Helper Handbook

Keepers of the Kingdom
Standing Strong in Today's Battle for Truth
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Helper Handbook
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Huzzah!

Hooray! It’s time to charge into medi-

eval times—a world brimming with

breathtaking castles, regal kings and

queens, fire-breathing dragons and

brave knights, and epic battles.

Amid the pages of *Keepers of the

Kingdom: Standing Strong in Today’s

Battle for Truth*, your knights will learn

how to be part of God’s kingdom and

wear the armor of God. Our Royal Maj-

esty’s kingdom is under attack, and we

must prepare for battle!

**Day 1: The Two Kingdoms**—We

will discover there are just two

kingdoms—the kingdom of light

versus the kingdom of darkness.

One is ruled by the good King, Cre-

ator God. The other is ruled by the

enemy, Satan.

**Day 2: The Belt**—We must decide our

side. Those who become citizens of

God’s good kingdom need to wear

the armor of God daily, starting with

the belt of truth that helps us have

an unshakable trust in God’s Word,

along with helping us live as truth-

ful people.

**Day 3: The Breastplate and Shoes**—

The breastplate helps God’s children

put on Christ’s righteousness and

grow in right living. The shoes show

us we can be at peace with God,

which helps us stand firm in our

Christian convictions and share Jesus

with others.

**Day 4: The Shield and Helmet**—The

shield and helmet protect us from the

enemy’s attacks—wrong thinking,

discouragement, and deception. We

will learn to discern!

**Day 5: The Sword and Prayer**—The

sword of the Spirit is the Word of

God, which helps us train our brains

to know, memorize, love, and obey

God’s Word. And as we battle, we

must pray!

Excitement and adventure await

from the first minute of each day

when kids meet in traveling troupes.

The troupes gather at the *Appren-

tices’ Assembly in the Great Hall*, a

high-energy beginning that includes

wacky intros, lively songs, a missions

moment, and prayer.

Then they’re off to rotate through

five fun sites:

**Truth Talks in the Keep**, where God’s

Word is taught in hands-on ways.

**Kieran’s Science and Crafts in the

Courtyard**, where kids are bedazzled

making special craft and science cre-

ations of their own.

**Tessa’s Treats in the Town**, where

kids can feast on tantalizing treats

and eats.

**Griffin’s Games on the Green**, where

there are plenty of old-world games

with new fun twists.

**Minerva’s Missions, Music, and

Memory Verses at the Manor**, where

kids can sing songs, learn their

memory verses with fun games, or go

in-depth with the mission moment

featuring Children’s Hunger Fund

and the Wild Brothers.

Finally, everyone heads back to the

**Apprentices’ Assembly in the Great

Hall** for the closing, where there’s

more singing, contest results, and the

highly anticipated daily drama. This

is situated in the royal chambers and

features some regal (and not so regal)
characters who are engaged in a classic battle between good and evil.

So prepare to step back in time, embark on the journey, and partake in one royally fun time!

Our Goal

We are so thankful for how God has chosen to use the Answers VBS programs over the past years! But why did we decide to embark on such an undertaking in the first place, and why are we still at it, by God's grace?

Our primary goal has always been to bring God glory by boldly and unashamedly proclaiming him to a strategic group—young people! From both a biblical and statistical point of view, young people are a big deal. They’re not only awesome—we love ‘em!—but they’re also dearly cherished by our Lord and tend to be softhearted toward spiritual things. Researchers generally agree most people become Christians when they’re children, so it’s apparent this age group is a huge mission field!

Children are loved by their Creator, and Jesus said to let them come to him (Luke 18:16). We want children to come to Christ and not be hindered in any way from doing so. To that end, we combine a biblically rich VBS with off-the-chart, irresistible fun. In a day and age when content sometimes suffers, we don’t want to sacrifice rich teaching. But it’s also crucial that the most exciting book in the world not come across as boring or irrelevant. We want to reflect our creative, inspiring, joy-giving God who made laughter and fun.

So why do we do it? We want kids around the world to hear about and personally meet our awesome God and understand how they can receive eternal life through repentance and faith in Christ Jesus. We believe VBS is a great way to introduce them to God, as it is one of the biggest outreaches of the year for most churches.

We pray you will find that every prayer prayed, every minute invested, every dollar spent, and every word spoken will bring God glory as you reach kids for Christ. Just remember—VBS is worth it. May God richly bless your VBS. We’re praying for you!

Frequently Asked Questions

The content of Keepers of the Kingdom may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit AnswersVBS.com/keeperfaq.
Throughout the VBS curriculum, various terms will be used. Here is a list of some of the most common terms to know.

**Traveling Troupes:** Groups of children (individual classes) named after people of the Middle Ages, such as Jesters, Bakers, or Troubadours.

**Troupe Leaders:** Group leaders who lead the traveling troupes from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required of this position.

**Truth Talks in the Keep:** Bible and apologetics lesson time in the most fortified part of the castle—the keep.

**Royal Trainers:** Teachers of the Truth Talks.

**Kieran’s Science and Crafts in the Courtyard:** Rotation site where crafts are made and science experiments are explored.

**Tessa’s Treats in the Town:** Indoor or outdoor location where snacks are served.

**Griffin’s Games on the Green:** Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for recreation time.

**Minerva’s Missions, Music, and Memory Verses at the Manor:** Rotation sites where kids can spend additional time learning songs, memory verses, and missions.

**Veritas Verse:** Daily memory verse. *(Veritas, a good medieval word, means “truth is mighty and will prevail” and “true, trustworthy.”)*

**Animal Pals:** Our friendly animal mascots that remind us of the main themes of each day.

**Toddlers:** 2–4-year-olds.

**Pre-Primaries:** 4–6-year-olds, or children ages 4 through those who have completed kindergarten.

**Primaries:** 6–9-year-olds, or children who have completed grades 1–3.

**Juniors:** 9–12-year-olds, or children who have completed grades 4–6.

For multi-age K–6 traveling troupes, we recommend using the material for the Primaries.
Devotion 1: The Two Kingdoms

Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Psalm 51:6

When Pilate questioned Jesus about the charges the Jews were leveling at him, Jesus replied, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

Can you hear the cynicism and sarcasm in Pilate’s voice as he asks dismissively, “What is truth?” and hands over Jesus to the Jews for crucifixion (John 18:37–38)?

Throughout the ages, people have echoed Pilate’s question, in sincerity as well as skepticism. In fact, the battle over truth is as ancient as the original sin. Take a look at the lies Satan told himself and those who rebelled with him against their Creator:

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!
You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven;
above the stars of God I will set my throne on high;
I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High’” (Isaiah 14:12–14, emphasis added).

Satan knew the truth—that there is none in heaven like the Creator God—but he exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and in the process became the father of lies (John 8:44). His first temptation of Adam and Eve was a continuation on the theme. He introduced error into God’s words (“Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” Genesis 3:1) and then bluntly lied about what God had said (“You will not surely die,” Genesis 3:4).

For the past six thousand years, we’ve been floundering, trying to find our own way and denying that truth comes from God and his infallible Word. Thankfully, God has called his children into his kingdom through the sacrifice of his Son. In his infinite grace, God has given us the armor we need to stand strong in this battle for truth and boldly serve our Creator.

This week as we examine the pieces of armor God has provided, ask yourself this: Where am I in the battle? Am I asking “what is truth?” along with Pilate, or do I know the difference between truth and error based on God’s Word?

“Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment” (Proverbs 12:19).