



God's Word Is Complete

5

Key Themes

- The New Testament is God's Word.
- God's written Word is complete.

Key Passages

- John 14:25–26, 21:24–25; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18; Revelation 22:18–19

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe two ways we know the New Testament is true.
- Recognize that the Bible—God's Word—is complete.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

page 5

Students will place bookmarks at John 14, John 21, and Revelation 22.
Students will practice placing all the books of the Bible in order.



Studying God's Word

page 5

We know the New Testament is God's true Word. We realize that the Bible—both Old and New Testaments—is the complete written Word of God.



Activity 1: God's True Word

page 8

Students will review Scriptures from the lesson and the memory verse to determine that the Bible is the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, written by eyewitnesses.



Activity 2: Memory Verse Review Game

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Teams will answer questions about details of the memory verse.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Cut strips of paper for each student to mark John 14, John 21, and Revelation 22 in their Bibles.
- If you did not do this for previous lessons, make a set of the books of the Bible cards for every 3-5 students. A template for all the books of the Bible is on the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 3.

- Strips of paper for each student
- Books of the Bible cards—one set for every 3–5 students



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one Board Work outline from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use in preparing for the lesson.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Board Work outline



GOD'S TRUE WORD

- Print one God's True Word worksheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your own use.

- God's True Word worksheet for each student
- God's True Word answer key
- Pencils



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW GAME

- Print Game Point cards from the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 3, if you did not keep them or did not use them previously.

- Game Point cards
- Cup or container



Memory Verse

Psalms 19:7–9 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Study these background passages as you begin to prepare for this lesson: John 14:25–26; 21:24–25; Revelation 22:18–19.

The Old Testament closed with a warning of judgment (Malachi 2:2) and the promise of a Messiah (Malachi 4:2). And then waiting. Four hundred years of silence from God. Silence until the fulfillment of the greatest event in history—the coming of the Messiah.

The New Testament—reflecting the fulfillment of the promised Messiah through Jesus Christ—was written primarily by the apostles. We find that Jesus empowered the apostles through the Holy Spirit to recall, write, and interpret the life, words, and deeds of Jesus. Jesus said in John 14:26, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” Jesus again promised His apostles a special revelation of truth through the Holy Spirit in John 16:13: “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”

The Apostle John verifies himself as an eyewitness to the events he wrote about: “This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true” (John 21:24). And God officially warns against tampering with Scripture—admonishing that no words be added to or taken from this sacred book (Revelation 22:18–19). We can be confident that the writings of those empowered by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are inspired, inerrant, and infallible.

As the New Testament letters began to be gathered and read throughout the church, we find evidence that they were already being included and described as “Scripture,” including them as part of the established Old Testament canon. The Apostle Peter makes such a claim about Paul’s writings in 2 Peter 3:15–16 when he puts Paul’s epistles in the same category as the “rest of the Scriptures.”

We can rest assured that the New Testament canon has now completed the Word of God. We are reminded of this truth through biblical, historical, and archaeological findings. Not only that, we know it is God’s Word because as we read it we hear God’s voice throughout every book. It is the Word of our Creator God—revealing the divine power that allows us everything needed to live a life of godliness through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord (2 Peter 1:3).

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

In His divine providence, God, not man, has determined through the Holy Spirit the books that make up the Bible. The early church, shortly after Christ’s death and Resurrection, had no discussion about what made a book equal to the Old Testament Scriptures. It was universally accepted that if a letter came from Peter or Paul, it was deemed Scripture.

However, it wasn’t long before people began to add their own letters, thoughts, ideas, and gospels—desiring to fill in the gaps with what they believed should be included. Because of this, during the first 200 years of church history, certain questions were adopted to serve as the litmus test for the books added to the Bible. All of the books of the New Testament regarded as Scripture fulfill these requirements.

1. Was the book or letter written by an apostle or under the direction of an apostle?
2. Did the writing resound with the truth of God? Did it speak with the voice of authority as the Word of God and not the words of men?
3. Were these writings used from the earliest of times? Attempts to include other writings from much later dates have been made. They have been rejected because the material is too new to have been apostolic.
4. Did most churches accept these writings as the New Testament canon? Before the middle of the first century, 20 of the 27 books of the New Testament were universally accepted. And only a few churches questioned the other books.
5. Did the writings conform to what the church taught? Because there was general agreement as to what the Christian message actually was, this question ruled out false teachings attempting to taint the truth.

Still today we see how people attack the authenticity and reliability of the Scriptures. We must be on our guard against such attacks—and confidently turn to the Word of God to weigh the truth of any claim.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Bible is increasingly regarded as not relevant due to the apathy of our culture toward things of God and the authority of His Word. Consequently, we hear very little about the history of the Bible. As we take a quick look at the books of the New Testament below,

keep in mind that these books stood the litmus test based on the questions mentioned above as they were included in the canon of the New Testament.

The Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John provide accounts of Jesus’s life, death, and Resurrection during his three-year ministry. Matthew, Mark, and Luke were written between AD 55–68; John was probably written in the 90s.

The book of Acts—an account of the history of the early church and the spread of Christianity after Christ’s Resurrection. Acts was written by Luke in the mid-60s.

The Pauline epistles—Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon are 13 pastoral letters written by Paul as he endeavored to grow Christ’s church in truth and sound doctrine. These letters were written between AD 51 and 65.

The General epistles—Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, and Jude are letters written to believers by five different people. They include doctrinal and practical advice and were sent out to churches. These letters were written from the late-40s (James’s letter) to the 90s (John’s letters).

Most of the New Testament books were added to the Old Testament Scriptures by the early church and were considered the complete inspired canon around 150 AD—this is called the Muratorian canon. How-

ever, due to false teachers and attempts to change this compilation, other Councils—general meetings of the Christian church—met to eliminate the confusion and bring unity to the church. The Council of Carthage in 397 finally affirmed publicly that the 66 books we have today were the divinely inspired Word of God—not to be added to or taken from (Proverbs 30:5–6).

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



BEFORE THE THRONE

Father, thank you for giving us your complete and accurate Word to study. Please help me to cherish it, appreciate it, and continue to grow in my commitment to it. Help me recognize any effort I may have made to add to your Word and give me discernment to evaluate the many false teachings today for what they are—attacks on your truth as revealed in your Word. Dear Lord, I pray you will move in the hearts of the children I will see this week to come to love your Word, look to it alone for guidance, and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ our only Savior through it.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- Have them place a bookmark in their Bibles at John 14, 21, and Revelation 22.
- Provide envelopes containing cards with the names of the books of the Bible for groups of three to five students. Students are to place the books in the proper order. They can use the Books of the Bible poster or their own Bibles to confirm the right order. If time allows, have them do it a second time without looking at the poster or their Bibles.



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



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Studying God's Word

Take a look at the Seven C's Timeline.

- ? Who was the last prophet of God in the Old Testament? You may want to refer to your Bibles or the Books of the Bible poster here. *Malachi.*

God gave His final warning through Malachi and then sent no more prophets. There were 400 years of silence from God. No more warnings or messages. *Point out the 400 years of silence on the Seven C's Timeline.*

God broke the silence when He sent His Son to earth right around 6 BC. Think how powerful that would be for God's people! They had not heard a new word from Him for hundreds of years. And then He came to earth as a man who walked among them, teaching them in person!

- ? Who was it—this special Son of God? *Jesus.*

That's right. When God came to earth as a man, His name was Jesus. And the New Testament is a written history about Jesus, His life, and the work of His apostles as they preached about Him and grew the church.

But how do we know the New Testament account about Jesus Christ is really true? How can we be sure this is what really happened? How do we know this is all that God wants us to know? Is the Bible as we know it complete? Wow! That's a lot of questions. Let's find out!

READ THE WORD

We are going to read from the book of John—in the New Testament. John 14:25–26. *Choose one or more students to read this passage.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

OK. We are going to do some exploring today. Keep your Bibles open as I ask you a couple of questions.

Observe the Text

? First of all, who wrote this book? There is a big hint in the name! *John.*

? Who was John? *He was one of Jesus's apostles.*

That's right. He was one of Jesus's apostles—and he was also one of Jesus's very closest friends. I think that is important to remember. This book was written by one of Jesus's best friends.

? Do you think John knew what he was talking about when he spoke about Jesus? *Yes.*

I do too! Now, who is this verse about? I'm going to write some words from the verse on the board, and I want you to tell me who these words refer to. It's not hard but you have to pay attention. Look in your Bibles to find the answers. Ready?

? In verse 25, who is "I"? *Jesus. Write on the board, "I—Jesus."*

That's right. Jesus was talking. This was at the last supper, right before Jesus died. All of his disciples were there—and Jesus talking to all of them. He is talking to His friends after dinner.

? In verse 26, who is the "Helper"? *The Holy Spirit. Write, "Helper—The Holy Spirit."*

? And who is the Father? *God. Write, "Father—God."*

? What was the Holy Spirit going to do for the disciples? It is in verse 26. *Teach the disciples all things and help them remember everything Jesus had told them.*

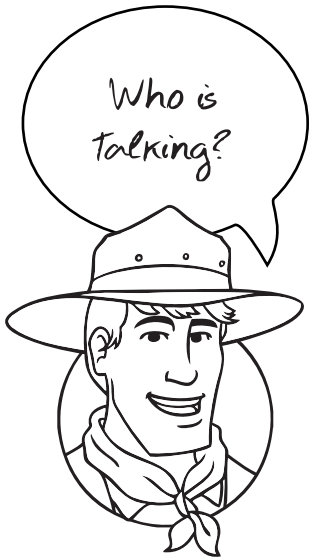
Discover the Truth

? Why did Jesus give the Helper—the Holy Spirit—for the disciples? *He would teach them and help them remember everything Jesus had done.*

? So, who inspired all the New Testament writers—including John—to write the Bible? *The Holy Spirit.*

? Right! So let's see, we have Jesus telling His friends that He is going to send the Holy Spirit so they remember everything that happened with Jesus. Do you think what the disciples and Jesus's friends wrote would be the truth? *Yes!*

? Why? *Because the Holy Spirit was helping them to remember exactly what to write.*



► Print the Lesson Board Work outline from the Resource DVD-ROM for easier planning.

God gave this kind of help to all the Bible authors—from both the Old and New Testaments—because He knew that they would need it in order to record God’s Word accurately. *Write on the board, “The Holy Spirit inspired the writers.”*

Turn in your Bibles to Titus 1:2. Titus is a small book written by the Apostle Paul to a man named Titus. You can look up here at the Books of the Bible poster or go to your table of contents to find it. *When everyone finds it, ask someone to read it.*

Titus 1:2

? What does this verse say about God? *He cannot lie.*

Right. And I’m going to read Hebrews 6:18. Listen and tell me what this verse says about God. *Read Hebrews 6:18 emphasizing the words, “it is impossible for God to lie.”*

Hebrews 6:18

? According to these passages, why can we believe God? *Because He cannot lie. Write on the board, “God cannot lie!”*

? So if we know that God cannot lie, and that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help the writers of the Bible to remember and know what to write, what do we know about the Bible? *It is true. It is inspired by God. God’s Word makes that very clear.*



READ THE WORD

? Let’s go back to John chapter 21. Who will read verses 24 and 25 for us? *Call on someone to read these verses.*

John 21:24–25

EXAMINE THE WORD

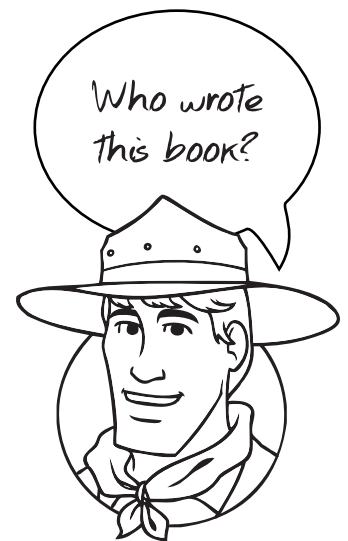
Let’s observe these verses.

Observe the Text

? Who wrote this book? *John.*

? Right. What is this verse telling us about John? *John is assuring the readers that he was a disciple, he is writing these things about Jesus, and everything that he is saying is true. Write on the board, “The Bible was written by eyewitnesses.”*

? According to verse 25, does the Bible contain accounts of every single thing that Jesus did here on earth? *No—the world itself couldn’t contain the number of books it would take to record everything Jesus did.*



Discover the Truth

John was sure to tell us that he was an eyewitness to all that he wrote about Jesus. Remember? He was one of Jesus’s very best friends. We have heard today three reasons why we can be sure the Bible is true.

? Can anyone tell me one? *Jesus gave the Holy Spirit to help the disciples remember everything about Him and write it down. Refer to the statements on the board.*

? Another one? *God cannot lie—so it must be true!*

? And the third? *There were people such as John writing the Bible. They were eyewitnesses. They knew Jesus. They traveled with him and learned from him.*



READ THE WORD

So, we know God's Word is true—that's for sure! But how do we know that the Bible is all of God's Word? How do we know there isn't more He wants someone to write?

Revelation 22:18–19

Let's find out! Turn to Revelation 22:18–19. I'm going to read this for you. Listen very carefully. I'll be asking more questions!

EXAMINE THE WORD

Ready for your questions?

Observe the Text

- ? **Who is this written to?** *To everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If the children don't get the answer, re-read the passage.*
- ? **What are we warned about?** *To not add to or take away from the words of this book.*
- ? **What will happen to anyone who adds words to this book?** *They will experience plagues written in the Scripture.*
- ? **What will happen to anyone who takes out parts of the book?** *God will take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in the book.*

Discover the Truth

God is very serious about His Word. This verse tells us just how serious He is. If anyone tries to add to His Word or take anything away, God will judge them! The Bible is the complete Word of God. He will always preserve it. And no one can add to it or take anything away from it. If they try, they will face God and His judgment.



God's True Word

MATERIALS

- God's True Word worksheet for each student
- God's True Word answer key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Distribute the God's True Word worksheets and pencils to each student. Students will fill in the blanks after searching the Scriptures listed on the worksheet.

Depending on the time you have left, you can give the students about ten minutes to work on this sheet—perhaps in pairs, or do it together as a whole class.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Very good. Take these sheets home with you and share them with your family. God's Word, both the Old and New Testaments, is true. We know this because God's Word clearly tells us that it is His Word—and God cannot lie! Also it is written by eyewitnesses—like the Apostle John—who learned from Jesus. And Jesus promised that He would give the Holy Spirit to help the writers know exactly what God wanted them to write.





Memory Verse Review Game

MATERIALS

- Game Point cards

INSTRUCTIONS

Play review game as follows: divide group into two teams. Have them work together to come up with an answer as you ask review questions. If they are correct, they draw a game piece from the container to show how many points they've earned and then put the game piece back in the container. The team with the highest score wins! You might want to hide the Memory Verse poster during this game.

We're going to play a game now to review some of the things we have learned about the memory verse we are studying together.

- ? In what book of the Bible do we find our memory verse? *Psalms.*
- ? What chapter of Psalms contains our memory verse? *It is found in chapter 19.*
- ? From our memory verse, name two of the five synonyms for "God's Word." *The words are: law, testimony, statutes, commandment, and judgments.*
- ? According to our verse, what does the commandment of the Lord do? *It enlightens the eyes.*

- ? What two words does the Psalm writer use to describe the judgments of the Lord? *They are true and righteous.*
- ? Name two more of the synonyms for God's Word. *The words are: law, testimony, statutes, commandment, and judgments.*
- ? What does the testimony of the Lord do? *It makes the simple wise.*
- ? How does the Psalm writer describe the statutes of the Lord? *His statutes are right.*
- ? Our passage talks about the "fear of the Lord." What does that mean? *It means respect for God which means respecting His Word, too.*
- ? How long is God to be respected? *He is to be respected or "feared" forever.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Great work! Just think about all the truths you have learned about the value of God's Word. I hope this helps you come to appreciate how special this book is. We can be confident that learning what God reveals to us in the Scripture must be of great value.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God was very careful to guide men to write the message He wanted them to write. God cannot lie, He used eyewitnesses, and He sent His Holy Spirit to help them remember.

And God told John to warn us in Revelation that no one can change God's Word. If we try to add to it or take things away, we will face God's judgment. God's Word is complete. *While speaking, show the Lesson Theme poster.*

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

God's Word is true. It is the foundation for all of our lives. There are a lot of people who want to change God's Word. They don't say that exactly, but they don't believe parts of it. If people don't want to believe even a part of God's Word, then they are really saying they want to change His Word.

? Should we ever try to change God's Word to say what we want it to say? *No.*

God's Word is fixed forever. You can be sure of that. No one can add anything to His Word or take anything from it.

You will hear people say that they don't believe certain parts—like creation, or Moses, or Jesus's Resurrection. But you can tell them, "It is all true—every word of it. We can't change any of it."

And we saw that today in our lesson. God's Word confirms to us that it is true!



► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 19:7–9

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

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

- Thank God for inspiring and protecting His Word for us.
- Praise God because He is omniscient and holds our future.
- Pray that God will give us courage to defend His Word and proclaim that it is true.