

CREEK
STUDENT
MINISTRY
COTTONWOOD CREEK CHURCH

The Good Book



A SERIES ABOUT READING THE BIBLE

The Good Book

By the end of this series, learners will demonstrate understanding of the importance of reading God's Word by participating in a daily Bible Reading Plan.

Table of Contents

Week 1	The Word	John 1:1, 14a; Colossians 1:15
Week 2	Context is Everything	Philippians 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:12-13
Week 3	All We Ever Need	2 Timothy 3:16-17
Week 4	Our Guide	Psalms 119:9-11, 105

The Good Book: The Word

At the end of this lesson the student will demonstrate an understanding of how the Bible is a tool to better understand God.

Week 1

Learning Activities

- Before service begins, preselect somewhat ambiguous “get to know you” questions and write them down on a piece of paper. Then select 2-4 students who know each other fairly well and have a leader ask the questions to each student. Record each student’s answers separately. Once service starts, have the students come to the front and ask each one the same questions, but about the other student (Newlywed Game Style). Each correct response earns 1 point. The team with the most points once all the questions are completed wins. Reward the winning team however you see fit for your group.

The purpose of this activity is to illustrate the fact that no matter how well you think you know someone, you can always learn more. The same is true with our walk with Christ. No matter how much we know about God, we can always be striving to know Him more.

- Have each student create a list of things that tend to distract them from God. Have them then reflect and attempt to create a time each day that they can study the Bible, even if this means having to sacrifice something else on their list.

The lesson here is that digging into God’s word is NECESSARY in order to know who God is. Therefore, this should be a priority for all of us.

Learning Readiness

- Say: *Oftentimes we think we know far more about things or people than we actually do. This is especially true with God. He is perfect and vast and we can never know all that there is to know about Him, but yet we allow ourselves to think we have nothing left to learn. The reason we come to church and study these scriptures is to learn more about who God is together. However, this should be done on our own as well.*
-
- Ask: *How do you think scripture helps us know more about God? (Pause for responses)*

Bible Study

At the end of this lesson the student will demonstrate an understanding of how the Bible is a tool to better understand God.

Read: John 1:1; 1:14a; & Colossians 1:15

Knowledge Questions:

1. We call scripture the Word of God. According to John 1:1&14, who is the word? (*Jesus*)
2. According to all of these scriptures, who is Jesus? (*God*)

Comprehension/Understanding Questions:

1. If Jesus is God and if He is the word, then what does that mean about scripture?
 - a. *(It is the heart and plan of God literally written out for us.)*
2. Explain the purpose of the Bible?
 - a. *(Glorify God. Reveal His plan of Redemption)*

Applications:

1. Why is getting to know God more deeply important for everyone and not just pastors?
2. Think about your daily schedule. When can you read or study God's Word? What will you do during your devo time? Pray, journal, draw, etc?

Synthesis Questions:

1. How can studying scripture prepare you for life away from your church friends?
2. Can you use the Bible when defending your faith to someone who doesn't believe in Jesus?
 - a. *(Yes, you can and should use the Bible. However, if the person doesn't believe in the Bible, it is helpful to give defenses outside of Scripture too.)*

Evaluation Questions:

Romans 1:18-20 says, *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse."*

1. If God reveals himself through creation, then why do we need the Bible?
 - a. *(God's General revelation of Himself through creation is sufficient for judgement. God's Special revelation through the Bible explains salvation)*
2. How could you explain why the Bible is so important to you to someone who is not a Christian?

Conclusion

- Scripture is so much more than simply words on a page. It is the living, breathing word of God. Just like an autobiography helps you better understand a regular person from their own perspective, scripture helps us better understand who God is from His perspective and His perspective is the only perfect one. Like we said earlier, scripture is literally the heart of God written out for us to see and learn from. I encourage you to become more diligent in your study of the Bible, so that you will continue to grow closer to your perfect

Heavenly Father. He is where you can find perfect peace, love, and acceptance. Let's pray.

Announcements

- Leaders, communicate any announcements for your group and the ministry.

The Good Book: Context Is Everything

At the end of this lesson the student will demonstrate an understanding of the importance context has on interpreting scripture.

Week 2

Learning Activities

- Find a fairly easy puzzle and remove only one piece from the box that doesn't give away what the picture on the puzzle is. Hide the box and the other pieces. Then have students give their best guess as to what the picture is based only on the one piece you removed. When all the guesses are done have everyone put the puzzle together as quickly as possible without using the box.

This illustrates the fact that until we have all the information, we don't see the whole picture correctly.

- Before service, use your phone to take an extreme closeup photo and a regular, clear photo of various items. Display, print, or pass around the phone showing the closeup pictures and have students guess what the picture is. Then show the regular picture of the object.

The purpose of this activity is to illustrate the fact that we need the proper perspective of things in order to know what they really are.

Learning Readiness

- Say: *There are several scriptures that we have taken out of context throughout the years and as a result, we have lost the proper meaning of them. If we continue to simply quote these scriptures and apply them incorrectly then we aren't actually learning the much deeper lessons they have for us and are misrepresenting the very words of God.*
- Ask: *What scriptures have you heard quoted out of context the most? (Pause for responses)*

Bible Study

At the end of this lesson the student will demonstrate an understanding of the importance context has on interpreting scripture.

Read: Philippians 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:12-13

Knowledge Questions:

1. What things does Paul ask for in 2 Timothy? (*Cloak, scrolls & parchments*)
2. Who strengthens us according to Philippians 4:13? (*Jesus*)

READ CONTEXT VERSES

Comprehension/Understanding Questions:

1. Does Philippians 4:13 mean that we can literally do anything?
 - a. *(No. Although God can certainly do anything He wants through us, this verse is referring to being content in every situation- Philippians 4:11-13. Rather than us conquering random obstacles, this verse is Paul telling us that he has been able to find peace in all circumstances because of his focus on God.)*
2. What do you think is the importance of the verses in 2 Timothy? *(These seem unimportant, but the context changes that. Through other scriptures, we know Paul and Timothy were extremely close and that Paul is writing 2 Timothy from a prison cell awaiting his execution. He is asking Timothy to come visit him because he wanted to see him one last time. That's why Tychicus was being sent to Ephesus, likely to "fill in" for Timothy while he came to Paul. He is asking for his coat because it will soon be winter and Paul will be needing it. This is the best part though...Paul is asking for the scrolls (scriptures) and parchments (blank pages for writing). Despite facing his death, Paul is still wanting to study God's word and continue the work God called him to do.)*

HERMENEUTICS LESSON

Applications:

1. If you ever read a verse that doesn't seem to make sense, what should you do?
 - a. (Read the context and check references)
2. Practice studying the context of Matthew 18:20. First, read only verse 20 and explain what you think it means. Then, read Matthew 18:15-20 and what is the context about?
 - a. **Out of Context:** This verse is usually quoted as an encouragement to one another when there is low attendance for a worship service or given as a benediction during a prayer meeting.
 - i. In fact, if someone really wants to stretch this verse, they may use it as justification for skipping church to "worship" with their family at home, while the football game is playing in the background.
 - b. **In Context:** This verse falls specifically within the context of church discipline and dealing with wayward believers.
 - i. It is meant to be an encouragement to church leaders during tough times of loving confrontation to say that God would be present with the two to three witnesses as they are intentional in correcting and restoring a fallen brother or sister.

JOHN 1:14 HISTORICAL LESSON

Synthesis Questions:

- Other than literary (the direct scriptures before and after), what kinds of contexts help us better understand passages?
 - *(Historical- time period of writing, Cultural- the author and audience's cultural heritage, Complete- the big picture of the Bible)*
- How do these contexts help shape our interpretation of scripture?

- If we don't understand context, what could happen to our beliefs about God?

Evaluation Questions:

- How can studying scripture in context contrast to the way you've studied the Bible before?
- How can you defend your faith with context when people point out perceived contradictions in different scriptures?

Conclusion

- Individual scriptures can offer us great encouragement and bring us peace during times of trouble, however we must make sure that we are understanding them completely. Often the way that we use a verse almost cheapens its actual meaning. We must be committed to only interpreting scripture within the proper context, so that we can understand the full depth of the words of God, and so we can better explain the Gospel to those who are lost.

Announcements

- Leaders, communicate any announcements for your group and the ministry.

The Good Book: All We Ever Need

At the end of this lesson the student will demonstrate an understanding of scripture's role in our lives.

Week 3

Learning Activities

- Get something to write with (pencil, pen, marker, etc.) and something to write on (paper, whiteboard, napkin, etc.) At the start of service, write the complete 2 Timothy 3:16 verse on whatever you have. Ask your students, "Who wrote these words just now?" (you). Next ask, "What did I write them with?" Followed by, "So, is it reasonable to say that the [pencil] wrote these words?" "Was it me or the [pencil]?" Finally, ask, "Who wrote the Bible?" Discuss all the answers as you go.

The purpose of this illustration is to understand that though a man physically wrote the books of the Bible, God is the true author.

- Before service, print out 2 Timothy 3:16 in five different translations. Give the print outs to five different students and have them each read it out loud. Then compare and contrast the different versions and the verse's actual application.

This activity should demonstrate the reality that though scripture may sound different in different translations, it still all accomplishes the same goal because ultimately it is still the Word of God.

Learning Readiness

- Say: Life can be very confusing and we can find ourselves lost in a sea of public opinion. The pressure to conform can be so great that we just collapse beneath it as to not completely isolate ourselves from those people we want to think highly of us. However, scripture should always be our guide before and while we feel this way. A strong grasp of the Bible and what it says can completely change your life if you let it. This is because scripture is literally the Word of God.
- Ask: Has there ever been a time in your life that you leaned on scripture during a difficult time you were having? (Pause for responses)

Bible Study

At the end of this lesson the student will demonstrate an understanding of scripture's role in our lives.

Read: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Knowledge Questions:

- Who inspired all scripture? (*God*)
- What is scripture good for according to this verse? (*Teaching, rebuking, correcting, & training*)

Comprehension/Understanding Questions:

- What does rebuking mean and how is it different from correcting?
 - *(Convict or call out. When scripture rebukes us it convicts us, when it corrects, it gives us the right answer.)*
- What does it mean in verse 17 when it says, “so that the man of God may be complete...”?
 - *(Scripture is what helps us in our sanctification. It brings us closer to God and changes our minds and hearts to be more like Him. It is accurate biblical understanding that better enhances biblical application to life's issues.)*

Applications:

- How would your life look different if you truly applied this verse to your life?
- If you genuinely believed that scripture could guide you in the right direction, would your decision making process change drastically?

Synthesis Questions:

- If your answer is yes, maybe this right now is an example of scripture’s ability to rebuke. Rather than let that fact discourage you, what should you do now?
 - *(Dig into scripture)*
- Read 2 Timothy 3:12-15. What does this tell you about the importance of staying in God’s Word?

Evaluation Questions:

- What if you or anyone you know starts to have doubts about your faith? What should be your answer to that?
 - *(Research and read scripture. Look at the verses you’re struggling with in their proper context and approach God prayerfully and humbly. Doubts are just your mind wanting answers and scripture is useful for teaching.)*
- Ultimately, why do we use scripture for all these things?
 - *(Because God Himself is in it and speaking through it.)*

Conclusion

- No matter what may happen in our life, no matter what issues we face, the Word of God is constant. It guides us through all of the world’s ups and downs and convicts us when we are in the wrong. As Psalm 119:105 says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Scripture is an amazing gift from God and as His children, we should be utilizing this gift and be constantly growing more and more in Him.

Announcements

- Leaders, communicate any announcements for your group and the ministry.

The Good Book: Our Guide

At the end of this lesson the student will demonstrate an understanding of the importance of scripture guiding us through all we do.

Week 4

Learning Activities

- If you have the space, set up a small obstacle course for two people around the room (nothing crazy, just a few pillows and/or other soft things). Have two students stand at the start of the course. Next, turn off the lights and see if the students can make their way through the obstacles. Once they've completed this, turn the lights back on to reset the course and bring the students back to start. Now give both students a flashlight and turn them on. Now turn off the lights again and have the students complete the obstacle course again.

This activity shows the importance of having something to light our way to navigate through life. Even though a lamp or flashlight may not show everything, they do show you where to go next until you are at the end.

- Open your service discussion by reviewing the week before. Then ask the students about a time that they had to live for any amount of time without electricity. Discuss the difficulties that came with that.

This simply gets the students thinking about the importance of light to our everyday lives. It's no different in our spiritual lives. God's word exists to be the light that guides us through various obstacles and tasks we may face.

Learning Readiness

- Say: *As we talked about in our last lesson, the word of God is useful for all kinds of things and ultimately guides us in all that we do by transforming our minds and hearts. If you remember, we closed with a scripture from Psalms that we are going to explore a little deeper tonight. By teaching us, convicting us, correcting us, and training us through scripture, God is guiding us as we live the lives He's given us here on Earth.*
- Ask: *When is a time that the Bible helped you make an important decision or answered a question you had? (Pause for responses)*

Bible Study

At the end of this lesson the student will demonstrate an understanding of the importance of scripture guiding us through all we do.

Read: Psalm 119:9-11; 105

Knowledge Questions:

- What is the answer to the question posed in verse 9? (*Keeping God's word.*)
- Where did the Psalmist say they treasured God's word? (*In their heart.*)

Comprehension/Understanding Questions:

- What does it mean to treasure God's word in your heart? *(These words of God are being valued by being placed somewhere they can be thought about and felt.)*
- What can we infer, from the end of verse 11, will happen if we treasure God's word in our hearts? *(We won't sin against God.)*

Applications:

- Does this mean that as long as we continuously read the Bible that we will be perfect? *(No. As humans we have all sinned [Romans 3:23]. Not one of us is righteous [Romans 3:10])*
- So what's the point in studying scripture then? *(Turn their attention to verse 105. God's word illuminates our path. It doesn't show us the overall big picture, but it does light our feet and guides us closer to Him.)*

Synthesis Questions:

- What would your life look like if you could only focus on the baby steps that lead you closer to God rather than focusing on the big things you can't control?
- How can you begin to let go of things that are distracting you from progressing in your relationship with God?

Evaluation Questions:

- What has stood out the most to you during this 4 week study of scripture?
- How will you continue to apply the lessons we've learned?

Conclusion

- Throughout this study we have looked at what scripture is, the importance of its context, the roles it plays in the life of Christians, and how useful it is in directing us through life. It is important to remember that it is the Holy Spirit who interprets scripture for us and we are not to become prideful as we gain more knowledge. On the contrary, we should become more humble and begin to thirst for more knowledge as scripture is revealed more and more to us. The purpose of the Bible is not to be a checklist, but is to be an instruction manual that shows us our need for Savior. It meets us where we are every time and lights our path as we learn and grow closer to our perfect, Heavenly Father.

Announcements

- Leaders, communicate any announcements for your group and the ministry.