

BIBLE BASICS

Know the Bible

Participant Guide · 10 Lessons for New Bible Readers

These ten lessons will help you build confidence with God's Word one step at a time. From understanding what's in the Bible to learning how to read it and why it can be trusted, each lesson is designed to grow your knowledge and deepen your faith.

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 1 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

SEEK AND FIND GOD — THROUGH HIS WORD

GOD IS NOT HIDING

Read each passage. What command does God give and what promise does He make?

Scripture	Command	Promise
Jeremiah 29:13		
Deuteronomy 4:29		
James 4:8		
Acts 17:26–27		

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. What theme is consistent across all of these verses — from both the Old and New Testament?
2. What does this reveal about the character of God?
3. What does this teach you about people?

PERSONAL FOLLOW-UP

1. How have you sought God in the past?
2. What has been intimidating about seeking God through Bible reading?
3. How do the verses you read give you encouragement?

BIBLE BASICS — SELF-ASSESSMENT

Fill this out honestly — no one will see it unless you choose to share. You'll complete it again at the end of the series.

PART 1: CONFIDENCE RATING

On a scale of 1–5, circle the number that best describes where you are right now.
(1 = Not at all confident / 5 = Very confident)

1. I feel comfortable reading the Bible on my own. 1 2 3 4 5
2. When I read the Bible, I generally understand what I'm reading. 1 2 3 4 5
3. I read the Bible consistently (at least a few times a week). 1 2 3 4 5
4. I could explain what I read in the Bible to someone else. 1 2 3 4 5
5. I could find my way around the Bible without much difficulty. 1 2 3 4 5

PART 2: WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

Answer as best you can — if you don't know, write "not sure." That's a completely valid answer.

1. How many books are in the Bible?
2. What are the two main sections of the Bible called?
3. Name two or three books from the Old Testament:
4. Name two or three books from the New Testament:
5. True or False: The Bible was written by one author.
6. What are the four Gospels?
7. In one sentence, what is the Bible's big story about?
8. What does it mean to you personally to seek God?

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 2 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

WHY DO WE READ THE BIBLE?

Directions: Read each Scripture, then use the Word Bank to fill in the blank that best completes the sentence.

1 **EXODUS 34:6-7**
It describes who God is – His _____

7 **ROMANS 12:2 AND 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18**
It shows you God's _____

2 **2 TIMOTHY 3:15**
It is how we learn about _____

8 **DEUTERONOMY 31:8**
It is full of God's _____

3 **2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17**
It is how we _____ in our faith

9 **EPHESIANS 4:31-32**
It teaches you how to _____ others

4 **LUKE 11:1-4**
It teaches you how to _____ to God

10 **1 JOHN 4:7-8**
It reveals how much God _____

5 **JOHN 3:16 AND ROMANS 6:23**
It shares the good news – the _____

11 **JOHN 20:31**
It's how we know _____

6 **PROVERBS 3:5-6**
It teaches you to _____ in all things

12 **JOHN 17:17 AND JOHN 8:31-32**
It is full of _____

WORD BANK

CHARACTER
GROW
SALVATION

PRAY
TRUST GOD
GOSPEL

WILL
LOVES YOU
PROMISES

JESUS
FORGIVE
TRUTH

REFLECTION QUESTION

1. Based on what you just read, why would you tell someone to read the Bible?

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 3 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

WHAT'S IN THE BIBLE? — OLD TESTAMENT

Directions: Create a key for the genres below, then highlight the books as your teacher directs. Record your observations at the bottom.

KEY

History / The Stories

Poetry / The Songs

Prophecies / The Sermons

Genesis	2 Chronicles	Daniel
Exodus	Ezra	Hosea
Leviticus	Nehemiah	Joel
Numbers	Esther	Amos
Deuteronomy	Job	Obadiah
Joshua	Psalms	Jonah
Judges	Proverbs	Micah
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Nahum
1 Samuel	Song of Songs	Habakkuk
2 Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
1 Kings	Jeremiah	Haggai
2 Kings	Lamentations	Zechariah
1 Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

NOTES/OBSERVATIONS:

PERSONAL FOLLOW-UP

1. Which Old Testament book or section are you most interested in reading? Why?
2. How is knowing the different genres helpful when approaching Scripture?
3. What feels intimidating about reading the Old Testament and how can you overcome those concerns or fears?
4. Why do you think God gave us the Old Testament if we have the New Testament?
5. At the start of today you gave yourself a number reflecting how confident you feel about reading the Old Testament. Where would you put it now?

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 4 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

WHAT'S IN THE BIBLE? — NEW TESTAMENT

Directions: Create a key for the genres below, then highlight the books as your teacher directs. Record your observations at the bottom.

KEY

History

Paul's Letters to Churches

Paul's Letters to Individuals

General Letters & Prophecy

Matthew	Ephesians	Hebrews
Mark	Philippians	James
Luke	Colossians	1 Peter
John	1 Thessalonians	2 Peter
Acts	2 Thessalonians	1 John
Romans	1 Timothy	2 John
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy	3 John
2 Corinthians	Titus	Jude
Galatians	Philemon	Revelation

NOTES/OBSERVATIONS:

PERSONAL FOLLOW-UP

1. Which New Testament book or section are you most interested in reading? Why?
2. How is knowing the different genres helpful when approaching Scripture?
3. What feels intimidating about reading the New Testament and how can you overcome those concerns or fears?
4. How does understanding the New Testament help you see how it connects to the Old Testament?
5. At the start of today you gave yourself a number reflecting how confident you feel about reading the New Testament. Where would you put it now?

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 5 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

WHAT IS THE STORY OF THE BIBLE?

Directions: Before we begin, write your best attempt at answering this question:
How would you describe the story of the Bible in one or two sentences?

THE FOUR MOVEMENTS

Movement 1: _____

Notes:

Symbol:

Discussion Question:

What does it tell you about God that His first act toward humanity was to create them in His image and invite them into partnership with Him?

Movement 2: _____

Notes:

Symbol:

Discussion Question:

Where do you see this same pattern — choosing your own way over trusting God — showing up in your own life or in the world around you?

Movement 3: _____

Notes:

Symbol:

Discussion Question:

Jesus passed the test humanity always failed. What does it mean to you that He did that on your behalf?

Movement 4: _____

Notes:

Symbol:

Discussion Question:

What does it look like for someone who has received the new life Jesus offers to begin reflecting that in the way they love and relate to others?

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Now that you've walked through the four movements, revisit what you wrote at the beginning. Do you want to adjust, expand, or rewrite your summary?

Revised summary:

OPTIONAL: ROMANS 5 CONNECTION

Read Romans 5:12–21. As you read, see if you can identify the four movements — Creation, Rebellion, Redemption, and Restoration. What does Paul say about sin, death, grace, and new life?

Notes:

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 6 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

HOW DO I READ THE BIBLE?

Directions: Fill in the blanks as your facilitator directs you and discuss what you learn.

1.

READ MATTHEW 7:7-11

TIPS 1-2-3

1. Approach God with a spirit of _____
2. Ask Him to give you _____ and _____
3. Ask for a heart open to His _____ and to _____ for Him

2.

READ 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

TIPS 1-2-3

1. Before you read, take a moment to _____
2. _____ what you read
3. _____ good questions

THE SWORD QUESTIONS:

THE BLADE (*pointing upward toward God*)

“What do I learn about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?”

Consider what the passage reveals about His character, what He values, and how He sees or relates to people.

THE HANDLE (*pointing downward toward people*)

“What do I learn about people?”

This includes what you observe about specific people in the passage, what the text reveals about humanity in general, and what it shows you about yourself.

THE HILT (*connecting the two*)

“How is God calling me to respond?”

Consider how you should think, act, or trust God differently because of what you just read. You might also ask: how does God want me to pray differently?

3.

READ PROVERBS 12:15

TIPS 1-2-3

1. Ask a _____
2. Use a _____
3. Consult _____

PERSONAL FOLLOW-UP

1. Which of these three practices — Pray, Engage, or Ask for Help — do you most need to develop?

2. How do you think consistently using this framework will change the way you approach reading the Bible?

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 7 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

PRACTICE READING THE BIBLE

PRACTICE 1: RUTH 1:1-18

Old Testament — History

PRAY

Before we begin, take a moment to ask God to open your eyes and heart to what He wants to show you in this passage.

ENGAGE

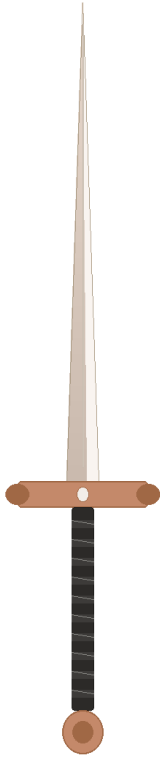
Context — Fill in as your group discusses:

1. What book of the Bible is this? _____
2. What genre is it? _____
3. Who wrote it? _____
4. Who was it written for? _____
5. What is the book about? _____

Read Ruth 1:1-18

Summarize — Who is in the passage? What happens? What is the sequence of events?

THE SWORD QUESTIONS



THE BLADE

What do I learn about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

Consider what the passage reveals about His character, what He values, and how He sees or relates to people.

THE HANDLE

What do I learn about people?

This includes what you observe about specific people in the passage, what the text reveals about humanity in general, and what it shows you about yourself.

THE HILT

How is God calling me to respond?

Consider how you should think, act, or trust God differently because of what you just read. You might also ask: how does God want me to pray differently?

ASK FOR HELP

What questions do you have? How will you find the answer?

PRACTICE 2: PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11

New Testament — Letter

PRAY

Before we begin, take a moment to ask God to open your eyes and heart to what He wants to show you in this passage.

ENGAGE

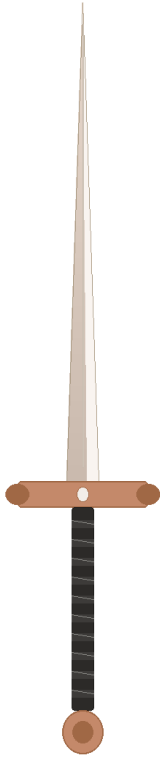
Context — Fill in as your group discusses:

1. What book of the Bible is this? _____
 2. What genre is it? _____
 3. Who wrote it? _____
 4. Who was it written for? _____
 5. What is the book about? _____
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Read Philippians 1:1-11

Summarize — What is the main point? Who is the author writing to and what does he want them to understand or do?

THE SWORD QUESTIONS



THE BLADE

What do I learn about God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit?

Consider what the passage reveals about His character, what He values, and how He sees or relates to people.

THE HANDLE

What do I learn about people?

This includes what you observe about specific people in the passage, what the text reveals about humanity in general, and what it shows you about yourself.

THE HILT

How is God calling me to respond?

Consider how you should think, act, or trust God differently because of what you just read. You might also ask: how does God want me to pray differently?

ASK FOR HELP

What questions do you have? How will you find the answer?

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 8 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

WHY CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE? — HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT SCRIPTURE?

Write down any questions you have about whether the Bible can be trusted — questions you've heard from others, or doubts of your own. Your leader will return to these at the end of Lesson 9.

SECTION 1: EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES — 1 Corinthians 15:3–8; Luke 1:1–4; 2 Peter 1:16

OBSERVATION QUESTION

1. In your own words, how does this give you a reason for your hope in Scripture?

SECTION 2: THE HONESTY TEST

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES — Matthew 28:1–10; John 20:11–18; Matthew 26:69–74

OBSERVATION QUESTION

1. In your own words, how does this give you a reason for your hope in Scripture?

REASONS FOR HOPE TRACKER — LESSON 8

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS	What do I want to remember:
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HONESTY TEST	What do I want to remember:
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BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 9 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

WHY CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE? — RELIABILITY & FAITH

SECTION 1: THE MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

Ancient Work	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Time Gap	No. of Manuscripts
Plato	~400 BC	AD 895	~1,300 yrs	7
Caesar (Gallic Wars)	58–50 BC	~AD 900	~950 yrs	~10
Homer (Iliad)	~800 BC	~400 BC	~400 yrs	643
New Testament	AD 40–100	AD 125*	~25–50 yrs	5,800+ Greek / 20,000+ total

*Rylands Papyrus P52 (c. AD 117–138). Source: Metzger & Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament* (Oxford, 2005); F.F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Eerdmans, 2003).

OBSERVATION QUESTION

1. In your own words, how does this give you a reason for your hope in Scripture?

SECTION 2: WHAT ABOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT?

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES — Luke 24:44

OBSERVATION QUESTION

1. In your own words, how does this give you a reason for your hope in Scripture?

SECTION 3: FAITH COMES THROUGH HEARING

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES — Romans 10:17

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between knowing facts about the Bible and having faith in Jesus?
2. What barriers might keep someone from truly encountering Jesus even if they agreed with all the evidence?

REASONS FOR HOPE TRACKER — LESSON 9

MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

What do I want to remember:

JESUS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

What do I want to remember:

BIBLE BASICS — LESSON 10 PARTICIPANT GUIDE

WHAT NOW? — LIVING OUT WHAT YOU LEARNED

BIBLE BASICS — SELF-ASSESSMENT

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8. What does it mean to you personally to seek God?

LET'S REFLECT

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What surprised you when you compared your answers?
2. What is one thing you understand now that you didn't when you started?
3. Where do you still feel uncertain or want to keep growing?

LET'S APPLY

Decision 1: What book of the Bible will you read first?

Decision 2: When is a realistic time in your day to read, even just 10 minutes?

LET'S SHARE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who in your life is curious about faith or the Bible?
2. What would it look like to invite them into what you've been learning?