Thank you!

Questions about this sample?

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positiveaction.org/fourthedition
**Vocabulary**

- **Prophet** – Someone who shares a spiritual message
- **Scripture** – Sacred writings; another name for the Bible
- **Testament** – A promise or testimony; the name for the two major divisions of books in the Bible
- **Gospel** – “Good news” or teaching about Jesus
- **Epistle** – A letter; one of the 21 letters in the New Testament
- **Tabernacle** – In Scripture, a tent compound where God showed His presence to Israel
- **Atonement** – When something wrong is erased or canceled

1-A **Overview of the Bible**

The Bible was written down by different authors over a period of 1,600 years. The writers came from many different backgrounds. Some were poets, teachers, singers, kings, fishers, and **prophets**. They wrote in at least three languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

God worked through these writers to record His Word for us. In the Bible, God has given us history, prophecy, stories, sermons, letters, and even poetry. All of this **Scripture** teaches us about God.

Turn to the table of contents in your Bible and complete the following statements.

- The Bible has two main sections: the Old ____________________________ and the New.
- There are a total of ________ books in the Bible.
- The *first* book is called ____________________.
- The *last* book is called ____________________.
The Old Testament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Law</th>
<th>The Law</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>Leviticus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deuteronomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>Judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Samuel</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Kings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Chronicles</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Chronicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezra</td>
<td>Nehemiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther</td>
<td>Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbs</td>
<td>Ecclesiastes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song of Songs / Song of Solomon</td>
<td>Isaiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremiah</td>
<td>Lamentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezekiel</td>
<td>Hosea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obadiah</td>
<td>Jonah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micah</td>
<td>Nahum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nahum</td>
<td>Habakkuk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Habakkuk</td>
<td>Zephaniah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zephaniah</td>
<td>Haggai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haggai</td>
<td>Zechariah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The New Testament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gospels</th>
<th>History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romans</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Corinthians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephesians</td>
<td>Philippians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colossians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Thessalonians</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Timothy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus</td>
<td>Philemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrews</td>
<td>1, 2, 3 John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1-B One Author, One Message

Even though the Bible was written down by many different types of people, it has one true Author in God Himself. The books of the Bible seem very different, but they all support one unified message.

► Read 2 Peter 1:19–21 and answer the following questions.

◉ Since God's prophecy is like a light in the dark, what should we do? (v. 19)

◉ If Scripture didn't come from people's imaginations, how did it come to us? (v. 21)

► Imagine that a friend asks you to explain what the Bible is about in just one sentence. What would you say?

► To answer this question better, let's see how God reached out to people throughout the Bible. Read the following verses and answer the questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bible Reference</th>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exodus 29:45–46</td>
<td>In the Old Testament, God told the people of Israel to build a Tabernacle so that He would live among them. What did God want them to know?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romans 3:20</td>
<td>God also gave Israel His Law. Because of this Law, what do we know about?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leviticus 4:27–31</td>
<td>In the Old Testament, God gave people ways to show that they were sorry for their sin. If someone sinned but then offered the sacrifice God required, what would happen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So why don't Christians offer animal sacrifices today? Why don't we go to a Tabernacle to pray?
Read Ephesians 5:1-2 and answer the following questions.

◉ Who should we follow and imitate? (v. 1) __________________________

◉ What did Jesus Christ do for us? (v. 2) __________________________

Jesus died on a cross to take the punishment for our sin. He became the perfect sacrifice, and then He rose from the dead to show His power. He offers to forgive and save people who turn from their sin and follow Him. We don't need Old Testament rituals anymore.

When we read the Old and New Testaments together, we can understand the big message of the Bible. Scripture tells us how a perfect God loves sinful people like us. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, we can know God and be close to Him.

1-C Jesus the Word

All of Scripture points toward Jesus:

◉ The Old Testament promises the coming of Jesus.

◉ In the New Testament, the four Gospels record what He said and did before dying and rising again.

◉ The Epistles explain how we can be like Him.

◉ And the Book of Revelation promises that He'll come back one day.

Scripture is the written Word of God, and it shows us the living Word, who is Jesus. So there are two “Words” of God. We read one Word to know the other Word better.

▸ Read John 1:1. What three things does John say about the Word?

1. __________________________

2. __________________________

3. __________________________

▸ Continue reading in John 1:2-18 and fill in the following blanks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verses 1-3</th>
<th>The Word was God, and everything was created by Him.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verse 4</td>
<td>In the Word was _______________ , which was the light of everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 10</td>
<td>The Word was in the world, but the people did not _______________ Him, even though He had made everything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verses 12</td>
<td>Those received the Word would become _______________ of God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Look again at John 1:14-17. Which Word was John talking about in this chapter?
- The written Word
- The living Word
- Some other word

If the Word is like a light to us, what do you think the "darkness" is? (vv. 5, 9)

Finally, read John 1:14 again, along with Philippians 2:5-8. What do you think John meant when he wrote about the Word becoming “flesh”?

Since Jesus is fully God and fully human, He is the perfect bridge between God and His people. As the Living Word, Jesus brings us light and life. By studying Jesus, we can know God and enjoy His gifts better.

Winning Your Race

If you rely on the truth of God's Word, you can run your life's race well. No matter what challenges you face, God can be your strength.

What is something you want to learn about Scripture this year?

How do you want to change or grow?
Vocabulary

- **Wisdom** – The ability to use knowledge well; insight and understanding
- **Inspiration** – The way God worked through human writers to record Scripture; “God-breathed”
- **Doctrine** – An important teaching or belief, often by a religious group
- **Reproof / Rebuke** – To tell people that they have done wrong; a mild scolding
- **Idolatry** – The practice of worshiping idols or false gods
- **Covenant** – A binding agreement between two or more people; a promise

**2-A Pictures of the Word**

We won’t know God well unless we spend time learning through His Word. Scripture tells us who God is and what He’s like. He made us to know, love, and follow Him, but we cannot do these things well without reading the Bible. After all, if you love someone but never listen to what they say, do you really love them?

▶ The Bible helps us know God better in many ways. Match the passages below to their main ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God's Law can help our soul and give us <strong>wisdom</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture points to Jesus, who offers us eternal life. To know God the Father, we must listen to His Word.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>God's Word helps us follow His commands and avoid sinning against Him.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture can give us good <strong>doctrine</strong> and correct us from doing wrong.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The writers of Scripture used many different pictures to explain how God uses His Word. Read the following passages and fill in the blanks. Then draw a picture of each thing that the Word is like.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm 119:105–106</th>
<th>Matthew 13:8, 23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God's Word is like a ________________ that helps us walk along a dark path.</td>
<td>The Word is like a ________________ that grows in our hearts to produce fruit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrews 4:12</th>
<th>James 1:22–25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God's Word is alive and sharper than a ________________. It cuts deep to show our inner self.</td>
<td>Hearing the Word is like seeing our face in a ________________. It shows us what we should change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Think about all the passages you’ve read in this lesson so far. If you choose to study Scripture, how do you expect God to use His Word in your life?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
2-B The Boy King

After the reign of King Solomon, the Israelites split into two separate kingdoms: Israel in the north and Judah in the south. The following years were a dark time for both kingdoms. The leaders and the people worshiped false gods and did horrible things to each other. There were no godly rulers in Israel and only a few in Judah.

One of the good kings of Judah was named Josiah. He became the king of Judah when he was only eight years old.

▶ Read about how Josiah became king in 2 Chronicles 33:1–6 and 21–24.

◉ What kind of king was Manasseh? (vv. 1–6)

□______________________________________
□______________________________________
□______________________________________
□______________________________________

◉ King Manasseh eventually turned from his evil ways and asked God for forgiveness. Did his son Amon do the same? (vv. 21–23)  □ Yes  □ No

◉ Why did Josiah become king before he could grow up? (vv. 24–25)

□______________________________________

This did not seem like a good start for Josiah. His father had not taught him about God. The land was filled with idolatry and other wickedness. The people had forgotten about God’s Law. How could a child lead a nation like this?

▶ Josiah became a good leader for one reason—he decided to follow God. Read the following verses in 2 Chronicles 34 and mark the correct ending to each sentence.

**Verses 1–3: In the eighth year of his reign, Josiah chose to seek . . .**

□ allies from the nations around Judah.  □ the approval of wealthy people in Jerusalem.  □ the God of his ancestor, King David.
**Verse 3: Twelve years after he became king, Josiah started to . . .**

- [ ] build a new temple for God.
- [ ] destroy places where people worshiped idols.
- [ ] write a new book of Scripture.

**Verses 8–10: Later, Josiah helped gather money to repair . . .**

- [ ] the wall around Jerusalem.
- [ ] the House (Temple) of the Lord in Jerusalem.
- [ ] the high places he had once torn down.

**Verses 14–15: While the priest Hilkiah was working in the Temple, he found . . .**

- [ ] an old loaf of bread.
- [ ] the robes worn by Aaron the priest.
- [ ] the Book of the Law of the Lord.

**Verses 16–19: When Shaphan read before the king, Josiah . . .**

- [ ] tore his clothes in sorrow and anguish.
- [ ] jumped for joy.
- [ ] smashed his throne in anger.

When Josiah finally heard the Law of God, he was sad that his people had ignored it for so long. The Word of God changed Josiah and his kingdom.

### 2-C Josiah’s Humility

In the Book of Deuteronomy, God told His people about all the blessings He would give them if they followed Him. He also explained the curses that would come on them if they rejected Him and worshiped false gods.

▶ Read 2 Chronicles 34:19–21. After King Josiah heard God’s Law, why was he distressed?

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Josiah was humble enough to know that he needed help from God. He didn’t try to ignore God and do whatever he wanted. Instead, he wanted to help Israel follow the ways of the Lord.

► Continue reading in **2 Chronicles 34:22–33** and fill in the blanks below.

Josiah told Hilkiah the priest to ask God for answers. So Hilkiah went to the prophetess. She gave Hilkiah two messages from God:

1. God would bring terrible things to Judah—including all the described in the Book of Deuteronomy. This would happen because the people had rejected God.

2. Because Josiah himself before God, the Lord listened to him. The kingdom would not suffer as long as Josiah lived.

When Josiah heard God’s message, he gathered everyone at the Temple and read all the words of the Book of the. Then the king himself made a to obey God’s commands, and he told everyone else do the same.

From that point onward, Josiah led the people to follow their Lord. For the rest of the king’s reign, the nation served God and respected His Word.

**Winning Your Race**

Godly leaders need humility. We must be willing to seek help when we need it, and we must be willing to serve others when they need it. We all depend on God, so no one is too big or important to help people.

► Describe one way you like to help others.

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

► Explain how you could do this in a way that leads people to thank God—and not just you.

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________
Vocabulary

- **Revelation** – Something that is revealed or shown; God’s communication to us
- **Doubt** – To distrust; a feeling of uncertainty or unbelief about something
- **Parable** – A story that pictures or illustrates a lesson
- **Vineyard** – A place for growing grapevines

**3-A God Speaks to Moses**

The Bible is God’s *revelation* to us. He revealed His Word so we could know Him better. When we read through all this history, poetry, and prophecy, we should ask what it shows us about God.

Before Scripture was complete, people needed to listen to God in different ways. When God first spoke to Moses, He appeared in an unusual form.

▶ Read **Exodus 3:1–8** and answer the following questions.

◉ Before hearing God call to him, what did Moses see? (vv. 2–4)

◉ God told Moses to show respect in this place. What did Moses need to do? (v. 5)

◉ The Lord had seen the suffering of His people. What would He do now? (v. 8)

Suddenly, at the age of 80, Moses had a mission from God. The Israelites had lived in Egypt for 430 years. They spent much of that time as slaves. But God had compassion on them, and He told Moses to lead people out of Egypt to their own land.
When God called him, Moses didn't think he was a good choice. How did God answer Moses’ doubts and questions? Read the following passages and fill in the blanks of each summary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verses</th>
<th>Moses’ Doubt</th>
<th>God’s Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exodus 3:11-12</td>
<td>Who am I to go to Pharaoh and bring out the people?</td>
<td>I will be ____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exodus 3:13-14</td>
<td>What if they ask for the name of the God who sent me?</td>
<td>Say, “_________________________ has sent Me to you.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exodus 4:1-5</td>
<td>But the people will not believe me or listen to me.</td>
<td>God turned Moses’ ____________________________ into a ____________________________, and then changed it back again. This would be one sign of God's power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exodus 4:10-12</td>
<td>But I cannot speak well.</td>
<td>I will teach you what ____________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this conversation, how do you think Moses felt about what God asked him to do?


Finally, read Exodus 4:13-20 and answer the following questions.

- Who was sent by God to help Moses speak? (vv. 14–16) ____________________________
- Did Moses eventually decide to go? (v. 20)  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
Many years after Moses led Israel out of Egypt, God spoke to Jonah the prophet. God didn’t ask Jonah to help some poor, oppressed people. Instead, Jonah needed to share God’s truth with Israel’s enemies—the wicked, violent people of Nineveh.

Read the following passages and match each sentence to its correct ending.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Ending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jonah 1:1–3</td>
<td>When God first told Jonah to preach in Nineveh, Jonah . . .</td>
<td>A. Got on a ship heading for Tarshish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonah 1:8–12</td>
<td>When the sailors found out he was running from God, Jonah . . .</td>
<td>B. Vomited Jonah up onto land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonah 1:16–17</td>
<td>Before Jonah could drown, God . . .</td>
<td>C. Went to preach in Nineveh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonah 2:1–2, 10</td>
<td>After Jonah prayed for help, God spoke to the fish, which . . .</td>
<td>D. Made a huge fish swallow him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonah 3:1–3</td>
<td>The second time that God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, Jonah . . .</td>
<td>E. Said to throw him into the sea.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Read all of Jonah 4 and answer the following questions.

- When Jonah found out that God wouldn’t destroy Nineveh after all, how did he feel? (vv. 1–4)

- What do you think God taught Jonah with the plant that died?
Read each statement and mark if it applies to Moses or Jonah. Some statements may be true for both men or neither.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moses</th>
<th>Jonah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chosen to help save the Israelites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chosen to help save the Ninevites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was afraid to do what God said to do</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obeyed God’s commands without doubt or hesitation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told God his doubts and fears</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ran away from God’s calling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eventually asked God for help</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t want his audience to listen to him and change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3-C True Obedience

In Matthew 21:28-32, Jesus told a parable to some religious leaders who were very prideful. Read the story and mark the correct ending to each sentence.

**Verses 28-29: In the story, the first son . . .**

- [ ] worked in the **vineyard** as soon as he was told.
- [ ] said he wouldn't work, but later did, after all.
- [ ] said he wouldn't work and then relaxed all day.

**Verse 30: When the second son was told to go work, he . . .**

- [ ] worked in the vineyard as soon as he was told.
- [ ] said he wouldn't work, but later did, after all.
- [ ] said he would go to the vineyard, but did not.

**Verse 31: The son who actually obeyed his father was . . .**

- [ ] the first son.
- [ ] the second son.
- [ ] neither son.

**Verse 32: Jesus showed the religious leaders that they were like . . .**

- [ ] the first son.
- [ ] the second son.
- [ ] neither son.
The religious leaders claimed to obey God, but they didn't really. Jesus pointed to other kinds of sinners with a bad reputation. He said that even terrible people could enter God’s kingdom before prideful leaders.

**Winning Your Race**

God wants us to listen to His words and respond to them. It’s not enough just to know about Scripture. The Word can change us from the inside out. We should learn and do.

▶ Look again at James 1:22–25. If we hear the Word but don’t do what it says, who are we like?

The whole point of a mirror is to show you what you look like. Is your hair messed up? Do you have a smudge on your nose?

Scripture can do the same thing, but spiritually. The Word shows us who Jesus is. We can study Him and compare ourselves to His love and kindness.

▶ In the spaces below, list three reasons why it can be difficult to study God’s Word.

◉

◉

◉

▶ Choose one of the reasons above and explain how you might make it less difficult. How can you seek help? How can you study the Word despite the challenge?