

G.R.O.W.

Lesson 2—Read, Study and Memorize the Bible

OVERVIEW

G.R.O.W. Acrostic

Week 1—G—Go to Church

Week 2—R—Read, Study and Memorize God's Word

Bible Stories: Matthew 4:3-10 and Matthew 12:1-7

Key Verse: 2 Timothy 2:15—"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth."

IMPORTANT NOTE: The point of today's lesson is to challenge our students to consider how much they do or don't know about God's Word and to understand that reading the Bible, studying the Bible, and memorizing the Bible are all normal parts of a growing believer's walk with Christ. In today's culture many believers have adopted the opinion that it is abnormal or unusual for believers (beyond a certain age) to memorize not only verses but even large portions of Scripture. We want our student to understand that it is normal and common for someone who is in love with Christ to fill his or her mind with God's Word.

BEFORE CLASS

Preparation: *Your preparation will determine what direction your class will go.*

- Consider the importance that reading, studying and memorizing God's Word has played in your own life and relationship with Christ.
- Consider the reason you spend time in God's Word.
- Study and prepare your lesson so that you are familiar with the illustrations and outline.
- Contact students who missed Sunday School last week.
- Pray for each student by name.

TEACHING TIPS

Get to know students by name, both those in and outside of your class. Then greet students by name as they enter on Sunday morning. When you remember and use a student's name it says, "You're important to me."

OPENING ACTIVITY

As Students Enter

As students enter the room **ASK**:

- *How was your week?*
- *What did God do in your life this past week?*

Bible or Babble

- *On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being great and 1 being poor, how well do you know God's Word?*

Let's find out:

Which of the following statements are from the Bible?

- *The tongue is a fire.* (Bible—James 3:6)
- *An apple a day keeps the doctor away.* (Not from the Bible)
 - *Cleanliness is next to godliness.* (Not from the Bible)
- *An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.* (Bible—Exodus 21:24, Matt. 5:21, etc.)
- *Greet one another with a holy kiss.* (Bible—1 Thess. 5:26)
 - *Four score and seven years ago.* (Not from the Bible—Abraham Lincoln said this.)
- *If at once you don't succeed, try, try again.* (Not from the Bible)
- *Obey your thirst.* (Not from the Bible—The Sprite motto.)
 - *Courage is not the absence of fear but the judgment that something is greater than your fear.* (Not from the Bible—from the movie "Princess Diaries.")
- *A gentle answer turns away wrath.* (Bible)

TEACHING TIPS

When leading student discussions remember that you want your students to feel the freedom to express themselves without other students mocking them. Stay in control of the discussion and don't let it turn into a debate. Let each person express his or her opinion not from the attitude of "whatever you believe is okay" but to build a platform that says, "Now let's take a look at what the Bible says." Remember that the purpose of the discussion is to give you direction as to what may need to be addressed specifically in the lesson as well as to help you understand what the world view of your students is. Also, be careful that you don't spend so much time discussing that your lesson suffers as the result.

Bible Quiz

Let students volunteer to try the following challenges, but see if they are willing to volunteer *before* you ask the question. If not, it's okay, but see if they are confident enough about their knowledge of the Bible to take a "blind" challenge.

- *Can you quote John 3:16?*
- *How many of the Ten Commandments can you name?*
Where are they found? (Exodus 20)
- *How many of the twelve disciples can you name?* (Peter, Andrew, James, John, Matthew, Thomas, Phillip, Bartholomew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas also known as Thaddaeus, Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus.)

- *How much of the following can you finish (Psalm 23): “The Lord is my Shepherd, I...”*
- *How much of the following can you finish (Lord’s Prayer): “Our Father who is in heaven...”*
 - *What do the Gospels tell about? (The life of Jesus)*
- *What does the book of Acts tell about? (The acts of the apostles or the acts of the Holy Spirit in the early church)*
 - *What is Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy called? (The Law)*

ASK the following:

- *Where you surprised by how much you did or did not know?*
- *On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you know God’s Word—Did your answer change from earlier?*
- *Do you think you know more or less than the average Christian?*

Think About It

ASK: How much time in an average week do you spend doing the following:

- *Doing homework?*
- *Getting ready in the morning?*
 - *Eating?*
 - *Talking to friends?*
 - *Playing sports?*
 - *Playing video games?*
 - *Watching TV?*
- *Reading, studying and memorizing God’s Word?*
- *Do you think how you spend your time shows what is most important to you?*
- *Would anyone like to share with us the last verse you memorized? How long ago did you memorize this?*
- *What do you think is normal for someone who is in love with Jesus?*
(Emphasize that reading, studying, and memorizing God’s Word are all important parts of a growing believer’s walk with Christ.)
- *Does the Bible give us an example of what we are suppose to be like as believers? (Jesus is our example.)*

BIBLE LESSON

Assign the following Scripture passages to two students in your class: Matthew 4:3-10 and Matthew 12:1-7.

Jesus, Our Example

- *How do you know that Jesus read, study and memorized the Scriptures (which at that time only included the Old Testament) ? (Jesus continually referred to and quoted Scripture.)*

Here's an example: Read Matthew 4:3-10

- *When Jesus was tempted what did He do? What kind of example does this set for us? (If Jesus relied on Scripture to resist temptation shouldn't we do the same?)*

Here's another example of how Jesus continually referred to and quoted God's Word: Read Matthew 12:1-7

The situation here is simply that the disciples were picking grain on the Sabbath. There is not a direct command against this in the Bible but the Pharisees, who were the religious leaders in Israel, taught that this was wrong because no work was allowed on the Sabbath. So, if you picked food to eat, you were harvesting which constituted work. For the same reason they also taught that you couldn't do the following things on the Sabbath:

- *Drag a chair across the follow because it disturbed the dirt which is plowing.*
 - *Spit on the ground because it might turn the soil which is farm work.*
- *Look in the mirror because you might see a gray hair and pull it which is a form of beautification work.*
- *They told Jesus he couldn't heal on the Sabbath because to do so would be medical work.*

The Pharisees had many such "laws."

SAY: Notice that Jesus never just relied on opinion to back up what He said. The Scriptures were His witness that his words were true. In today's culture students debate about a variety of religious, political, and social issues and most of them rely on their own thoughts and opinions instead of backing up what they believe with the truth of God's Word.

- *Do you believe that you know enough about the Bible to back up what you believe using Scripture only?*

SAY: Let's find out. The following are basic Bible concepts. There shouldn't be any debate about their truth. The point is that these are things that you say you believe but do you know the Bible well enough to back up what you believe from God's Word? Can you show me where these things are found?

(Be careful not to spend too much time discussing the topics. Don't get into any debates. The point is, can they find where in the Bible these things are taught?)

- *That Jesus is God. Show me where the Bible says this.*

TEACHING TIPS

Never compel a student to read aloud. Some students are not comfortable with this, so let them know that if they don't want to read aloud, they don't have to. Also, never make comments about a student's reading skills in front of the group.

(There are many places but John 10:30 is an example: Jesus said, “I and the Father are one.”)

- *That Jesus is the only way to go to heaven. Show me where the Bible says this.*
(John 14:6 is a great example: Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me.”)

- *That heaven is real. Show me where the Bible says this.*
(There are many places but John 14:2 is an example: Jesus said, “In my Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so I would have told you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” Also, consider all of Revelation 21.

- *That baptism is an important and essential step in following Christ. Show me where the Bible says this.*

(There are numerous stories where a person committed his life to Christ and the first thing he did was to be baptized; Jesus was baptized; but the Bible specifically says, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ...” (Acts 2:38) or “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...” (Matt. 28:20).

- *That Jesus is coming again. Show me where the Bible says this.*
(Again there are many places but 1 Thessaolonians 4:16-17 is an example: “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”)

- *That a Christian should read, study, and memorize God’s Word. Show me where the Bible says this.*
(Psalm 119:11—“I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you”)
(Psalm 1:2-3—“But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither.”)

KEY VERSE

Or consider today’s key verse:

2 Timothy 2:15—“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.”

(Read this from your Bible.)

SAY: “Be diligent” can also be translated as “Do your best” or even “Study.”

- *Would you say that you are “doing your best” to handle God’s Word correctly?*
- *Does this verse imply that some will stand ashamed before God because of how they have handled His Word?*

- *What does it mean to by “handling accurately the word of truth”? (It means that you don’t neglect it and that you don’t water it down or cheapen it. The truth will often offend people and sometimes the truth hurts; you don’t rationalize it or try to find “loop-holes” around what God says. You accepted the Bible as the ultimate truth in everything for life and live by this truth on a daily basis.)*

Extra Time

(1) Share about how and when and where you are reading or studying in the Bible. Share with your students things in His Word that God has recently used in your life or verses you have recently memorized.

(2) If you have extra time, see how many Bible verses your class can quote. This can be an eye-opening experience and a great challenge.

WRAP IT UP

Final Thoughts

- *During the span of life, how much time do you think the average person spends waiting in line? (Three years)*

SAY: Why not write a Bible verse on a small card, carry it with you, and any time you find yourself standing in line or with nothing to do, pull it out, read it, and think about what it says—meditate on it or memorize it. Then read the Bible every day. Get to know God’s Word. It’s not as hard as most people think and God will always bless you through it.

Prayer Time

List prayer requests below and on the back of this page and pray for your students throughout the week.