

LESSON 1

THE GOD OF THE BIBLE

Scripture Memory – Romans 15:4a

For the Teacher

This lesson introduces some basic theology while letting students practice looking up passages of Scripture. Over the next few lessons, you may wish to assist students who aren't yet comfortable with finding passages by book, chapter, and verse.

Content Objectives

- 1-A** As our Creator, God is powerful, holy, and loving.
- 1-B** The Trinity exists in three persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- 1-C** To follow God, we should reflect His love.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to . . .

- Look up passages of Scripture by book, chapter, and verse
- Use and explain at least one or two words from Scripture to describe God
- List the three persons of the Trinity
- Describe one way to reflect God's moral character

Vocabulary

- **Almighty** – Has the strength to do anything; “all mighty”
- **Holy** – Far from sin or anything unclean; set apart or sacred
- **The Trinity** – The three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—mysteriously unified as one God
- **Potter** – A person who makes pots, often by shaping clay

SESSION 1-A WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

Discuss: Who are some of your favorite people mentioned in the Bible?

Consider sharing a figure from the Bible that has been an encouragement or challenge to you.

This year, we'll look at the life stories of a handful of people in the Bible. These people were not perfect—in fact, some did very bad things. But God helped them all grow to become more like Him. We can learn from their example.

Read the introduction on page 5 with your students. Note that we can learn about God in many ways, but we can find the clearest picture of Him in Scripture.

Before students begin the exercise on page 6, explain the instructions, noting that the sentences are summaries of the Scripture passages, not word-for-word copies. Students should read the verses, think about the meaning, and then fill in the blanks with the word bank.

You may wish to look up the first passage together, noting how to find the book, chapter, and verse.

Prompt: Complete the exercise in section 1-A of your Student Manual.

As needed, review the answers in the table (SM p. 6) as a group.

Discuss: Do you know what the word “almighty” means? What about “holy”?

Almighty

Has the strength to do anything; “all mighty”

Holy

Far from sin or anything unclean; set apart or sacred

Illustrate: Consider writing the following terms on the board:

God is . . .

- **Powerful** – He can do anything He wants to do. He’s powerful enough to create the universe, and He’s strong enough to protect us.
- **Holy** – He is perfectly good. He does not lie or do anything bad.
- **Loving** – He loves us and wants to take care of us. He gives us good things.

When we forget one of these ideas, we can get a bad picture of God in our minds.

Target Truth

God is powerful, holy, and loving.

SESSION 1-B THE TRINITY

Discuss: Look up John 3:16 in your Bibles. We looked at this verse briefly in our previous session. Who is God’s Son?

Explain: God’s Son is Jesus. Both He and the Father are God. This might seem confusing if we think that God is just like us. But He’s not. God is a Spirit, which means that He does not have a body like we do. He is also a Trinity, meaning that He is three persons in one essence.

Illustrate: One of the most difficult ideas about God is the *Trinity*.

- Christians believe in one unified God (cf. Deut. 6:4–5; Mark 12:29–30). Only one God created the world and rules over everything.
- But this one God is made up of three persons. All three are completely, equally God, but also distinct. These persons talk together (cf. John 17), move in different ways (cf. John 16:7), and show love to each other (cf. Matt 3:16–17; John 6:38; 17:24)—all within this three-in-one.

We can’t fully understand the Trinity because nothing else in the universe works the same way. It is a mystery. We might look for ways to picture this idea—like three leaves on a clover or three musical notes in a chord—but every picture falls short.

Trinity
The three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—mysteriously unified as one God

Look at the graphic on page 7 of your Student Manual. Who are the three persons in the Trinity?

- God the Father
- God the Son
- God the Holy Spirit

We cannot understand how the Trinity works, but this is the way that the Bible describes God.

Prompt: Complete the exercise in section 1-B of your Student Manual.

Consider completing this exercise as a group. Note the following vocabulary term, as well as additional notes for three of the verses.

Potter
A person who makes pots, often by shaping clay

- **Isaiah 64:8**—A *potter* makes a pot just the way he or she wants. Likewise, God works all things toward the end that He wants.
- **John 20:31**—The Book of John was written to show that Jesus is God. He is the only way to eternal life.
- **Galatians 5:25**—When we believe Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives inside us. We should live the way He wants us to.

Target Truth

God is three persons in one.

SESSION 1-C REFLECTING GOD'S LOVE

Begin this session by reading the story on the next two pages (“The Papadopoulos Pedalers”). Discuss the following:

- Why might some people be embarrassed by their family?
- How did Anna get over her embarrassment?
- Did Anna’s mom and dad give her a good example of love? How?
- How did Anna show love to her brother Jason after the race?

We learn to love by example—and God gives us the best example of love. If we show godly love, we’ll show that we’re part of God’s family.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 1-C of your Student Manual.

Ask volunteers to share some of their most-admired people. Consider sharing someone you admire, as well.

Discuss: When we admire others, we often want to become more like them. How can you become more like the people that you admire?

Illustrate: Where does the moon get its light? The light actually comes from the sun, bounces off the moon, and shines down on Earth at night. The moon has no light of its own, but it can reflect the sun’s light to us.

Likewise, we humans are very different from God. We don’t have His power or goodness, but we can reflect Him. As God shows love to us, we can show His love to others. People can learn about God through us.

Explain: Read **1 John 4:7–15**.

- **Verse 7**—Followers of Jesus will love each other.
- **Verses 10–11**—We love each other because God first loved us.
- **Verse 12**—No one has seen God, but people can get a hint of what He is like by seeing His followers love each other.
- **Verses 13, 15**—When we believe Jesus, God’s Son, then God the Spirit will live in us.

Explain: God shows us love in many ways, and the biggest way is through Jesus. Jesus came to Earth to make us part of God’s family. He offers us eternal life even though we could never earn it for ourselves.

When we believe and trust in Jesus, God adopts us into His family. We have countless brothers and sisters through Jesus. People should be able to recognize Christians by their love for this new family.

Discuss: What are some ways you can show love and kindness to other Christians?

Target Truth

Christians should be known for their godly love.

LESSON 1 STORY: THE PAPADOPOULIS PEDALERS

The sky dawned warm and clear—a perfect day for a bike race! Anna and her family scanned the field of competitors. Everyone was checking their bikes, talking about the course, and loading their packs.

Dad asked everyone to check their bikes carefully. Anna’s older brother, Jason, was adjusting his new chain. Dad helped Seth inspect his tires and brakes. Seth was only 9, but he was strong and had been training for months. Anna hoped he could make it through the 28-mile course.

She was grabbing her helmet when she heard, “Papado-uh . . . the Papadoo-POH-lis Pedalers, to the starting line! Papadoo-POH-lis?”

Anna winced. It was supposed to be Papa-DOP-oulis. Her parents were proud of their Greek heritage, and they put their family name on everything, even though no one could pronounce it. Now everyone thought their name was Papadoo-POH-lis.

Anna quickly fastened her helmet and kept her head down as they made their way to the starting line. Dad asked, “Everyone ready to have a good race today? Whatever happens, I’m proud of how hard you’ve worked for this. We’re the Papadopoulis Pedalers!”

The announcer called start. “Let’s go, go, go!”

Anna forgot her embarrassment and felt a rush of excitement. She loved a good competition. At first, the road was level, and the riding was easy. There was a light breeze which kept her cool, and small hills were no problem. But halfway through the race, the course became steep and narrow. Anna felt dizzy when she looked into the gaping valley next to her. So instead, she tried to focus on the hill ahead.

She shifted gears as she climbed, and she wondered about Seth. Could he make it up this hill? She glanced around for him, but didn’t see him anywhere. Finally, she panted, “Mom, where’s Seth?”

Mom just smiled and nodded up ahead. As they crested the hill, Anna finally saw Dad, Seth, and Jason waiting for them. The family took a quick break to rest and drink some water. Anna hoped they would hurry up. She didn’t want to fall too far behind the other racers.

Dad showed his usual excitement. “We’re all doing great! After the way you conquered that hill, I think we can finish in tenth place or higher. Are you with me?”

“Huzzah!” they all shouted.

Anna punched Seth on the shoulder, and he laughed. But secretly, Anna wondered if her little brother could keep up. They might not make the top ten this year.

They started fast down the far side of the hill. Only a third of the course lay before them. But suddenly, Jason wobbled on his bike and called out. Anna heard, “It’s the chain!” and saw Jason steer into a steep ditch. The rest of the family zipped past him before they could brake and turn around.

Dad rushed over to make sure Jason was OK. He had a couple small scrapes on one knee, but otherwise, he was fine. The bike, on the other hand, needed some help. The chain had completely fallen off.

Mom asked Anna to watch the road and warn them if a car was coming. Dad took off his pack and rummaged around for a chain tool. Anna kept an eye on the road, but all the while, she fumed.

There was no way they could finish in the top ten now. Why didn’t Jason take care of his bike before the race? Did he care about winning? Anna didn’t say what she was thinking. She didn’t want to start fighting and slow everyone down even more.

She heard Jason talking to Dad, “I’m really sorry. The chain’s new, and I thought I had shortened it to the right size. Guess I didn’t. Now I’ve ruined everything.”

Story continued on next page »

Jason sounded devastated, but Dad punched his shoulder and said, “It’s OK—delays happen. God allows problems, and it’s how we respond that matters. Anyway, it was a good idea to replace your old chain before the race. Next time, I can show you how to measure it correctly. For now, let’s finish strong!” Thankfully, Dad had the right tool, and it took only about three minutes to remove a few links and get the chain back on.

Mom gave Anna a quick hug and said quietly, “Thanks for staying focused and positive. I knew I could count on you.” Anna was glad that she hadn’t said any of the things she was thinking before.

Everyone was on their bikes in a flash. When Dad counted to three, they shouted, “Papadopoulos Pedalers! Let’s go, go, go!”

Mom, Dad, Jason, Anna, and Seth all took turns leading and watching out for traffic. For the last few miles, they encouraged each other and gave their best effort.

When they crossed the finish line, Anna heard the announcer say over the loudspeaker, “Here’s the Papadopoulos Pedalers, finishing with a time of two hours, 28 minutes, and 46 seconds. Great job!”

After they had cooled down and put away the bikes, the family enjoyed a picnic lunch together. During the award ceremony, they were all surprised to learn that their time was good enough for second place—and just one minute behind first place!

Anna pumped her fist in excitement. But then she saw Jason’s face, which showed a mix of sadness and anger. He knew that they would have won if his chain hadn’t fallen off.

This time, Anna decided to speak her mind. “We both know we can win next time. After another year of riding, we’ll be even faster. We’ll check each other’s bikes and land first place as a family. People will remember the Papadopoulos Pedalers!”

CHARACTER TRAIT ACTIVITY: LOVE

We show **love** to people when we do what’s good for them.

We can better show love by learning more about others. Students will participate in a simple ice breaker to learn more about some of their classmates. Ask each student to number 1–5 on a piece of paper. Write a list like the following on the board.

1. Owns a pet
2. Has broken a bone
3. Has traveled to a different country
4. Plays basketball
5. Is an only child

Give students three minutes to find classmates described by one of the items on the list. Students should write the name of a classmate next to each number on their papers. After the time is up, consider collecting the papers from the students. Go through the list, asking students if they remember which of their classmates are described by each item.

Explain that love seeks good and adds good to people. We love by caring for people and giving them what they need. To better love and understand people, we need to learn more about them.

LESSON 1

THE GOD OF THE BIBLE

VOCABULARY

- **Almighty** – Has the strength to do anything; “all mighty”
- **Holy** – Far from sin or anything unclean; set apart or sacred
- **The Trinity** – The three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—mysteriously unified as one God
- **Potter** – A person who makes pots, often by shaping clay

1-A WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

Have you ever gotten a letter in the mail? Imagine opening your mailbox and finding a letter from the most important person in the world. This person wrote the letter so that you two could get to know each other.

What would you do with this letter? Would you throw it away, or would you read it carefully? Would you write back?



The most important Person *did* write you a letter.

The God of the universe gave you the Bible so that you could learn more about Him. He wants a relationship with you, and He wants you to be more like Him.



Read the following passages in the Bible. Use the words below to fill in the blanks.

Almighty	God	holy	loved
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Genesis 17:1	The Lord told Moses, "I am God Almighty / Almighty God . . ."
Psalms 99:9	. . . The Lord our God is holy .
Isaiah 6:3	Holy , holy , holy is the Lord . . .
John 3:16	God loved _____ the world so much that He gave His only Son . . .

► Can you think of other words to describe God? Write a few below.

Answers will vary.

1-B THE TRINITY



Read each passage and mark which person of the **Trinity** is named.

Isaiah 64:8 – He shapes us like a potter shapes clay.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Father	<input type="checkbox"/> Son	<input type="checkbox"/> Holy Spirit
John 20:31 – If we believe in Him, we have life.	<input type="checkbox"/> Father	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Son	<input type="checkbox"/> Holy Spirit
Galatians 5:22-23 – He grows love, joy, and peace inside us.	<input type="checkbox"/> Father	<input type="checkbox"/> Son	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Holy Spirit
Galatians 5:25 – We should walk with Him and do what He says.	<input type="checkbox"/> Father	<input type="checkbox"/> Son	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Holy Spirit
Ephesians 4:6 – We have only one true God.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Father	<input type="checkbox"/> Son	<input type="checkbox"/> Holy Spirit
James 1:17 – Every good gift comes from Him.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Father	<input type="checkbox"/> Son	<input type="checkbox"/> Holy Spirit

STUDENT MANUAL PAGES

1-C REFLECTING GOD'S LOVE



In the spaces below, write three people that you admire.

- **Answers will vary.** _____
- _____
- _____

► Why do you admire these people?

Love is an important part of God. He loves us very much. If we want to follow God, we should love people like He does.



Read **1 John 4:7-11** and use the words below to fill in the blanks.

God	love
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1 John 4:7	We should love _____ each other because love _____ is from God _____.
1 John 4:8	People who do not love _____ do not know God _____—because God _____ is love _____.
1 John 4:9-10	God _____ showed His love by sending His Son into the world.
1 John 4:11	Because God _____ loved us, we should also love _____ each other.

LESSON 2

THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE

Scripture Memory – Romans 15:4b

For the Teacher

This lesson introduces the biblical account of humanity’s fall, followed by Christ’s redemptive work. Each session presents opportunities to discuss elements of the gospel.

Content Objectives

- 2-A** Adam and Eve brought sin into the world by disobeying God.
- 2-B** Jesus came to Earth to show people the path back to God.
- 2-C** Jesus died and rose again to give us life.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to . . .

- Define *sin* as it relates to God’s law
- Explain how Adam and Eve first disobeyed God
- List two or three ways that God showed love through Jesus

Vocabulary

- **Creation** – Everything God brought into being; the universe
- **Sin** – The decision to break God’s law; turning away from God
- **Faith** – A belief in something we cannot see or prove; trust in God

SESSION 2-A CREATION AND SIN

Discuss: The world around us is a mix of wonderful and terrible things.

- What is wonderful about the world? What are some of your favorite things?
- What is bad about the world? What things can make people afraid or sad?

If God created the universe, and if God is so good, why are there some bad things around us?

Prompt: Complete the first exercise in section 2-A of your Student Manual.

Consider reviewing the answers to the first exercise, and then read the paragraphs at the top of page 10. As you read, note the definitions for the vocabulary words below.

Creation

Everything God brought into being; the universe

Sin

The decision to break God’s law; turning away from God

Discuss: Before you begin the next exercise, there’s one more word you should know. Do you know what the word *serpent* means?

Serpent is an old name for a snake. There’s a serpent mentioned in Genesis 2, but this is no ordinary animal.

Prompt: Complete the remaining exercise in section 2-A of your Student Manual.

Explain: God gave Adam and Eve so many things to enjoy. They could eat any kind of fruit except one. But the serpent led Eve to think that she was missing out on something good, and she believed him. And then Adam disobeyed, as well.

When God asked Adam and Eve if they ate the fruit, they both blamed someone else.

- Adam blamed Eve for giving him the fruit.
- Eve blamed the serpent for tricking her.

Read **Genesis 3:14–19**. As a result of sin, people would now face suffering. Some people call this “the Fall” or “the curse.”

- **Verses 14–15**—The serpent would crawl in the dust. The descendants of the serpent would be enemies of Eve’s descendants. Verse 15 is a picture and promise that Jesus would one day defeat Satan, God’s enemy.
- **Verse 16**—Women would have pain during childbirth, and there would be conflict between husbands and wives.
- **Verses 17–19**—People would have to work very hard to get food. Everyone would one day die and return to the ground.

This is all very sad, but God had a plan to rescue us. He did not abandon His creation.

Target Truth

Sin pulls us away from God.

SESSION 2-B THE WORK OF JESUS

Explain: What makes sin bad? God is the source of all good things, but when we sin, we . . .

- Say “no” to God and His good gifts
- Push God away
- Hurt the people around us
- Hurt ourselves

After humanity chose to sin against God, the world was cursed with evil. People did terrible things to each other, and many people died without ever knowing God.

But again, God did not give up on us. He wanted to rescue people from the curse of evil. So He came to Earth Himself to save us.

You may wish to briefly review the persons of the Trinity (SM p. 7). Jesus is the Son of God, yet also God Himself. God the Father sent Jesus into the world to save humanity from sin.

Prompt: Complete the exercise in section 2-B of your Student Manual.

Explain: Remember the three words used to describe God in Lesson 1? He is *powerful*, *holy*, and *loving*.

- God is *holy*, which means He can’t allow sin.
- He is also *loving*, so He offers to help us.
- And through His *power*, God took all the punishment for sin on Himself.

We can’t do anything to save ourselves. So we simply need to trust God, and He will take care of us.

You may wish to spend more time discussing the gospel with your students. Consider giving them a chance to speak with you privately if they have further questions.

To break free from sin and enjoy the life God offers, we must accept Jesus. We must believe His words and trust that His death paid for our sins.

Target Truth

Jesus came to Earth to save us.

SESSION 2-C THE PROMISE OF JESUS

Discuss: What is *faith*? What have you heard people say about this idea?

Faith

A belief in something we cannot see or prove; trust in God

Before reading the story on the next two pages (“Sight Unseen”), ask the students to listen and think about how the main character, Kelsey, shows faith.

After the story, discuss the following:

- How did Kelsey show faith?
- Was Kelsey’s grandmother a good person to have faith in? Why?
- What would Kelsey have done if she had no faith in her grandmother?
- How could Kelsey love a horse before seeing it? Do you think Kelsey was happy after she met Dusty?

It’s good to have faith, but it’s also important to rest our faith on the right people and ideas.

Explain: Jesus asked His followers to put their faith in Him. But when Jesus died, some of His followers wondered if His promises could come true.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 2-C of your Student Manual.

Consider working through these exercises together as a class. You could ask volunteers to read some of the verses out loud.

Discuss: What does John 3:16 mean by “eternal” or “everlasting” life?

- Earlier in this lesson, we learned that Adam and Eve brought suffering into their lives by sinning against God. When they sinned, they died spiritually—that is, they were separated from God.
- Every person has had this same problem. Sin has cursed this world with suffering and death.
- But God has a solution for this. Jesus promises that if we trust Him, He will give us life forever with God. Even if we die here in this world, we will live with God in heaven forever. Nothing will separate us from God again.

Explain: It takes a lot of faith to believe this promise, but thankfully, Jesus builds up faith inside us (cf. Heb. 12:2). As He keeps showing us love in little ways, day after day, He gives us hope that He’ll fulfill His big promises in the future.

Jesus promised His followers that He would die and rise again—and He did. That gave those followers hope and courage.

Read **Hebrews 10:23–25**. We can hope in God’s promises because He always does what He says He will do.

Target Truth

We can trust Jesus’ promises for the future.

LESSON 2 STORY: SIGHT UNSEEN

The wind blew through Kelsey’s hair as the truck bounced over the country roads. After two days of traveling with Mom, she was ready to stretch her legs and run free. She just wasn’t sure what her new life would be like.

After Grandpop had died from cancer last year, Grandmom had been left alone on the old farm. She was doing OK, and the neighbors saw her often, but she was happy when Mom suggested moving in. They would “join forces,” Mom said. She thought that’s what God wanted them to do.

It was hard for Kelsey to leave behind her friends, but Grandmom’s house was probably the happiest place she knew. She was determined to help Mom and Grandmom make this work.

After the truck pulled into the overgrown yard, Kelsey jumped out to give Grandmom a big hug.

“Kelsey! I’m so glad you’re here—finally! Let’s get your things inside. Do you need anything to drink? I have snacks ready in the kitchen.”

Later, they walked around the property. When they reached the barn, Grandmom opened the big, creaky door. Kelsey was surprised to find the building dark, quiet, and empty.

“Where are the horses?” asked Kelsey.

Grandmom sighed. “Before Grandpop passed away, he boarded Dusty and Rose at a stable not too far from here. I couldn’t take care of them by myself. But I want to talk to you about that.”

“About what?” Mom asked, a little nervous.

Grandmom looked at Kelsey with a serious face. “I was hoping that you might try to get this place in shape.” She started pointing around the barn. “We need someone to clean out the stalls, re-set the hinges on those doors, get fresh hay, and maybe repaint the outside. If you can do all that in a month, we can bring the horses home. Dusty was Grandpop’s favorite, and I want her to be yours.”

Kelsey froze for just a second. “Are you kidding? That’s awesome! Let’s make it happen!”

Over the next four weeks, Kelsey spent time almost every day in the stable. She shoveled out the old hay and manure, then used the wheelbarrow to dump it in the compost pile for Grandmom’s garden. Kelsey watched a few videos to learn how to replace broken door hinges. Mom kept telling her to watch out for splinters and rusty old nails. Thankfully, Grandpop’s shed had plenty of tools in great condition, and Mom showed Kelsey how to use a miter saw to cut new boards for the door frame.

After a few weeks, only a little cleaning and painting was left, but there was a problem. One of Kelsey’s new friends from church had invited her to a birthday party. Kelsey really wanted to go, especially since she wanted to make more friends in town. But with her deadline coming up, she couldn’t afford to give up a whole day of work. Grandmom couldn’t help, and Mom was too busy with her new job.

Kelsey talked to Mom while they were driving home from church. Mom said that Kelsey should decide for herself—and to accept the consequences either way. After thinking it through, Kelsey decided that she would continue working on the stable and not go to the party. She didn’t want to disappoint Grandmom, and she wanted the horses to have a safe, clean home when they arrived.

“Besides,” said Kelsey, “I can invite my friends over to ride Dusty sometime. First things first.”

Over the next week, Kelsey sanded, cleaned, and painted almost everything around the barn. Mom got some hay delivered, and everything was ready just a day before the horses would come.

Kelsey brought Grandmom out to the barn to see the finished work. “See how clean everything is? The doors don’t stick anymore, and I greased the hinges so they don’t even creak. I painted those walls red like Grandpop had, and the white trim was Mom’s idea. What do you think?”

Story continued on next page »

Grandmom was overwhelmed. “Kelsey, you’ve done a wonderful job. Has your mother seen all this?”

“I sure have,” said Mom, walking into the barn. “But I’m afraid I have some bad news.”

Kelsey turned. “Wait, what?”

Mom hesitated. “I don’t want to upset you, but the stable won’t be able to bring Dusty and Rose here tomorrow. Their trailer somehow wrecked yesterday, and they’re going to need a new one. It might be a couple days before the horses get here.”

Kelsey listened carefully and thought a moment before speaking. “You’re worried I might be upset about the delay? That I could’ve gone to the party after all?”

“Well, yes, I guess so,” said Mom. She still remembered when Kelsey had gotten upset over bad news before.

But this time, Kelsey smiled. “I made my decision, and none of us could have known it would be this way. The barn is just ready a few days early. Thanks so much for all your help with this.”

Mom let out the breath she was holding, and Grandmom beamed.

Two days later, Kelsey was riding her bike in the freshly mowed yard, when she heard the rumble of a truck and trailer coming down the driveway. Quickly, she put her bike away and ran down to the barn.

Grandmom introduced her to Grandpop’s friends from the stable. They had kept Dusty and Rose for the last six months. One of the men said, “I hear Dusty is your horse, Kelsey. Would you like to be the first to welcome her back home?”

“I sure would!” As Kelsey opened the trailer door, she realized that she had never even seen Dusty before, but she already knew they’d be the best of friends. She’d love Dusty as much as Grandpop had.

CHARACTER TRAIT ACTIVITY: FAITH

We show **faith** by trusting and following God's plan.

We don't know everything that God knows, so we have to trust Him. To illustrate our partial knowledge of God's plan, students will assemble puzzles with some of the pieces missing.

Before the activity, gather the following for each group of 5–6 students in your class:

- A small jigsaw puzzle (around 20 pieces) in a plastic bag, with several pieces removed
- A large sheet of drawing paper to lie under the entire assembled puzzle
- A roll of clear tape
- Crayons or colored pencils

Set aside the box covers for each puzzle until after the activity.

To begin the activity, divide the students into groups. Ask students to assemble their puzzles on top of the drawing paper. Several pieces will be missing. When students have completed the puzzle as much as possible, they can tape the edges down to the drawing paper, then draw and color the missing portions of the image. After students are finished, reveal the pictures for each puzzle. Compare the pictures with each group's attempt, and consider voting on which attempt is the best match.

Discuss how the students decided to fill in the spaces. Our lives are a lot like these puzzles. Every moment and every day, we get another piece of our story. We don't yet know what our entire life will look like, but if we follow God, we can trust Him to take care of us. We might not understand why good things or bad things happen to us, but one day, God will make all of that clear. In the meantime, we need faith to trust Him for the empty spaces. We can't just give up and throw all our pieces away.

As time allows, read Matthew 6:25–34. We don't know how God will take care of us in the future, but by faith, we can believe God even when it's difficult. Faith is trusting God for what we cannot see or prove (cf. Heb. 11:1).

LESSON 2

THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE

VOCABULARY

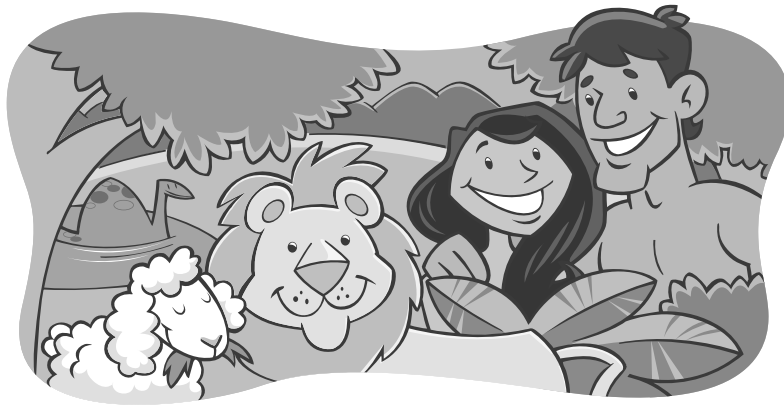
- **Creation** – Everything God brought into being; the universe
- **Sin** – The decision to break God's law; turning away from God
- **Faith** – A belief in something we cannot see or prove; trust in God

2-A CREATION AND SIN



Read the following verses in **Genesis 1** and use the words below to fill in the blanks.

beginning
earth
female
good
male



Genesis 1:1	In the beginning _____, God created the heavens and the earth _____.
Genesis 1:27	God made humans in His own image. He made both male _____ and female _____.
Genesis 1:31	Everything God made was very good _____.

STUDENT MANUAL PAGES

God created the entire universe—the stars, our planet, and everything that lives around us. He even created two humans named Adam and Eve. All of God's **creation** was wonderful.

God gave Adam and Eve one rule. They were not allowed to eat the fruit from one tree in the Garden of Eden. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and **sin**.



Read **Genesis 3:1-6**. Then match the beginning of each sentence to its correct ending.

A	Verse 1 – The serpent asked Eve if God really . . .	A. Said not to eat from any tree. B. Die. C. Touch the fruit. D. Give the fruit to her husband, Adam.
C	Verse 3 – Eve said that they could not even . . .	
B	Verse 4 – The serpent told Eve that she would not . . .	
D	Verse 6 – So Eve ate the fruit and chose to . . .	



2-B THE WORK OF JESUS

Humans chose to sin, but God still cared for us. He promised to send Someone to save us from our sins. That person is Jesus, and He came to Earth to live as a human.



Read each passage from the Book of Matthew and complete the puzzle.

Across	Down
<p>2. Matthew 20:19 – Jesus said that He would one day be killed, but He would come back to life on the ___ day afterward.</p> <p>4. Matthew 2:1 – Jesus was born in the town of ___, in the region of Judea.</p>	<p>1. Matthew 14:16-20 – Jesus fed thousands of people with just ___ loaves of bread and two small fish.</p> <p>3. Matthew 15:30 – When people came to Jesus with different problems, He ___ them.</p>

	¹ F		² T	³ H	I	R	D	
	I			E				
	V			A				
⁴ B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M
				E				
				D				



Despite all the good that Jesus did, some people hated Him. Eventually, these wicked people decided to kill Him. They executed Him by nailing Him to a cross.

But even this terrible thing was part of God's plan. Jesus chose to die for our sins. He faced our punishment so we would not have to. Because of Jesus, we can follow God and live with Him forever.

2-C THE PROMISE OF JESUS



Read **John 3:16** again and mark the correct ending to each sentence.

God so loved ...		
<input type="checkbox"/> the planet Earth.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the people of the world.	<input type="checkbox"/> all the animals.
God sent ...		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> His only Son.	<input type="checkbox"/> a tornado.	<input type="checkbox"/> an army.
If we believe in Him, we will have ...		
<input type="checkbox"/> death.	<input type="checkbox"/> happiness.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> life.



- ▶ Jesus died so that we could live. But do you remember what you read in **Matthew 20:19**? What did Jesus promise to do after He died?

Rise again on the third day

- ▶ Read **Matthew 28:1-9**. Did Jesus keep His promise? Yes No

Jesus promised to give His followers life that never ends. Many people make promises that they cannot keep, but Jesus showed that He has power over life and death. One day, everyone who has faith in Christ will live with Him forever.

LESSON 3

THE PARTS OF THE BIBLE

Scripture Memory – Review Romans 15:4

For the Teacher

This lesson maps out the broad divisions of the Bible. Students will briefly survey major biblical themes while reviewing Scripture’s value to believers.

Content Objectives

- 3-A** The Old Testament records how God interacted with the nation of Israel.
- 3-B** The New Testament reveals the work of Jesus and the beginnings of the Christian church.
- 3-C** God gave us Scripture to reveal Himself to us.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to . . .

- Recognize several terms for important divisions and genres in the Bible, like *testament*, *gospel*, and *epistle*
- List several differences between the Old and New Testaments
- Describe Scripture’s role as God’s explicit self-revelation

Vocabulary

- **Testament** – A promise or record; a name for the two major parts of the Bible
- **Scripture** – Sacred or religious writing; another name for the Bible
- **Idol** – A statue of a false god
- **Prophet** – Someone who shares a spiritual message
- **Gospel** – The “good news” about Jesus; one of the first four books of the New Testament
- **Epistle** – A letter; one of the 21 letters in the New Testament

SESSION 3-A THE OLD TESTAMENT

Discuss: Is the Bible one book or many books?

We often think of the Bible as one book. After all, the Bible usually comes in one volume. But the Bible is actually made up of 66 smaller books collected together. They are organized into two parts called *testaments*.

Testament

A promise or record; a name for the two major parts of the Bible

Consider asking your students to find the Table of Contents in their Bibles.

- The Old Testament includes 39 books.
- The New Testament includes 27 books.

Explain: There's a word we use to describe what's in the Bible. It's called *Scripture*.

Scripture

Sacred or religious writing; another name for the Bible

The books of Scripture were written . . .

- By at least 40 writers over 1,000 years
- By men and women from many different backgrounds
- In at least three different languages, including Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic

Over the years, people have translated Scripture into hundreds of languages so that almost everyone can read it today.

Explain: In today's exercises, you'll learn about the Old Testament. In this part of Scripture, God revealed Himself to the nation of Israel. We'll learn more about these special people in the coming lessons.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 3-A of your Student Manual.

Consider reading out loud the introductory paragraph to each exercise. You could also let students complete these exercises in small groups.

As time allows, ask volunteers to say which part of the Old Testament (Law, History, Poetry, Prophets) includes the following books:

- **Genesis** – the Law
- **Isaiah** – the Prophets
- **2 Chronicles** – History
- **Proverbs** – Poetry
- **Deuteronomy** – the Law

Target Truth

The Old Testament describes God's relationship with Israel.

SESSION 3-B THE NEW TESTAMENT

Explain: The second big part of the Bible is the New Testament. These books were written about Jesus and His followers. They include the Gospels, the Book of Acts, and the Epistles.

Consider reading the introductory paragraph on page 16 out loud.

Explain: The word *gospel* has two meanings.

Gospel

The “good news” about Jesus; one of the first four books of the New Testament

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called “the Gospels” because they focus on the good news of Jesus. They describe how He taught and healed people, and how He died and rose again to save us from our sins.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 3-B of your Student Manual.

Explain: The New Testament books were written for different reasons.

- The Gospels are records of what Jesus did and said while He was on Earth.
- The Book of Acts is a history book. It describes what Jesus’ followers did after He went back to heaven.

- The Epistles are letters that Jesus’ followers wrote to some of the first churches. They teach truth about God.
- The Book of Revelation is a prophetic book written to seven early churches. It explains that God will one day defeat His enemies and bring peace.

As time allows, play a brief review game. Present the following pairs of books, and ask students to tell you which book comes first in their Bible. Alternatively, you could hold a Bible drill and see which student can flip to each book first.

Discuss: Which came first?

1 Samuel	Exodus
Acts	James
Mark	Isaiah
1 Timothy	1 Corinthians
Psalms	Proverbs
Ephesians	Deuteronomy
Genesis	Romans

Target Truth

The New Testament describes the work of Jesus.

SESSION 3-C LEARNING FROM THE WORD

Read the story on the next two pages (“You’ve Got the Map”). Consider sharing a time when you had trouble following directions. Afterward, discuss the following:

- How did Eli show more care and attentiveness on his second try with the map?
- What are some times when we should listen to others carefully?
- How can we pay better attention to Scripture? How can we make sure we understand what we read there?

Discuss: What is the purpose of Scripture?

- Some people use the Bible as a window into the past.
- Some people use the Bible to help them decide between right and wrong.
- Some people enjoy the stories, poems, and advice they find in the Bible.

These ideas aren’t all bad, but there’s a bigger purpose behind it all. God gave us Scripture to reveal Himself to us. He wants us to learn about Him and follow Him. So He guided and inspired people to write these books.

Discuss: Can we learn about God from things other than the Bible? What other things has God given to help us?

We can learn about God from good teachers, from the Holy Spirit, and from the world around us, but Scripture is the clearest way that God talks to us.

Before students begin their exercises, consider reading **Psalm 19:7–14** and discussing the following verses:

- **Verse 7** – Scripture helps us be wiser.
- **Verse 8** – Scripture helps our hearts find joy.
- **Verse 11** – Scripture warns us about bad things and helps us find good things.

Prompt: Complete the exercises in section 3-C of your Student Manual.

Discuss: How did you answer the last question on page 18? What would you like to learn about Scripture this year?

Target Truth

God reveals Himself through Scripture.

LESSON 3 STORY: YOU'VE GOT THE MAP

“Eli! Hey Eli—Let’s go!” Xavier’s voice boomed through the house.

“What’s up?” Eli paused his game and looked up at his big brother.

“I’m going to visit that new historical marker—the one with our ancestor. I still need a picture for my school report. You wanted to go, right?”

William Carney was born a slave in the year 1840, back when some places in the United States still allowed slavery. When he was a teenager, William escaped to freedom in the North. Up until that point, he only had the name *William*, but he took the last name *Carney* so he could sign up to fight in the Civil War. William earned the rank of Sergeant in the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment. In one battle, he suffered several gunshot wounds while holding up the US flag. For his bravery, he received the US Medal of Honor.

Xavier was writing a paper on William Carney when he found out that the soldier was his great-great-great-great-great-grandfather. So now Xavier wanted to take some pictures of a historical marker.

Eli got up to follow Xavier. “Dad say OK?”

“Yeah, Dad said OK.”

As Eli buckled his seat belt, he asked, “So what should I do?”

Xavier handed him a phone. “Do? You can hold my phone while it gives me directions. I haven’t been to the marker before, but it’s near some cemetery.”

As the two brothers traveled up the highway and into the city, Eli held up the phone so Xavier could hear the directions over the wind blowing through the windows. Eli watched the other cars fly by, and he began to daydream about being in a battle like his ancestor. He couldn’t wait to share pictures with his friends at church. They’d probably think that—

Xavier’s voice interrupted Eli’s thoughts. “Where’s my next turn, Eli? Is it coming up? I thought we were close.”

Eli looked down at the phone. The screen was blank, and the phone wouldn’t turn back on. “Uh, I think your battery died.”

His brother had his eyes glued to the road ahead. “Don’t joke with me, Eli.”

“Seriously. It won’t turn on.”

Xavier got off the highway and turned into a crowded old neighborhood. He pulled over near a corner where he could see a couple street signs.

“OK,” Xavier said. “That’s my fault. Help me find the charger.”

They looked all around the car—in the glove box, under the seats, even between the cushions in the back seat. After about five minutes, they gave up.

Xavier laughed a bit. “Well, I guess we can finally use that map Dad bought five years ago.” He lifted a bundle of papers out of the glove box and showed Eli an old road map. “Have you ever used one of these?”

Eli was curious. “Not like that, but I like maps.”

“Great!” said Xavier. He pointed to a spot on the map. “It’s not hard. See, we’re right here.”

Xavier’s finger covered a big section of the map, so Eli couldn’t see exactly where he was pointing. But Eli didn’t want to look dumb, so he just mumbled, “Yeah, sure.”

“We have to go up this road a little ways, maybe three inches, and then we’re going to turn right. That road winds around for a little bit. We’ll take two more left turns, and somewhere around here we should see the marker on our right. Got it?”

Eli just looked at Xavier with big eyes.

“Great!” said Xavier.

Off they went. How far was three inches on a map? Neither of them knew. They were looking for Cromwell Drive, but all they could find was Cromwell Road.

Story continued on next page »

As they drove, Eli saw a little girl riding her tricycle in front of her house. Eli waved, and she stared back.

Eli had no idea where they were on the map. He could barely read the tiny writing, and it had been too long since Xavier explained anything. Eli didn't want to ask for help now.

They saw the little girl on the tricycle again. Eli waved. The third time they passed her, she finally waved back.

“Stop waving at the little girl!” said Xavier. “You’re supposed to be helping me find Cromwell.”

“I’m just being friendly,” said Eli. He waited a minute, then finally said. “I have no idea where we are. I’ve forgotten everything you said.”

Xavier stopped at a stop sign and stared at Eli for a long minute. Then he burst out laughing. “Want a burger? I want a burger. We’ll both feel better after a burger. Let’s get lunch over there and look at the map one more time.”

Pause a moment to discuss the following:

- Why did Eli have trouble with the map? What kept him from helping Xavier well?
- How could Eli do better with the map next time? What advice would you give him?

Once they had sat down with their food, Xavier spread the road map out on the table. He took a pen and began marking their route again. This time, he took his time and made sure that Eli could repeat the directions back to him. Eli listened closely and asked questions. After looking at the map for a while, they realized that Cromwell Drive and Cromwell Road were the same street.

Twenty minutes later, Xavier and Eli reached the historical marker just outside the cemetery. The brothers walked around and took a few pictures with Dad’s nice camera. They even found a statue of William Carney, along with some plaques that talked about other soldiers buried nearby.

When they got back to the car, Xavier decided to throw his back pack into the trunk. There, right next to the tire iron, was the phone charger. Eli snorted, Xavier grinned, and neither said a thing.

Once they were out of the city, Eli finally had to say, “Well, at least we made friends with little tricycle girl!”

CHARACTER TRAIT ACTIVITY: ATTENTIVENESS

We show **attentiveness** by listening to others and remembering important details.

Students can play a bingo-style game to practice listening skills. Before the activity, make a copy of the “Bible Vocab” table below for each student. After passing out the copies, ask students to write a random letter of the alphabet in each square. Consider reciting the letters of the alphabet as students fill in their table at random. The middle is a free square, so students will only be able to write 24 letters total.

Read the following words, one at a time. Ask students to mark a square whenever they hear a word that starts with the corresponding letter (i.e., “A” for “Almighty”). The winner will be the first student to mark five squares in a row. As a review, consider discussing the meaning of each word.

- Almighty • Faith • Prophet • Worship • Epistle • Matthew
- Scripture • Trinity • Creation • Leviticus • Idol • Understanding
- Gospel • Holy • Bible • Deuteronomy • Jesus • Old Testament

BIBLE VOCAB

		FREE SPACE		

LESSON 3

THE PARTS OF THE BIBLE

VOCABULARY

- **Testament** – A promise or record; a name for the two major parts of the Bible
- **Scripture** – Sacred or religious writing; another name for the Bible
- **Idol** – A statue of a false god
- **Prophet** – Someone who shares a spiritual message
- **Gospel** – The “good news” about Jesus; one of the first four books of the New Testament
- **Epistle** – A letter; one of the 21 letters in the New Testament

3-A THE OLD TESTAMENT

The first part of **Scripture** is called the Old Testament, and it describes how God helped the nation of Israel. God gave these people special promises, along with laws to help them follow Him. The Israelites did not always obey God, but God loved them. As we study the stories and laws in the Old Testament, we can learn why people need Jesus.

Let’s learn about the four big sections of the Old Testament.

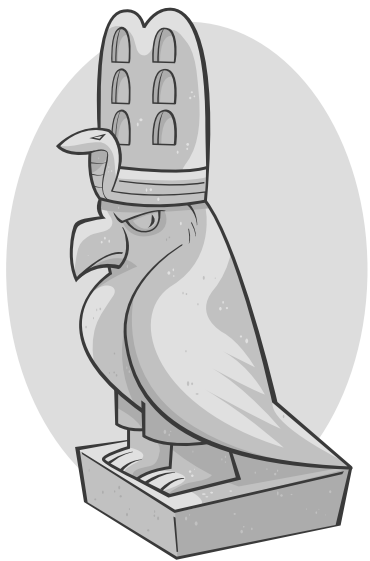
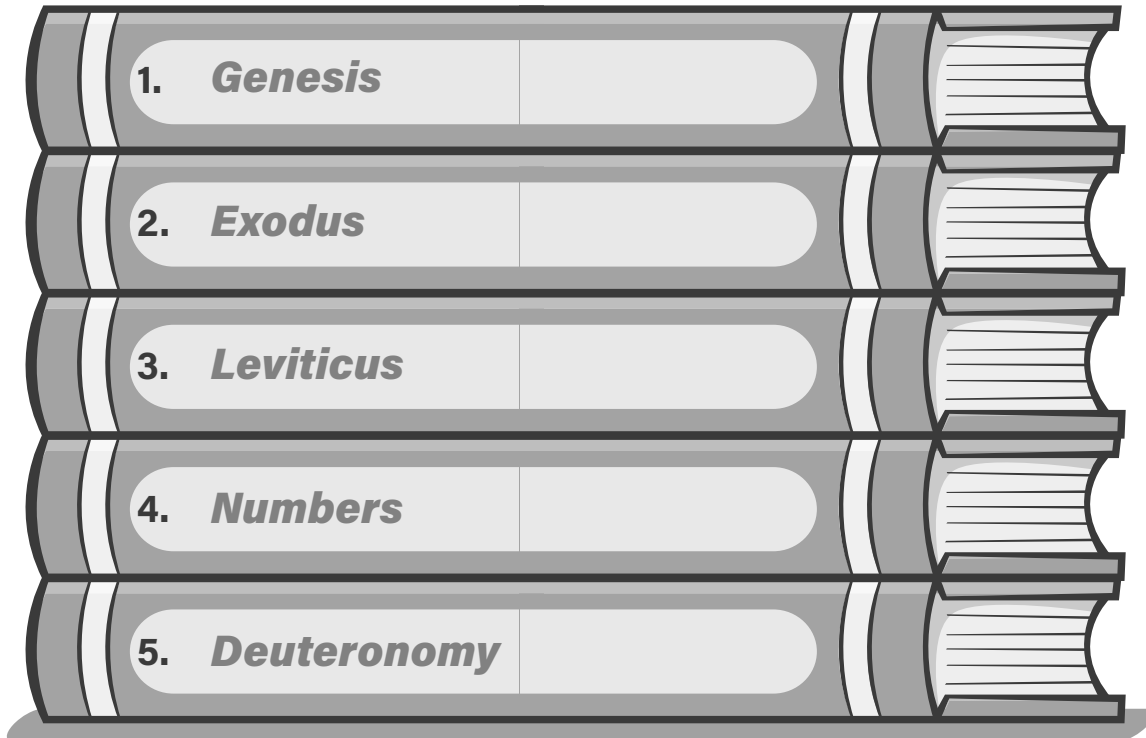


STUDENT MANUAL PAGES

THE BOOKS OF THE LAW



Find the Table of Contents near the beginning of your Bible. This shows the 66 books of Scripture. The first five books of the Old Testament are called the Books of the Law. Write these five books below.



THE BOOKS OF HISTORY

In this section of the Old Testament, we read how the people of Israel settled into the land of Canaan. Most people in Canaan did not follow God, and sometimes Israel followed their example. The Israelites often worshiped **idols** and hurt each other. A few times, the leaders of Israel even forgot about God's laws.

STUDENT MANUAL PAGES



Number the historical books from **1** to **12**. The first book is marked for you.

2	Judges	3	Ruth
9	2 Chronicles	8	1 Chronicles
1	Joshua	6	1 Kings
12	Esther	10	Ezra
5	2 Samuel	11	Nehemiah
7	2 Kings	4	1 Samuel

THE BOOKS OF POETRY

In the Old Testament, we can also find five books that include songs and poetry. These books describe God and His gifts in amazing ways. The writers also ask important questions about Him. The poetic books are . . .

- ◉ **Job** – A story about a man who trusts God even while suffering
- ◉ **Psalms** – Songs about our walk with God
- ◉ **Proverbs** – Advice from wise, godly people
- ◉ **Ecclesiastes** – Thoughts on the meaning of life
- ◉ **The Song of Solomon** – A song about love in marriage

THE PROPHETS

Even though Israel kept disobeying God, He kept calling them back to Himself. He sent **prophets** to remind Israel about His laws. The prophets also warned about God’s punishment for people who hated Him.



In the space below, write the names of three prophetic books.

- ◉ **Answers will vary.** _____
- ◉ _____
- ◉ _____

3-B THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE GOSPELS

The first four books of the New Testament are called the **Gospels**. Here we read about the coming of Jesus, the Son of God. He was born in Bethlehem as a baby, and He grew up to teach and heal people. He died on a cross to pay for our sins, but three days later, He rose again. Each gospel gives us a different picture of Jesus' life.



Look at your Bible's Table of Contents again. Write the names of the first four books of the New Testament.



THE BOOK OF ACTS

The Book of Acts explains what happened after Jesus rose back to heaven.



Read **Acts 2:1-4**. Who came to live inside Jesus' followers?

The Holy Spirit

► Read **Acts 11:26**. What did people begin to call Jesus' followers?

Christians

STUDENT MANUAL PAGES

THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION

The **Epistles** are letters written by early Christians to each other. They further explain the gospel, and they describe ways that we can be like Jesus.



God worked through a handful of people to write the epistles. Look up the following verses and match each epistle to its writer. One answer will be used twice.

C	Romans 1:1	A. John B. Jude C. Paul D. Peter
C	1 Timothy 1:1	
D	1 Peter 1:1	
B	Jude 1	
A	Revelation 1:1	

3-C LEARNING FROM THE WORD

God did not give us the Bible to scare or frighten us. When we take time to study and understand Scripture, we will see how powerful, holy, and loving God is. We will learn about God's work—and how we can do our part in His plan.



Read **Psalm 19:7-9** and write at least four words that describe God's laws and words.

- ⦿ **Answers will vary.** _____
- ⦿ _____
- ⦿ _____
- ⦿ _____

STUDENT MANUAL PAGES

Sample Copy
Work in Progress



Read the following passages and fill in the blanks.

◉ **Psalm 119:105**

God's Word is a ***lamp*** _____ to our feet and a ***light*** _____ to our path.

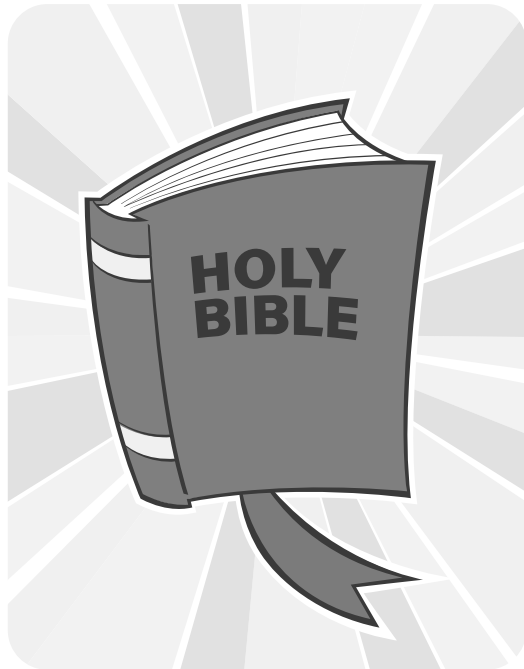
◉ **Psalm 119:169**

The writer asks for ***understanding*** _____ according to God's Word.



What would you like to learn about Scripture this year?

Answers will vary. _____



WE CAN LEARN FROM SCRIPTURE

