

Leader's Guide

Let's Explore Our Faith

Lesson 1 - God and His Word

Distribute *Student Workbooks*, Bibles and pencils. Students answer first question on page 1, telling some people they trust. **Who are some people you trust? Why do you trust them? Have they ever lied to you? Do they ever make mistakes?** Volunteers answer. Guide discussion to show that we trust people like parents, teachers, grandparents, law enforcement officers, etc. But they aren't perfect people. They've all made mistakes. Maybe some have even lied to us.

Aims:

- To know what the Bible teaches about itself
- To understand that the Bible is truth from God Himself
- To respond by trusting the Bible completely

Preparation:

- Read through the *Article of Faith 2* (concerning the Bible). Note questions that come to mind. Any question(s) you have may be the same one(s) your students ask.
- Read the Scriptural basis for the *Article of Faith 2*: Psalm 119:9, 89, 105; Matthew 24:35; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; and 2 Peter 1:21
- Review the *Article* again. Highlight the connections between the key points of the lesson and the Scripture passages referenced.
- Prepare the student lesson.

Needed:

- Student workbook, Bible and pencil for each student
- Copy(ies) of *MC Constitution* with *Articles of Faith and Practice*
- A yardstick
- Scissors and a well-worn Bible
- Marker board, markers and eraser
- Index cards and markers
- Tape or CD player, tape or CD

Getting Started:

Begin your class with a short prayer. Ask God to help students understand what He wants to say to them about Himself and His Word.

Direct students' attention to the second question. **Can you trust God?** Have the students answer the five YES or NO questions relating to trusting God. Volunteers share answers. During discussion make the point that we can trust God completely. He never lies and He never makes mistakes.

Even more incredible... **God has spoken to us! And He has written us a letter!** Instruct students to use the four words to fill in the blanks of the next section. (*Answers: spoken, obedient, words, Bible*) Discuss answers, and then direct their attention to other names they may have heard for the Bible.

Study:

Have students find the paragraph that explains *Articles of Faith and Practice*. Have volunteer read. Show students copy(ies) of the *MC Constitution* with *Articles of Faith and Practice*, and pass around for them to inspect. Discuss the paragraph, and then have the students do the short matching exercise. (*Answers: Faith—What we believe the Bible teaches; Practice—How we should live*) Have another volunteer read *Article 2* about the Bible from the *MC Constitution*, while the rest of the students follow in their workbooks. Have students circle any words that are new to them. Write the words on the board. (Words printed in bold are listed in the *Glossary*). Then discuss the paragraph, noting any concepts that may require more explanation during the study time.

As students work their way through questions 1-4, remind them to fill in the blanks by referring back to the *Article* about the Bible, except where Scripture references are given.

Question 1. (Answers: God, inspiration, Scripture, teaching, righteousness, equipped, origin, God, Holy) Discuss the question. Emphasize that only the Bible, written through the guidance or inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells God's plan of salvation for people. This one main theme was carried through all 40 human authors over the 1600 years. That's what makes the Bible so special. God used very different people over a very long time to communicate His truth with a single focus.

Question 2. (Answer: 66) Take a moment to review the Bible's organization. Then divide the class into teams of 2-3. Instruct the groups to use the table of contents page in their Bibles to complete the Bible books exercise. When students have completed the list, review each section of the Testaments. Ask for volunteers to read each section summary. Then have students complete the Scripture reference activity. See the key below.

Exodus 20:3 Isaiah 9:6 John 3:3

Ephesians 6:1 1 John 4:7

Question 3. (Answers: inerrant, manuscripts, reliable) Hold up the worn Bible and scissors. **I have cut out all the mistakes in this Bible. What do you think it looks like inside? How much do you think is missing? Show the inside of the Bible—it's complete! There are no mistakes to remove.** That's because as originally given by God, and written by the human authors He chose, the Bible was totally without errors of any kind.

Question 4. (Answer: authority) Using the yardstick, have several students measure various objects in the classroom. Record the lengths on the marker board or a large piece of paper. **How do we know that the objects we measured are really these lengths?** Volunteers respond. **The yardstick is a standard that does not change. It measures things the same every time.** In the discussion that follows, make the correlation between the yardstick and the Bible. The Bible is the standard by which we measure how we live for God. It does not change. Instruct students to look up the verses that say what we should do about God's Word. (Optional: This may be done as a large group.)

Psalms 119:11 Hide it in our hearts
 John 14:15 Obey it
 Colossians 3:16 Let it dwell in us richly
 2 Timothy 2:15 Handle it correctly
 James 1:22-24 Do what it says

Let's Review:

Have students do the review match individually or with a partner. (Optional: Use the review definitions or descriptions as questions for a review exercise between two teams.) Discuss answers.

(Answers: A-2, B-3, C-4, D-5, E-7, F-1, G-6)

Emphasize the *Scripture to Learn*. To teach 2 Timothy 3:16-17 to students, divide the verses into 6-7 phrases. Print the words of each phrase on index cards. Make at least two sets of cards, using a different-colored marker for each set. Be sure to make at least one card for each student. Distribute the cards, giving one to each student. Using the CD/tape player, play music as, students walk around room and form groups with others holding cards of the same color marker. Then students work together to put the cards in order. Have them check their work by reading 2 Timothy 3:16-17 in their Bibles.

My Response:

Allow students to complete the *My Response* section of their workbook. Help them to think about the characteristics of God's Word that are unusual or unique. Possible self-evaluation responses could include: read God's Word every day, obey it, memorize one verse a week, regularly attend Sunday school or Bible club/class, study a particular topic, make studying God's Word and praying a daily habit; trust God's Word completely, etc. As time permits, allow volunteers to share their answers with the class.

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Lesson 1 · God and His Word

Who are some people you trust?

Write or draw your answer

Why do you trust them? Have they ever lied to you? Do they ever make mistakes?

Can you trust God?

Circle YES or NO to answer the following questions.

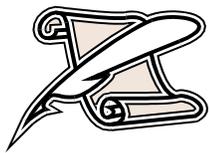
Can you trust God?	YES	NO
Does God ever lie or make mistakes?	YES	NO
If God spoke to us, could we trust what He said?	YES	NO
If God wrote us a letter, could we trust what He wrote?	YES	NO

Place these four words in the correct spaces below.

Bible obedient spoken words

God has _____ to us. He used _____ men to write down His
_____ to us. We call what God has written, The _____.

Other names for the Bible you may have heard are: God's Word, Scripture(s), The Holy Bible, and The Gospel.



Articles of Faith and Practice

Our church is part of a group of churches called The Missionary Church. In our Constitution (a booklet that tells about the Missionary Church), there are 17 statements or comments about what we believe the Bible teaches us, and how we should live. The first 6 statements tell what we believe the Bible teaches us about God, the Bible, man and sin, salvation and more. We call these 6 statements **Articles of Faith**. The last 11 statements tell how we should live for God. We call these statements **Articles of Practice**. In this study, most of our attention will be on understanding and applying the 6 Articles of Faith.

Just for review, draw lines to match:

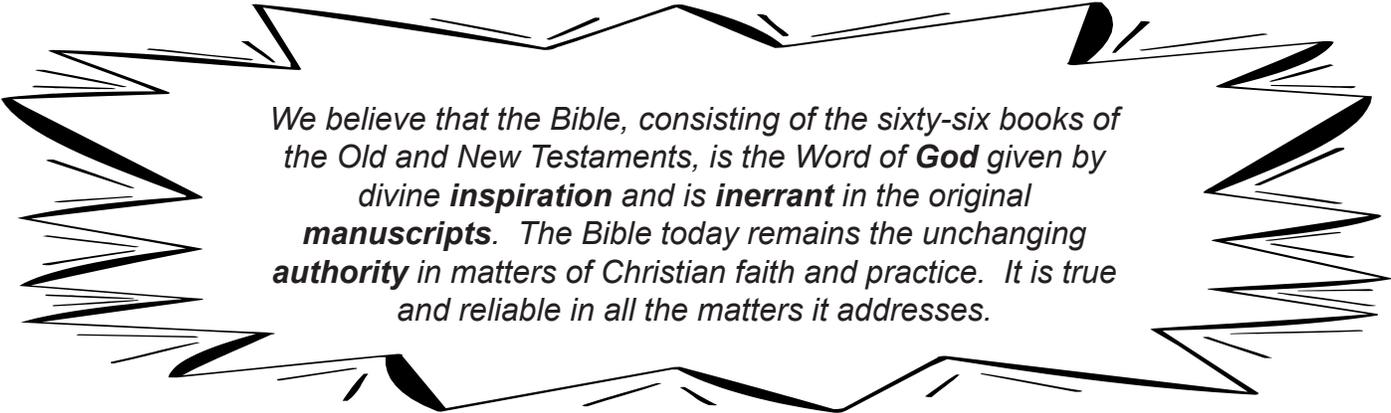
Faith

How we should live

Practice

What we believe the Bible teaches

One **Article of Faith** explains what the Bible teaches about itself:



*We believe that the Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the Word of **God** given by divine **inspiration** and is **inerrant** in the original **manuscripts**. The Bible today remains the unchanging **authority** in matters of Christian faith and practice. It is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.*

This **Article of Faith** helps us answer four very important questions about the Bible.

Question 1. Where did the Bible come from?

Answer: It is “the Word of _____ given by divine _____.”
God Himself inspired or “breathed out” His Word. **Look up 2 Timothy 3:16-17 to fill in the missing words.**

“All _____ is God-breathed and is useful for _____,
rebuking, correcting and training in _____, so that the man of God
may be thoroughly _____ for every good work.”

These verses remind us that the Bible is God's Word and teaches us how to live lives that please God.

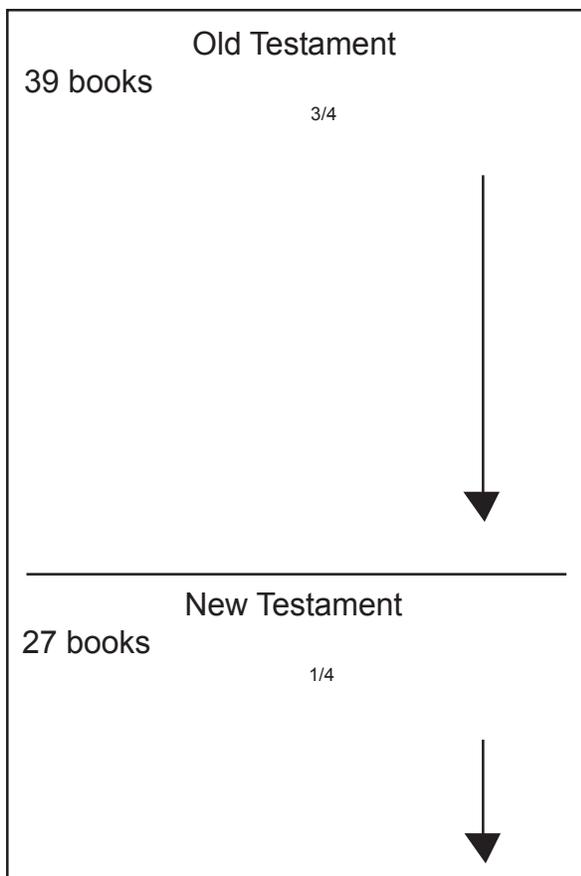
Now look up 2 Peter 1:21.

"For prophecy never had its _____ in the will of man, but men spoke from _____ as they were carried along by the _____ Spirit."



What makes the Bible unique is that God is the author, but He used people to write down exactly what He wanted us to know. Over a period of about 1600 years, God inspired more than 40 godly men to write down His Word completely and correctly. Sometimes He gave them the exact words, but mostly He guided their thoughts.

Question 2. What is included in the Bible?



Answer: It consists of "the _____ books of the Old and New Testaments."

The Bible is divided into two parts. The **Old Testament** is the first and longer section of the Bible. It has 39 books, and tells of God's promise to send a Savior and His plan to send the Savior through His chosen people, the Israelites. The **New Testament** has 27 books and is much shorter than the Old Testament. (See the diagram to the left.) The New Testament tells how God kept His promise to send a Savior by sending Jesus, and how He offers salvation from sin through Jesus to everyone.

Now here's a tip to remembering the number of books in each Testament. Multiply the digits of the Old to find the New: $3 \times 9 = 27$.

Both Testaments have been divided into smaller sections. Books that are related or similar in writing have been grouped together.

Find the table of contents page in your Bible!

The Old Testament

THE LAW—sometimes called the “Pentateuch” or “books of Moses” after the man who wrote them. These five books tell about God’s creation of the world and His instructions for all who live in it. The Law also begins the story of God’s chosen people, the Israelites. The five books of the Law are:

G_____, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

HISTORY—the story of God and His people continue, as the Israelites conquer and settle in the Promised Land, are led by judges then kings, build the temple, divide the nation, are taken captive because they failed to obey God’s instructions, and finally return to the Promise Land as God promised. There are 12 books of History:

Joshua, J_____, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles,

Ezra, Nehemiah, E_____

POETRY—though not rhyming like our English poetry, several Old Testament books are long poems or collections of poems that express important truths or deep feelings. Many of these poems are set to music. The five books of Poetry are:

Job, P_____, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

PROPHECY—the last two sections of the Old Testament are made up of books written by prophets or messengers from God. In Bible times, prophets spoke and wrote for God. Often they reminded the people what God had done for them and warned them about God’s punishment for sin. God also gave some prophets the ability to tell what was going to happen in the future long before it actually happened. The books of Prophecy can be divided into two groups, *Major and Minor Prophets*. Books in the Major Prophets are simply longer than those in the Minor Prophets. The five books in the Major Prophets are:

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, D_____

The 12 books in the Minor Prophets are:

H_____, Joel, A_____, Obadiah, J_____

Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, M_____

The New Testament

THE GOSPELS—the first section of the New Testament. The word “Gospel” means “good news.” The four Gospels record the life story of Jesus Christ. They are:

Matthew, M _____, Luke, J _____

HISTORY—sometimes called the “Acts of the Apostles.” This book tells how the Holy Spirit came to be our Helper, how the good news of Jesus spread around the world, and how the church began. The one New Testament history book is:

A _____

EPISTLES—the largest part of the New Testament. The word “epistle” means “letters.” These letters were written by God’s messengers to encourage people living in the first century who believed in Jesus. The Apostle Paul wrote at least 13 of the 21 epistles:

Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, G _____, Ephesians,

P _____,

Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon,

H _____,

James, 1 & 2 P _____, 1 & 2 & 3 John, Jude

PROPHECY—the last book in the New Testament with special messages about the Lord Himself and His plans for the future. The one New Testament book of Prophecy is:

R _____

In 1560 A.D., the Bible was first printed with even smaller chapter and verse divisions, to help readers find individual sections more easily. Just as you have a home address, each Bible verse has an address called a Scripture **reference**. We usually write Scripture references with the name of the Bible book, followed by the chapter number, a colon (:), and then the verse number. For example, “Genesis 3:15” means the book of Genesis, chapter 3 and verse 15. **Find Genesis 3:15 in your Bible. Now look at the Scripture references below. Underline the Bible book, draw a box around the chapter number, and circle the verse number. Practice finding these particular verses.**

Exodus 20 : 3 Isaiah 9 : 6

John 3 : 3 Ephesians 6 : 1 1 John 4 : 7

Question 3. What do we believe about the Bible?

Answer: It is “_____ in the original _____,”
and “is true
and _____ in all the matters it addresses.”

As originally given by God, and written by the human authors He chose, the Bible was totally without errors of any kind. And since the Bible is God’s own Word and God never lies or make mistakes, **all** of the Bible, including the very words which God inspired or guided, is true, correct and dependable. So we can certainly trust anything God has recorded in His Word. In the week ahead, all of the lessons for this class will be based on God’s truth as He has told it in the Bible.

Question 4. How important is the Bible to us?

Answer: It is “the unchanging _____ in matters of Christian faith and practice.”

An authority is someone or something to whom we must answer. Because the Bible is God’s Word and totally true, it is the authority we must answer to regarding our faith (what we believe). And like the yardstick, the Bible is also the standard by which we measure how we live for God (our practice). Clearly, the Bible is very important to us, and God will help us to live His Word. **Look up the verses below to discover what the Bible says we should do about God’s Word.**

Psalm 119:11 _____

John 14:15 _____

Colossians 3:16 _____

2 Timothy 2:15 _____

James 1:22-24 _____



Let's Review.

Match the key words on the left with their definition or description on the right. Try doing this exercise from memory. If you are "stumped," look back at the previous pages. If you still cannot find the answer, ask your teacher for help.

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|---|
| _____ | A. 39 | 1. the Bible contains nothing that is not true |
| _____ | B. Articles of Faith and Practice | 2. the number of Old Testament books |
| _____ | C. Original manuscripts | 3. what people in the Missionary Church believe and how we live |
| _____ | D. Divine inspiration | 4. the Bible as it was first written down by God's servants |
| _____ | E. 27 | 5. the Bible was "breathed out by God" |
| _____ | F. Inerrant | 6. the Bible determines what we believe and measure how we live |
| _____ | G. Unchanging authority | 7. the number of New Testament books |



Scripture to Learn.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

My Response.



Finish the following sentences.

One amazing truth I have learned about God and His Word from this lesson is

Because God's Word is true and I should live by it, I am willing to _____
