

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

FOUNDATION: GOD IS TRUTH - GOD GIVES HIS WORD

BIG TRUTH: THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

1 Corinthians 2:7,10,12-13; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 1:1-3

BIBLE VERSE: 2 TIMOTHY 3:16a

"All scripture is breathed out by God."

BIG IDEAS

- The Bible is a book that contains the words of God Himself.
- The Bible is the source of all truth.
- Every word in the Bible was given to us by God and was written for our good.
- The Bible is the story of God's rescue plan for the world.

BIBLE STORY: NEHEMIAH 8

During the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem, Nehemiah brought the people together to hear the priest read God's Word to them.

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God does not just know what is true, He is truth. When God speaks everything He says comes into being. The God who spoke everything into existence determines what is true and what is false. In His grace, God not only is truth, but also gives us the chance to know what is true by speaking. God speaks through His Word (the Bible), and the message of the Bible is given to us by Him. The Bible allows us to know what is true, what is false, and gives us knowledge of the truest thing in the universe, Himself.

BIG AIMS



Every child should know that:

- God is truth
- The Bible is the true Word of God
- Truth exists and is important for our lives



Every child should feel:

- Excitement when they learn something that is true



Every child should be able to:

- Tell the truth
- Talk about the Bible as the source of truth



Every child should want:

- To hide God's Word in their heart by memorizing verses from the Bible

FAMILY DEVOTION: EVERY WORD IN THE BIBLE WAS GIVEN TO US BY GOD AND IS FOR OUR GOOD

All scripture is from God breathed out by Him and compiled by human authors into one book, the Bible.

BIBLE VERSE: 2 TIMOTHY 3:16a

"All scripture is breathed out by God."

All Scripture is Profitable**God's Word is very valuable to us. It is our source of knowledge and wisdom.**

- We can learn all we need to know about God in the Bible.
- We learn about God's character and how He interacts with His people.
- We also learn how to live for God in a pleasing way.

God's Word is valuable to us because it teaches us how to live.

- Without God's Word we are only left with the world's idea of how to live life.
- In God's Word we learn what God expects of His followers.
- We see examples of how to live through the people who have gone before us and have their stories recorded in God's Word.

God's Word teaches us how to have find joy in God.

- Real joy is only found in God.
- Paul writes to Timothy in this second letter emphasizing the importance of God's Word helping us become more like God.
- God's Word is the tool that is used to make us more like Him.
- It is helpful to us because it shows us how to be joyful and how to find joy in God.

When Paul writes to Timothy, he reminds him of the ways in which God's Word can correct us.

- Through God's Word we learn how to obey God.
- Without God's Word we don't know how to obey God and we can walk in disobedience.
- God's Word is our source of wisdom and through it we can please God.

BOOK: NEHEMIAH 8*God's People Hear The Law*

Supporting Scripture: Romans 15:4; John 1:17, 8:31-32, 17:8; Genesis 7:10

Teacher Introduction:

When God gave the Law to Moses, He was giving them a guide to know Jesus Christ. God's rescue plan for His people is present throughout all of His Word. The Bible is God's Word given to His people to guide them back to Him. It also serves as the source for all truth in every circumstance.

When Nehemiah and Ezra gathered the people together after they had rebuilt the Temple and the City Wall, they were gathering them to focus them on what is most important---God's Word.

This narrative reveals the foundational truth that the Bible is God's Word and it is given to His people to reveal His truth to the world and to lead the world back to Him through Jesus Christ.

Teaching Guide:

The guide below is provided to help you teach the foundational truth "*The Bible is God's Word.*" The four points are the Big Ideas that should guide your lesson as you share the narrative of God's People Hear the Law.

Footnotes are provided for further study of the text and God's interaction with His people. Throughout the lesson, questions are placed to help you guide the preschoolers to think about and process the narrative—God's People Hear the Law.

Opening Illustration:

(Using a smartphone or voice recorder, ask a pastor or another familiar adult leader to state the guidelines for behavior in class and to share with the children how special they are. Examples are, "Remember to not hit each other. We don't want to hurt anyone." "No running because you might fall and hurt yourself." "You are very special and made in God's image.")

- Gather the preschoolers together and have them sit down.
- Tell them that you have a message for them from (name of pastor or leader).
- Play the recording. Remind them that they are telling them those things because they care about them and it is important for them to know how they should act in class so they can be safe and learn.
- Just like they had a message for the preschoolers that was meant to help them, God gave us His Word as a message to everyone to help them and for their good.
- Show the preschoolers a copy of God's Word and remind them that God's Word is always true.

BIG IDEA: THE BIBLE IS A BOOK THAT CONTAINS THE WORDS OF GOD HIMSELF.

The Bible is God's Word. It is inspired, or created by God and written by human authors who were under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

- The human authors of the Bible were guided or led by the Holy Spirit to write the words they did, much like believers are guided or led by the Holy Spirit to obey God.
- Every part of the Bible is from God. Because God is perfect, every part of the Bible is perfect or infallible. There are no mistakes in it.
- In Paul's letter to Timothy, he emphasizes that all of scripture is from God, breathed out by Him.
- It was the Israelites' custom to be taught the Law of God by a priest or their leader.
- God used Moses to write down His Law and commanded Moses and the priests to read His Law to His people.
- The Law was God's Word and it was necessary for them to have it read to them.



On pieces of paper write out the books of the Bible. Write each book on an individual piece of paper or card. Then write the names of other books on cards. On a board or the wall draw two columns: From God/Not From God. Ask the preschoolers to put their card or piece of the Bible in one of the columns. Talk with them about how ALL of the Bible is from God, but other books are just written by men.

The Israelites disobeyed God and were captured by the Babylonians.¹

- Every part of God's Word is to be obeyed always, yet the Israelites did not listen to God's Word.²
- Nehemiah was used by God to return His people to His Word.
- When Nehemiah saw the ruins of Jerusalem, he was overcome with grief. The ruins represented the people's failure to keep God's Word.
- They had gone so long without God's Word and didn't know how to please Him.

Before the prophet Nehemiah came to Jerusalem, Ezra had already gone to Jerusalem to teach the people the Law and to help them maintain their identity as the people of God.

- Because of the Israelites' long period of disobedience, many had never even heard the words in the Book of the Law.
- Nehemiah and Ezra understood that the Law was from God; it was not from man and therefore, it was the Word of God.
- God used them to give His Word to His people again---to bring them back to His Law and His truth.
- *What does the Bible contain?* (God's truth and word given to His people.)
- *Whose words are in the Bible?* (God's words are in the Bible---all of them are God's words.)

1. Jeremiah 25:8-14: The prophet Jeremiah predicted the Babylonian captivity of the Israelites. Because the people would not repent and turn from their idolatrous ways, they would be scattered and enslaved by Babylon, a very wicked and pagan nation. For seventy years, they would be in captivity until the Lord punished the nation of Babylon for their wickedness.

2. Isaiah 44:1; 45:1: God is the One who guides history, foretelling the birth of the Persian king, Cyrus, two hundred years before he was born. Isaiah prophesied that Cyrus would be the instrument God used to return the Israelites to Jerusalem and to help them rebuild the temple and the city wall.

BIG IDEA: THE BIBLE IS THE SOURCE OF ALL TRUTH.³**Nehemiah was instrumental in helping the Israelites return to their roots as God's chosen people.**

- In their disobedience, which lasted nearly half a century, the Israelites looked to other sources for truth, ignoring the Word of God that had been given to them by God.
- Nehemiah entered Jerusalem not only to help rebuild the city wall, but to bring the people back to God's Word.

Nehemiah and Ezra knew what the people had forgotten---God's Word is valuable and helpful to every person in every situation.

- They desired for the Israelites to hear the Word of God and return to their worship of the one true God.⁴
- Ezra was sent to Jerusalem to teach the Israelites the Word of God.

God's Word is the only source for truth.

- The Israelites had forgotten this and had turned away from God.
- They had chosen to serve other gods and practice idolatry.
- The consequence was they no longer knew the Law and didn't recognize their own sinfulness.
- Many Israelites lived without hearing the Book of the Law read to them and therefore they didn't have the truth. They were misguided and living their lives based on lies.
- They had also seen their city destroyed and now in ruins because they had forsaken God's Word.

God's Word is breathed out by Him and is therefore true.

- Because God does not lie and He does not change, His Word is also true. It would be against God's character for any part of His Word to not be true.
- *What did the Israelites believe instead of God's Word?* (They believed lies and worshipped false gods.)

3. Psalm 119:160; Daniel 10:21: God's Word is referred to repeatedly in scripture as the word of truth. It is the source of all truth and the first place a believer should look to discern what is right or wrong in any and every situation. The whole of God's Word is applicable to every and any situation in this life.

4. Ezra 7:1-10; Nehemiah 1:4-11: Ezra had a heart for the Word of God and was used to teach the Israelites what they had forgotten for so long. Nehemiah's heart wept when he saw the ruins of the city, the walls broken down, the gate in ruins. These ruins symbolized the ruin of God's people. Nehemiah prayed and fasted for the people, asking God for mercy for them. His heart was to help the people return to God and to learn what His Word says.

BIG IDEA: EVERY WORD IN THE BIBLE WAS GIVEN TO US BY GOD AND WAS WRITTEN FOR OUR GOOD.⁵**Ezra read the Word of God to the Israelites after they had rebuilt the temple and the city wall.**

- They had spent many years in captivity and had traveled back to their native land.
- They had spent many years rebuilding their homes and now were gathered to hear God's Word read to them.
- God's Word was given to them for their good. It is given to all believers for their good, but we cannot use it for our good unless we hear it or read it.
- *Why were the Israelites gathered together before the Water Gate?*

Ezra stood on a platform prepared especially for the reading of the Law and when he began to read, the people stood for as long as it took for Ezra to finish.

- Nehemiah and the Levites helped the people understand the Book of the Law. As the people understood the Word of God, they wept and mourned and fell to their faces.
- The reading of the Word of God is convicting as it is encouraging.
- The Israelites had not heard the Book of the Law in a long time and did not know the sin they were committing daily.
- As they heard the Book of the Law and their sin was pointed out, the Holy Spirit worked inside of them to bring them to repentance.⁶

God's Word is good for His people—every part of it is good for instruction and correction.⁷

- The Israelites mourned and wept as they realized their own sinfulness.
- They were grieving their own sin and their lack of understanding.
- Though the reading of God's Word brought sorrow to the hearts of His people, it was used for their good because it brought them to repentance.
- Ezra and Nehemiah declared the day holy because it brings great joy when one repents and begins anew to follow after God's law.
- God had used His Word and the reading of it to turn the hearts of His people back to Him.
- *Why were the Israelites upset when they heard the Word of God? (They realized they had sinned against God and disappointed Him.)*



Gather the preschoolers together and have them stand together. Stand on a small platform (if you have it) and read a story from The Jesus Storybook Bible. If possible read several stories. Remind the preschoolers that the Israelites stood the entire time Ezra read the Book of the Law to them because God's Word is that important and it's for our good.

5. Romans 15:4: Scripture was given to us so that we may grow in knowledge and wisdom and to encourage our perseverance. It is through patient endurance in any circumstance that we grow more like Christ. God's Word is our source of truth and encouragement.

6. Nehemiah 8:9: All the people were weeping as they heard the Law of God. They were recognizing the many ways they had broken His rules and turned away from Him.

7. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Ephesians 1:13-14; John 8:31-32: God's Word is useful to us and intended to reveal the truth to us—the truth about Jesus Christ and the truth about our own condition. The truth of Jesus and the truth of our own personal condition is revealed as a person reads the Word of God.

BIG IDEA: THE BIBLE IS THE STORY OF GOD'S RESCUE PLAN FOR THE WORLD.⁸**From the beginning of scripture to the very last word recorded, the presence of Jesus Christ can be seen.⁹**

- The Bible serves as God's letter to His people. It includes the history of the world and His people.
- It includes the way in which His people can bring Him glory.
- Throughout the Word of God, God's plan of redemption is woven.
- The Savior was present when the world was created.
- He was present when the people became very wicked and God destroyed the world by a flood.¹⁰

God's plan to rescue His people is revealed throughout all of scripture.

- As Adam and Eve stood before God in the Garden receiving the curse caused by their sin, God revealed His plan for the salvation of the world.
- As the world populated and the people further sinned, God's Word points to their need of a Savior.
- God gave His people His Word to serve as a guide for them---as a sort of map that leads them back to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ.¹¹
- What is revealed in God's Word? (God's rescue plan---Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world.)

Jesus Christ is our Rescuer.

- When Adam and Eve sinned and were banished from the Garden of Eden, sin and death entered the world.
- They were separated from God because God is holy.
- But God did not intend for His children to remain separated.
- Before He removed them from the garden, from the very beginning, He had a plan of rescue in place.
- The Bible reveals this plan and the way in which God's people can return to Him---the way in which people can be with God now and forever for all of eternity.

8. John 17:8; 8: 31-32; John 1:17: Jesus revealed through God's Word that He was sent to save the world from their sins, to show them grace and mercy. The law had been given to show the people their need of a Savior. Jesus had come in grace and mercy to save them from their sins. The Word of God reveals Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

9. Genesis 1:26; John 1:1: God does not change; He does shift with the shadows, but remains constant. He is a triune being. He is one in three persons; therefore, God the Son existed even before the world was created. The apostle John reiterates this when he opens his gospel with, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Jesus Christ is exemplified as the Word of God throughout scripture; therefore, the Word has always been present.

10. Genesis 7:10: When God determined to destroy the earth by a flood, He purposed to save Noah and Noah's family. Noah was to make an ark using gopher wood and he was to cover it inside and out with pitch, which was a substance that would waterproof the ark, keep it afloat and keep Noah and his family safe during the flood. The Hebrew word for pitch is kopher, which is the root word for the Hebrew word for atonement. Even as He destroyed the earth by a flood, God's rescue plan was already in place. Already He was pointing people to His Son, the Savior of the world.

11. John 14:6-7: Jesus, Himself revealed that the way back to the Father was through Him. There is no other way and it is only through the hearing and reading of the Word of God that man can know the way back to the Father.



Gather the preschoolers together and read John 3:16 to them. Have them repeat John 3:16 together several times. On separate sheets of paper, write the words GOD, HIS SON, and THE WORLD. As you say the verse, hold up the appropriate word when you come to it in the verse and have the children say that word loudly. Remind them that God's Word tells us the story of how God sent His Son to rescue us.

HOOKS

**The Bible is the Source of All Truth**

(Prior to class or when the preschoolers aren't aware gather together several small to medium containers---they can be empty boxes or plastic containers or bags. Place one small cd player or a smartphone/iPod in one of the containers. Begin a song playing and then close the container. Place it somewhere in the room out of sight so the preschoolers can't see it. Place the other containers with their lids closed throughout the room where they can see them.)



- Ask the preschoolers if they hear something? (Make sure the song is playing loudly enough for everyone to hear with the container closed.)
- Where is the music coming from? (Help them say, "One of the containers" if they don't do that automatically.)
- Which container is the music coming from? (Allow them to take a guess.)
- Open all the containers and show them that the source of the music isn't in any of the containers.
- Then take out the container with the source of the music and open it up.
- Show them that the source of the music was there all the time.
- Then tell them that God's Word, the Bible is the source of all truth.
- Show them the Bible saying, "This is God's Word and it is our source for truth."
- Discuss with them how important it is to look in the Bible for truth and not in other places.

**The Bible Is The Story Of God's Rescue Plan For The World**

(Set up a small obstacle course in the room. You can place objects already in the room in such a way to make a course the preschoolers have to travel through; for example, chairs blocking a path, books in the way, empty boxes stacked on top of each other or tables in the way. Place a prize on one end of the obstacle course. Form a line of preschoolers on the other end. Give the preschoolers a map that shows them how to navigate their way to the prize, but give them a time limit. Make it seem like an adventure.)

- As the preschoolers navigate the obstacle course, remind them that God's Word is the story of God's rescue plan for the world.
- God has a rescue plan to help us get back to Him since sin separated us from Him.

Every Word In The Bible Is God's Word And Is Written For Our Good

(Use a large piece of paper or a poster board. Print or cut out magazine pictures of things that are good for us, such as brushing our teeth, eating a healthy meal, running, playing and loving each other. Paste them on the paper or board.)

- Help the preschoolers identify the pictures on the board.
- Tell them that all these things are good for us and when we use them they help us.
- Show them God's Word and tell them that God's words are good for us. When we use them in our lives they help us.