



God's Word Is Our Foundation

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Key Themes

- God's Word is the foundation for our lives.
- God's Word is the standard we use to judge every thought.

Key Passage

- Psalm 19:7–11

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify the Bible as the starting point from which we make decisions.
- List qualities of God's Word.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

page 5

Students will prepare for Bible study by looking up and reading Psalm 19:7–11.



Studying God's Word

page 5

The Bible is perfect and true, the completely trustworthy starting point for understanding the world. Though our own viewpoint is distorted, the Bible gives us perfect wisdom.



Activity 1: Psalm 19 Study Review

page 9

Students review the lesson as they work with mini-posters that were used during Bible study and practice arranging them beneath their proper headings.



Activity 2: God's Word Gives Wisdom

page 10

Students will use goggles and an obstacle course to demonstrate that the Bible helps us see things God's way.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Cut strips of paper for each student to mark Psalm 19 in their Bibles.

- Strips of paper for each student



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one set of Psalm 19 mini-posters for the wall from the Resource DVD-ROM. Print on cardstock if possible.
- Print (on cardstock if possible) and cut out one set of the Quarter Overview display material from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Print one copy of Psalm 19:7–11 Scripture sheet for each student from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Poster putty
- Psalm 19 mini-posters for wall display
- Quarter Overview display material
- Psalm 19:7–11 Scripture sheets



PSALM 19 STUDY REVIEW

- You will use the Psalm 19 mini-posters mentioned above for this activity.

- Psalm 19 mini-posters
- Poster putty



GOD'S WORD GIVES WISDOM

- Smear petroleum jelly on one pair of swim goggles.

- Two pairs of swim goggles
- Petroleum jelly
- Two crackers
- Honey
- Horseradish or mustard
- Paper plate



Memory Verse

Psalm 19:7–9 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

In order to best prepare your heart and mind for the lesson this week, take time to read and meditate on Psalm 19, Psalm 86:11, and Psalm 119:105.

Ever since Satan in the form of a serpent cast doubt on God's instructions in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1–4), people have questioned the authority of God's Word. As descendants of Adam, we have inherited a sinful nature (Romans 5:12, Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8–10), which corrupts our human reasoning, questions God's authority, and prevents us from embracing the truth.

The Bible says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). This reminds us that we cannot move along the path of life without God's Word providing the light of truth to guide us. The Bible enables us to see the world as it truly is. Without the understanding that Scripture gives, we are lost in the dark, wondering how to accurately interpret good and evil, God and man, right and wrong. We are left with a distorted view of history, science, and society. The testimony of the Lord, however, is undistorted and sure (Psalm 19:7).

In Psalm 19, King David powerfully reveals the supremacy of Scripture. The perfection of the Word leads to conversion of the soul, the surety of the Word brings wisdom, the righteousness of the Word rejoices the heart, and the purity of the Word lights the way. The Word of God is clean, true, and righteous, producing the fear of the Lord necessary for repentance. Verse 11 summarizes the intention of the Word—that we may be warned to keep the commandments and achieve the promised reward.

Those who stand in awe of God, who are bound to Him without compromise, and who submit their minds to the teaching of Scripture are those who have a solid foundation and are able to connect the Bible to real life.

Our response to God and His Word should be to join the Psalmist in praying, "Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name" (Psalm 86:11).

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The proper role of apologetics is to confirm what we know of God through His Word. It is not a series of explanations attempting to prove that the Bible is true or that there is a God.

As Christians, we start with the assumption that God exists and that His Word is true. This serves as the starting point for our beliefs. This is called presupposi-

tional thinking because we are presupposing that what God says about Himself is true.

Jesus set the example for us in this way of thinking through His life, ministry, and teaching. All of Jesus's messages presupposed that the Scriptures were true.

He knew the Scriptures so well, learned men marveled (John 7:15).

He quoted Scripture as historical fact, referencing some of the most-attacked accounts in the Bible, including Creation (Matthew 19:4–5), Noah and the Flood (Matthew 24:37–39), Sodom and Gomorrah (Matthew 10:15; 11:23–24), Lot and his wife (Luke 17:28–32), and Jonah and the fish (Matthew 12:39–41).

He said the writings of Moses are more powerful than even someone rising from the dead (Luke 16:29–31).

He defended Himself against Satan with God's Word (Matthew 4:4–10).

In the same way, we must rely on God's Word as the starting point for all of our judgments and beliefs. Others may insist that we "leave the Bible out of it" when discussing God, creation, absolute truth, morality, science, or the Bible itself. However, we cannot and must not. Christians stand on the Word of God—it is our foundation (Luke 6:47–49). Everything we believe and how we live are based on what it says.

Disregarding the Scriptures would result in disaster because our foundation would be destroyed. Our starting point is and must always be the Bible. If we give up our starting point—our foundation—we will lose the battle before it begins. We must assume that the Bible is the trustworthy starting point from which we interpret all of life.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

We are no longer a culture that depends on God's Word. Today people doubt that the Bible's history is even true. The history of mankind shows over and over that when the Bible is rejected, then man himself becomes the measure of all things. How have we gotten to this age of man-centeredness?

Ever since the Garden of Eden, there has been a battle over the authority of the Word of God. The serpent asked Eve, "Did God really say that?" (Genesis 3:1). And the apostle Paul warns us that just as the serpent deceived Eve so our minds can be corrupted to believe lies that deny biblical truth (2 Corinthians 11:3).

The book of Genesis provides the foundation for the Bible and the gospel message of redemption. It wasn't too long ago that Genesis was taken literally and there was little controversy over its interpretation.

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the history of Genesis came under attack by scientists who began

to accept the idea of millions of years of history—rather than the thousands of years God records in His Word.

This interpretation brought compromise in the areas of biology—Darwinian evolution replacing God’s creation of kinds; geology—millions of years replacing the Flood history of Genesis; anthropology—man descended from ape-like ancestors replacing God’s creation of man in His own image; astronomy—the big bang replacing God’s amazing account of speaking the universe into existence.

As our culture has adopted these secular views, the Bible has been disconnected from reality and consequently is becoming less and less relevant. Even many in the church have separated “church” life from “all other” life. These compromises have torn down the foundations of biblical authority and trust in God’s Word. The result? Jesus gave us the answer when He asked Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (John 3:12).

Many no longer believe the earthly things that Jesus was referring to. And, consequently, even the heavenly things—redemption, hope, eternity with God, forgiveness, Christ’s resurrection, the Trinity,

and judgment—are no longer of any interest to us. It is time to get back to the foundational beliefs of the Word of God, beginning in Genesis.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Lord, I know that you have given me your Word so that I would have everything I need in order to trust and obey you. Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Help me to have great confidence in your guidance through Scripture and to pass along that confidence to those I teach. Help us to show honor to you through studying and valuing your Word. I pray that all of us will come to recognize the truthfulness of your Word, not only about the heavenly things, but about the earthly things, too.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- Distribute paper strips to students. Direct them to find Psalm 19 in their Bibles and mark the place with a bookmark. Encourage them to read the Psalm together quietly. Help students find the passage if necessary.



Studying God's Word

Place the poster of the questioning person from the Quarter Overview display on the wall as you say:

Here you are on the first day of our new Bible learning adventure—this little person represents you! Through our study over the next weeks, you'll hear the answers to some questions that you may have wondered about

like: *Place question bubbles from Quarter Overview display on wall around the person poster, reading them as you place them.*

- Why do we have to use the Bible at all?
- Who wrote it?
- Does it have mistakes?
- How did we get the Bible?
- Lots of religions claim to have God's Word, so how do I know this Bible is true?
- Does God really even exist?
- How can I know what God is like?
- What is the Trinity?

You may leave this display on the wall for the next six weeks as you answer these questions.

There are answers to all these questions. And we'll be explaining them this quarter.

READ THE WORD

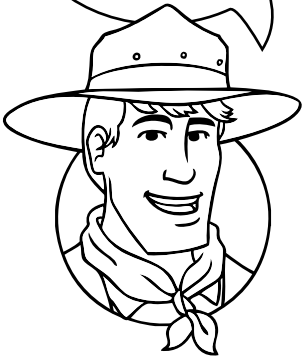
The best way to find answers is to begin with God's Word, the Bible. Let's look together at Psalm 19. You should have it marked in your Bibles. We'll begin reading at verse 7 and read through verse 11. Who would like to volunteer to read? *Have someone read this passage.*

Psalm 19:7–11

EXAMINE THE WORD

Very good. You know, it is good to read God's Word, but also great to study His Word. That is what we're going to do now. These sheets will help us to study this passage further. *Distribute pencils and the Psalm 19:7–11 Scripture sheets to the students.*

What are other names for God's Word?



Observe the Text

Now read the passage on your Scripture sheet again carefully to yourself. God's Word is described in five different ways.

? **Who can tell me what they are?** *Have the students circle the words on their sheets. Law, testimony, statutes, commandment, judgments.*

? **Great. Who can tell me what else this passage tells us about God's Word? There are eight words in these verses used to explain God's Word further.** *Use the set of Psalm 19 mini-posters you printed from the Resource DVD-ROM. Place the heading "God's Word is..." on the board. As students answer, place each of the appropriate words under that heading. Perfect, sure, right, pure, true, righteous, more to be desired than gold, sweeter than honey. Have the students circle these words on their sheets.*

We see that God's Word can be described in different ways. Let's look further and see how God's word changes us. *Add the "God's Word changes us" poster to the board.*

? **This passage tells us five things that God's Word does for us. Read your verses again quietly. Who can give me one?** *Have the students answer one at a time and circle the words on their sheet. Converting the soul, making wise the simple, rejoicing the heart, enlightening the eyes, by them your servant is warned.*

We can say that God's Word changes us in these ways. But what exactly does God mean by this? Let's see!

"Converting the soul" means His Word changes our desires. We no longer want the things we used to want. We want what will honor God in our lives. *Place this poster under the "God's Word changes us" poster on the board.*

"Making wise the simple" means that we must go to God's Word for wisdom. We really aren't very wise by ourselves. *Place this poster under the "God's Word changes us" poster on the board.*

"Rejoicing the heart" means His Word gives us joy that really can't be explained. *Place this poster under the "God's Word changes us" poster on the board.*

"Enlightening the eyes" means the Bible helps us understand—like light brightens a dark room, God's Word shines light in our brains, and we begin to know more about God. *Place this poster under the "God's Word changes us" poster on the board.*

"By them your servant is warned" means that God's Word warns us. It tells us the things we need to avoid—the things that displease our holy God. *Place this poster under the "God's Word changes us" poster on the board.*

- ? Who would like to read verse 11? *Have one child read verse 11.*
- ? What does the word “them” refer to? Look at your Scripture sheets—the words you circled earlier. The other words that refer to God’s Word. *Law, testimony, statutes, commandment, judgments.*
- ? One more question from our text. What happens when we obey God’s Word? Look at verse 11. Who can tell me? *There is great reward. Add both mini-posters “Obeying God’s Word gives us” and “Great Reward” on the board.*

Discover the Truth

Now that we have seen what the passage says, let’s talk about the main idea—God’s Word is perfect! Let’s read this together. *Have the students read the display under the heading “God’s Word is perfect, sure, right, pure, true, righteous, more to be desired than gold, sweeter than honey.”*

God’s Word also changes us, making us wiser and happier from the inside out. Let’s read this together. *Have the students read the display under the heading “God’s Word changes us . . . converting the soul, making wise the simple, rejoicing the heart, enlightening the eyes, by them your servant is warned.”*

And obeying God brings great reward. *Point to the words “Great Reward.”*

Sometimes we forget these wonderful truths about God’s Word and we think we can figure everything out on our own. But we really are not wise enough for that. We need to rely on God and His Word to help us with everything in our life.

We don’t know enough to make wise choices on our own. But God knows all things. We say He is omniscient. This means He knows everything—past, present, and future. This is what we call an attribute of God.

- ? There are many attributes of God and we will be talking about them throughout the year. Can you find the attribute *omniscient* on this poster? *Point to the Attributes of God poster and have the students read the definition together.*

God knows all things. And He has given us His Word so we can know Him better. We need the truth of God’s Word to help us understand the world we live in. We cannot rely on our own wisdom—it just isn’t good enough.

- ? So, when we have a question, where should we look for the answer? *The Bible, God’s Word.*

That’s right! We call this “putting on biblical glasses.” In other words, we begin to answer our question by looking in God’s Word to see what it says. *Demonstrate putting on glasses as you discuss this concept.*

Putting on biblical glasses helps us to understand the world we live in. When we believe what God tells us in the Bible, we can understand so many things much more easily. We can see much more clearly when we use God’s Word. Like we just learned from Psalm 19—God’s Word “enlightens our eyes.”

OMNISCIENT
(Refer to Attributes poster)

Now listen as I read a short story about two friends who asked the same question but came to very different answers.

Two friends lay in the grass listening to the birds sing, watching them soar, and wondering how these beautiful creatures came into being. Neither of the friends was born when the first birds appeared on the earth. And they wondered where and when they first appeared.

To find the answer, the wise friend began by looking to God's Word, where he read that God spoke and created birds each according to its kind on the fifth day of creation. He concluded that the beautiful birds were designed by God on that day.

The foolish friend ignored the Bible and read a book written by another person, someone who had lived long after creation and who was not there when the first birds appeared on the earth. His book said that birds first appeared over a million years ago and that they had evolved from dinosaurs into birds. Although the two friends both looked at the same birds, they came to very different conclusions based on the books they were reading.

? Where did each friend look for the answer to the question? *One looked in the Bible and one looked in a different book.*

The two friends had what we call different starting points. One began by using his "biblical glasses." He looked in the Bible and he believed that God would know the answer. After all, God is omniscient and He was there at creation. This friend had learned what God's Word says in Psalm 19.

? Will someone read verses 7 and 8 again? *Have someone read those verses from the handout.*

? What does it say about the testimony of the Lord? *It is sure.*

? What does it say about the statutes of the Lord? *They are right.*

These friends saw the very same things but had different starting points.

The truth comes from God's Word—it is sure and right.

We need to start there when we want answers to our questions.



Psalm 19 Study Review

MATERIALS

- Psalm 19 mini-posters from the wall
- Poster putty or tape

INSTRUCTIONS

Leave the main headings—"God's Word is," "God's Word changes us," "Obeying God's Word gives us"—on the board. Remove the mini-posters from under the headings and distribute them in random order to students. Call on the students one at a time to put the posters you have given them back under the appropriate headings.

Here are the mini-posters we just used to study Psalm 19. I've mixed them up and I'd like you to put them back under the proper heading when I call on you. *There are 14 mini-posters to distribute to the students. If you have more students than mini-posters, pair some of the students to work as a team. Call on the students to replace the mini-posters. After they have returned all of*

the posters to their proper locations, have the class read the Psalm 19 Scripture sheet again together.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Now we know how to answer the question, "Why do we have to use the Bible at all?" God makes it clear that His Word is very special and we need it for all of our questions. Psalm 19 is a reminder of just how perfect God's Word is. *Refer to the Quarter Overview Display.*

The Word of God is very special. We are called to read, study, and memorize it. That is what we intend to do this quarter and this year. Our memory verse for the next few weeks will be Psalm 19:7–9. Let's read that from the **Memory Verse poster.**

Refer to the Memory Verse poster.





God's Word Gives Wisdom

MATERIALS

- A pair of swim goggles with the lenses smeared with petroleum jelly
- A clean pair of swim goggles with clear lenses
- A paper plate with one cracker topped with honey and another topped with horseradish or spicy mustard

INSTRUCTIONS

Have a volunteer try to do things while wearing smeared goggles that make it difficult to see. The volunteer student will try to choose the best cracker to eat and navigate the room with blurry vision.

? **I need a brave volunteer for this demonstration. Who would be willing to complete a simple obstacle course while the class watches?** *Choose a student.*

The only catch is that you'll have to do it while wearing these goggles. *Have volunteer put the "smeared" goggles on while explaining directions to the rest of the class.*

Our volunteer has goggles on smeared with goo. The goo makes it hard to see. (Student's name) is going to do his/her best with a couple different tasks. Let's be quiet while our volunteer concentrates.

? **Do you think you can do it (student's name)?** *Yes/no.*

Here's your first task. *Have the student wearing the goggles sit at a table. Place the plate of crackers in front of him/her. Tell the volunteer that you have placed a plate on the table with two crackers on it. One cracker tastes sweet; the other is not so great. Ask the student to eat one of the crackers, using other senses to tell which one is the better cracker.*

Good job! Now let's see how (student's name) does navigating the room. *Rearrange a couple of chairs or tables so the student will have to move around them to get to the other side of the room. Guide the student to the starting point. Tell the student*

to do his/her best to get to the other side when you say, "Go." When the room is set and quiet, say, "Go."

When the student reaches the other side, have him/her remove goggles and congratulate the volunteer for the good effort.

? **Now, (student's name) would you be willing to do the obstacle course again using these goggles?** *Offer a clear pair of goggles.*

Now try to walk across the room. *Wait as student easily walks across the room avoiding obstacles.*

? **That was much better! What made the difference?** *He could see better. Have student remove goggles and take his/her seat.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

? **Can anyone guess what the first goggles—the blurred ones— represent in this demonstration?** *Various answers.*

These goggles made everything look blurry; you can hardly see anything out of them. That's how it is when we try to see things without our biblical glasses on. We will be very confused and have trouble finding the truth if we don't rely on the Bible. Making choices every day without knowing what God says in His Word is like making choices with these dirty goggles on. It just won't work.

The second pair of goggles—the clear ones— represent our biblical glasses. No more stumbling or bumping into things with those goggles on! That means we look at everything God's way—as explained in Scripture. When we see the world through the lens of Scripture, everything is so much clearer.





Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

The Bible is the starting point from which we make decisions. We need to learn to use it to guide our every thought. Psalm 19 tells us that God's Word is perfect, sure, right, pure, true, righteous, more to be desired than gold, and sweeter than honey! It is like no other book ever written.

God's Word can also change us. It changes our soul, it makes us wise, it brings joy to the heart, and it allows us to see more clearly—like light in the darkness. *Refer to your wall display as you recap these important points.*

We might think we know all the answers, but we don't know anything compared to God. God is the only one who is omniscient—He knows everything! But He has left us with a guidebook—the Bible—to help us understand better. If we refuse to use His Word to guide us we will never see things clearly. We need to look at all of life through biblical glasses, using the Bible as our foundation in everything.

God's Word will help all of us to make wise choices—choices that will honor God and glorify Him according to His Word. His Word will also help us to determine what is true and what is not as we hear and learn things. This is very important because so many people do not stand on the authority of the Bible. So, you need to know what it says, so you know who is telling the truth and who is not. Wearing our biblical glasses is so important. It takes commitment to read the Word, so you know what it says. I pray you will make a commitment today to wear Biblical glasses as you search for the answers in life!

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

This week you will be faced with many decisions, from how to treat your family, to what to watch on television, to what you ought to believe. You will be tempted to think that you know what is best for you.

? But where can you find the perfect truth? *The Bible.*

To know what God says, you will have to read the Bible. Each week you'll get a Student Take Home Sheet. It has a section called *Read the Word* that will encourage you to get into God's Word each day. *Pass out the Student Take Home Sheet. Explain the daily Bible reading guide.*

► Each lesson has a Lesson Theme poster which should be posted in the classroom to highlight the main point. These will be used for review in future lessons.

► Remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.

The Student Take Home Sheet also has our memory verse on it under *Learn the Word*. We will begin memorizing the verse next week. But I think you should be pretty familiar with it after today's lesson. Let's read it **together from the poster**. Refer to the *Memory Verse poster—Psalm 19:7–9*. Read it together several times and begin to memorize it together if you have time.

Get familiar with it, read it every day during the week, and we'll discover more about it next week.



MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 19:7–9 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for giving us His perfect Word which can make us wise.
- Ask God for the faith to believe what His Word tells us and for the wisdom to defend it.