



Books of the Bible – Lesson I

All Grades

Principle: The Bible is God's Word for us. His Word should be what shapes our view of Him and what informs every aspect of our lives.

Scripture Reference: 2 Timothy 3:16



PERSONAL PREPARATION: Before this weekend, consider the role God's Word plays in your life. Is the Bible what shapes your view of God and informs your every decision? Do you believe that the Bible is true, and is truly God's Word for us?

Some people don't believe that the Bible is true and accurate. Some say that even if it were true from the start, all the copies and versions we now have couldn't possibly be correct after all these years. But the Bible is the most tested written material of all time. To determine if ancient texts are accurate, historians have gathered up all the versions (even just bits and pieces) available and compared them to what we have today to see if they match.

After the Bible, the *Iliad* by Homer is the most examined ancient text. With 643 samples to compare, the *Iliad* is considered to be 95% accurate. The Bible, on the other hand, has 5600 samples to compare and is 99.5% accurate. It's clear that by academic standards, the Bible is accurate, but we don't have to stop there; we could also look at all the archeological proof of its historical truth, from evidence of the flood to the order of all the kings and leaders found outside the Bible.

For years, critics pointed to the fact that nothing had ever been found to confirm King David's existence, but in 1993 archeologists found proof of it outside the Bible. At an ancient mound called Tel Dan ("mound of Dan" – Dan is mentioned in the Bible as the northernmost city in Israel), words carved into a chunk of basalt were translated as "House of David" and "King of Israel," proving King David was more than just a legend. New evidence of the Bible's accuracy and authenticity is found time and time again.

So, how do we share with our campers how the Bible impacts our lives?

How do we share that with our students? Do they know that the Bible:

- Was inspired by God, yet is a collection of 66 books written by 40 plus men over a period of 2000 years.
- That the Bible is one story, God's story.
- That the Bible is completely true and reliable.
- That the Bible is personal. It is how God reveals Himself to each of us, how He has chosen to direct us individually.
- That the Bible, God's Word, should be the authority in a believer's life.

PLUG IN TIME - 5-10 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

Arrive early to check the supplies in the bin and review the lesson. Write today's principle on the whiteboard. Remember to greet all campers upon arrival; meet their parents; welcome and introduce all visitors. Create a welcoming cabin for all campers!

Books of the Bible Board Game

Over the course of the three-week *Books of the Bible* series we will learn more about God's Word and practice practical ways to increase our knowledge of the Bible. Start class each week by playing the Books of the Bible Board Game to help your campers learn the names of the books of the Bible. (Teachers – Use binder clips to clip the two sets of cards (Old Testament and New Testament) back together at the end of the game.)



BIG GROUP TIME - 35-40 minutes Lesson

As you line up, remind campers we are going to have fun as an entire Camp Grace group! We are going to live out GRACE by **Glorifying God** through worship, **Respecting All Leaders**, and **Accepting Responsibility** to listen with attentive ears, minds, and hearts – fully **Celebrating Christ** with passion! We should **Encourage Others** to do the same, by not distracting them from their worship of God.

The Bridge to Small Group

Today we will begin our *Books of the Bible* lesson series. We are going to learn about how God's Word should shape our lives.

Small Group Time - 25-30 minutes

Getting Started

If your cabin did well in Big Group, acknowledge it. If not, take a couple of minutes to talk about how they can do better next time.

Hand out Bibles to the campers – have campers pair up and share as needed. Spend a few minutes looking at a Bible and showing your students how it is laid out. Show your campers the Table of Contents located at the beginning of the Bible, the Old Testament in the front, and the New Testament in the back. We want them to become familiar with God's Word, to use it in class and to be able to use it practically on their own.

Today we are starting a three-week series called "Books of the Bible." Over those three weeks, including today, we'll be talking about the Bible – how it came to be, how it is laid out, why it's

important, and how we can use it to learn more about God and how to live our lives.

The Bible is God's Word to us. Everything you read in the Bible came from God, but what's amazing is that it was written by over 40 different men. These men all knew exactly what God wanted them to write – the Bible is GOD'S Word, written by man. It is a collection of 66 books that were all written over a period of 2000 years!

How old are you? (Allow time for answers and divide 2,000 by a child's age for the next part: 6 years old = 333; 7 years old = 285 8 years old = 250; 9 years old = 222, 10 years old = 200.) So, if you're ____ years old, you would have to live ____ of your lives to live as long as the time it took for the whole Bible to be written! That's a long, long time, isn't it?

Another important thing to know about the Bible is that it's divided into two big parts. Does anyone know what those two parts are? (Allow time for answers.) That's right – the Old and New Testaments!

The word "testament" means "covenant." Does anyone know what a "covenant" is? (Allow time for answers.) A "covenant" is an agreement or a promise. Have you ever made a promise to someone? (Allow time for answers.) Did you keep your promise? Do you think God's kept His? God always keeps His promises. A long, long time ago, God made an agreement with Abraham and the people of Israel. The term "Old Testament" refers to this promise. (Covenant may be a strange word and concept for the 1st and 2nd graders, so spend some time further explaining the idea of a promise or agreement with them, if need be. Many of the 3rd and 4th graders will have gone through at least a year or two of Camp Grace curriculum by now, and should be more familiar with the word and concept and how it related to God and His people. We will be talking more about what the covenant was in next week's lesson.)

In the second part of the Bible there is a new covenant or promise God had with people who believed in Christ. The "New Testament" refers to this *new* promise through Jesus Christ.

What are the two main parts of the Bible called? (The Old Testament and the New Testament.) Even though the Bible is separated into these two main parts, it is still just one big story. It's GOD'S story. It's His story of creation, salvation, redemption, and of His return. His Word is the same throughout the entire Bible and doesn't change.

God chose how to write His story down in our Bibles in three ways. One way was through people. Jeremiah 1:9 gives us an example of this when it says, "Then the Lord reached out and touched my mouth and said, 'Look, I have put my words in your mouth!'" Another way was Him doing the writing Himself, as we see in Deuteronomy 9:10 when Moses says, "The Lord gave me the two tablets on which God had written with his own finger all the words he had spoken to you from the heart of the fire when you were assembled at the mountain." The two tablets Moses mentioned are the Ten Commandments. That's right, the Ten Commandments we know today came directly from God's own hand! And the third way God chose to record His story is seen in the New Testament where we have Jesus (who is God) speaking the words directly to us.

God tells us in 2 Timothy 3:16 that, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches

us to do what is *right*. “Do you know what Timothy means when he says “all Scripture is inspired by God”? (Allow time for answers. Then explain to the campers that Timothy is saying that the Bible, or Scripture, all comes from God. Everything in the Bible is something God wanted us to know – but sometimes He used other people to tell us these things. He gave the words to people like Jeremiah and Isaiah and Timothy.) **This verse from Timothy is going to be our memory verse for this series, so let’s say it together a couple times right now. We’ll work on memorizing it even more later in the lesson.** Repeat the verse a couple times.

Game of Telephone



The purpose is to show the difference in a story being “inspired” by humans and being “inspired” by God.

Supplies:

Telephone passage cards (1 set per bin)

Tell the campers that you’re going to play a game of “telephone.” Have everyone sit in a circle. Put the cards on the table with the “Telephone Passage” sides up. Pull a card (**save the card in red ink for last**), and whisper the passage to the camper on your left. Have that camper then whisper what he or she heard to the camper on his or her left. Go around the entire circle in this manner. When the last camper hears the statement, have him or her say it out loud. Show campers the card with the original passage. In some cases, the statement will NOT be what was originally said (and that’s great!). However, there may be times it does make it all the way around the circle correctly, and that’s okay, too. Do this with each verse.

(Please clip the cards back together at the end of the activity.)

Tie It Together



We just played telephone with four different statements. How many of those were said correctly by the end of the round (by the time the phrase reached the person at the end of the circle)? (Allow time for answers.) Because we are human, and we are not perfect, we were not able to perfectly or correctly get the message to the last person. But when it came to sharing God’s story, the words were coming from God, through people like Jeremiah and Timothy. Because God is perfect and God inspired them and the story, we can know that what is in the Bible is correct, is perfect, is exactly what God wants us to have and to know, no matter who wrote it or how many people have translated the story since it was first written.

The last verse we read, the one about the potter and the clay, comes from Jeremiah 18. Let’s read a little more from that chapter – Jeremiah 18:1–6. (If the class reading level permits, have a camper volunteer to read the passage; if not, a teacher or student helper should read it.) “

Jeremiah 18:1–6

“The LORD gave another message to Jeremiah. He said, ² “Go down to the potter’s shop, and I will speak to you there.” ³ So I did as he told me and found the potter working at his wheel. ⁴ But the jar he was making did not turn out as he had hoped, so he crushed it into a lump of clay again and started

over.⁵ Then the LORD gave me this message:⁶ “O Israel, can I not do to you as this potter has done to his clay? As the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand.

When we read passages in the Bible, they don’t always say things like, “God told me…” or “The Lord gave another message…” as it does here, but verses like the one in 2 Timothy we read earlier tell us that “ALL scripture is inspired by God.” Everything we read in the Bible comes from God. (“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.”)

The Bible, God’s word to us, was given to us so that we could know who God is, what He is like, and to instruct us in every part of life. God even helps us do this. Jesus told us in John 14:26 that, “the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” How great is that? God hasn’t left us on our own to figure out what the Bible means. He comes to live in us and teach us what His Word says to us.

The Bible is True...And Personal



The purpose is to have an in depth discussion about how everything in the Bible is true and personal.

Supplies:

Verse reference cards on orange cardstock (1 set per bin)

Bibles

Ask for four volunteers to read Bible verses out loud. Hand each volunteer a verse reference card. (Teachers, you may need to help with the reading, but encourage campers to give it a try.) Give campers some time to look up each verse.

Who has the Proverbs 30:5 card? Can you read that verse for us? *“Every word of God proves true. He is a shield to all who come to him for protection.”* For us as believers, trusting the Bible to be true comes down to a matter of faith. Do we believe what God has said? Allow time for answers and discussion. Proverbs 30:5 reminds us that “every word of God is true.” That means that Jonah really was swallowed by a big fish, that the Red Sea really did part, that the walls of Jericho really fell, and that God spoke and the world was created.

It also means that sin separated us from God, that God had a plan, that Jesus was a real baby and really God at the same time and that He came to pay the price for your sin and mine.

Who has Ephesians 2:8? Will you please read it? *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.”* Does anyone know how we learn about God’s grace and come to have faith in Him? Allow time for some answers or blank stares. Well, the Bible tells us in Romans 10:17! Who can read that for us? *“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* Good job.

So far we’ve learned that the Bible tells us that every word of God is true and that God made us, but

our sin separates us from God who is holy and perfect. But the Bible also tells us that God gave us a gift – what is that gift? (Jesus, grace through Christ, communion with Him.) And we can learn about God, His grace, having faith, and more by doing what? By hearing or reading the word of God!

The Bible is personal. It is how God shows Himself to each of us, how He has chosen to direct us individually. It's not just for teachers and preachers to know and share, it is for each of us. Who will read Deuteronomy 11:18-20? *"So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."*

The Bible, God's word, should impact or have influence on our lives every moment of every day.

Joshua 1:8 says, "Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do." And Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." Both of these verses tell us how important God's Word is.

(Please clip the cards back together at the end of the activity.)

A Light for My Path



The purpose is to remind campers that God's Word should impact our everyday lives.

Supplies:

Canning jar with lid (1 per camper)
Battery operated candle (1 per camper)
Memory verse card (1 per camper)
Spool of curling ribbon or twine (1 per bin)
Hole punch

Remind campers that Psalm 119:105 says God's Word is "a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." Ask them to share what that means to them. **Do anyone of you remember the memory verse we've read a couple times from 2 Timothy? It says, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right."** This is going to be our memory verse over the next few weeks, so let's say it together a few times. Spend a couple of minutes teaching your campers how to memorize the verse to a beat. It would even be fun for your cabin to come up with a beat to memorize it together.

Great job! We have heard many times today that the Bible was given to us by God to teach us more about Him and it teaches us how we should live our lives. God's Word, the Bible, is like a lantern or lamp that guides us down the path of life. Today, we're going to make a lantern that has the 2 Timothy passage on it so when you're at home working on memorizing the verse, you'll be reminded of the importance of reading and memorizing scripture because God's Word is a light to guide our lives.

Give each camper a jar and a memory verse card. Have them punch a hole in the top corner of the card and then string a piece of curling ribbon through the card. Help campers tie the card and ribbon around the top of the jar. Give each camper a battery operated candle and show them how to turn it on with the switch on the bottom. Then have them put the candle in the bottom of the jar and replace the lid to their memory verse lamp!

If time allows, turn off the lights and have campers march around the room, repeating the memory verse as the lamps light their path. Remind them to work on memorizing the verse throughout the week!

(You may want to suggest that campers turn off their candles before leaving, to preserve the battery.)



Prayer Time

Spend a few minutes in prayer to finish small group time.



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