beyond the scope of ours. His love is demonstrated in the gospel—that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried, and He rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4).

The gospel through Jesus Christ was God’s plan from the very beginning. When God created Adam and Eve in the very good world, they saw God clearly. But when they disobeyed God, they were no longer welcome to walk with Him (Genesis 3:23–24). They were thrown out of the garden because God cannot dwell with evil or wickedness (Psalm 5:4). But even then, God revealed His plan—His love—to redeem

a people to Himself through the Seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). Everyone who would repent of their sins and turn to the Savior would be forgiven and given an inheritance with Christ.

Others have wanted to see God as Adam and Eve did. We read that Moses was once bold enough to ask to see more of God (Exodus 33:18). And we know that Moses would die if He saw the face of God. However, Moses did get a glimpse of God's glory pass by as Moses hid in the cleft of the rock (Exodus 33:22-23).

Jesus came to reveal God to sinners. The Bible tells us that in Jesus, we know of God yet have not seen Him: "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known." (John 1:18). And Paul wrote to Timothy, describing God as the one "who alone has immortality, who

dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen" (1 Timothy 6:16).

God keeps Himself in unapproachable light. We cannot see Him as Adam and Eve once did. But He promises one day we will. And what a day that will be when His children will be like Him, for they will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2)! How we long for the day we will once again see God, talk with Him, and enjoy the fellowship that was originally intended but broken because of sin. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Come On In

Write, “What is God like?” on the board, and encourage students to discuss this idea as they wait for the lesson to begin.

Memory Verse

 Slides #1–3

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song (audio or video).

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Introduction

Hold up a Bible. Last week we talked about God’s Word. It gives us the answers to life’s toughest questions. If you want answers, you can find them in this book! It is where we should start when we have to make tough decisions. It is the foundation we should stand on and trust. God’s Word is perfect, sure, right, pure, and true! It is not like anything else ever written!

- ▶ Encourage your students to take notes in their Student Guides during the lesson.

So, why is the Bible truth we can trust? Because it is the Word of the God who created everything in the universe. As the Creator, He chose to communicate to us in writing, so we can understand the truth about the world. The Bible is the only book written by God. We can trust it completely.

And God’s Word can change us as we learn to love it and trust it. In fact, it is the only truth that will help us turn away from our sins and turn to Jesus! But before we can trust God’s Word, we need to trust God. And we can’t trust God until we know something about Him.

- ▶ Don’t forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

? Where can we find out about God? *Allow discussion. The Bible.*

We can learn more about God through His Word. And the more we know about God the more we know we can trust His Word!

Studying God’s Word

The Bible Declares God’s Attributes

- ▶ Bring out the Attributes of God Poster. Refer to it as you discuss the verses and attributes presented in this lesson.

Today, we are going to discuss God’s Attributes. An attribute is a word that describes what someone is like. Let’s see how God has revealed Himself to us in Scripture so we can understand what He is like.

This poster lists some of the attributes of God. Earlier, we were brainstorming about what God is like. You may see some of the words

you used to describe God on here. We will be referring to this poster often as we discover how God describes Himself in His Word.

 Slides #4–6

Exodus 34:4–8

Let's dig into God's Word right away. We'll start in Exodus 34:4–8 to find more of God's attributes. This passage reveals some of the ways God described Himself to Moses. Moses had gone up the mountain early in the morning by himself to meet with God, taking two tablets of stone he had cut, on which God would write the Ten Commandments. *Have someone read the passage aloud as others follow along. Remind the students they can take notes in their Student Guides.*

Don't close your Bibles yet! Let's take some time to look over these verses and observe what they say by answering some questions about them. This is how we will discover the truth from God's Word.

- ? First, who are the characters in this passage? *Exodus 34:4. God (the Lord) and Moses.*
- ? Where did this event happen? *Exodus 34:4. Mt. Sinai.*
- ? What kind of literature is this passage? History or poetry or parable? What do you think? *Allow answers.*

If you said history, you were right. This presents a historical account of the interaction between Moses and God. This really happened, and it shows us what God said to Moses when God was meeting privately with him to renew His covenant with the Children of Israel and to replace the original set of tablets that were broken by Moses. We'll look at that event more closely in another lesson. For now, we want to focus on what God says about Himself when He was talking to Moses.

► Encourage the students to write down the attributes of God in their Student Guides as you name them. You'll be referring to them later.

- ? Starting with verse 6, name the ways God described Himself. What did He say He was like? *Exodus 34:6–8. Refer to Attributes of God Poster. God is merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, and forgiving; yet He is a holy God who is just in dealing with sin. God does not clear the guilty, which means He is just to deal with sin.*

As we discuss God's attributes today, there's space in your Student Guide to list nine attributes and define them. We'll use the Attributes of God Poster to help us understand what all these attributes mean. They aren't all on the poster because no poster can hold all of God's attributes. But the first one is. It's in Exodus 34:6—merciful.

 Slides #7–8

- ? What does merciful mean? Look on the poster for the definition. *Allow answers.*

► Hold up the Attributes of God Poster or have it displayed somewhere in the room.

God's mercy is His kindness and forgiveness toward sinners when they believe in Him. We deserve punishment for our sins, but when we ask Him to forgive us, He does. God is merciful. *Have students write down merciful in their Student Guides.*

? The next one is gracious. What does gracious mean? *Allow answers.*

Yes. God gives good gifts to those who love Him, even when they don't deserve it. That's grace. *Have students write down gracious in their Student Guides.*

? What about slow to anger—what is that? This one isn't on our poster. *Allow answers.*

God is patient with us. Some translations use the word *longsuffering*. That word means that God is slow to anger; He puts up with us. He never reacts in a way that is out of control. *Have students write down longsuffering in their Student Guides.*

? What are the next two attributes in our passage? *Exodus 34:6. Steadfast love and faithfulness.*

That phrase "steadfast love" in Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament, means *covenant faithfulness, mercy, kindness, or goodness*. We'll use the word kind. God is perfectly kind and faithful to His people. No one else is perfect in this way but God. *Have students write down kind and faithful in their Student Guides.*

The next attribute is forgiving in Exodus 34:7. Write that one down. Our God forgives our sins when we ask Him to. *Have students write down forgiving in their Student Guides.*

? Is forgiving on the Attributes of God Poster? *No*

The next part might need some explanation. God said He by no means clears the guilty. This is still in Exodus 34:7.

? Which attribute is that? It sounds like it means He punishes sin. Do you see an attribute that means that on our poster? Look at the definitions. *Allow answers. Just.*

God is just. That means that God must do what is right. God must be just because He is holy. God hates sin, and because sin is evil in His eyes, He must judge sin. The Bible says that the judgment, or the punishment, for sin is death. All sin offends God. And God's "just" punishment has to be that sinners will die and be separated from Him forever! *Have students write down just in their Student Guides.*

This does not sound like good news, does it? God's justice MUST come on all sinners! And we are all sinners. But there is more to God than that. That's why we need to know more about God's attributes.

 Slide #9

Romans 5:8

Let's keep going by looking at another passage of Scripture that relates to this passage. This one is in the New Testament. Turn to Romans 5:8. *Have a student read the verse.*

- ❓ Which attribute of God are we reading about here? *Allow discussion. Refer to Attributes of God Poster. Loving. Have students write down loving in their Student Guides.*
- ❓ How did God demonstrate His love? *Allow discussion. He sent Jesus to die for us.*
- ❓ According to this verse, when did Christ die for us? Did He wait for us to do good things? *He died for us while we were still sinners.*

Because God hates all sin, we deserve God’s punishment. But God loves sinners so much that He was willing to have His own perfect Son—Jesus—die so sinners could be saved. He didn’t wait for us to get our act together—He died for us even while we were doing sinful things.

So, God always wants what is best for His children—He loves them. And the most amazing act of God’s love is seen in Jesus! God, who is perfectly holy and hates sin, sent His perfect, sinless Son, Jesus, to die for sinners. That is the kind of love that God has for us—perfect love! He did that to make a way for us to be forgiven, and instead of going to hell because of our sin, we can go to heaven if we believe and trust in Jesus. God’s love shows that He wants what is best for His children—and that is to spend eternity with Him! That is the most wonderful gift we could ever ask for.

Psalm 115:3

 Slide #10

- ❓ We’ve come to our last verse. Will someone read Psalm 115:3 for us? *Psalm 115:3. Assign a reader.*
- ❓ Where is God? Look at what we just read! *In the heavens.*
- ❓ What does God do there? *All that He pleases.*
- ❓ So, do any of you know what attribute this might be? *Allow discussion. Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. This verse is talking about God’s sovereignty.*
- ❓ Can someone read the definition from the Attributes of God Poster for the class? *Choose a reader.*

When we say that God is sovereign, what we are saying is that God is God. He rules perfectly with complete control and authority over all of creation—everything! Every person, plant, animal, drop of rain, gust of wind, ray of sunshine, every event is under His control! Only the one true God can say this. And there are no other gods but Him! *Have students write down sovereign in their Student Guides.*

Discover the Truth

Since this lesson is about what God is like, let’s make sure your list of the attributes we talked about is complete. Look at the notes you took in your Student Guide.

- ? How many attributes do you have? *Nine.*
- ? Can you name them? *Merciful, gracious, longsuffering, kind, faithful, forgiving, just, loving, sovereign.*

God has so many attributes that we often forget about some of them. We tend to focus on certain aspects that are our favorites, but it is important to know all about Him so we can worship Him for all that He is. If we are not careful to study who the true God is, and to learn of His attributes, and to understand that He is incomprehensible in all His ways, we may be led to worship or make up our own false gods. I don't mean statues made of gold. I mean a false god we might make up in our heads. Maybe it's a god that loves us so much he would not punish us for our sin. Or maybe it's a god who never shows mercy and will not forgive us when we sin. Or maybe it is a god who is small and weak and doesn't have the power to speak the universe into existence. We need to know all of God's attributes so we can worship and know Him in truth.

That's why we must turn to God's Word to better understand Him. That is where He reveals Himself to us in His amazing power, glory, and might. If we study who He is from the Bible, we will be less likely to make up a false god in our minds.



Lesson Review

We all learn best with review and repetition! We encourage you to review the lesson with a Lesson Review Game.



Applying God's Word

What You Heard in the Word

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Today we read about some of God's attributes. He is merciful, gracious, loving, faithful, sovereign, just, longsuffering, good, and so much more! God is not like anyone we know. He is eternal and infinite. No person can ever name or list every single one of His amazing attributes. But we can grow every day in our knowledge of who He is by studying His Word—the Bible.

We need to do our best to know who God is because when we focus only on part of God's attributes, we run the risk of creating a false god in our minds. For example, we can't truly understand His justice—the fact that He is holy and He must judge sin—unless we also understand His love. Knowing that He provided a way for us to avoid the punishment we deserve when He sent Jesus to save us from sin helps us get a more complete picture of who God is.

God's Word in the Real World

Think about this. What if you knew that God judges every person for the bad things they do because God is just, but you didn't know about God's attribute of love? You didn't know that God created each person special and He knew them before they were born. You didn't know God loved sinners so much that He sent His son, Jesus, to earth and was willing for Him suffer and die on the Cross as a sacrifice for sins because of that great love.

? What would you think of God if you only had this incomplete knowledge of His attributes? *Allow answers.*  Slides #12-14

? You might be scared of God's punishment and feel helpless to escape His wrath, wouldn't you? *Yes.*

Now think of it the other way around. You know all about God's attributes of love and mercy, but you don't know that God is holy and just. You don't know God hates sin and must judge it.

? How would your view of God and your lifestyle possibly be affected by this incomplete view of God? *Allow answers.*

You would not be able to understand the seriousness of your own sin, and you would not be able to understand why Jesus had to come and die on the Cross.

? So, do you see why it's important to understand all that the Bible has to say about God's attributes? Tell me why in your own words. Why spend time getting to know all the Bible has to say about who God is? *Knowing who God is enables us to have a more complete view of Him and helps us avoid creating and worshiping a false god that is made up of only a small portion of God's attributes. Also, when we know God, it's easier to trust and know that the Bible is true.*

God's Word reveals God's attributes. That's why we need to study it. Knowing God better is the only way to understand the world around us. And knowing who God is helps us understand salvation.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students before you dismiss them.

- Praise God for His unchanging character.
- Ask God that each person would have boldness to share the hope of Christ with others.
- Thank God for His justice and mercy toward sinners.



We Can Know God Exists

God is the eternal Creator and is clearly seen in the order of the universe.

Lesson Focus

God, the only eternal being, makes sense of the entire universe. The order seen in creation points to a Creator who is the one and only true God.

Key Passages

Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:13–15; Romans 1:18–23

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain that only God can be eternal and exist outside of time.
- Connect the order in the universe to the existence of God.

Memory Verse

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Write on the board, “How do we prove God exists?” Allow students to discuss.

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game.

- Down the Line
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Print and/or gather necessary items.

Play the Memory Verse song (audio or video) to help your students learn the Memory Verse.

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game.

- Bible Stand Off
- Board Game
- Draw Dice
- Pick a Point
- Toss for It

Gather necessary items.

If time is short, you may simply want to ask your class the review questions without playing a game.

Go to Prayer

Father God, you are the Creator of all things. All of creation testifies that you are the omnipotent one. Lord, as we study this week, open the hearts of my students to see your majesty in the wonders of creation. Bring them to a saving faith in you.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under **Lesson 3**. Game instructions are also included in the **Appendix** in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

- Introduction
- Studying God's Word
- Optional Video Clip
- Real World Skit

Small Group

- Come On In
- Memory Verse
- Optional Activity
- Lesson Review
- Applying God's Word
- Group Prayer

Optional Supplements

Hands-On Activities

Do this activity when you think best—before, during, or after the lesson.

- Big Bang—Sense or Nonsense

Students will spill out the pieces of LEGO® bricks, a puzzle, or model to see if they will come together in an orderly fashion. This visual will help them understand that the big bang theory is not logical.

Real World Skit

Print three copies of the Real World Skit.

Video Clips

Preview the recommended video(s) before class. If appropriate, show to your class and discuss before, during, or after the lesson.

- Science (4:03)
- God Is Real (12:15)
- Common Designer (2:52)
- Creator Clearly Seen (4:43)
- Is There Really a God? (2:49)
- What's the Best Proof of Creation? (3:42)

PowerPoint

You may want to use the PowerPoint presentation provided to enhance your teaching.

Notes

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

“How do I know God exists?” This is a question that has been and will be debated as long as sinners occupy the earth. First of all, as Christians who walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7), we do not need to prove the existence of God. The Bible says that we accept God by faith—that we believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). Because the Bible is our basis for all we believe, we believe in God as presented in the Bible.

God’s Word begins with the proclamation that He and He alone existed from eternity past: “In the beginning, God . . .” (Genesis 1:1). If He had wanted to prove Himself to the world in a way our minds could grasp, He could have done that. God saw no need to explain further. Belief in Him as the one true God comes by faith and trust in Him and His Word.

Genesis 1 continues to describe this God who spoke the entire universe into existence. The order we see in creation—from the stars, solar systems, animal and plant life, to the natural laws of gravity, motion, and thermodynamics—gives evidence of an omnipotent Creator. There is no other explanation. The universe is not a result of random chance. It was created by one who was not created. There had to be someone who never came into being. There had to

be a Creator. God—the one true God—is that Creator, who was and is and is to come (Revelation 4:8).

As we look to the Scriptures, we see that God described Himself to Moses as “I AM WHO I AM,” which essentially means *the one who is and will be* (Exodus 3:13–14). The eternal, self-existent nature of God is revealed through His Word and simply assumed. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John records that the Lord is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8). What more do we need? This describes the only holy, omnipotent, omniscient God of the universe—who was and is and always will be. He is not bound by time as we know it. He created time in the beginning (Genesis 1:1).

God in His mercy has also specifically revealed Himself through His incredible creation. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). And the Apostle Paul tells us that since the creation of the world, God’s invisible attributes have been seen through creation, revealing His eternal power and Godhead—leaving those who do not believe in Him without excuse (Romans 1:18–21). God does indeed exist. His existence is confirmed in Scripture and through His creation—and the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven against all who suppress the truth of His existence in unrighteousness.

Historical/Apologetics Background

Look around you; what do you see? An amazingly designed universe—from the single cell to the vast and immeasurable solar system. And yet the debate for a Creator of such things rages. We can rest in God’s Word, “In the beginning, God . . .” (Genesis 1:1). We know that if something exists, it was somehow created into being. And as Christians we know who that Creator was. But what of folks who state there was no Creator—it all began with a bang, a very “big bang,” one that allegedly occurred billions of years ago in one tiny speck of mass and energy, a speck that would one day become everything we see today?

This story of the big bang originated with an attempt to completely discount the Bible and its

account of our Creator God. Christians who buy into it need to understand the atheistic beginnings of this secular story and why it cannot be “added” to the biblical account of Genesis 1 without destroying the Bible’s integrity.

From a practical standpoint, have you ever blown something up and then observed the pieces reassembling into a complex . . . anything? No, when buildings are demolished, they pretty much end up in a heap of debris with no order or design. And yet, the big bang proposed by some has produced intricate life and more. In fact, this notion claims that out of a random explosion and expansion of matter billions of years ago, life in its complexity and beauty—from the

human body to the ant, from the wonder of the solar system to the universe beyond—has been organized and arranged into the complex world we live in today by nothing more than random, natural processes.

But, we know that the very existence of design, order, natural laws, and principles in the universe demands that there was a Creator—an organizer, a designer—not a big bang. That Creator can only be the one true Creator God. The only one who has declared Himself the Creator (Genesis 1), and the only one who proclaims that He Himself is sustaining the universe—personally maintaining life and upholding all things by the word of His power (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3). This Creator, our God, is truly worthy to receive glory and honor and power—for He created all things, and by His will they exist and were created (Revelation 4:11)!

However, from the very beginning, people have wanted to be their own gods—and Satan is the primary encourager of this. The God of the Bible demands obedience, reverence, and accountability. The serpent asked Adam and Eve, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” (Genesis 3:1). Adam and Eve listened to the serpent, disregarding God’s Word, and sin, deceit, pride, evil, hatred, death, and suffering entered the world.

God will one day judge the sin of the world in righteousness (Psalm 96:13). Those who believe God’s Word know this to be true. However, many doubt the very existence of God and do not fear His judgment. These atheists boldly turn from the greatest commandment—“You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3)—to pursue the imaginings of their own minds.

In many ways, our culture has been shaped by these people who claim there is no God. We’ll look at a few of them here.

Charles Darwin, the father of evolution, although not a proclaimed atheist, was influenced immensely by his atheist grandfather Erasmus. Darwin’s idea of

evolution has changed the course of human history and is one of the greatest attacks on the Word of God in our modern time.

Karl Marx, referred to by some as the greatest thinker in all of history, once stated that religion is the opiate of the masses—impotence of the human mind to deal with occurrences it cannot understand.

Sigmund Freud, considered by some as psychology’s most famous figure, believed that religion was nothing more than an expression of underlying psychological neuroses and distress.

More recently, Madalyn Murray O’Hair was instrumental in removing prayer from the public schools in 1963. She believed that religion has caused more misery to all of mankind in every stage of human history than any other single idea.

And today we have those who are referred to as the “new atheists”—men such as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens (now deceased)—and they are aggressively going after your children, your liberties, and your faith! Dawkins, a scientist and an active leader in this movement, believes that one of the things wrong with religion is that it teaches us to be satisfied with answers which are not answers at all. These men and others have accused Christians of “child abuse” for teaching their children the Bible and passing on their faith.

The worldview of these atheists is dangerous to our culture. However, as Christians we are confident in the promises of the Word of God. We must not lose heart. We must be committed to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and enthused about keeping God on His throne as Sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all (Colossians 1:17). God has assured us that His Word is settled forever and His faithfulness will endure to all generations (Psalm 119:89–90).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.

 Slides #1–2

Come On In

Write on the board, “How do we prove God exists?” Allow students to discuss.

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song (audio or video).

 Slide #3

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Introduction

Hold up a Bible. The Bible is God’s Word. It is the only place we can find the answers to life’s questions. It is the foundation we should stand on and trust. When we read God’s Word, it will change us. It can bring joy, understanding, and even love.

- ▶ Encourage your students to take notes in their Student Guides during the lesson.

We discussed why we can trust the Bible—because the perfect Creator of the universe wrote it! This book is like no other. It was written to us by God who reveals Himself to the reader on every page. If you want to know what God is like, read His Word.

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. And last week we discussed what God is like—His attributes. Today we will build on that. We will read more about God and see more of His attributes. But remember, God is “Incomprehensible.”

 Slide #4

Incomprehensible:
Beyond our understanding

- ? What does the word incomprehensible mean? *Allow discussion.*

It means He is beyond our understanding. We can’t always know why He does what He does. There are a lot of things about God that we cannot fully understand—after all, He’s God and we aren’t. We are going to talk more about that today!

Studying God’s Word

God Is Eternal

- ▶ Don’t forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

- ? Who can tell me what the first book of the Bible is? *Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Genesis*
- ? Can anyone say the first four words without looking? *Genesis 1:1. “In the beginning, God . . .”*

That's correct. Those are the first words in the first verse of the first chapter of the first book of the first testament in the Bible! Please turn to that verse in your Bibles.

Genesis 1:1

Slide #5

- ? Will someone read the whole verse for us? *Assign a reader.*

The first verse of the Bible tells about the very first hours of the world's history. Let's take a closer look.

- ? Who was there in the beginning? *God. Some may say the Trinity—which is true. God is three in one.*
- ? Why is God the only one there? *Allow students to answer. Because God has always existed, and He hadn't created anything yet.*
- ? What was God doing? *Creating the heavens and the earth.*

That's right. The first pages of God's Word record the historical account of God creating the universe over a six-day period. God was the only one in existence at first. This verse reveals what happened at the beginning of time as we know it. This is when God first started to create the universe by the power of His Word.

- ? So, what was before this beginning? What existed before anything was created? *Allow students to answer. God.*

Discover the Truth

Before this—before Genesis 1:1—God was. He always was. God is eternal. That means He has always existed, and He always will exist. He is the only eternal being. The Bible tells us, "In the beginning, God . . ." and that was it. God is. God always was. God always will be. He is eternal. *Refer to "eternal" on the Attributes of God Poster.*

God is not bound by time as we know it in any way. He created time, but He existed before He created it. He exists outside of time as we know it.

That is very confusing, I know. But remember, when we talked about God's attributes, we said He was incomprehensible! He is beyond our understanding. We can't figure Him out because He is greater than anything we can imagine!

So, God existed before He created the universe, the earth, and people. He existed before time and space. This shows us that God is self-existent.

- ? What do you think that means—self-existent? *Allow discussion.*

God needs nothing to be God. He is complete and perfect even when no one or nothing else exists. We could also say that God is independent—He does not depend on anyone or anything else to exist.

- ? Is that true of you and me? Are we independent? *No, we exist only because our parents gave birth to us. We depend on them. Ultimately, we all depend on God for our existence.*

God Is Outside Time

Let's move to the second book in the Bible, Exodus. We are going to read Exodus 3:13–15. While you turn there, I'll tell you that these verses are from a conversation between Moses and God. God told Moses to lead His children out of Egypt and into the Promised Land—a beautiful country God had prepared for them.

 Slides #6–8

Exodus 3:13–15

But Moses was afraid to lead the people out. Moses didn't think the people would listen to him or want him to be in charge. This doubt led Moses to ask God a question. Let's read what Moses asked God and see how God answered—Exodus 3:13–15. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

- ? What did Moses ask God? *Exodus 3:13. What shall I tell the children of Israel? Who should I say sent me? What is Your name?*
- ? What was God's answer in Exodus 3:14? *He said "I AM WHO I AM" and "I AM has sent me to you."*

Right. God said His name was I AM. When God said this, He was saying that He was the one who is and who was and who always will be.

- ? What attribute was God referring to? *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Eternal.*

God Himself was telling Moses that He is eternal—He has always existed. He is.

Discover the Truth

The Bible is clear. God is the eternal one—the one who always was, the great I AM. Something or someone had to be here before anything else came to be. Do you see that? There had to be someone who never had a beginning—someone who was there when creation began. Someone who commanded everything to be! That someone is the one and only true God. He is the God of creation; He is the God of Moses; and He is the same God we worship today. He always was, and He always will be. He is the only eternal one. He is the Creator of absolutely everything—including time! And He Himself is not bound by time as we know it because He always has been.

Creation Reveals God's Existence

Now turn to Romans 1:18–21 in the New Testament. Romans is an epistle, or letter, that was written by the Apostle Paul.

While you are turning there I want you to think about our discussion at the beginning of class. You were answering a question. The question was "How do we prove God exists?" This next passage will help us

answer that question. Let's see what God has to say to people who say they don't believe in God.

Romans 1:18–21

 Slides #9–10

Let's read Romans 1:18–21. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

- ?** Now who did I say Paul was talking about in this part of his letter? *People who do not believe in God.*
- ?** How does God act toward unrighteous people? *Romans 1:18. He reveals His wrath against them.*
- ?** How do people know that God exists? *Romans 1:20. God's existence is evident through His creation.*
- ?** Is God's existence clearly evident or hard to find? *Romans 1:20. This passage makes it clear that it is evident, being clearly perceived by witnessing the things He has made in the world.*
- ?** Who has made this truth evident? *Romans 1:19. God has made it plain to all men. He has shown it to them.*
- ?** What attributes of God are evident in His creation? *Romans 1:20. His eternal power and divine nature are clear from all that He has created.*
- ?** According to verse 18, how do people respond to the knowledge of God's existence? *They suppress the truth in unrighteousness.*
- ?** Do people have an excuse for not acknowledging God? *Romans 1:20. No, they are without excuse for denying God's existence.*
- ?** How does verse 21 confirm that all men know God?. *It clearly states that they know God.*

 Slide #11

When Scripture refers to God's divine nature, it is talking about the attributes of God. You can't see His attributes. They are invisible. But God says everyone knows they are there by the things they see around them—by creation.

- ?** So, what does verse 20 say about all those people who say there is no God? It is at the end of Romans 1:20. *They are without excuse.*
- ?** They are without excuse! Why? Look at the beginning of Romans 1:21. Did these people know God? *Yes.*
- ?** How do they know God? *Romans 1:20. By the things God created.*
- ?** They know who God is because of what God made—God tells us that. But how did these people act toward God? *Romans 1:21. They did not honor Him as God or thank Him for His creation, and they become futile in their thinking.*

Romans 1:22–23

 Slide #12

Let's read the next two verses. *Romans 1:22–23. Have someone read the verses.*

- ? **Whom do they worship rather than God?** *Romans 1:23. They worship created things rather than the Creator. This would include the worship of mankind—man’s inventions, man’s wisdom, man’s discoveries, etc.*
- ? **Do these God-deniers think they are wise or foolish?** *Romans 1:22. They believe they are wise, but it is a worldly wisdom that is foolishness in God’s eyes and leads to darkened hearts.*

Discover the Truth

There is a very important lesson here! Even back when Paul wrote this letter—and that was nearly 2,000 years ago—people were claiming that there was no God. And still today people deny the existence of God. But this passage from Romans shows us that everyone knows that God exists. So that means there are really no atheists, only those who claim to be atheists. Everybody, including those who claim to be atheists, knows there has to be a Creator. Creation reveals God’s eternal power and His divine nature.

- ? **Do you know what I mean? Have you ever noticed how orderly and perfect the universe is?** *Yes/no.*

The stars, solar system, plants, animals, the human body—everything is designed to do what it is supposed to do. It is all perfectly organized and designed. Color, variety, and detail all point to an eternal God with a plan and the power to make it all.

- ? **People who refuse to believe that there is a God talk about a “big bang.” Have any of you heard of the big bang theory? What do you know about that?** *Allow students to answer.*

To some people, the big bang is a way to explain how the universe came into existence without God. But it really doesn’t make any sense. These people believe that there was a tiny speck of super-compressed matter, but they don’t know where that came from. And then there was a huge explosion, or expansion—a bang—and eventually all the particles from this big bang came together perfectly to form stars and planets throughout the universe. This is nothing but a lie. And most people who teach this want to turn us away from God’s Word and His truth.

When we look around and see the universe and everything designed in a special way to do what it is supposed to do, we know it could only have come from God. There is no way it was the result of random chance from a big bang. And that is what God’s Word tells us in Romans 1. God has clearly made Himself known to everyone. His invisible attributes are displayed everywhere in the intricate design and order of creation. Everyone knows there is a God. Anyone who denies God exists is suppressing the truth that He exists in an attempt to deny God as Lord over all.



Lesson Review

We all learn best with review and repetition! We encourage you to review the lesson with a Lesson Review Game.



Applying God's Word

What You Heard in the Word

Today we have seen what God's Word has to say about Him. In Genesis 1, the first four words reveal God's unique attribute—an attribute He does not share with us.

? What is it? *Eternal.*

Yes. God has always existed. In fact, He is outside of time—eternal. He has always existed and always will exist. He is totally independent.

Then we read how God told Moses His name. He said He was “I AM.” God was confirming that He was the eternal one true God.

Then in Romans we read that His existence is made known to everyone. So let's reconsider our original question, “How can we prove God exists?” The answer is that we don't need to!

? Why not? Why not go around trying to prove to people that God exists?
Allow answers.

We don't need to prove God exists, because God already has! Romans 1:20 says that since the creation of the world God has made Himself known to man. God's invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that He made—all of creation—so that everyone is without excuse.

God has not instructed His followers to spend their time presenting physical evidences or philosophical arguments in an attempt to convince unbelievers of His existence. Nowhere does the Bible say, “Go out and tell everyone about amazing scientific evidences that prove God exists and the Bible is true.” Instead, Romans 10:17 states: “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

It's the truth of God's Word that people need to hear. No amount of physical evidence can come close to what the Holy Spirit can do in a person's life through the message of salvation. There's no need to depend on clever arguments. Instead, we need to keep learning more about God's Word and the gospel message so we can proclaim those truths to unbelievers, calling them to trust in the God they know exists rather than denying Him.

God's Word in the Real World

We live in a world where most people don't believe God's Word is true. And just like in Paul's day, nearly 2,000 years ago when he wrote the letter to the Romans, many people don't believe in God! They suppress the truth of His existence. That's why they made up a theory of how everything came into existence without God. We've talked about it. It's the big bang theory. Maybe you have believed the big bang theory all your life. You didn't know that God tells us in His Word that the world was created by Him in six days—and only about 6,000 years ago. Then this lesson gave you a lot to think about.

Maybe you believe God created the universe just like the Bible says. But someone in your life has already tried to get you to believe that there was an explosion in space that caused everything in the universe to converge into perfect order. Maybe they have even told you that the big bang and the Bible can fit together—that God caused the big bang. If not, eventually someone will try to convince you the big bang theory is true.

- ? What will you do? What will you say? What will you stand on when that happens? *Allow discussion.*

 Slides #13–14

If your thoughts went right to God's Word, then you are definitely on the right track. Even if the person you are talking to doesn't believe the Bible, God's Word is what we should stand on. Sometimes there is no need to speak up. You are watching a movie or TV when the subject comes up about the big bang theory. You don't need to say anything out loud (that might be kind of weird), but your thoughts can go to God's Word and remember that God is Creator and that His creation reveals that truth.

- ? But if you get in a conversation with an unbeliever about the big bang or the existence of God, then what should you say? *Allow discussion.*

Again, start with the Bible. The Bible is our ultimate authority. Let them know that the Bible is God's Word and the one source of truth we have. It gives an account of what creation was really like. Remember, don't pretend to be the expert. The expert is God. That's why you want to keep the conversation pointing to His words recorded for us in the Bible.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for the truth of His Word.
- Thank God for His creation that proclaims His glory and His attributes.
- Pray that the Lord will open the minds of these children to the truth of His Word through Jesus Christ.



The Trinity

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit

Lesson Focus

The Trinity refers to one God in three Persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. All three Persons of the Trinity were present at creation.

Key Passages

Genesis 1:1–3; Psalm 33:6; John 1:1–5; Isaiah 44:23–24; Matthew 3:13–17

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Name the three Persons of the Trinity.
- Recognize that all three Persons of the Trinity were present at creation.

Memory Verse

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Lesson Preparation

Come On In

Write on the board, “The Trinity is kind of like _____.” Allow students to discuss.

Memory Verse

Choose a Memory Verse Game.

- Down the Line
- Look Behind You
- Now You See It
- Review Card Relay
- Stack Em Up
- Your Turn

Print and/or gather necessary items.

Play the Memory Verse song (audio or video) to help your students learn the Memory Verse.

Studying God’s Word

Come prepared with a glass of water, some ice, and a saucepan in order to describe the Trinity using the analogy of the three states of water.

Print the following:

- God Is Three in One handout
- Trinity Diagram

Lesson Review

Print one copy of the Review Questions.

Choose a Lesson Review Game.

- Bible Stand Off
- Board Game
- Draw Dice
- Pick a Point
- Toss for It

Gather necessary items.

If time is short, you may simply want to ask your class the review questions without playing a game.

Go to Prayer

Father God, what a mystery you are! The Trinity—three persons in one—Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Please give me wisdom, Father, to present this amazing truth in such a way that the students in my class will grow in their understanding of who you are. Lead them to a knowledge that will bring them to worship you as only you deserve.



The required lesson and supplementary materials can be accessed from the **Teacher Digital Resources** under **Lesson 4**. Game instructions are also included in the **Appendix** in the back of this Teacher Guide.

We recommend the following order for churches using a **large group/small group** format:

Large Group

- Introduction
- Studying God’s Word
- Optional Video Clip
- Real World Skit

Small Group

- Come On In
- Memory Verse
- Optional Activity
- Lesson Review
- Applying God’s Word
- Group Prayer

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

The word *Trinity* is not found in Scripture, but the concept of the Trinity is clear in its accounts. It is an important doctrine of the Christian faith, advocating that God eternally exists as three Persons. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God—but there is only one God. Because of our finite minds, this concept is impossible to fully understand and/or explain. Let's consider a few things.

There is only one God. "I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God" (Isaiah 45:5). See also Isaiah 46:9; Galatians 3:20; 1 Corinthians 8:5–6.

All three Persons of the Trinity—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are called God. In *Christ* dwells all

the fullness of deity bodily (Colossians 2:9). The *Holy Spirit* and *God* are both referred to as God (Acts 5:3–4).

All three Persons of the Trinity are eternal. *God* is from everlasting to everlasting (Psalm 90:2). The throne of *the Son* is forever and ever (Hebrews 1:8). *The Spirit*, too, is eternal (Hebrews 9:14).

All three Persons of the Trinity are Creator. Genesis 1:1–3 clearly references that *God* and the *Spirit of God* were present at creation. John 1:1–5 brings *Christ*—the second Person of the Trinity—into the picture at creation. He was in the beginning with God, and all things were made through Him. Colossians 1:15–17 again confirms that *Jesus Christ* is the firstborn over all of creation. And by Him all things were created. This passage also reiterates the eternity of Christ.

Historical/Apologetics Background

The Bible, while not using the term Trinity, plainly teaches that while there is but one true God, He consists of three separate yet equal Persons—and all were present at creation. In fact, the term "Trinity" did not become a formal doctrine of the Church, by name, until the fourth century. This fact has led to numerous debates over the origin of this word and its validity as a doctrine of Scripture.

Many teachers in the history of Christianity have twisted the concept of the Trinity. To misunderstand the nature and character of God is a serious problem. When this misunderstanding leads to a compromise in the true understanding of the gospel, the mistake can rightly be called a heresy—a doctrine that leads to damnation.

A brief look at some of the historical heresies built around the doctrine of the Trinity follows. In all cases they deny either the oneness of God, the distinction between the Persons of the Trinity, or the full deity of one or more Persons of the Godhead.

Modalism: This idea suggests that God acts in three different "modes" but is only one Person. God appeared as the "Father" in the Old Testament, as "Jesus" in the earthly ministry, and as the "Spirit" in the present age. Presently, some Pentecostal groups hold to Modalism.

Arianism: Named for the fourth-century teacher Arius, this view teaches that Jesus and the Holy Spirit were created by God the Father. This idea was condemned at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD.

Adoptionism: This view teaches that Jesus was an ordinary man until, at His baptism, He was adopted by the Father and given supernatural powers and the status of "Son of God." Some Unitarians hold this view today.

Unitarianism: This view holds that there is a single God with no distinct Persons. Whether Jesus or the Father is God varies, but many present-day Unitarians reject the pre-existence of Jesus, insisting that He began to exist at the virgin birth.

Church councils were called to deal with mutations of the truth that were being spread in the early church. As a result, the doctrine of the Trinity was codified in the Nicene Creed in 325, and later in the Athanasian Creed. Both of these creeds are the basis of an orthodox understanding of the relationships within the Trinity.

Even today we see how misunderstanding the Trinity can skew the gospel by denying the biblical understanding of atonement, justice, and the effect of Christ's work on the Cross.

We often hear people speak of God: God is good; God will answer our prayers; God is in control; God has a plan. Yet many of these same people seldom speak the name of Jesus Christ—and may not even believe that salvation comes through Him alone. They deny and fail to understand the important doctrine of the Trinity—three Persons in one God.

These people discount the significance of who Jesus is—that He is 100% fully God and 100% fully man. Specifically, there are many who claim that Jesus Christ was merely a man—a prophet; the first created being; a sinless, good person—but not God in human flesh. The significance of the doctrine of the Trinity eludes them.

And yet, the New Testament is abundantly clear that Jesus is God. Jesus claimed to be one with the Father (John 10:30–33); He used the title of “I AM” from the Old Testament (John 8:23, 8:58); He demonstrated His power over nature, disease, demons, and death (Matthew 8); and He forgave sins—something only God can do (Mark 2:1–11).

Upon seeing the resurrected Christ, Thomas declared, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28), and Jesus did not rebuke him but affirmed him for saying so. And finally, the Jewish leaders recognized Jesus’ claims to deity and tried to stone Him for it (John 5:18, 8:59); ultimately they had Him crucified for supposed blasphemy.

Why is it important to believe Trinitarian doctrine and specifically that Jesus is both God and man? Our very salvation requires it. The death of a mere man (no matter how noble) could not provide the purchase price required to redeem other men from their sins against an infinite God. But because Jesus is God, is eternal, and is infinite, He alone is able to satisfy the penalty for those sins by His death.

In addition, Jesus had to be fully human in order to redeem Adam’s fallen race—the human race. The substitutionary atonement required that Jesus Christ must die as a man to bear judgment for the sins of men. Only the God-man could bridge the gap and bring both God and man together. As a man, He lived a perfect life and is qualified to be our High Priest and Savior (Hebrews 2:17, 7:24–28).

Many discussions surround this important doctrine and can cause division in the church. This is a mysterious doctrine that cannot be comprehended by the human mind. We know that God has revealed the primary truths of the Trinity in His Word. With that in mind, we must be willing to allow that there are secret things that belong to the Lord our God, which have not been revealed (Deuteronomy 29:29).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.

Slides #1–2

- ▶ After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.

Slide #3

- ▶ Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Come On In

Write on the board, “The Trinity is kind of like _____.” Allow students to discuss.

Memory Verse

We encourage you to practice the memory verse with your students by playing a memory verse game or singing the memory verse song (audio or video).

Psalm 119:89–90 Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Introduction

We’ve been saying that one reason God has given us His Word is so we can know Him better. We’ve been looking at many of God’s attributes. Refer to the *Attributes of God Poster*.

God is eternal, holy, just, loving, and so much more! But we also said He is incomprehensible. We’ll never fully be able to understand everything about Him. Last week we saw that God exists because there had to be someone who was already here at the beginning of time. That someone was God who spoke everything into existence. And as we look around at the beauty and order in creation, we know in our hearts and minds that there is a God who created it all.

Today, we will examine another attribute of God—another one that is very difficult to wrap our minds around. The idea of the Godhead being three-in-one (triune)—the doctrine of the Trinity—is not directly stated in Scripture with the word *Trinity*, so we are going to look at how the Bible presents this extremely important doctrine. Consider using the short demonstration below to show how our analogies of the Trinity can actually misrepresent what the Bible teaches on the subject.

- ? Have you ever heard, or used, the analogy of the three states of water to describe the Trinity to someone? Show the glass of water, the ice, and the saucepan.

Since water can exist in three different states at different temperatures (i.e., ice, water, and steam), it seems like a helpful way to illustrate the idea of the Trinity—that God is one, yet three. If I melt this ice, it will become liquid water. If I heat the water in this saucepan or let it sit on the counter, it will turn into a vapor. Yet it is still made up of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen, H₂O. As we continue through this lesson, let’s think about that analogy and see if it holds up to the test of what is recorded in Scripture. We’ll come back to this analogy later. The typical explanation of this analogy comes across as the heresy of Modalism, but we’ll explain how it can be rightly used later in the lesson.



Studying God's Word

The Father, the Son, and the Spirit All Created

The first passage we are going to look at will probably be familiar.

Genesis 1:1–3

Let's read Genesis 1:1–3 together. *Have someone read it aloud.* You might be familiar with this passage, but today we are going to look at it from an angle that you may not have considered before. This passage gives us a glimpse into the Trinity. You'll see what I mean when we start answering some questions about this text.

- ? Who are the characters mentioned in the passage? *God and the Spirit of God.*
- ? What actions are ascribed to God and the Spirit? *God created, and the Spirit was hovering.*
- ? When did this take place? *On Day One of creation at the beginning of time.*
- ? Who is responsible for creation? *God.*
- ? Who is with the Creator God at creation? *Genesis 1:2. There is a Spirit of God.*

It's important to connect various passages of Scripture when you study a topic. That is one part of the inductive Bible study method. If you only look at one Bible verse about any given topic, you could misunderstand its meaning. So, let's make sure we understand what the whole of God's Word has to say about the Trinity in creation.

Psalm 33:6

Genesis 1:1–3 is not the only place that talks about creation. Let's look at two other passages: Psalm 33:6 and John 1:1–5. *Have someone read Psalm 33:6.*

- ? What connection do you see between Genesis 1:3 that says, "Then God said, 'Let there be light'" and Psalm 33:6? *Allow answers.*

In Genesis 1:3 God spoke to create the light, and in Psalm 33:6 God also spoke to create. It says, "*By the word of the Lord the heavens were made.*"

Plus there is another, more subtle connection when you compare Psalm 33:6 to Genesis 1:2b that says, "And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." The word *Spirit* in Genesis 1:2 is the same Hebrew word translated as *breath* in Psalm 33:6.

- ? Do you think both of those could be referring to the Holy Spirit? *Allow answers.*

Yes! The Hebrew word *ruach* is translated as "*breath*" in this poetic passage from Psalm 33, and the phrase "the breath of his mouth" can rightly be understood as a metaphor for the Spirit of God.

Slide #4

- Encourage your students to take notes in their Student Guides during the lesson.

Slide #5

John 1:1–5

There is a similar parallel in John 1. Turn to John 1:1–5. We'll see a parallel with Jesus rather than the Spirit. See if you recognize it when we are reading it. *Have someone read John 1:1–5.*

- ? Did you notice it? First, how did each passage we've looked at refer to something spoken? *Allow discussion.*

"The Word," "God said," and "the word of the Lord" are phrases found in these three passages that are references to Jesus who is the Word incarnate—the Son of God who took on flesh. Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He existed with the Father and the Spirit.

- ? Do you get it yet? In Genesis 1:1–3 we see the Trinity. Who can point out where we see God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in Genesis 1:1–3? *Allow answers.*

In Genesis 1, we can see the presence of the Father directing the work of Creation through His Word. Then the Son is evident in Genesis 1:3—“then God said.” God said words. He created everything with words.

- ? And who is the Word? *Jesus.*

Yes. God was using Jesus, the Word. He was creating by speaking everything into existence. And the Spirit was there also, directed by the Father to accomplish the creation of the universe. Other passages we looked at confirm this.

Discover the Truth

Keep in mind, none of these verses used the word *Trinity*. But as we study them, it should be clear that three distinct Persons were involved in the act of creation—God the Father, the Spirit of God (Holy Spirit), and God the Son (Jesus).

God Is Three in One

This next passage we'll be looking at will help us see the Trinity in a different way.

Isaiah 44:23–24

Let's read Isaiah 44:23–24 together. *Have someone read the passage.*

Now that we have read the text, let's take some time to observe what it is saying to us. This process is an important part of understanding God's Word.

- ? Can you tell this passage of Scripture is poetry? *Yes/no.*

Mountains and forests don't literally sing. So we know this passage is written in poetic language. When we are reading poetry, we must read the passage and consider what the author intended to communicate.

- ? We can tell that God is being praised for something here. What is it? *His redemption of Israel and His acts of creation.*
- ? What has God done according to verse 24? *He formed each person in the womb and made all things, stretching out the heavens.*
- ? Who helped God perform these acts of creation? *Isaiah 44:24. He was alone.*
- ? But in the previous set of verses, we figured out that three Persons were involved in creation! Does this verse contradict our conclusions? *Allow answers.*

God's Word doesn't have contradictions. And we can be sure that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18), so either our previous conclusion was wrong, or another explanation can bring these two different ideas together.

- ? Do you know a way they can both be true? *Allow answers.*

Yes! The concept of the Trinity—that God is one, yet three Persons—can mean both are true.

Discover the Truth

Although the word *Trinity* doesn't appear anywhere in the Scriptures, I hope you can see the picture coming into focus. God is both one and three, but in different ways so that there is no contradiction. He is one God existing as three distinct Persons. The Father is not the Son is not the Spirit, yet they are all the single God described as creating the universe.

We have been examining this idea of our triune God using the role of Creator, but many other roles and descriptions are given to all three members of the Trinity. We could spend weeks—even months—discussing the doctrine of the Trinity as revealed in Scripture. That's how much Scripture there is to support it.

But we don't have months. So, let's benefit from some work that has already been done for us. Instead of reading the Bible cover to cover right now to find verses about the Trinity, we can use this quick reference chart that has been created for us. It shows many of the verses that support the Trinity.

Look at the first row of verses. The amount of verses that show that the Creator is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit is LONG! We've barely scratched the surface. And as you can see, this chart has many different rows. Each row names an attribute of God and verses where the Trinity is revealed.

For example, we could examine passages that call all three Persons eternal. That's covered in the fourth row down on your handout. Yes. God the Father is eternal, Jesus is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is eternal. Another interesting study would be the Resurrection of Jesus.

- ? Did Jesus raise Himself from the dead on the third day? Or did the Father raise Him? Or was it the Holy Spirit? *Allow answers.*

► Pass out the God Is Three in One handout for the students to keep in their Bibles for future reference. Briefly, explain how it is laid out and encourage students to look up the verses at home.

Jesus said He would raise Himself up in John 2:19. But Galatians 1:1 says the Father raised Him. Then Romans 8:11 mentions Jesus' Resurrection and says the Holy Spirit raised Him! If you didn't know that God is three in one, you would be pretty confused by those different verses. But when you know the doctrine of the Trinity, you can understand how it all makes sense. *Point out that those verses are listed on their handout in the second row.*

The doctrine of the Trinity is one that was constructed by looking at the whole Bible, and comparing Scripture with Scripture. When we do this, the text reveals one Godhead with three distinct Persons.

You can keep this reference guide in your Bible to look at more closely later and to use as a resource if anyone ever asks you about the Trinity.

The Baptism of Jesus

The clearest place in Scripture where the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all revealed at once is the baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:13–17.

Matthew 3:13–17

Let's read that together. *Have someone read Matthew 3:13–17 aloud.*

This passage has a lot of implications for how we understand the Trinity, but let's make sure we examine the text to avoid any errors of interpretation.

- ? Who are the human characters? *John the Baptist is baptizing Jesus.*
- ? How do we see the three Persons of the Trinity present in this passage? *The Son was being baptized, the Father was the voice from heaven, and the Spirit appeared in the form of a dove.*
- ? Does this passage demonstrate that God exists as a Trinity? *Yes/no.*

This passage supports only the idea of three Persons in the Godhead, not the idea of the Trinity. This passage COULD be misunderstood if someone didn't know what the rest of Scripture says about the Trinity. Some people have used it to say there are really three gods. That's why it's important to see what the whole Bible says about something. Anyone who says there are three gods is ignoring all the places in Scripture where God says He is one.

Discover the Truth

Again, let's make sure that we understand that no individual verse proves the Trinity. We must look at the entire Bible and its teaching to see what God is teaching about the Trinity. When we do, the doctrine of the Trinity is seen as one God with three distinct Persons. The Father is not the same as the Son or the Holy Spirit, but they are all one God. This view of God is essential to believe, because any other view is false and denies what Scripture says.

 Slide #10–11



Lesson Review

We all learn best with review and repetition! We encourage you to review the lesson with a Lesson Review activity.



Applying God's Word

What You Heard in the Word

We started this lesson with an analogy of the Trinity using ice, water, and steam.

- ?** If we don't carefully explain this analogy, it could more closely resemble a false teaching called modalism. Modalism is the idea that God acts in three different modes instead of three different persons. How could the analogy of the water being three forms support this false teaching? *As presented, the ice must melt to form water and then become vapor—all three cannot be present at one time. This must be very carefully explained so that the analogy does not lead anyone astray.*

Just like any analogy used to describe God, the water analogy is flawed. Since we are trying to explain an infinite (unlimited) God with a finite (limited) analogy using finite language, we are going to fall short. However, analogies can be useful; we just have to be careful in how we present them. When we explain the water as an analogy, we could say that unlike water, God is three Persons all at the same time.

Other popular analogies are the clover (three leaves yet one clover), an egg (three parts yet one egg), and time (past, present, and future). All of these have limitations in trying to explain the triune nature of God and can lead to heretical understandings of God's nature.

Let's summarize what we have learned today by reviewing three key concepts that present the case for the triune nature of God.

- First, there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44:23–24, 46:9).
- Second, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all identified in Scripture as God (Galatians 1:1; John 1:1; Acts 5:3–4).
- Third, these three each relate to one another and to the world as distinct Persons (Matthew 3:13–17; John 15:26).

This is the doctrine of the Trinity. The one true God of the Bible has revealed Himself to exist in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Many have found this diagram to be more useful than any analogy. Let me show you. *Using the Trinity Diagram, explain that the Father is not the Son is not the Holy Spirit and that each is God—one yet three.*

 Slide #12

 Slide #13

God's Word in the Real World

Knowing about the Trinity is important for several reasons. This important doctrine is one teaching that is essential for salvation. The Athanasian Creed (a statement of doctrine developed early in church history) says, "He therefore that will be saved must think thus of the Trinity."

 Slide #14

? Why is it THAT important? *Allow answers.*

You may not know that since the beginning of the Christian church, false teachers have tried to overthrow the truth of Scripture. Some have wanted to deny the one true God and have replaced Him with a god who was not three in one. That's why the creed is worded so strongly. The Trinity really is THAT important.

Unless we know the God of the Bible—who He truly is and what kind of nature He has—it is impossible to worship Him in truth. If we don't know the truth about who God is, we run the risk of making up a god to worship that is a little easier to understand. But any god that is not the God of the Bible is a false god. And we wouldn't want to worship a false god.

Also, knowing that God is three unique persons in one God will help us have informed conversations with people who have questions about God. There are lots of people who haven't read the Bible and who want to know what God is like. You can help them find answers about God's nature in the Bible. And you can help them understand that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, but there is only one God.

And the teaching we heard today about the Trinity will help us all to be on guard against the false teachings of cults. When a teacher or pastor presents a picture of God that doesn't line up with the triune God of the Bible, we should realize right away that this person could be a false teacher. There are false churches that claim to be Christian who don't believe in God's Word or the Trinity. Knowing God is three in one will help protect you from the false teachings of the cults.



Group Prayer Time

Be sure to pray with your students before you dismiss them.

- Praise God for His majesty revealed in the Trinity.
- Ask God for grace to know Him better.
- Thank God for His Word which reveals Him as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.