



5

God's Word Is Complete

Key Themes

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

Key Passages

- John 14:25–26, 21:24–25; 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

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Students will practice placing all the books of the New Testament in order.



Studying God's Word

page 5

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



Activity 1: True or Lie?

page 8

Students will learn that truth does not change, that something is true whether anyone believes it or not.



Activity 2: Memory Verse Review Song

page 10

Students will review the memory verse by singing the Word of God song to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down."

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- If you did not do this previously, print and cut out the Books of the New Testament cards for every 3–5 students from the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 2. Store in envelopes or other container.

- Books of the New Testament cards—one set for every 3–5 students



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Cut two apples (or oranges) into 8 or more wedges. Put one of the apples back together and put a rubber band around it, holding it tight.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Apple or orange pieces



TRUE OR LIE?

- Print and cut out one True card and one Lie card for each student.
- Print one copy of the True or Lie statement sheet for use in class.

- One True and one Lie card for each student
- True or Lie statement sheet



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW SONG

- Print one Word of God song sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 2, for each student.

- Word of God song sheet for each student



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.

► **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—and as children of God we never tire of it. 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 Bible regarded as Scripture fulfill these requirements.

- Was the book or letter written by an apostle or under the direction of an apostle?
- 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?
- 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.
- 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.
- 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. However, 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 information 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 . . .

- Provide envelopes containing Books of the New Testament cards for groups of 3–5 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.

Read the names of the books aloud together.

This activity will be repeated throughout the quarter.



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 Books of the Bible poster.

- ? What is the name of the last book of the Old Testament? *Malachi.*

God gave His final warning through the prophet Malachi. Then 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.*

Four hundred years was a long time for God to be quiet, wasn't it? Could you be quiet for 400 years? Of course not!

But God was waiting for a very special event before speaking to people again.

- ? Can anyone guess what that very special event might be? *Allow discussion.*

It was the coming of Jesus to earth! God's people 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!

- ? What was the name of the Person who was God and came to live on the earth? *Jesus.*

The New Testament is a 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 could the people who wrote it get everything right? And how could they remember everything that happened?

When we write about things that happen to us, sometimes we forget things. Have you ever forgotten something you were saying right in the middle of it? Could that have happened to the people who wrote the New Testament? Let's find out!

READ THE WORD

John 14:25–26

We are going to read from the book of John—in the New Testament. John 14:25–26. Turn there in your Bibles and I'll read. *Read verses.*

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 disciples.*

That's right. He was one of Jesus's disciples—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 about Jesus and Jesus's life? *Yes.*

? Why would we think the things John wrote are true? *He spent time with him! He was one of Jesus's best friends.*

But what if John forgot something? Or remembered something wrong? Look what verse 25 says. It says someone would help John and the other apostles remember what Jesus said when it was time to write it down.

? Who was God going to send? *Reread verse 25 if the children can't find the answer. The Holy Spirit.*

? Right! And what was the Holy Spirit going to do according to this verse? *Teach them and bring the things Jesus said to their remembrance.*

? Do you know what that means? *Allow discussion.*

The Holy Spirit was going to make sure that everything the apostles wrote about was completely right! He would not let them make any mistakes. And if they began to forget how some things happened, the Holy Spirit would make sure they remembered correctly!

Discover the Truth

? Why did Jesus give the Helper—the Holy Spirit—for the disciples? What are the two things he was going to do for them? *He would teach them and help them remember everything Jesus had done.*



- ? Right! So let's see, 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.*

God gave this kind of help to all the men who wrote books of the Bible—from both the Old and New Testaments. He knew that they would need help in order to write God's Word with no mistakes.

The Bible is completely true because the Holy Spirit helped men to write it!



READ THE WORD

Let's go forward a few chapters in John to chapter 21. We are going to read verses 24 and 25. *Allow children to find the verses. Assign some children to read or read the verses yourself.*

John 21:24-25

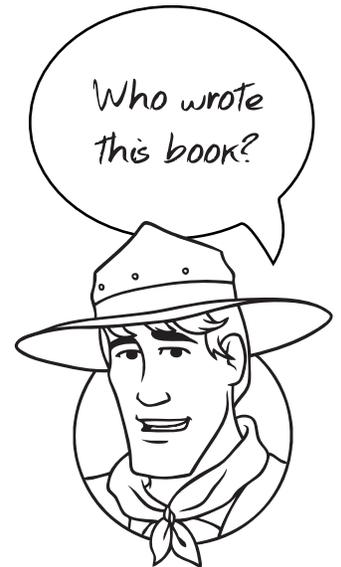
EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's observe these verses and see what God is telling us.

Observe the Text

- ? Now, who remembers who wrote this book? *John.*
- ? Right. And did John know Jesus? *Yes. He was one of his best friends.*
- ? Does the Bible contain accounts of every single thing that Jesus did here on earth? *Read John 21:25. No.*

John says Jesus did so many things while He lived on the earth that if every single thing He did was written in a book, maybe even the whole world couldn't contain the books. That is a lot of books!



Discover the Truth

John was sure to tell us that he saw the things that he wrote about Jesus with his own eyes.

- ? Do you know what we call someone who sees something with his own eyes? *Allow children to answer.*

We call that person an eyewitness. It is someone who sees something happen and then tells about it. John was an eyewitness to a lot of the things Jesus did on earth and he wrote about what he saw.

You are an eyewitness to what we are doing in this class today. You are here and you see everything that is happening.

Well, John was one of Jesus's very best friends. He was there, saw what happened, and wrote about what he saw. And when he wrote, the Holy Spirit helped make sure he got all the details right.

Isn't that great? We can know when we read the Bible that it is true! The Holy Spirit made sure everything was written down completely right.

We know the Bible is true and have heard today two reasons why we can be sure the Bible is true.

- ? First, John was there when most of these things happened. What did we call him? *An eyewitness. Point to eye.*
- ? Second, who helped make sure everything was written down correctly? *The Holy Spirit.*
- ? And who sent the Holy Spirit and promised that He would help them remember exactly what to write? *Jesus.*



True or Lie?

This activity is important for today's students as the "truth is relative" philosophy is taking hold on this generation. This shows up when we hear words like "This is true for you," or "That's not true because I don't believe it." We are being told that believing something is what makes it true for us. We counter this by making sure our children understand that something is either true or a lie, no matter who believes it and who disbelieves it. The Bible is true, whether anyone believes it or not. This activity will help your students discern that some things are always true and others are always a lie.

MATERIALS

- True or Lie cards, one set for each student.
- True or Lie statement sheet.

INSTRUCTIONS

Distribute one True card and one Lie card to each student. When you read a sentence from the statement sheet, the students hold up either the true card if the statement is true, or the lie card if the statement is a lie. Interject questions and discussion such as follows: What if I don't believe it is true, is it still true? Not everyone thinks this is true, is it still true? What if your friend doesn't believe it, is it still true? If you desire, the children can call out "True!" or "Lie!" as they are holding up the card.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God's Word in both the Old and New Testaments is true. Even if no one ever believed a word of the Bible, it is still true. You see, some things are always true and some things are always a lie. You may have people say that things are true because they think it's true or because a lot of people believe it's true. But, that is not necessarily TRUE! People change their minds and want to change what is true or not based on what other people are saying.

But God's Word is true. It always has been true and it always will be true because we know that God cannot lie. And we know the writers were eyewitnesses of what happened when Jesus was on the earth. And we know the Holy Spirit helped them remember and write down accurately everything that happened.



READ THE WORD

Revelation 22:18–19

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? Let’s find out! Turn to Revelation 22:18–19. That is the very last book in your Bible. *Refer to the Books of the Bible poster.*

I’m going to read this for you. Listen very carefully. I’ll be asking more questions! *Allow children time to find the verses then begin reading. Make sure to emphasize “adds” and “takes away” while you are reading.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Ready for your questions? I’ll read a statement and I want you to fill in the blank. OK? Look in your Bibles for help.

Observe the Text

- ? Verse 18 says “If anyone (what) _____ to these things God will add to him plagues.” *Adds.*
- ? Verse 19 says “If anyone (what) _____ from the words God shall take away his part from the Book of Life.” *Takes away.*
- ? So, what are the two things that we cannot do to God’s Word? *Add to or take away from the words of this book.*
- ? What will happen to anyone who adds words to this book? *Re-read Revelation 22:18. He or she will experience the plagues written in the Scripture.*
- ? What will happen to anyone who takes out parts of the book? *Re-read Revelation 22:19. 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.*

Look at what I have here. *Show the children an apple (or orange) cut into many pieces, but put back together and held together with a rubber band.*

This is a complete apple. *Take apple apart and show children the pieces.*

Think of this as being like the Bible. There are many different parts, or books, that God had men write at different times. *Show pieces of apple.* But when it was all finished, he put it together into one big book. That is what we now call the Bible. *Put apple all together and hold it together with rubber band.*

Now that the Bible is complete, God does not want anyone to add any pieces *(try to add another piece from the other cut apple)* or take away any pieces *(remove a piece)*. He wants it left exactly as He wrote it. It is complete, just like this apple is when it has all the pieces.

Discover the Truth

God is very serious about His Word. This verse tells us just how serious He is. 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.



Memory Verse Review Song

MATERIALS

- Word of God song sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 2

INSTRUCTIONS

Review the memory verse by singing this song together. You can repeat this during the quarter to help the children remember the verse.

Word of God Song

(To the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down")

*The law of the Lord is pe-r-fect, pe-r-fect,
pe-r-fect. The law of the Lord is pe-r-fect,
converting the so-ul.*

*The testimony of the Lord is sure, Lord is sure,
Lord is sure. The testimony of the Lord is sure,
making wise the simple.*

*The statutes of the Lord are right, Lord are
right, Lord are right. The statutes of the Lord
are right, rejoicing the heart.*

*The commandment of the Lord is pure, Lord
is pure, Lord is pure. The commandment of
the Lord is pure, enlightening the ey-es.*

*The fe-ar of the Lord is clean, Lord is clean,
Lord is clean. The fe-ar of the Lord is clean,
enduring forever.*

*The judgments of the Lord are true, Lord
are true, Lord are true. The judgments of the
Lord are true, and righteous altogether.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Great work! The Word of God does many things for us. God wrote it for us so we could know and understand how He wants us to live.





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 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. Every word in the Bible is true.

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

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

God's Word is true even if no one believes it. Even if our friends don't believe the Bible, it is still true. God does not lie!



► 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.
- Pray that God will give us courage to believe and trust His Word.

