

Bible Basics 2 (refresher w/ updates)

The purpose of this lesson is to give some history to what the Bible is and to encourage/ignite the desire of the students to read scripture daily and turn to scripture for inspiration. Use this as a guide for things to cover, but feel free to present any way you'd like. You can quiz them on some of these points as you begin to talk about them. And you're encouraged to share how the Bible has been a part of your faith walk as well. They need real life examples of how to implement scripture into their daily lives.

An icebreaker you can use here and then explain at a later point, is the telephone game.

A fun spin on this is to have them line up, give only the first person in the line a word that they must act out to the next person in line (with everyone else not seeing, and without speaking), then the second person acts it out to the third person, and so on, until the last person in line has to guess what the word was.

[Open in prayer]

God reveals Himself to us in 2 ways:

1. Sacred Scripture (the Bible)
2. Sacred Tradition (teachings)

The Church offers a whole arsenal of effective weapons we can use to combat the enemy, but one of the most powerful is the Bible, or the Word of God.

The Bible is described as being "living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12).

The Bible is also described as being the "sword of the Spirit" by Saint Paul (Eph 6:17).

2 Tm 3:14-17

"But you, remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it, and that from infancy you have known [the] sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith I Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work."

Pope Benedict talked about the Bible as "an inheritance, a testament handed over to readers so that they can put into practice in their own lives the history of salvation witnessed in the text [...] the people cannot exist without the Book, because it is in it that they find their reason for living, their vocation and their identity [...] The Word that leaves the mouth of God, witnessed in the Scriptures, returns to Him in the shape of prayerful response, of a living answer, of an answer of love."

The Bible:

- Contains various instructions regarding proper morals and behavior.
- Instructs us regarding what is necessary for salvation, historical information and it covers the good and the bad, the rich and the poor etc.
- Is to lead all persons to Christ and into His Church, the Holy Catholic Church and of course, thereby help us realize our ultimate purpose - to know, love, and serve God.
- Teaches us about God and His love for us.

** "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ!" - St. Jerome

An Overview:

What is the Bible?

- The word "Bible" is derived from the Greek meaning "books".
- The Bible is the Word of God in written form - Sacred Scripture

It's divided into two main sections:

1) Old Testament

- The old covenant – salvation through the Mosaic Law
- Record of salvation history from creation until the time of Christ
- Prophecies and signs of Christ

2) New Testament

- The new covenant – salvation through Jesus Christ
- Record of Christ's public life, Acts of the Apostles, Epistles plus Revelation
- Fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies

How it came to be - a little history:

- The first official list of Scriptures was compiled in 393 at the Council of Hippo, then again in Carthage in 397 and 419. The universal Church accepted this canon and used it without controversy for over 1000 years. The Church did not infallibly define these books until the Council of Trent, when it was called into question by Martin Luther and other Protestant Reformers, in 1556.
- Originally passed down by the Jewish people and early Christians via oral tradition (consider talking about the telephone game here)
- The Old Testament was written before the coming of Christ.
- The New Testament was written in the 1st century AD. It is estimated that the 1st word of NT was not authored until around 6 years – 2+ decades after Jesus' death that the last word was written around 10AD. It was not until the fourth century that the Catholic Church officially determined the list of inspired books of the Bible and formally placed all inspired books under one cover.
- Later recorded by hand on scrolls and parchments and eventually printed for wider consumption.
- Now comprised of designated books, translated and contextualized by Catholic scholars.
- The USCCB recommends the current version for us: **New American Bible Revised Edition**.

The Catholic Bible vs other Bibles:

- The Catholic Bible is under the care of the Pope and the Magisterium who brought us NABRE
- Other Bibles may have missing books, missing texts or changed meanings.

Omitted books from Protestant Bibles:

- Tobit
- The Book of Wisdom
- Baruch
- 2 Maccabees
- Two chapters in the book of Daniel
- Judith
- Sirach (also called Ecclesiasticus)
- 1 Maccabees
- Seven chapters in the book of Esther

How to read the Bible:

[“Ways to Read the Bible”](#) - Fr. Mike Schmitz video (8:17 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hb7nSL1gKU>

Matthew Kelly recommends we start with 3 books, reading one chapter a day (128 days ~ 4 months):

1. The Gospel of Matthew (28 days)
2. Genesis (50 days)
3. The Psalms (50 days)

- Citations: Book, Chapter, Verse (i.e. Jn (John) 3:16)
- A Footnote is an extra note at the bottom of the page which provides extra information about a particular sentence or section of a book.
- A cross-reference directs you to another verse with what you are currently reading.
(Show and explain what footnotes and cross-references are, using the reading for that day.)

Tips:

- Start by reading the Gospels. Use the bolded headers to find stories in the Gospel you're not as familiar with.
- Read the introductions for insights into what to expect in each book.
- Get books that have the readings and reflections of the day.
(The Magnificat, The Word Among Us, Life Teen resources, for example)
- Use Bible Apps
- Write notes on your mirrors with dry erase markers with reminders and/or scripture verses
- Use sticky notes on your nightstands, phones, or other places you'll see often
- Use phone alarms that remind you to read the Bible
- Start small, even 5-10 minutes a day
- Pray before and after reading the Bible. Ask God to provide you guidance or comfort through Scripture. He may speak to your heart based on what you read and what's going on in your life.
Lectio Divina

** If you don't have time to pray and read the scriptures, you are busier than God ever intended you to be.

** Remember you might be the only Bible someone will meet.

Lectio Divina (Psalm for the 3rd Sunday in Advent)

- Explain that you will be reading a passage from scripture several times, with the purpose of God being able to speak to them through it, and that you will discuss it afterwards.
- Ask the students to close their eyes and to put themselves within the story and see if anything in particular stands out to them.
- Open in prayer and invite the Holy Spirit to be present and to open our ears and our hearts to what it is that the Lord wants to reveal to us. (Read the passage slowly and reflectively)

Read the following reading aloud and then invite a teen to read the passage aloud. Encourage the teens to actively listen. After the second read-through, invite the teens to open their Bibles and silently read the passage a third time. Allow time to pause and reflect between read-throughs.

Psalm 146:6-10

The maker of heaven and earth, the seas and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, who gives bread to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free; the LORD gives sight to the blind. The LORD raises up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous. The LORD protects the resident alien, comes to the aid of the orphan and the widow, but thwarts the way of the wicked. The LORD shall reign forever, your God, Zion, through all generations! Hallelujah!

Then start having a discussion, asking them to share what it is that stuck out to them and if they know what the Lord is trying to tell them through that. Be prepared to have an answer yourself.

** Let them know that it is ok if they didn't get anything from this, but encourage them to pray with scripture like this on their own.

Then begin discussing the following questions:

- Oftentimes we ask God to change our situation, but God has designed the situation to change us. What might God be trying to teach you through the situations in your life right now?
- Gives, loves, protects ... these are some of the verbs attributed to God in the psalm. Would you use these words to describe God and your relationship with Him? Would you use other words?
- Sometimes we have a habit of thinking of God as this far away person, up in the clouds. How does this psalm describe God? Would you describe God that way? If no, how would you describe God?
- Do you invite the Lord into your struggles, or do you push Him away and try to handle everything on your own?
- Is it hard to wait for the Lord to fulfill His promises? How can you grow in the virtues of trust, hope, and patience during those times?
- The psalm shows how the Lord provides for our every need. How has the Lord provided for you lately?
- The Lord is active, which makes sense because God is love and love acts. How can we act in order to show others our love for them?

** Encourage your students to read the scriptures like this on their own.