

LESSON PLAN DAY 1

FAMILY VBS DAY 1

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

LESSON OVERVIEW

Families learn how the Bible was put together – what is it? Who wrote it? Why are there 66 books? Begin the journey through the world’s most important book by understanding the answers to these key questions!

SCHEDULE

WELCOME | FAMILY CONNECT

(15 Minutes) **BIBLE FUN FACT GAME**

FAMILY LESSON

(20 Minutes) **WHAT IS THE BIBLE?**

SMALL GROUPS (Adult and Children)

(45 Minutes)

ADULT SMALL GROUP

Understanding Narrative

What’s in the Bible? walks your kids through the narrative of the Bible – the Bible’s big story. But we also need to help them find the narrative of their LIVES, and how THAT narrative is shaped by the narrative we find in the Bible.

KID SMALL GROUP ROTATION

Large Group Activity: Canon Challenge

Game #1: Relay Brick Stack

Game #2: Redemption Relay

Art: What’s in a Book?

FAMILY REVIEW & WRAP UP

(15 Minutes)

The purpose of this time is for families to reconnect, reflect and review the day’s lesson. During this time, everyone will come back together in the main VBS room. Families can sit together to facilitate discussions. At the end, pass out the Go Home cards (if using) for the families to review the day’s lesson on their way home.

WELCOME | FAMILY CONNECT

(15 Minutes)

The purpose of this time is for families to connect and have fun together and to be introduced to the day’s lesson.

PREPARATION

Supplies (Per Group): 2 Cones (or Empty, Clean Plastic Milk Jugs), 1 Golf Ball, 2 Small Plastic Rings, and 12 Ribbons (Cut into 1 yard lengths)

Set Up Directions: Tie 6 ribbons to each ring. Set the cones 10 feet apart. Place the ring around the top of the cone and place the golf ball on top of the cone.

Alternative Game Directions: If you have 50 or fewer adults and kids participating in the game, follow the instructions as listed below. If you have more than 50 people, consider leading the game onstage for 2 teams only. After the game, give everyone a chance to share their own Bible Fun Facts with the adults/kids sitting around them.

WELCOME – VBS HOST

(2 Minutes)

SAY: *Welcome to What’s in the Bible? VBS! Who brought an adult with them? Great! We are so glad to have you with us, and we, as a church are excited to partner with you as we work together to learn more about the Bible. Kids, give the adults in your group a big ole’ high five! Adults, give the kids in your group a big ole’ high five!*

During the next several days we are going to learn about the Bible: What is a Bible? Why is the Bible important? What is a Christian? And why do we need the Bible? We sure have a lot of cover!

MUSIC

(2 Songs, 5 Minutes) Optional

OPENING ACTIVITY – VBS HOST

(8 Minutes)

SAY: *The Bible is the story of God and what he has done for us. Also, the Bible has two parts: The Old Testament and The New Testament. Those are just two fun facts about the Bible! Who can tell me one fact that you know about the Bible? (Take answers) (Each time they give a fun fact respond with “Bible Fun Fact!”)*

Are you ready to play “Bible Fun Fact?” Find a group of 6 people and then divide your group into two teams. Each team will stand near one of the cones. The first team can share one fun fact about the Bible. Then, that team can pick up the ring using the ribbons, together lift up the golf ball off the cone with the ring and carry it to the next cone and set it down. Once the golf ball is set on the cone, the team shouts: “Bible Fun Fact!” Then, that team can walk back to their original cone.

The teams take turns sharing their Bible Fun Facts until you run out of facts, or until time runs out!

FAMILY LESSON

(20 Minutes)

The purpose of this time is for families to watch the main content video and learn about the Bible together.

Supplies: What is the Bible? Video

VBS HOST SAY: *Let’s turn our eyes to the screen and watch today’s video – What is the Bible?*

PLAY What Is the Bible? Video (20 Minutes)

SAY: *That was great! Turn to the person next to you and share one new thing you learned from today’s video.*

Director Note: At the end of the video dismiss children to their small group time. Adults remain in the room to watch the adult teaching video and participate in their small group time.

KID SMALL GROUPS

(45 Minutes)

The purpose of this time is for kids to dig deep into the lesson by participating in age-appropriate games, discussion and art. Set this up to work for your church. Divide the kids into small groups. The ACTIVITY is designed to be done as a large group (with all the kids at once), but depending on the number of kids attending your VBS you may need to do it in small groups as part of the rotation. The ART and GAMES should be set up as a small group rotation. On the PRINT MATERIALS CD, you will find separate GAME LEADER GUIDES, SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDES, and ART LEADER GUIDES. Print those out and give them to the appropriate leaders. They contain the same instructions and scripts for the individual activities that you will find in this book.

ACTIVITY

CANON CHALLENGE

PREPARATION

Supplies: Bibles, 4 Thumb Signs (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), 10 Books of the Bible Signs, and 2 Bucket Signs (In, Out)

Host Note: Before the activity, place the thumb signs at different places around the room.

VBS HOST SAY: *We believe God inspired the process that picked which books should be in the Bible and which books shouldn’t be in the Bible. The canon is a collection of books that was chosen through a list of rules or standards to be in the Bible.*

Who set the standards for the Old Testament books? (The Jewish Leaders) Around 367 AD, most of the books of the New Testament were chosen with set standards by the church leaders.

Today we are going to pretend to be the early church leaders and choose the books to go in the New Testament. Around the room I have placed 4 signs on the wall. (As you say each of the signs make a thumbs up or down sign.)

- Strongly Agree (thumb up at 90 degree angle)
- Agree (Thumb up at 45 degree angle)
- Disagree (Thumb down at a -45 degree angle)
- Strongly Disagree (Thumb down at a -90 degree angle)

As I ask the questions, you can decide which sign you agree with, run to that sign and give the thumbs up/thumbs down sign. Let's practice!

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- 1 For a book to be considered, first the church leaders asked if the writing had come from an apostle - someone who knew Jesus - or from a close friend of an apostle.

ACTION: Choose a sign and run to it!

- Strongly Agree (thumb up at 90 degree angle)
- Agree (Thumb up at 45 degree angle)
- Disagree (Thumb down at a -45 degree angle)
- Strongly Disagree (Thumb down at a -90 degree angle)

SAY: *Nice Job! Those who are standing with their thumbs up or partially up are correct and can come back to the middle of the room. Those that have their thumbs down are incorrect and can sit down for the rest of this round.*

- 2 Second, did the writing agree with what the apostles and early church leaders taught about Jesus?

ACTION: Choose a sign and run to it!

- Strongly Agree (thumb up at 90 degree angle)
- Agree (Thumb up at 45 degree angle)
- Disagree (Thumb down at a -45 degree angle)
- Strongly Disagree (Thumb down at a -90 degree angle)

SAY: *Nice Job! Those who are standing with their thumbs up or partially up are correct and can come back to the middle of the room. Those that have their thumbs down are incorrect and can sit down for the rest of this round.*

- 3 Third, was the writing already accepted and used by the whole church?

ACTION: Choose a sign and run to it!

- Strongly Agree (thumb up at 90 degree angle)
- Agree (Thumb up at 45 degree angle)
- Disagree (Thumb down at a -45 degree angle)
- Strongly Disagree (Thumb down at a -90 degree angle)

SAY: *Nice Job! Those who are standing with their thumbs up or partially up are correct and come back to the middle of the room. That completes this round, now let's everyone go back to the middle of the room.*

SAY: *For most of the books to make it into the New Testament they had to meet all three of these rules or standards, not just one. Let's review the three rules. (Kids respond)*

SAY: *For the Canon Challenge I am going to hold up a sign and tell you three things about the book. Then you can decide if you agree, strongly agree, disagree or strongly disagree that they book should be included in the New Testament and run to your choice. If most people "agree" then the book will be put in the "in" basket, if most people "disagree" then the book will be put in the "out" bucket.*

VBS Host Note: Ask the questions quickly to keep the game moving fast!

Host Note: Hold up the corresponding book sign for each question.

CANON CHALLENGE QUESTIONS:

- 1 The Gospel of Matthew is believed to have been written by the apostle Matthew. It teaches us about Jesus' life, and the whole Church used this book. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 2 Paul, whom Jesus appeared to after he had risen into to heaven, wrote the book of Romans. Romans taught the believers who lived in Rome how to live like Jesus and the whole church used this book. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 3 The book of Didache (pronounced "DID-ah-kee") was not written by an apostle or friend of an apostle. It focused on rituals (like fasting and saying the Lord's Prayer), and was not used by the whole church. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 4 The Gospel of Thomas is believed to be written by Judas Didymus Thomas, either the apostle Thomas or an otherwise unknown brother of Jesus. It shows a very different Jesus than the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. It was widely rejected by the church. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 5 The book of Jude is believed to have been written by one of Jesus' brothers. It taught believers how to live and warned the church against false teachers. The whole Church used this book. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 6 The Acts of Paul was written by a priest around 170 AD (long after the apostles were all dead). This fact was discovered by the church leaders and the priest was dismissed. It was widely read in the early church. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 7 The Acts of the Apostles is believed to have been written by Luke, a friend of Paul's. It tells about what happened to the apostles after Jesus went back to Heaven. The whole church used this book. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 8 The Gospel of John was written by a disciple of Jesus, and tells about the life of Jesus. The whole church used this book. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 9 The book of First Timothy was written by Paul to Timothy and reminds him how to live like Jesus. The whole church used this book. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*
- 10 The Shepherd of Hermas was not written by an apostle or a friend of an apostle. It's not clear whether everything it says about Jesus agrees with what the rest of the New Testament teaches. The whole church did not use this book. *Should it be included in the New Testament?*

SAY: Fantastic job! Go back to your seats, and let's see how we did.

(Go through the cards in the bucket by reading them out loud. The following should be in the "in" bin and the "out" Bin)

"IN"

The Book of Matthew

The Book of Romans

The Book of Jude

The Acts of the Apostles

The Gospel of John

The Book of First Timothy

"OUT"

The Book of Didache

The Gospel of Thomas

The Acts of Paul

The Shepherd of Hermas

TIP: *Have all the kids find their small group leader and sit in a circle to discuss the following question.*

SAY: Finally, find your small groups and discuss the following question:

How do you think it would have felt to be a church leader who had to choose which books should be included in the New Testament?

GAME 1

RELAY BRICK STACK

Director Note: Customize these activities so they are just right for your children. Set up as stations so that children can rotate between the games and art, or choose the activity that fits your children best and give them time to play/create within their small group.

Supplies: *What's in the Bible?* CD, 5 Brick Stack (similar to Jenga® Games with the Old and New Testament books written on the blocks with blue and orange marker), 2 Eight Foot Tables, Masking Tape (for a start line), 5 Old and 5 New Testament signs, 5 Small Blue Buckets, and 5 Small Orange Buckets

Set Up: Prior to class, use the list below to write the names of the Old and New Testament books on the ends and sides of the brick stack blocks. Write the Old Testament books in orange marker, and New Testament books in blue marker. For each brick stack set, each book should only be written once.

Before the children arrive, set up the eight foot tables with the games on them. Tape down a start line 10-15 feet away from the tables. Place one blue and one orange bucket on each start line.

PLAY THE GAME:

Play the *What's in the Bible?* CD music as children are playing the game.

GAME LEADER – SAY: *Today we learned that the Bible is a book made up of many books. Who can tell me what the two big sections of the Bible are called? (Old and New Testament)*

Let's play a game! The first game is Relay Brick Stack! First I am going to divide you into groups of 10. Each team will stand in a line behind the start line. The first person will run to the table and try to remove a Brick Stack piece with either an Old or New Testament name on it. The Old Testament names are written in orange and the New Testament names are in blue. Then, that person will run back to the line and put the Brick Stack piece in the matching bucket (either orange or blue). The goal is to get as many of the Brick Stack pieces into the buckets before the Brick Stack tower falls.

DAY 1

GAME LEADER GUIDE

RELAY BRICK STACK & SALVATION AND REDEMPTION



DAY 1 SCHEDULE

Welcome/Connect (15 Minutes)

Main Lesson (20 Minutes)

Small Group Activities (45 Minutes)

- Activity: Canon Challenge
- Game: Relay Brick Stack
- Game: Salvation and Redemption
- Art: What's in a Book?

Review & Wrap Up (15 Minutes)

As a Game Leader, you will set up and lead the game station during the small group time. You may lead both stations, or you may have a second game leader to lead the other game station.

GAME 1

RELAY BRICK STACK

Teacher Note: Customize these activities so they are just right for your children. Set up as stations so that children can rotate between the games and art, or choose the activity that fits your children best and give them time to play/create within their small group.

Supplies: *What's in the Bible?* CD, 5 Brick Stack (like Jenga®) Games (with the Old and New Testament books written on the blocks with blue and orange marker), 2 Eight Foot Tables, Masking Tape (for a start line), 5 Old Testament Signs, 5 New Testament Signs, 5 Small Blue Buckets, and 5 Small Orange Buckets

Set Up: Prior to class, write the names of the Old and New Testament books on the ends and sides of the brick stack game's blocks. Write the Old Testament books in orange marker, and New Testament books in blue marker. For each brick stack set, each book should only be written once.

Before the children arrive, set up the eight foot tables with the games on them. Tape down a start line 10-15 feet away from the tables. Place one blue and one orange bucket on each start line.

PLAY THE GAME:

Play the *What's in the Bible?* CD music as children are playing the game.

SAY: *Today we learned that the Bible is a book made up of many books. Who can tell me what the two big sections of the Bible are called? (Old and New Testament)*

Let's play a game! The first game is Relay Brick Stack! First I am going to divide you into two groups. Each team will stand in a line behind the start line. The first person will run to the table and try to remove a piece with either an Old or New Testament name on it. The Old Testament names are written in orange and the New Testament names are in blue. Then, that person will run back to the line and put the piece in the matching bucket (either orange or blue). The goal is to get as many of the pieces into the buckets before the tower falls.

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DAY 1: UNDERSTANDING NARRATIVE

NOTES

What's in the Bible? walks your kids through the narrative of the Bible – the Bible's big story. Helping our kids make sense of life in a sometimes horrible, sometimes wonderful world. This page outlines the content from the video. Feel free to take notes, or just follow along!

- **Our first big concept!**

Narrative

- **What is a “narrative?”**

A series of plot points or incidents that together tell a story

- **What does a narrative structure help us do?**

Find meaning in our lives. What story are we living in?

- **Our first childhood narrative**

“I am the center of the world, which exists to make me happy.”

- **What is our central question, once this childhood narrative dies?**

“How do I stay happy, if the world doesn't want to help?”

- **What is a very common, faulty Christian narrative?**

“If there is an all-powerful, loving God, and I am ‘good’, nothing truly bad will ever happen to me.”

- **What is an accurate Christian narrative?**

We, and the universe, were made in God's image, but have been broken by sin. God has a rescue plan to set everything right – so we can live with him in an unbroken world.

- **One way to explain this in a way kids can understand:**

The world is a broken amusement park.

- **What is our role in this picture?**

We're the Red Cross. We're here to help – to heal – and to explain why things are the way they are.

DAY 1 GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR ADULTS

NOTES

What's in the Bible? walks your kids through the narrative of the Bible – the Bible's big story. Helping our kids make sense of life in a sometimes horrible, sometimes wonderful world.

Directions: Gather in groups of 3-8 people, and discuss the following questions. Please be conscious of how long you share, so that everyone has a chance to share. As God directs you, be sure to write down any action steps you may want to take with your family.

- Do you remember a time in your childhood when you thought the world existed to make you happy? What's your earliest memory of an event that told you this was NOT the case?
- By the time you reached high school, were you more likely to believe the world was a safe place? Or a dangerous place? What sorts of things happen to kids in junior high and high school that can make them pessimistic about the world?
- Of the two H.G. Wells quotes (the 1937 "things are getting better and better" and the 1946 "things are getting worse and worse" quotes), which one feels more true to you today?
- Have you ever known anyone – or you yourself – whose faith in God was badly shaken by tragedy? It's important to note that God weeps with us when we face the reality of living in a broken world, but we know that He is faithful to work good out of all things, even if we don't see or feel it right away. If you feel comfortable, share a time your faith – or the faith of someone you know – was shaken and how you felt God in the midst of that pain? Or how you didn't feel God, and how that made you feel?
- What did you think of Phil's "broken amusement park" analogy? Did it ring true for you? How might this picture help your kids face the world more realistically?

Pray together as a group.