



Writer: Carolyn Crowell
Design: Kaeli Hern
Editor: Carrie Busch

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Lesson 1



Why The Bible?



Bible Connection: Matthew 7:24-27; Malachi 3:6; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 119:160; Psalm 33:4 (NLT); 1 Peter 2:2



Bottom Line:

The Bible is God's truth that will never change.



What's That to Me? Preteens will discover that it's not the changing and confusing world that determines the way they should go, but God's true Word, the Bible. God's Word is like a blueprint for our lives.

SUPPLIES

- OPENING ACTIVITY: LINE 'EM UP CHARADES

Slips of paper prepared with scenarios written on them for preteens to act out. You'll need one identical slip of paper for every five to six preteens in your group. You'll need a different scenario for each round you plan to play. Example scenarios could be: "ordering fries at the drive-thru," "searching for a missing sock," or "telling on a brother or sister for hitting you."

- SMALL GROUPS: EAT GOD'S WORDS

Bible

- NOTES

All Scripture references are taken from the NLT unless otherwise indicated.

- LESSON OVERVIEW

In this week's lesson, preteens will learn about how the Bible, God's true Word, is the foundation for our lives. They'll discover ways to know how to avoid the world's wrong messages and stay on the path of truth through the Bible. They'll also explore ways to make Bible-reading a daily practice.

OPENING GAME

LINE 'EM UP CHARADES

SUPPLIES:

- Slips of paper prepared with scenarios written on them for preteens to act out. You'll need one identical slip of paper for every five to six preteens in your group. You'll need a different scenario for each round you plan to play. Example scenarios could be: "ordering fries at the drive-thru," "searching for a missing sock," or "telling on a brother or sister for hitting you."

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME:

Say,

We're beginning a brand-new series called Big-Time Truth to kick-off a brand-new school year. One thing we often enjoy about school is the return to what we know. Summer is exciting and fun, but there's something comforting about returning to a familiar routine. We know what to expect; the school schedule tells us what'll happen each day. It's something solid we can count on for the whole next year. We can try new and exciting things, knowing that the very next day we return to the routine we recognize.

Our faith in God is a lot like that. There are so many new and exciting things we can experience as we walk with Him. Sometimes, however, things can be unfamiliar. The world is constantly changing. What do we do when that happens? How do we know what to believe? Where do we find our security when life isn't familiar and things are hard? Who will help us?

Wouldn't it be nice to have some things in your backpack this school year that you know you can count on? Things that will never change even when friendships change, or when your grades change, or when your interests and activities change?

In this series, we're going to discover truth that you can take with you into the school year that will not change. This truth from God is something solid, secure, and unshakeable. It will keep you steady and stable in a constantly changing world. These truths are called "Foundations." Foundations are something everything else gets built on top of.

When a person builds a house, he or she has to start with a really great foundation, because that foundation holds up the rest of the house for a very long time.

In Matthew 7:24-27, we are encouraged to build our faith on a secure foundation:

"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."

(Read the passage aloud.)

Say: Jesus tells us a secure foundation, one that is rock-solid, is what He wants us to build on. He is the one that gives us this secure foundation. The Bible says God never changes. He is rock solid and secure. He is faithful and true. The Bible also says His truth will endure throughout all generations (Psalm 100:5).

Read Malachi 3:6:

"I am the Lord and I do not change."

Say: God's truth is unshakeable. He is faithful, which means He is true and devoted to us. He will keep us rock solid even when life gets crazy, when storms come, and when everything else in our world changes.

Let's have a little fun with this whole concept of truth with a game where the truth gets messed up, and it becomes hard to understand what the real message is.

What to Do: Have preteens form groups of five or six. Have each group line up so each preteen is facing the next player's back. Have kids play a variation of the Telephone game using charades instead of whispers. Give one copy of each scenario you prepared beforehand to the last person in each group. (In each round, all groups get the same scenario.) The preteen reads the scenario, taps the shoulder of the next person in line to turn around, and then acts out the scenario to that person without revealing the paper or speaking. Once the next player feels he or she understands, that player taps the next person in line to turn around. Then the player acts what he or she understood from the original player. This process continues until it's the final player's turn. The final player must guess what the most recent player acted out. Let teams compare the guess to the original scenario on the paper.

Say: This activity showed us how important truth is. We need to be able to locate the source of all truth so that when we hear many different messages, we can go to the original one and know what is really true. Today, we are going to look at why the Bible is such an important part of our foundation in life.

TEACH: TRUTH FOR LIFE

Say: As we explore together, consider why the Bible is a good foundation for you during this school year.

Ask:

- Do you have a Bible? If so, where do you keep it? Describe it.
- What parts of the Bible have you read? What parts do you enjoy?

(Have preteens turn to someone near them and discuss the questions.)

Say: The Bible is not just another book, it was given to man from God to reveal Jesus Christ as our Savior. It is God's big story from beginning to end, and we are a part of that story. We believe that every part of the Bible is completely true and its truth never changes. God tells us in the Bible why it's so important and what its purpose is.

Let's look at some scriptures that may help us understand the significance of the Bible.

I'd like your help by reading the verses out loud and answering the questions underneath.

First, let's take a look at 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

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. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

Ask:

- Where does all Scripture come from? *(From God.)*
- What is Scripture good for? *(Teaching us what is true, rebuking, correcting, training, and equipping.)*

Say: What a great verse! Did you notice that it said the Bible is useful for "teaching us what is true"? God knew long ago that we would live in a world that gives us lots of competing messages and we would need something to refer to. The Bible is like the slip of paper in our game that we could look at to find out exactly what the actors were trying to communicate.

Let's have two volunteers come up for a moment. (Place one volunteer on each side of your stage/teaching area.) One volunteer is going to come up with a message that we might hear often in our world. The other volunteer will counter that message with truth we know from the Bible. Don't worry, volunteers, we will all give you a hand if you get stuck.

(Let preteens work through three or four different messages and help them out when needed. An example could be: A message the world gives us is "look out for yourself.")

But the truth we know from the Bible is "consider the interests of others. Philippians 2:4."

(Allow volunteers to grapple with this, and invite preteens in the audience to jump in with ideas.)

Say: Great job, volunteers! Raise your hand if you have heard some of those messages from the world before. (Allow responses.) The Bible tells us God's truth so we don't follow the wrong path. God also tells us in the Bible that the Bible is true. Let's look at the next verse.

Read Psalm 119:160:

*The very essence of your words is truth;
all your just regulations will stand forever.*

Ask:

- How can you respond to someone who says the Bible isn't true? (*All of God's words are true, so the Bible is also true because it is the Word of God.*)
- Does God ever need to come up with new rules or laws? (*No, His laws are eternal.*)

Say: King David says here that the very essence of God's Word is truth. That means right down to the smallest of words, the smallest of books, the Bible is entirely God's truth. We can trust this book given to us from God because there isn't anything untrue in it.

Psalm 33:4 says:

*For the word of the LORD holds true,
and we can trust everything he does.*

Say: What an amazing promise! We can trust God and His Word. What a great foundation to stand on. We don't have to worry about God deciding He didn't say it right and He needs to write it again. His Word has been the truth from the beginning. It can be trusted, and it will stay truth to the end of time. God will not wake up some morning and decide we "should look out for number one after all" or "we need to care more about how we look on the outside than what our heart is like" or that "lying and stealing isn't that bad after all." God tells us it won't ever happen. His Word will always be true. We can stand confident in this Big-Time Truth. We can be unshakeable knowing that whatever happens this school year, whatever people say, that we have the final truth on the subject that we can always go back to.

Ask:

- Have any of you ever experienced the Bible making a big impact in your life?
- Are there two or three of you who would like to come up and share what happened?

(Allow for responses.)

Say: Thank you for sharing. We have seen clearly today why the Bible is so important. But If the Bible is so important, if it's full of truth, and if it helps us to be unshakeable—then why is it so hard to read?

Satan wants to knock us down. He wants to make sure we don't have a sure foundation to stand on so that when tough times come, we stumble and fall. He wants us to be confused and uncertain about what to believe. That means we need God's help when we read the Bible and begin using it as a part of our foundation. Each time we read, we need to ask God to help us understand the truth in what we are reading.

There are also other things that make it hard to read that we don't always consider. Maybe we try to read too much right away, or we read from a translation that is difficult, or we start in a place that is hard to understand. That is something a leader or parent can help you with so God's Big-Time Truth can become a big-time part of your life.

The Bottom Line: The Bottom Line for today is that the Bible is God's truth that will never change.

Say: Today in small groups, you will talk about how you can make the Bible, God's truthful words, an important part of your foundation this coming school year.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Supplies:

- Bible

Say: The Bible is an important part of our foundation. God's Word is the big-time truth that keeps us stable in a world that constantly changes. Let's look up 1 Peter 2:2 and read it together.

Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment.

Another translation says for us to “desire the pure milk of the word” (NKJV). The Bible is often referred to as food or nourishment.

Ask:

- Have you ever thought of the Bible as food before?

Say: God's Word is nourishment for us. Now, think about the food you eat everyday.

Ask:

- Why is it important to eat the right food and eat regularly?

Say: If we don't eat the right food or if we don't eat at all, we become malnourished. We don't have the nutrients and energy we need to stay strong.

The Bible is our source of spiritual nourishment. We need to “eat” regularly and have it as a daily part of our lives in order to stay strong and stable.

Ask:

- What are some ways we can make the Bible a daily part of our lives?
- How can we make sure we receive nourishment from what we read in the Bible?

(Contribute your ideas to help guide the discussion. Give preteens any other tips that are helpful in your church family when it comes to making the Bible a priority (apps, reading plans, etc.). Close in prayer.)