

10. What Is the Bible and Where Did It Come From?

Small Group Lesson

Sometimes teenagers view the Bible as an old book that reads more like fiction than a trustworthy account of God's story. And those who do read it regularly may feel disconnected from it, like the Bible doesn't connect to their lives. This lesson will help junior highers see how the Bible is inspired by God and can encourage, challenge, and guide them through whatever they face in life.

Lesson Objectives

1. **WHAT:** The Bible is the inspired Word of God, and its truths are powerful and challenging to those who choose to listen.
2. **WHY:** As teenagers gain a deeper understanding of the Bible, they are drawn closer to the central person of Scripture: Jesus.
3. **HOW:** Students will discuss how Scripture is the story of God, and how God guided the process of writing the Bible.

Primary Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Secondary Scriptures: 2 Peter 1:16-21

Let's spend a few minutes exploring this passage of Scripture.

1. The Bible is the story of God

What's your favorite story ever, and why do you love it so much?

Why do you read a story differently than you read a textbook?

If you're familiar with the New Testament, you know that Jesus often shared big truths using stories, called parables. Why are stories a powerful way to share truth?

Look at our verses in 2 Timothy 3 and find a truth or idea that you've also seen in a story—and it doesn't have to be a story from the Bible. Then tell us about it. For example, verse 16 talks about how Scripture "teaches us to do what is right"; maybe you've learned that from a story, too.

Which do you find more powerful: fictional stories or true, real-life stories? Why?

Some people read the Bible like it's an instruction manual, textbook, or list of regulations. But Scripture focuses on Jesus, not rules for living. It's a story—the true story of how God loves humanity, how God continued to love humanity even after sin entered the world, and how God loves us so much that he sent Jesus to pay the penalty for our sins. When you read Scripture, always remember that you're reading God's story.

2. God guided the process of writing the Bible

The Bible was written over a span of 1,500 years and includes many different books written by many different authors. We call it God's Word even though God didn't physically write it—but God guided the process. Many of the oldest stories in the Bible were passed by word of mouth from one generation to the next, beginning with people who witnessed the events. That sounds crazy to us, but back then memorization was an extremely reliable, accurate, and regular practice. As writing became a part of culture, people began to write down the stories and truths that had been passed down.

Does that history make you more confident in the Bible's truth? Why or why not?

Why is it important that humans didn't write the Bible on their own, but that it is inspired by God—that God guided the process of writing the Bible?

Do you think Scripture is less relevant to you today than it was for people who lived hundreds or thousands of years ago? Why or why not?

If the Bible is inspired by God, what's the danger of picking and choosing which verses we think are or aren't important?

God inspired ordinary, everyday people to write the Bible. We would be in trouble if people had written the Bible on our own, without God leading the process. Humans fail and are imperfect, but God doesn't and isn't. The words of the Bible weren't just intended for people who lived thousands of years ago. God wants us to read and absorb those words today, too. I'm so glad God was leading the process!

3. The Bible points us to Jesus

What's your favorite story about Jesus in the Bible?

Look at verse 14—what are some amazing truths you've learned about Jesus from the Bible?

Tell us about a time you felt a deeper love for Jesus because of something you read in the Bible.

Because God was leading the process of creating the Bible, all of Scripture points us to Jesus and guides us closer to him. Seriously! Even the Old Testament, written long before Jesus came to this world, tells us

about him. It talks about God's promise of a Messiah who would rescue humanity from sin. When we get to the New Testament, we read directly about Jesus in the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. And the rest of the New Testament keeps pointing us back to him.

BGroup Questions

1. What idea from today's conversation had the biggest impact on you, and why?
2. What habits can help you get to know the Bible better?
3. How do you need Jesus to guide you to Scripture that will encourage, challenge, or help you through big challenges you're facing right now?

TAKE ACTION: Memorize this Scripture this week! *"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right"* (2 Timothy 3:16).

**Leaders, leave 3-5 minutes for prayer at the end of your group time.