



Encouraging the Churches

5

Key Theme

- Jesus will build His church.

Key Passages

- Galatians 1:1–2; Philippians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1;
1 Timothy 1:1–2, 3:14–15; Ephesians 4:31–32

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify who Paul's epistles, or letters, were written to.
- Describe why Paul wrote these letters, or epistles.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will practice the memory verse by working on the Memory Verse Review Sheet and reciting the verse to a friend.



Activity 1: Encouraging the Churches Class Notes

Students will mark the New Testament books written by Paul and fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

God used the Apostle Paul to write 13 epistles. These letters were sent to churches he had visited and to godly men: Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Paul encouraged the believers in these letters and instructed them in proper conduct. These letters are part of the New Testament and the inspired Word of God.



Activity 2: Four in a Row

Teams will take turns answering review questions and placing their markers on the grid to get four in a row.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student
- Pencils



ENCOURAGING THE CHURCHES CLASS NOTES

- Print one Encouraging the Churches Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.
- Optional: Crayons to mark the class notes.

- Encouraging the Churches Class Notes for each student
- Encouraging the Churches Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils
- Optional: Crayons to mark class notes



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Print one copy each of the 13 Epistle Signs from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use.
- Go Before the Throne.

- 13 Epistle Signs
- Tape or poster putty
- Student Take Home Sheets



FOUR IN A ROW

- Print one Four in a Row Teacher Guide from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Cut out eight red circles and eight black circles from construction paper. Or gather other items for team markers (beanbags, paper plates, etc.).
- Make a grid on the floor with the masking tape according to the instructions on the teacher guide.

- Four in a Row Teacher Guide
- Masking tape
- Red and black construction paper
- Red and black circles or other markers for each team



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW GAME (OPTIONAL)

- This is an optional activity to use in some or all of the lessons to review the memory verse if time allows.
- Print onto cardstock and cut out the Memory Verse Flashcards from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Keep the cards for use in other lessons.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Flashcards
- Tape or poster putty



Memory Verse

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

The Apostle Paul serves as a great example to all Christians today. He loved His Savior. God used him in a mighty way to further the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ. Paul suffered trial after trial for Jesus's sake. He was beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrecked, in danger in the sea, in danger of robbers; his own people came against him; the Gentiles came against him; false teachers were against him; he was often weary, hungry, thirsty, and cold (2 Corinthians 11:25–27). Paul's experiences show clearly that he did not count his own life dear but longed to finish the race set before him with joy (Acts 20:24).

And Paul loved his fellow believers. As he traveled throughout the regions during his three missionary journeys and finally to Rome, he was intent on strengthening the churches the Lord had established and encouraging the believers (Acts 15:41). In fact, Paul was daily burdened for the churches and the people in them. He had deep concern that they continue to grow strong in the faith (2 Corinthians 11:28–29).

Paul's love, commitment, and dedication to Christ's church are made very evident by a brief look at the New Testament where he is credited with writing at least 13 different letters to churches and church leaders. It is widely believed that Paul wrote Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

Many of these letters were written to the various churches Paul had taught during his visits. For example:

- “To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus . . .” (1 Corinthians 1:2).
- “To the churches of Galatia . . .” (Galatians 1:2).
- “To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 1:1).
- “To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Philippians 1:1).

Some of the letters Paul wrote, he wrote to specific men—friends and leaders in the church. These include the letters he wrote to Timothy who was Paul's beloved son in the faith.

- “To Timothy, a true son in the faith” (1 Timothy 1:2).
- “To Timothy, a beloved son” (2 Timothy 1:2).

Paul also wrote a special letter to Titus, who was a Gentile and a beloved disciple and worker in the gospel (Titus 1:4). And he wrote to a fellow believer named Philemon (Philemon 1:1).

We know that all Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness in order that the man of God may be complete and equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16–17). And as you read the letters Paul wrote to his beloved friends and churches, that truth will be made clear to you. Paul wrote so that the early Christians would know how to conduct themselves in the house of God (1 Timothy 3:14–15). The “house of God” in verse 15 does not mean within the church building, but among the saints of God. Paul wanted the early Christians to understand how to act toward one another. In his letter to the Ephesians Paul gives clear instructions on Christian living and proper conduct among Christians. He writes that all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking should be put away as well as all malice. He admonished the church at Ephesus, and thus all believers in all churches, to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave them (Ephesians 4:31–32).

Paul was filled with genuine, heart-felt joy at the thought of fellow believers, and he wanted to encourage them in their faith. He often would write to the churches how grateful he was to God as he remembered their faith and fellowship in the gospel. Paul told the church at Philippi that he was confident that God, who started a good work in them, would complete it as the day of Jesus Christ approached (Philippians 1:3–6).

Paul had similar sentiments for all the churches. In his letter to the saints at Colossae, Paul wrote that he gave thanks to God for them and prayed regularly for them because of their faith in Jesus Christ and their love for each other and all Christians (Colossians 1:3–4).

The life of the Apostle Paul presents an amazing testimony to the grace of God and the saving power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. From Paul's very dark background of persecuting, arresting, and killing the early Christians (Acts 8:3) to his unceasing drive to further the very gospel message that changed him, God has shown vividly what it means to truly become a new creation in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). We see

in this remarkable life that God's grace can extend to anyone. And God does save to the uttermost all those who come to Him through Jesus Christ (Hebrews 7:25).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The letters of the New Testament are often called *epistles*. They were originally written as letters to churches or individuals. The word epistle comes from the Greek word *epistole*, which means "letter" or "message." Epistles were a principal form of communication in the ancient world, especially during New Testament times.

An epistle would have been written on a scroll. Often, it was dictated to a secretary (also called an amanuensis) and then reviewed by the author before being delivered by a messenger. In one of Paul's epistles, the amanuensis (or secretary) mentions himself when he writes, "I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Lord" (Romans 16:22). Tychicus was one of Paul's messengers; he delivered several of his epistles (Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7). It appears that Paul signed each one of his epistles to verify that he was its author (1 Corinthians 16:21; Galatians 6:11; Colossians 4:18; 2 Thessalonians 3:17).

Epistles generally followed a similar format. Most of Paul's epistles begin with an introduction that identifies the author and any of his associates. It then mentions the recipients and gives a greeting. There is an introduction followed by the main body of the letter. Most epistles conclude with a general blessing and personal notes to individuals within the church that received the letter.

Twenty-one of the New Testament's twenty-seven books are epistles. Thirteen of these epistles were written by the Apostle Paul: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Paul's epistles are often divided into subgroups. One group is called the Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon), so-called because they were written during Paul's two-year house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30–31). Another subgroup is the Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus). These letters were written to church leaders and include many teachings regarding practices within the church.

God used Paul as he traveled on four different journeys and planted churches wherever he went. Paul kept the churches in his heart whether he was with them or not. He felt responsible for them, like a father for his children (1 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Thessalonians

2:11). The epistles he wrote to them were his way of encouraging, teaching, correcting, and staying in touch with those whom he loved.

The following is a breakdown of Paul's letters and the possible dates and locations from which he wrote them:

- Galatians (AD 50–51, from Syrian Antioch)
- 1 and 2 Thessalonians (AD 51–52, from Corinth)
- 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians (AD 54–56, from Ephesus)
- Romans (AD 57–58, from Corinth)
- Ephesians, Philemon, Colossians, Philippians (AD 61–63, from Rome)
- 1 Timothy (AD 64–66, from Macedonia, Rome, or Philippi)
- Titus (AD 64–66, from Ephesus or Rome)
- 2 Timothy (AD 65–66, from Rome)

Although Paul either penned or dictated these letters, he made it clear that he was speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The other apostles, as well as the early church, accepted these letters as words from God, like the rest of the Scriptures (2 Peter 1:20–21, 3:15–16). In fact, when Jesus commissioned Paul to go, He told Paul that he was sending him as a witness of all Jesus would reveal to him (Acts 26:16–18).

These letters of Paul to the churches, along with the rest of the Bible, are inspired by the Holy Spirit. All 66 books of the Bible represent the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. It is the only written Word from God and is the only basis of truth for the Lord's people and His church.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, thank you. Thank you for your work in the Apostle Paul. Because of your marvelous grace, he became a faithful servant to you. And now, 2,000 years later, we are encouraged and instructed because of what he wrote under your inspiration. Your plan is always perfect. Your Word is always true. Use this lesson to build on that foundation with my students. Impress upon them the truth that you are building your church still today and that they can be a part of it as they yield to your Word, believe it, and apply it to their lives.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have the students recite the verse together, to each other, or to you.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



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.



Encouraging the Churches Class Notes

MATERIALS

- Encouraging the Churches Class Notes for each student
- Encouraging the Churches Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils
- Optional: One light-colored crayon for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson. Optional: Pass one light-colored crayon to each student along with the pencils to mark the letters in the Bible written by Paul.

- The class notes are designed and written simply. Please encourage and help your students to read them as the class progresses. They are an excellent means to review important lesson principles.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible today. Do not work ahead. We'll do this together.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we go through our lesson today, we will learn that the Apostle Paul wrote letters that are part of the holy Bible. He wrote these to encourage and instruct the churches he had visited on his missionary journeys.



Studying God's Word

➤ Refer to Paul's Missionary Journeys Map to follow Paul's travels as you teach the lesson.

➤ If needed, print the Map Pronunciation Guide from the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 1, for help pronouncing the place names.

? Refer to *Paul's Missionary Journeys Map*. How many trips did the Apostle Paul make altogether? *Four.*

? That's right. And where did his last journey—the fourth one—take him? *To Rome.*

? Refer to the *Lesson 4 Lesson Theme Poster*. How did that journey to Rome go for Paul? *Allow discussion.*

To say it was rough sailing would be to put it mildly! With the storm and the rough seas, it seemed as though Paul would never get to Rome. But God had promised Paul he WOULD get there! Paul went through some very dangerous, exciting events, like when everyone had to jump overboard into the water and make it safely to shore. God protected Paul through it all, and Paul did finally reach Rome.

? What kind of prison was Paul put in when he got to Rome? *Allow discussion.*

Paul was actually not taken to jail or prison, was he? He was able to move into a house or apartment. He had one Roman guard assigned to him, but he was free to have as many visitors as he wanted.

? What did Paul do while he was in Rome? *He continued to tell others about Jesus!*

Refer to *Paul's Missionary Journeys Map*. That's right. Paul loved his Savior. He suffered a lot while he was on all these journeys. But nothing would stop him! And Paul loved all the new believers in the churches he had been to while he traveled on all of his journeys.

In fact, he kept in touch with those churches by writing letters to them. Today we're going to talk about some of those letters Paul wrote. Take a look at your class notes now.

? Do you see the books there? What are those books? Where are they from? *The books of the New Testament in the Bible.*

? And how many books are there? You can count them if you need to. *27 Books.*

Right. There are 27 different books in the New Testament. Now, I have some signs here that I am going to put up on the board. These are different books in the New Testament and are on your list. As I read each book name, I want you to find it on your class notes and draw a line through it or check it off—mark it somehow.

Attach each Epistle Sign on the board in order as you read it. Ready? Find and mark these books on your class notes. Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

➤ Read and attach each Epistle Sign to the board. Help students find each one on the class notes and mark it.

? OK. How many books did you mark? Can you count them? 13.

You should have 13 books marked on your list. And guess what? These are ALL letters that the Apostle Paul wrote!

? Now look at #1 on your class notes. It is at the top of the page. Will someone read that for us? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. 13. Have students complete #1 on the class notes.*

READ THE WORD

Let's take a look at some of these letters and see what we can find out about them. I am going to read from the letter to the Galatians. This is Galatians 1:1–2 in the Bible. Listen to this. *Read Galatians 1:1–2 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

Galatians 1:1–2

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

? Who wrote this letter? *Galatians 1:1. Paul.*

? And who is this letter written to? *Re-read Galatians 1:2. To the churches of Galatia.*

Refer to Paul's Missionary Journeys Map. Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia. Here is the area of Galatia.

Refer to the Lesson 1 Lesson Theme Posters. Paul visited Galatia on his first journey. This letter probably went to the churches in the cities of Iconium, Lystra, and others. Do those sound familiar? We talked about those didn't we? In Iconium, some people believed, and some did not. And in Lystra, Paul was worshipped as a god when he healed the man who couldn't walk. Then Paul was stoned by the unbelievers!

So, this letter to the Galatians actually went to churches in several different cities in that area. There were probably messengers who took the letter to the different churches so they could all read it.

Let's move on to the book of Philippians. Listen as I read. *Read Philippians 1:1.*

? Who was this letter from? The Bible mentions two names. *Paul and Timothy.*

That's right. This letter is from Paul and Timothy. You see, Timothy was with Paul at the time he wrote the letter, and he wanted the people in Philippi to know Timothy was with him.

? Who was this letter written to? *Listen again. Re-read Philippians 1:1. To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi.*

? What's a saint? Who is he talking about here? *Allow discussion. A saint is a believer in Jesus Christ.*

➤ Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we have written these lessons for you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, please encourage your students to bring Bibles to class. And if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.

Philippians 1:1

➤ Re-read the verses or the portion of the verse(s) that answer the questions you are asking of the text.

Refer to Paul's Missionary Journeys Map. The saints Paul wrote to are believers. This letter went to the people in the church in the city of Philippi who believed in Jesus!

? Refer to the Lesson 2 Lesson Theme Poster. Remember the city of Philippi? Who did the Lord save in that city? Allow discussion. Lydia and the jailer.

Yes! While Paul was in Philippi on his second journey he met Lydia by the river. The Lord opened Lydia's heart, and she believed in Jesus! And then Paul and Silas met the jailer. And the Lord did the same thing! The jailer asked what he must do to be saved. And Paul told him to believe in Jesus, and he would be saved! Lydia and the jailer were probably very happy to hear from Paul when the church in Philippi got his letter.

Ephesians 1:1

Now let's take a look at the book of Ephesians. I'm going to read the very beginning of that letter. Read Ephesians 1:1 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.

? Who wrote this letter? Paul.

? Who did Paul write this letter to? Re-read Ephesians 1:1. To the saints who are in Ephesus.

Refer to Paul's Missionary Journeys Map. The saints Paul wrote to are believers. This letter went to the people in the church in the city of Ephesus who believed in Jesus!

Refer to the Lesson 3 Lesson Theme Poster. We learned that Paul taught the gospel for two years in Ephesus. And he had a special meeting with the church leaders during his third journey. I have to think that the people in that church were very happy to hear from Paul again—even if it was only in a letter!

Paul wrote letters to the churches and all the believers in those churches. But he also wrote to some special people. He wrote to men who had helped him and learned from him. These men were leaders in the church and needed Paul's advice. I'm going to read from one of those letters now. Listen carefully so you can answer these questions. Read 1 Timothy 1:1–2.

1 Timothy 1:1–2

? OK. First question. Who wrote this letter? 1 Timothy 1:1. Paul.

? Right. Now who did Paul write this letter to? Did you hear it? Listen again. Re-read 1 Timothy 1:2. Timothy, a true son in the faith.

Paul was writing this letter to one man—Timothy! Timothy was a leader in the church and a very dear friend of Paul's. Paul even thought of him like a son.

Discover the Truth

Paul wrote this letter, 1 Timothy, to one special man—Timothy, his friend. But Paul also wrote to the churches, like the church in Ephesus, in Philippi, and in Galatia. Paul wrote 13 different letters. All of these 13 letters are very special and important because they are part of the Bible, God's Word!



READ THE WORD

But *why* did Paul write these letters? What did he want the churches, the church leaders, and his friends to know? Well, remember Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit, so he wrote EXACTLY what God wanted him to write.

Let's take a look again at 1 Timothy. Paul told Timothy why he wrote this letter. Listen as I read. *Read 1 Timothy 3:14–15.*

1 Timothy 3:14–15

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

So, Paul was writing to Timothy, right?

? Why was Paul writing to Timothy? Did you hear the answer? *Re-read 1 Timothy 3:15. So he would know how to conduct himself in the house of God.*

? Hmm! How to conduct himself in the house of God. What do you think "house of God" means here? *Allow discussion.*

Well, it sounds like he means the church building. But Paul meant more than that. The church is actually made up of all believers. It's not just a building. And Paul wanted Timothy to know that as a Christian, he should always act in a way that would please God.

? Let's complete #2 on the class notes now. What was Paul's first letter to Timothy about? Someone read that for us. *Assign a reader. Act. Have students complete #2 on the class notes.*

What did Paul mean though? How did he want Christians to act? Ephesians 4:31 describes what Christians should NOT do. Listen to this carefully because this is God's Word to us, too! *Read Ephesians 4:31.*

Ephesians 4:31

You may not know the meaning of some of those words. But you know what anger is. And evil speaking. All of these words describe a heart that is hateful and not loving. These words describe ways we are mean to each other. And this is NOT how Christians are to act toward each other. We should not be mean.

? Look at #3 on your class notes. Who can read that? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Mean. Have students complete #3.*

But what SHOULD Christians do? Well Paul tells us in the very next verse. Listen as I read Ephesians 4:32. *Read Ephesians 4:32 with enthusiasm.*

Ephesians 4:32

? How should Christians treat each other? *Ephesians 4:32. Be kind, tenderhearted, forgive each other.*

Yes. This is the proper conduct Paul was talking about. This is how people who are Christians are to treat each other—with kindness, not with anger or hatred! God wants Christians to forgive and love each other!

? Take a look at #4 on your class notes. Can someone read that? *What is the answer? Assign a reader. Love. Have students complete #4 on the class notes.*

Discover the Truth

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. All the letters Paul wrote were very special. God inspired Paul to write them, and they are part of God's Holy Word—the Bible. But what did God want all the Christians to know? One thing God wanted them to know was how to treat each other. And He made it clear that He did not want Christians to be angry or hateful to each other. No! God wants Christians to be kind and tenderhearted to each other—to love each other.

► If time allows, do a quick review of each point on the class notes.

? Now let's finish up the class notes. Will someone read #5? What is the answer to that? *Assign a reader. Bible. Have students complete #5.*



Four in a Row

MATERIALS

- Four in a Row Teacher Guide
- Masking tape
- Red and black construction paper cut into circles
- Or other markers for each team

INSTRUCTIONS

Use masking tape to make a 16-section grid on the floor. The grid should be four sections wide by four sections high. Each section should be equal in size. Cut eight red circles and eight black circles from the construction paper. (Or use other appropriate markers for the two teams such as paper plates, beanbags, etc.)

Divide the students into two teams. Give each team eight paper circles—either red or black. They will take turns answering the questions. Allow them to use the class notes and posters. If they answer correctly, they can put a marker in a square on the grid. The first team to get four markers in a row wins the game.

Now we are going to get into teams and play “Four in a Row.” Each team will get eight markers. When your team answers a question from the lesson correctly, you will take turns putting one of your markers in a square. The first team to get four markers in a row wins. OK. Let's play!

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Paul remembered the believers in the churches where he had traveled. He wanted them to keep on growing in the Lord even though he couldn't be with them. So, he sent them letters to teach them and encourage them to live in a way that would please God.





Memory Verse Review Game (Optional)

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

If you find you have extra time, please consider reviewing the memory verse with your class by playing this game.

MATERIALS

- Memory Verse Flashcards printed on cardstock
- Tape or poster putty

INSTRUCTIONS

Print and cut out one copy of the Memory Verse Flashcards, preferably onto cardstock. Tape the cards in order on the wall or board as you recite the verse together. Review the verse as you point to each card. Choose a student to remove one card of his choice. Recite the verse again. Continue to choose students to remove cards one at a time, reciting the whole verse between each one.

Let's say our memory verse first. *Point to each flashcard as you say each word and have the students repeat. Good job! But wait! I'm going to ask one of you to come up and take one of our cards down. Then we'll have to say the verse without that card! Are you ready? Call on a student to take down one card then recite the verse together. Continue until the cards are gone and the whole verse is recited from memory.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Paul went through a lot of difficult times to preach the message of the Cross. He knew how important it is. God used Paul in a very big way, including writing letters, to spread this message to many places in the world.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Refer to the Lesson 5 Lesson Theme Poster. Some of Paul's epistles, or letters, were written to the churches in the places he had visited—like Rome, Philippi, Galatia, and Ephesus. And some of Paul's letters were written to church leaders—like Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Paul's epistles are a part of the Bible because God inspired Paul to write them.

Paul wrote these letters so the people would know how the Lord wanted them to live and grow in love and grace. Paul explained that Christians are called to live lives of love, kindness, and forgiveness rather than of hatred, wickedness, and unforgiveness.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

Paul wrote a lot of letters! And there are 13 of them in the Bible! They are very important! God inspired Paul to write these letters. And that means that those letters are God's Word to ALL Christians, and we should pay close attention to what they say.

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

You see, God has not changed, and He never will. So, what He said way back then to those first churches, He is also telling us. He wants us to read, understand, obey, and believe what the Bible says. It is the truth, and it explains how we can be saved—by trusting, receiving, and believing in God's one and only Son, Jesus Christ who died, was buried, and rose from the dead so sinners could be forgiven and saved for all eternity.



MEMORY VERSE

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God for the life of Paul and the instruction and encouragement we get through the letters he wrote.
- Ask God to help us to be faithful students of His Word, so that we will know who He is and how He wants us to live.