

— TRUTH TALKS IN THE KEEP —

TEEN/ADULT



TEACHER GUIDE

Course Overview

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
Title/Bible Content	The Two Kingdoms	The Belt	The Breastplate and Shoes	The Shield and Helmet	The Sword and Prayer
Bible Passages	Creator King and Prince of Darkness John 18:37-38; Ephesians 6:10-14	Savior King Genesis 1-3; Gospels; Ephesians 6:10-14	King Josiah 2 Kings 22-23; Ephesians 6:14-15	King Solomon 1 Kings 2-11; Ephesians 6:16-17a	King of Kings vs. Prince of the Air Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 6:17-18a
Lesson Focus	We're in a battle between two kingdoms.	Each child of the King needs to fasten on the belt of truth.	Put on the breastplate of righteousness and the shoes of peace.	Take the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation.	Take the sword of the Spirit and pray.
Apologetics Content	Absolute truth is true for <i>all</i> people, for <i>all</i> times, for <i>all</i> circumstances.	Build a biblical worldview to stand strong in the truth.	Put on what's right (Jesus' righteousness) then do right.	Guard against false teachings and temptations.	Be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in you.
Veritas Verses	Ephesians 6:10-11	Ephesians 6:14	Ephesians 6:15	Ephesians 6:16	Ephesians 6:17-18a
Rhyme Time	Of two, only one is true!	Decide your side!	Do right in God's sight!	Learn to discern!	Train your brain!
Animal Pals	Winifred ("Winnie") the Warhorse	Wily the Fox	Grimwald the Dragon	Byron the Ironclad Beetle	Skye the Peregrine Falcon
Kieran's Crafts in the Courtyard	Castle Catapult Kingdom Crown Juggling Balls	Suncatcher Cross Fox and Geese Board Game	Breastplate Tin Punch King Josiah Puppet Theater Dragon Sock Puppet	Faith Shield or Necklace Wordless Book	Train Your Brain Card Caddy Mini Sword
Kieran's Science in the Courtyard	What's Up? Light and Dark	Newton's Cradle Goin' in Circles	Force Field Pom-Pom Launcher	Spring Thing Balloon Jousting	Tests of Strength Battering Ram
Griffin's Games on the Green	Capture the Flag Jumping Jesters	Bucket Brigade Belt Bonanza	Dragon Dash Royal Games of Skill	Defend the Castle Hat Stack	Knights' Obstacle Course Sword Tag
Tessa's Treats in the Town	Kingdom Cookies Be Strong Barbells	King's Cups Fox Faces	Dragon Munchies (Versions 1 & 2)	Mini Pizza Shields Cracker Shields	Moat Floats Banana Swords
Cool Contests	Guess the Cannonballs	Team Tournaments	Royal Dress-Up Day	Design a Helmet	Mission Money Mania

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Teen/Adult Guide

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Handy Helps

Huzzah!

Hooray! It's time to charge into medieval 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 Majesty'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, Creator 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 truthful 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 **Apprentices' 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 creations 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.

Your Role

Your role as the teacher is outlined in the following pages. This is *your* guide. Read it carefully and prayerfully, using our suggestions combined with the ideas the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

So get ready! Get set! God is about to use you and your church to impact lives.

The best fit for this job is someone who enjoys teaching teens and adults and does the following:

- Plans and prepares the daily lessons for VBS.
- Enthusiastically engages in delivery of the lessons during VBS week.
- Prays over all aspects of this job.

Terms to Know

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.

Tips for Teachers

1. Pray and study God's Word. This is your most important preparation. "We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).
2. God has entrusted you with the awesome privilege of opening his Word and sharing it daily with the students. Walk worthy!
3. Read through all your lesson plans in advance. Begin to pray and plan now, and continue to pray during and after VBS.
4. In this guide:
 - » Materials for each activity are listed next to the activity.
 - » The "teacher says" portion is bolded.
5. It's helpful to get all the supplies ready in a box or bag ahead of time rather than gathering them day-by-day the week of VBS.
6. Attend the Gospel Workshop. Be prepared to share the good news of salvation!
7. Call the students by name. Name tags help with this.
8. Make sure to keep eye contact as you share the lessons, helping each student sense your warmth and caring.
9. Students will be at various levels of spiritual comprehension. Pray for the Lord to take the message and do with it as he wills: plant seeds, bring to salvation, or strengthen and grow those who are already believers.
10. Use your Bible throughout the lessons at the appropriate times. Show through your facial expressions and your actions the importance of the Scriptures.
11. Show love. All students, regardless of age or appearance, need to be loved. Greet them warmly each day, and always be ready with smiles, encouraging words, and a handshake.
12. Be all there. Try to leave behind whatever is currently going on in your life and focus your attention on the students under your care.
13. Notice the good. Students want attention and will sometimes resort to acting up in an effort to receive attention, even if it is negative attention. Be proactive by noticing and praising the things they do right. Be an encourager.
14. Students generally rise to the level expected of them, so challenge them to work on memory verses.
15. Have fun! Teaching should be a joy for you. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Truth Talks in the Keep

Students will be learning a lot from God's Word when they're at the Bible Lesson Time. You can download the videos and any visuals mentioned in this guide from AnswersVBS.com.

This session is approximately 100 minutes long, depending on what you choose to include, and is divided into these sections:

Introduce It! (5 minutes): Each day, the students will be greeted with something interesting that captures their attention and begins the teaching of the day's lesson.

Teach It! (30-35 minutes): The Bible teaching and apologetics content is presented during this time by a teacher.

Apply It! (60 or more minutes): This is the practical application time and includes a small group time and a video with discussion.

Remember It! (5 minutes): This is the memory verse review time.

Fill It! (15 minutes): Choose from the following to fill your time—snack (15 minutes), game (15 minutes), experiment (15 minutes).

Memory Verse Songs

We have partnered with Seeds Family Worship (contemporary, ESV) and Majesty Music (traditional, KJV) to create songs for each of the memory verses. They feature the full verses. Singing scripture is an excellent way for students to learn their Bible verses easily. You can use the songs (either video or audio) during the memory verse time in each lesson. The Music Resource USB, which

contains audio and videos, comes with the purchase of a Super Starter Kit and can also be purchased separately (12-0-057). You can also purchase and download the songs individually from our online store for use on a handheld device (AnswersBookstore.com). Student CDs in packs of 10 are available if you would like each student to have a copy of the songs (12-0-061 or 12-0-062).

DAY 1

The Two Kingdoms

BIBLE PASSAGE

Creator King and Prince of Darkness
John 18:37–38

APOLOGETICS FOCUS

Absolute truth is true for all people, for all times, and for all circumstances.

LESSON FOCUS

We're in a battle between two kingdoms.

Preparing for the Lesson

- Read John 18:37–38 and Ephesians 6:10–18.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials. For more information on absolute truth and the two kingdoms, visit AnswersVBS.com/keeperfaq.
- Pray.

Today's Lesson at a Glance

INTRODUCE IT!

The Spiritual Battle

TEACH IT!

Part 1: Two Kingdoms Contrasted
Part 2: Guardians of Truth Game

APPLY IT!

Group Discussion

WATCH IT!

Be Bold for Truth
(Download video from AnswersVBS.com)

REMEMBER IT!

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. Ephesians 6:10–11

FILL IT!

Use extra time to play a game, eat a snack, or enjoy a science experiment.

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 blatantly 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).

Introduce It!

THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE

Good morning! This week, we're going to learn about the armor God has given us to wear in spiritual battles. Castles were built to withstand attacks from hostile armies, and the strongest and most fortified spot in the castle is called the keep. When you're in the keep, you're in the safest spot, and you're also in the best position to ward off enemy attacks.

Just as people in the keep were prepared for physical attacks, we need to be prepared for spiritual attacks. And God's Word tells us about the armor he equips believers with. I'm excited to open up God's Word and share about this armor, so let's get started with a game!

Have students form a line in the middle of the room. I will be stating a series of choices, and you should go to the side of the room that represents your choice. As you state each of the choices below point to a side of the room representing that choice.

- Do you like salty treats (left side) or sweet treats (right side)?
- Do you walk fast or slowly?
- Do you prefer winter or summer?
- Do you prefer celebrating your birthday or Christmas?
- Do you like owning big pets or small pets?
- Do you prefer bringing your own lunch or buying lunch?
- Do you prefer reading or doing Sudoku?
- Do you prefer going to the mountains or the beach?
- Do you prefer being busy or having lots of free time?

Okay, now everyone can sit back down. Do so. With these questions, was there one answer that was more "right" than another? Allow answers/discussion. These questions had to do with preference, and there was no right or wrong answer. Can you think of other areas that are matters of preference where it's fine to disagree? Allow answers/discussion. Examples: favorite sports teams, movie genres, hobbies.

All of these are examples where there is no "right" or "wrong" answer. But there are other areas where there are absolutely true and absolutely false answers. In these cases, it's important that we be able to differentiate between truth and error or between right and wrong. These aren't areas of personal preference, but absolute, unchanging truth.

How can we know what is absolutely true? Allow for answers/discussion. This is something that people have asked for a long time. Can I get a volunteer to read John 18:37–38? Have a volunteer read the passage. There are lots of people claiming different, often opposite, things about what's really true. So how can we tell who we should listen to?

There are two sources of truth we can trust all the time. Have students look up the verses referenced here. God the Father (Numbers 23:19), God the Son (John 14:6), and God the Holy Spirit (John 16:13) cannot lie, God is the source of perfect truth. And because the Bible is God's Word to us, we can also absolutely trust that it is 100% true, too (John 17:17). God provides truth for all people throughout all times and in all circumstances. This will never change!

Sadly, just as God is the source of truth, there is a source of lies. Does anyone know what this is? Allow for answers/discussion. Satan, also known as the devil, is the source of lies (John 8:44). The Bible, our source of truth, calls Satan the father of lies. In fact, the Bible tells us how God and Satan are in a cosmic battle between two kingdoms—God's kingdom that is based on truth and Satan's kingdom that is based on lies.

Teach It!

PART 1: TWO KINGDOMS CONTRASTED

We're going to divide into two groups and compare these two kingdoms using the Bible. Each group will make a chart of their findings, and then we'll come back together to discuss them.

Divide into groups and give each group a poster board, a marker, and a **TWO KINGDOMS CONTRASTED HANDOUT**. They will read verses to contrast God's kingdom with Satan's kingdom and make a chart of their findings on the poster board.

After giving the groups time to discuss, have each group attach their chart to the wall. As time allows, briefly review their findings together. Refer to the Teacher Reference Sheet for the answers. A sample chart follows. Then finish by going over today's rhyme time: Of two, only one is true!

Good Kingdom	Bad Kingdom
Ruler: God (Psalm 47:7-8)	Ruler: Satan (1 John 5:19; John 12:31)
Kingdom of light (1 John 1:5)	Kingdom of darkness (Ephesians 6:12)
Always tells the truth (John 14:6; John 7:28)	Tells lies (John 8:44; Acts 5:3)
For us (Romans 8:31)	Against us (Matthew 13:39)
Creator/Protector of life (Genesis 1:1)	Destroyer of life (John 10:10)
Promise keeper (1 Kings 8:56; 2 Corinthians 1:20)	Promise breaker (Ephesians 5:6a)
Good (Psalm 25:8)	Evil (Matthew 6:13)
Loving (1 John 4:8)	Hateful (John 3:20)
Godly (Colossians 3:12-15)	Ungodly (2 Timothy 3:1-4)
Omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-10)	Not omnipresent (Job 1:6-7)
Unlimited power (Jeremiah 32:17)	Limited power (Matthew 4:10-11)
The only God (Psalm 86:10)	Not a god (a fallen angelic being), so not God's equal (Luke 10:18)

Even though there are two kingdoms, they're not equal. God is God! He's in charge. He's good. He can do anything! Satan, on the other hand, is bad and has limited power. He's not equal to God. He's an angel who was created by God and then rebelled against God. Satan can't be everywhere, seeing and knowing everything like God can. His kingdom includes the fallen angels who rebelled with him against God in the beginning.

PART 2: GUARDIANS OF TRUTH GAME

Project the Guardians of Truth game board on the wall. Use small post-it notes as game markers to attach to the wall as the teams progress. Print the Question Cards and the Color Cards on cardstock and cut apart. Print the Teaching Explanations and have them ready.

Lead the group in playing a round of Guardians of Truth. Explain that a guardian is a keeper of truth. In this game, they will try to figure out if the statements are true or if they are errors. An error is something that contradicts God's Word. Satan tries to get us to fall for tricks, lies, and anything contrary to God's ways. This game is designed to train their brains to think well so they know God's Word and are not easily tricked.

How to Play: Divide into two teams. These can stay the same all week or can change daily. Decide on team names (Knights vs. Squires, Jesters vs. Jugglers, Kings vs. Queens, etc.) and decide which team goes first. Read a question. Have the team decide together if they think it's a truthful statement or an error. If they're correct, they pick a color card and move to the corresponding color. Follow the directions on the game board. Play then moves to the other team. Go back and forth between the two teams, playing as long as time permits and making sure each team gets the same number of turns. Start a fresh round daily.

- Bibles
- Poster board and markers, 1 per group
- Tape or mounting putty
- [Two Kingdoms Contrasted handout](#)
- [Image: Of Two, Only One Is Truth](#)

- [Image: Guardians of Truth Game Board](#)
- [Guardians of Truth Color Cards, Question Cards, and Teacher Explanations](#)
- 2 post-it notes of different colors for game pieces

Allow time each day to play it. It's a fun, quick, and content-rich way to develop a biblical worldview in your students. It's important to share brief explanations to each question (on the Teaching Explanations Sheet) regarding why each statement is true or false.

Apply It!

Can you think of thirty good things you can thank God for? Make a list of as many as you can, remembering that every good thing is given to us by the good King, who is the ruler of the good kingdom.

Discuss how you might apply what you've learned with the following questions:

1. Have you ever been confused about whether a particular issue is about preference or whether it is about right vs. wrong?
2. Have you ever had to take a stand for absolute truth?
3. Where do you see evidence of the bad kingdom's lies in the culture today?
4. How can we fight those lies with the truth of God's Word?

Read the account of the temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4:1–11), which may be one of the clearest biblical passages about the war between Satan and God (in this case, specifically, God the Son). How can we learn from how Jesus fought Satan in this passage? (We will study this passage on day 5.)

Play a game of opposites that shows the difference between the two kingdoms. How many kingdom opposites can you think of in one minute? (Examples: God, Satan; for us, against us; light, dark). Set a timer and see!

Ask yourself these questions: Do I believe the Bible is absolutely true and trustworthy? Do I want to be known as a person of truth?

Watch It!

VIDEO—BE BOLD FOR TRUTH (Dr. Georgia Purdom, 27 minutes)

God and his Word are unchanging, infallible sources of truth. God's truth is under attack by Satan, the father of lies. As Christians, we should always be ready to defend God's truth. In this presentation, Dr. Georgia Purdom talks about the importance of being bold for the truth.

1. 1 Corinthians 4:10–13 mentions being “fools for Christ's sake.” Have you ever been made fun of because you believe the Bible? How did you react? If you haven't experienced this, how do you think you would react?
2. There are many reasons people give for doubting the Bible's history. How can we respond to them? The Bible is true because it was given to us by the God who cannot lie.
3. Is it possible to reject one part of the Bible and accept other parts; for instance, can we reject Genesis and keep the gospel? No; the history recorded in Genesis gives us the reason we need the gospel.
4. What are some of the consequences of doubting the Bible's history? Doubting the Bible in other areas, believing the Bible has contradictions, believing there are other ways to be saved.
5. Have you ever needed to defend your faith? If so, what happened?
6. Why is it bad to depict things like Noah's ark as cartoons? Because it makes it look like an unrealistic fairy tale.
7. What did Satan tell Eve to get her to doubt what God said? "Did God actually say?"

Media player

[Be Bold for Truth video](#)

Remember It!

As time allows, review the memory verse by playing the song from the Music USB. Or play a game such as the following: Use your arm as a volume indicator. Hold your arm out to your side and lower it for “soft” and raise it high for “loud” with variations on the loudness throughout. Students say the verse based on the volume you indicate with your arm. Change the volume before the students say the verse or as they’re saying it. Choose one or two students to also control the volume while the others say the verse.

Fill It!

Choose from the following activities to fill your remaining class time.

Game

Check the *Game Guide* for suggestions. Choose an appropriate game for your situation.

Snack

Instead of coffee and doughnuts, serve snacks that also teach an important point. Check the *Snack Guide* for more information on today’s suggested snacks.

Experiment

The experiments given in the *Science and Crafts Guide* are geared toward children. However, if your teens or adults would like to participate, check the guide for more information.