



6

Don't Change God's Word

Key Themes

- The Bible is the only inspired revelation from God.
- God's Word must be the absolute authority.

Key Passages

- Deuteronomy 18:20–22; Galatians 1:8–9

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognize that there are those who speak for God and those who are false prophets.
- Recognize that there are other religions that have added to or taken away from the Bible.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

page 5

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



Studying God's Word

page 5

The Bible is the only inspired revelation from God and it must be the absolute authority.



Activity 1: True or False According to God's Word

page 7

Students will look at statement cards and determine if what is written is true or false according to God's Word.



Activity 2: The Gospel

page 9

Students will color a sheet telling them what the gospel is.

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 3. Store in envelopes or other container.

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



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



TRUE OR FALSE ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD

- Print and cut out one set of True or False statement cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use during the activity.
- Label a shoebox True.
- Label a shoebox False.

- True or False statement cards
- Box with slit or open top labeled True
- Box with slit or open top labeled False



THE GOSPEL

- Print one The Gospel coloring sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- The Gospel coloring sheet for each student
- Crayons



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

“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field . . . and he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree in the garden?’” (Genesis 3:1). Just as Satan cast doubt on God’s Word in the very beginning, the Word of God has been questioned, denied, changed, added to, and misinterpreted throughout history.

As you prepare to teach this week, meditate on the passages below. We are called to search the Scriptures to discover the truth—to be Bereans (see Acts 17:10–11). Your confidence and trust in God’s Word as your final authority will instill the same confidence in the children you teach.

Deuteronomy 4:2—“You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.”

Deuteronomy 12:32—“Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.”

Deuteronomy 18:20–22—“But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?’—when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.”

Galatians 1:6–9—“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”

And as we reach the Bible’s final chapter, we are given God’s assurance that it is complete as He warns that it must not be changed in any way.

Revelation 22:18–19—“For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Tolerance—it’s a word we often hear in this culture. The attitude today is to be open-minded, accept everyone, be careful not to offend anyone, and accept all religions as equally true. If it works for you—it works! This is not an accurate understanding of tolerance, but a twisted view that comes from the post-modern mindset where people can construct their own truth. Real tolerance involves understanding the positions of others, knowing why you disagree, living alongside them, and confronting their false ideas with biblical truth. If we are not convinced that someone is wrong, why would we need to tolerate their different views?

As Christians, we are called to follow the example of Jesus Christ, who was not tolerant of false religions, but stood on the truth of God’s Word (e.g., John 3:34, 14:6, 17:3).

Is the Bible the only Word of God? Be assured, God’s Word needs no proof. God begins with the presumption that He exists (Genesis 1:1) and follows up with many texts that authenticate His Word (e.g., Proverbs 30:5; Psalm 119:160; John 17:17). He does, however, warn us against succumbing to empty deceit, traditions of men, and the principles of the world that are not of Christ (Colossians 2:8).

With this in mind let’s take a look at how some false religions blatantly deny the truth of God and the work of Jesus Christ.

We need to be very aware that there are many false teachings in the world today. And only God’s Word provides us with the information we need to reveal them for what they are. The Bible is the only Word of God.

View of Origins

Bible

God created all things in six, 24-hour days, about 6,000 years ago. All creatures, including man, were kinds. Sin, disease, sickness, and death were not part of this creation; they came as a result of the Fall.

Islam

The Koran teaches that Allah created all things, but it contradicts itself on the number of days. It also teaches that the first man and woman were created in Paradise but were later banished to earth after the fall into sin.

Mormonism

God created man physically after He created the earth. However, we had a pre-earth life, in which we existed as God’s “spirit children.”

Jehovah’s Witnesses

The Watchtower Society teaches that each of the six creative days of God in Genesis 1 was 7,000 years long, and that the universe is billions of years old.

	Bible	Islam	Mormonism	Jehovah's Witnesses
View of Christ	Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, who became man to live a perfect life, to be mankind's substitute on the Cross, and to rise from the dead, defeating death.	Allah (God) created Jesus and appointed him to be a messenger to the Jewish people. The Koran does teach that Jesus was sinless but He was not God, and He did not die on the Cross.	Jesus is the spirit-brother to every man, and even Satan. Jesus is one of an endless number of gods and is a being separate from the Heavenly Father.	Jesus is the Son of God, but is a created being. Christ existed in a pre-human state as the Archangel Michael. Jesus died at his crucifixion and was resurrected as an invisible, non-material, glorious, spirit creature.
Sin and Salvation	Every person has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ and His redeeming work on the Cross.	Salvation is possible after adherence to the Koran, as well as performing the five pillars of the Islamic faith. But even then, salvation is not guaranteed.	Sin was part of God's plan because without it mankind could not progress to become like God, know joy, or have children. Salvation is a combination of faith and works.	Human nature is universally sinful, because all humans inherit the original sin of Adam and Eve. Salvation comes by placing faith in Christ's sacrifice, being baptized as a Witness, and doing good works.
Life After Death	Mankind will live forever either in heaven or in hell. The only way for us to get to heaven is through faith in Christ.	Allah sends both righteous and unrighteous to hell unless they die in a holy war. But if their good works outweigh their bad, they should be admitted into Paradise. Paradise is only guaranteed to those who die in jihad (holy war).	Even after death, everyone has an opportunity to respond to the gospel. Heaven has three levels, and those who attain the highest level become gods, ruling and populating their own world.	There is no eternal hell; this is a false concept created by Satan to turn people away from belief in Jehovah. Unbelievers cease to exist at death (annihilation), while believers remain in death until the resurrection. Only 144,000 will go to heaven, while the rest will live in an earthly paradise.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

God presumed His existence and felt no need to prove it. His Word commences with, "In the beginning, God . . ." (Genesis 1:1), and that is how our history started.

Believers who have gone before us have demonstrated how much the Bible meant to them. They were willing to go to great sacrifice in order to spread the Word throughout the world in common languages because they knew it to be the only Word of God.

Consider John Wycliffe who was born in England in 1324. In those days, church leaders purposely kept ordinary people from the Scriptures. John Wycliffe declared that God's Word is for all people and he began a quest to produce the Scriptures in common English—handwritten from the Latin translations then available. These translations had to be read in secret and Wycliffe suffered persecution all of his life for his efforts.

John Huss, born in 1369 in Bohemia, was another of God's servants. John Huss was intent on maintaining the Word of God as the authority over Christian doctrine, and he spoke boldly and courageously against the compromises he saw in the church such as altering the Lord's Supper and selling indulgences. As a result, he was burned at the stake—giving his life so the Word of God might remain the pure standard for the Church.

German believers experienced similar persecution. When Martin Luther was born in 1483, the Bible was a very rare book and practically unknown. As he grew, so did his love for the Bible, God, and truth. Luther was aware that there were grave and unbiblical injustices in the church and God stirred his soul to action. On

October 31, 1517, he posted his complaints against the church authorities—jeopardizing his life to defend the Bible as the only Word of God.

At the time Luther was translating God's Word into German, God also stirred William Tyndale (1492–1536) to desire that the Word be available in the English language. This was a terrible time in England and Tyndale's spirit, boldness, and faithfulness to God's Word put his life in constant danger. Yet he pursued his God-given vocation and eventually did complete a translation of the New Testament—the first translation into English from the original Greek. Ultimately, God's will was for Tyndale's life to end in tragic death.

These are but a few of the saints who have gone before us to preserve, protect, and provide the Word of God. It is the only Word of God—and around the world people are still giving up their lives to honor its integrity.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Father, thank you for preserving your Word and allowing it to be so available. Please keep me alert to those people around me who have been led astray by false teachings and guard me against their influence. Guide me to be ready always to give an answer for the hope and knowledge that I have in Christ Jesus as I have learned from your Word. Speak through me to guide my students to that same hope.



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.

When finished, have all the girls (then boys) say the names of the books in order.



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

You know, there are a lot of different religions that claim to have God's Word and yet they don't believe the Bible. They try to change the Bible, or make it say something different.

? Can God's Word be changed? *No!*

Absolutely not. There are a lot of warnings in the Bible against people who try to change God's Word. We talked about that last week.

Remember, we said that we were not to "add to" or "take away" from the Bible. We need the whole thing just like it is—complete. Let's take a look at some of the warnings God gives to those who try to change His Word.

READ THE WORD

First, we are going to read Deuteronomy 18:20–22. Turn there in your Bibles. *Help students find passage.*

Deuteronomy 18:20–22

What we are reading was spoken by God through Moses. God was telling the people that there would be teachers who would lie about His Word. Listen while I read it. *Read the passage.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

We are going to ask some questions. All of the answers will be in these verses we just read. Take a close look at them.



Observe the Text

Refer to the Bible Study poster to remind your students how to dig deeper into God's Word by asking the right questions.

In verse 20, we read about a prophet who said something, but God had "not commanded him to speak."

- ? What is this prophet doing? Remember that God had not commanded him to speak. *He is saying things that did not come from God.*

Right. This prophet is presuming—or daring—to speak in God's name when he really isn't speaking in God's name. A prophet was someone who spoke the words that God told him to say. This prophet was not doing that! In fact, the Bible says he was speaking in the name of other gods not the God of the Bible—the one true God.

This was a very serious thing. This prophet was not a true prophet. He was a false prophet. He was not like Moses or Jeremiah or Isaiah. This prophet was not commanded to speak by God.

- ? What will God do to false prophets like the one described here? It is at the very end of verse 20. *God will kill him. He will die.*
- ? There is a question asked in verse 21. What is that question? *How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?*

Right. The people were wondering how they could tell a true prophet from a false, lying prophet.

- ? Can someone tell me how God answered that question? Look in verse 22. *If the children can't get the answer, read the verse again, emphasizing "if the thing does not happen or come to pass."*

God tells us that if a prophet says something is going to happen, and it doesn't happen, he is a false prophet!

That's right. When a prophet spoke from God, he was right all the time. God is never wrong. If something a prophet says doesn't happen, he is not a prophet of God.

Discover the Truth

Please remember that even today there are what we would call false prophets. These people have started their own religions. These are false religions because what they say is not what God says in His Word. We need to be very careful of them. You might hear people say that Jesus isn't God—not true! They might say you can become your own god—not true! They might say everyone will get to heaven—not true!

These people will tell you things about God but these things are NOT in the Bible. They are not true and these people are what we would call false prophets.

Whenever you hear people say things that are not in God's Word you have to say, "No. I don't believe that. God's Word doesn't agree with what you are saying."



True or False According to God's Word

MATERIALS

- True or False statement cards
- Box with slit or open top labeled True
- Box with slit or open top labeled False

INSTRUCTIONS

Print and cut out True or False statement cards from the Resource DVD-ROM. Shuffle and distribute cards to the students until each child has one. Keep one sheet intact for your reference as to what Scriptures to read to verify that the cards are either true or false. Put the True and False boxes at the front of the room.

We want to become better and better at knowing what things are true and what things are false. The only way to do that is to compare what we hear with what the Bible says. If what someone tells us does not agree with the Bible it is false. Do you see these two boxes up front? One is labeled True, and one is labeled False. When I call

your name, I want you to stand up and read what it says on your card. I will read the verse from the Bible and you tell me if, based on what God's Word says, your card is true or false. If it is true, you will place it in the true box. If it is false you will place it in the false box. *Have the children read the statement. Then read the verse and allow the child/children to determine if it is true or false. If time is limited, don't go over as many cards. But the idea is we need to rely on God's Word for the truth—not solely on what someone tells us.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Very good! Remember, there are many people who don't believe everything the Bible teaches. And they may try to tell you that what the Bible says is not true. We know it is God's Word, it is true, and it is the only place we can



READ THE WORD

Do you know one of the most important things the Bible tells us about? It is called the gospel.

- ? Does anyone know what the gospel is? *Allow children to answer.*

This is a very important question. When we talk about the gospel, we are talking about Jesus Christ coming to earth to live among sinners. He did not sin Himself. He was born and He lived and died for our sins and was buried. Then He rose again and was seen by lots of people! That is the gospel! Jesus, the sinless Son of God, died for our sins and was buried. And then He rose again from the dead.



The letter to the Galatians was written by the Apostle Paul. He was concerned because there were some false teachers trying to change the gospel. They were adding things to the gospel message.

- ? I am going to read a couple of verses from the book of Galatians. Can someone show me on our Books of the Bible poster where that book is? *Have someone find the book and point it out.*

It is in the New Testament. Listen carefully as I read Galatians 1:8–9. *Read verses.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

Paul is saying here that no one should preach another gospel.

- ? What happens to someone who preaches a different gospel? What does verse 8 say? *Read the verse again if necessary. He is accursed.*

Accursed means he will be punished by God.

So this verse is telling us that if anyone tries to change the gospel, and preach a different one, God will punish him. He is a false prophet and we should not listen to him.

- ? Where do we find the true gospel message? *In God's Word, the Bible.*
- ? What is the true gospel again? Who is it about? *Jesus, the sinless Son of God, who died for our sins and was buried and then rose again from the dead.*
- ? Why did God send his Son Jesus to die? *Allow for answers.*

He did it to provide a way for people—sinners like us—to be forgiven of our sins—so that we could go to heaven. But people try to change the gospel. You might hear people say that you don't really need to believe in Jesus. Some say that there are many ways to get to heaven, and Jesus is just one way.

These are false religions.

- ? Can we get to heaven without Jesus? *No!*

Discover the Truth

It is very important for you to know that God does not like anyone to change His Word. It makes me sad that there are people who do try to change the Bible.

The Bible is the only book that will ever tell us the truth about God. Don't let any false prophets fool you.

And this is very important. Don't listen to a false gospel that will tell you that you don't need to believe in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the only way, the only truth, and the only one who can give eternal life. No one will get to God the Father without believing in Jesus.



The Gospel

MATERIALS

- The Gospel coloring sheet for each student
- Crayons

INSTRUCTIONS

Give each child a coloring sheet. Discuss the picture as they color it.

Let's color these sheets that tell us the true gospel. Jesus died for our sins and was buried. Jesus rose from the dead and was seen by lots of people.

Because Jesus died and rose again, we can be saved if we trust in Jesus and receive him as our Savior.

And see what it says on the bottom of the page? "I declare to you the gospel . . . Christ

died for our sins according to the Scriptures . . . He was buried . . . He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures . . . He was seen . . ." 1 Corinthians 15:1–5.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

These sheets tell us the true gospel. Jesus died for our sins and was buried. Jesus rose from the dead and was seen by lots of people. We read from the book of Galatians that the preachers were telling a false gospel. They were trying to add to it and change it. We know that the gospel of Jesus is true because it is in the Bible. We cannot change the gospel or anything else in God's Word!



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

You know we can't change God's Word. He tells us that over and over again. We can't add anything to it or take anything away. It is true just the way it is. *Show Lesson Theme poster.*

We need to pay careful attention to what the Bible says, and not believe anything that is different from what the Bible teaches.

There are many false religions and false prophets, or teachers, teaching lies about God and Jesus. These religions have tried to add things to the Bible or take out the things they don't like. These are not God's Word. The Bible is the only Word of God and we must believe it.

Most importantly, we need to believe the gospel and not change it. Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, and then rose from the dead. His death pays for our sins if we believe and trust in Him as our Savior. He is the only way to heaven.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

There are many things in the world today that people listen to instead of listening to God's Word.

For example, sometimes we watch television and believe what we hear there more than what the Bible says. And maybe you have heard someone talk about horoscopes in the newspaper or going to a fortune teller.

We must never look in the wrong place for answers to our questions about life. God's Word is what should guide us—not television or fortune tellers or horoscopes or anything else.

Remember, too, that there are many religions and churches that don't believe or teach God's Word. They add to it or take words away. They want to change it. When you hear things that don't sound right—either in church, school, or from friends—make sure you study God's Word. It is the only truth—and His Word will not lead you in the wrong direction.



➤ 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.

Why not sing the Word of God song again? It is to the tune of "London Bridge Is Falling Down." The song sheet is on the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 2.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

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

- Thank God for the wonder and truth of His Word.
- Ask God's Holy Spirit to help students place their trust in the authority of God's Word alone.
- Pray that the students will be wise and measure everything with God's Word.