



We Can Trust the New Testament

2

Key Theme

- The Bible is inspired by God.

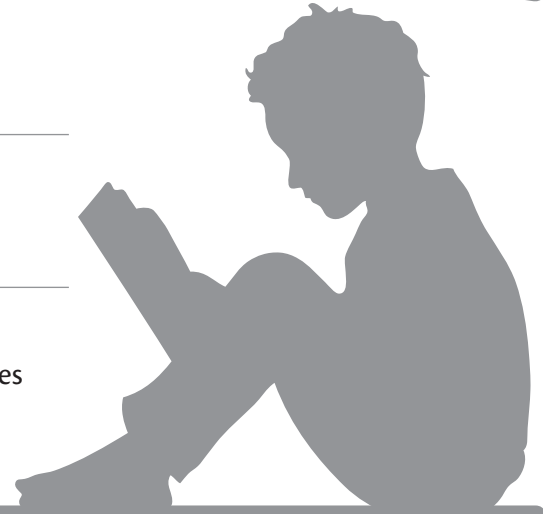
Key Passages

- John 14:25–26, 16:13a, 19:35, 20:31

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify who Jesus promised He would send to help the apostles record Jesus's life.
- Explain why we can trust the authors of the New Testament.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will review the memory verse by working on the Memory Verse Review Sheet and reciting the verse to a friend or to the class.



Activity 1: We Can Trust the New Testament Class Notes

Students will fill out the We Can Trust the New Testament Class Notes as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

Many of the disciples were eyewitnesses to the things Jesus did. Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit, the Helper, to help them remember all that He said and did. The things they wrote were inspired by God through the Holy Spirit. What they wrote in the Bible is true.



Activity 2: Tic-tac-toe Review

Students will compete in teams by answering questions and filling in the tic-tac-toe grid.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- ☐ Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- ☐ Memory Verse Poster
- ☐ Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student
- ☐ Pencils



WE CAN TRUST THE NEW TESTAMENT CLASS NOTES

- ☐ Print one We Can Trust the New Testament Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- ☐ We Can Trust the New Testament Class Notes for each student
- ☐ We Can Trust the New Testament Class Notes Answer Key
- ☐ Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- ☐ Study the Prepare to Share section.
- ☐ Go Before the Throne.

- ☐ Student Take Home Sheets



TIC-TAC-TOE REVIEW

- ☐ Print one copy of the Tic-tac-toe Review Questions from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use.
- ☐ Mark a tic-tac-toe grid on the floor with masking tape.

- ☐ Tic-tac-toe Review Questions
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Small paper plates in two different colors for two teams



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW GAME (OPTIONAL)

- ☐ Print, preferably onto cardstock, and cut out one copy of the Memory Verse Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- ☐ Save the cards for use in future lessons.

- ☐ Memory Verse Cards printed on cardstock
- ☐ Tape or poster putty



Memory Verse

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above along with this background.

We recognize the New Testament to be the history of the coming of Jesus Christ the Messiah, His teaching and ministry, and the founding and building up of the Church through His apostles. It spans approximately 90 years, beginning shortly before Jesus's birth and ending with the book of Revelation, written while John was on the island of Patmos shortly before he died. But how do we know the New Testament is true? How do we know we can trust the testimony of what is written as God's Word?

First, we find that Jesus empowered the apostles through the Holy Spirit to recall, write, and interpret the life, words, and deeds of Jesus. Jesus said the Helper, the Holy Spirit, would come in His name and would teach His apostles all things and bring to their remembrance the things Jesus said to them (John 14:26). The apostles would receive special revelation and record that truth through the Holy Spirit who would guide them into all truth (John 16:13).

Second, we have it on the authority of the apostles that the words recorded for us are true. They recorded these truths as eyewitnesses. The apostles were ordained by Jesus to spread the message of the gospel, and we have the writings from them and their close associates. Peter verified this emphatically when he wrote that they were eyewitnesses of Jesus's majesty. This is further verified when Peter expressed that they heard the voice of God Himself acknowledge the beloved Son with whom He was well pleased (2 Peter 1:16–18).

The Apostle John also verified himself as an eyewitness to the events he wrote about: "This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true" (John 21:24).

Not all of the 27 books of the New Testament were written directly by one of the Twelve Apostles. For example, James, the brother of Jesus, wrote a letter to the church. Mark, who wrote the Gospel of Mark, is mentioned various times in the New Testament, so we know him to be an eyewitness. And the Apostle Peter reflected on Mark as his "son," indicating a close relationship and giving credibility to the words Mark wrote (1 Peter 5:13). Luke, writer of the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, was not an apostle but a very close companion of the Apostle Paul and travelled with the other apostles (2 Timothy 4:11). It isn't certain who

wrote the book of Hebrews, but the writer verifies that what he spoke of had been confirmed by those who heard the Lord (Hebrews 2:3).

As the New Testament letters began to be gathered and read throughout the church, we find evidence that they were already being described as "Scripture," being included as part of the established Old Testament canon. The Apostle Peter made such a claim about Paul's writings in 2 Peter 3:15–16 when he put Paul's epistles in the same category as "the rest of the Scriptures."

A similar confirmation is seen when Paul, in his letter to Timothy, quoted from Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7, indicating that both statements are from the Scriptures (1 Timothy 5:18). Paul apparently considered Luke's writings to be on par with those of Moses! And we should, too. As the Holy Spirit directed these various writers, they recorded these truths to produce the inspired original manuscripts of the New Testament (2 Peter 1:19–21). These writings were then spread throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa as copies were transferred from local church to local church. The collection of writings was acknowledged by Christians and used as a source of teaching by the early leaders—including those we call the Church Fathers. Early in the first and second centuries, there was a small degree of disagreement about which letters and books should be included in the canon—the official list of the inspired texts—but these differences were discussed and resolved as the true writings from the Holy Spirit were made clear and acknowledged.

Now God's Word is closed. We can be confident that the 27 books of the New Testament canon combined with the 39 books of the Old Testament is the completed Word of God. God clearly warns us that we are NOT to add to His Word or take away from what is written (Revelation 22:18–19). This warning from almighty God sits as a capstone at the end of the New Testament—a stone we dare not move.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The Christian faith is not a blind faith—we have much evidence to support the things that we believe. Although we do not have the original manuscripts (the documents actually penned by the authors) of the New Testament, we do have many documents that were copied from those originals. The originals were written at the direction of the Holy Spirit, and we refer to them

as the original inspired manuscripts or autographs. But if all we have today are copies of copies of copies, wouldn't there be a few copying mistakes?

Yes, but it turns out having lots of copies is a good thing. We have so many copies of the New Testament letters and Gospels that we can compare them to one another and come to an understanding of where the errors were made during the copying and what the originals said. Most of the errors, which are called variants, are very easy to correct or are insignificant. For example, sometimes words or phrases got switched (e.g., Christ Jesus vs. Jesus Christ) or there are variant spellings (e.g., similar to the variation in the English spelling of honor and honour). Some areas are more difficult to deal with, but we have literally thousands of documents to help us understand what the original manuscripts written in Greek said. This is called textual criticism and gives us great confidence in the Bible we already trust by faith.

Consider this simplistic example of how textual criticism works: If we found manuscripts A, B, and C, could we determine what the original statement was?

A: Justin took his friends to the beach.

B: Justine took his friends to the beach.

C: Justin took his friends to the sea.

The variants can be examined: beach or sea; Justin or Justine. Since all three include "his," it seems Justin is the correct reading over Justine. Since there are two instances of beach, sea seems to be the error, but it really doesn't change the meaning.

The manuscript copies were made by handwriting on animal skins, papyrus, and various forms of paper developed through the centuries. That means that the originals, written in the same way, would have deteriorated. And the many manuscripts we have are in various states of decay, with only a few being complete. Later, the invention of the printing press allowed the Bible, in its various forms, to be copied much more quickly and with fewer errors, but these are not considered manuscripts since they were not written by hand. There are over 5,800 partial or complete manuscripts in the original Greek language, not to mention around 10,000 in Latin and 9,000 in various languages like Coptic, Armenian, and Syriac.

On top of all this, there are regularly new finds that help us understand the history of the Bible we hold in our hands. One fascinating area of new discovery came from Egypt. Many masks and other burial items made of papyrus and linen bonded together with plas-

ter (similar to papier-mâché), called cartonnage, have been found. These were decorated in various ways, but they often used old scraps of papyrus that had writing on them. Recently, portions of the Bible have been found by carefully dissolving and separating the sheets in these masks. And these are some of the oldest manuscripts known!

The fact of the matter is, the historicity of the Bible is obvious to anyone willing to fairly investigate it. And by the power of the Holy Spirit, the truth can transform the lives of people who put their faith in Christ. The Bible is uniquely self-consistent and extraordinarily authentic. It has been confirmed countless times by archaeology and other sciences. It possesses divine insight into the nature of the universe and has made correct predictions about distant future events with perfect accuracy. When Christians read the Bible, they cannot help but recognize the voice of their Creator. The Bible claims to be the Word of God, and it demonstrates this claim by making knowledge possible. It is the standard of standards. And we can trust it and the life-giving message of the gospel it contains.

[Note to teacher: When talking about dates around the turn of the first century, many people become confused, thinking the first century would be the period from 100–200, when this is actually the second century. Try to use phrases like "just 50 years after Jesus died" or "within a few years from when the Apostle John died" to help clarify these dates, especially for younger students.]



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, your Word is precious to me. I am confident it is true. The passages I read for this lesson reassure me of the truth of the New Testament.

They give me detailed reasons for my faith in your Word that I can pass on to my students, family, and friends who may have doubts. Forgive me for entertaining any doubts when I've heard reports about other books outside the canon of Scripture that cast a shadow on the truth of your Word. To you be all glory, omniscient Lord! Thank you for revealing yourself to us through your true Word and for giving us minds to grow in our knowledge of you.

► Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will review the memory verse by completing the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, they will recite the verse to a friend or to the class.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided a worksheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



We Can Trust the New Testament Class Notes

MATERIALS

- ☐ We Can Trust the New Testament Class Notes for each student
- ☐ We Can Trust the New Testament Class Notes Answer Key
- ☐ Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print one class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Do not work ahead. We'll do it together when I tell you.

After filling out each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we read the Bible and complete the class notes today, we will get answers to the question, "How do we know we can trust the New Testament?"



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Refer to Lesson 1 Lesson Theme Poster. Jesus had come! In the Old Testament, God spoke through His prophets telling that the Messiah, our Savior, was coming. That day finally did come. The one God had promised was here. It was Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Many people rejoiced at His birth.

John 14:25–26

- ? Who did we talk about last week? Who was the man who rejoiced when he saw the baby Jesus? *Simeon.*

Simeon knew about Jesus through the Old Testament. We read about Jesus and His life in the New Testament. But how do we know the things we read in the New Testament are true? Let's see if the Bible can tell us!

First, we'll read from the book of John. John is in the New Testament. John was an apostle, one of Jesus's very closest friends. Listen carefully while I read. *Read John 14:25–26 emphasizing the answers to the following questions.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

OK. Now let's try to answer a few questions about those verses so we can see what God is saying to us.

Observe the Text

In these verses Jesus was speaking to His disciples. He knew that He would soon die on the Cross and leave them. He was giving them some instructions and encouragement.

- ? Jesus talked about someone who would come after He died. Who was that? *Re-read John 14:26. The Helper, the Holy Spirit.*
- ? Yes. The Holy Spirit would come. And who would send the Holy Spirit? *John 14:26. The Father.*
- ? The Father would send the Holy Spirit. Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Helper. Look at #1 on your class notes. What did Jesus say about the Holy Spirit? Will someone read that? How will you answer it? *Assign a reader. Come. Complete #1 using a word from the Word Bank.*
- When the Holy Spirit, the Helper came, He would do two things. Listen carefully as I read this. Listen for the two things. *Re-read John 14:26 emphasizing the answers to the questions.*
- ? What was the first thing this verse told us the Holy Spirit would do? *Teach them all things.*
- ? What was the second thing Jesus said the Holy Spirit would do? *Re-read John 14:26 if necessary. Bring to their remembrance all Jesus was saying.*
- That's right! The Holy Spirit would teach them and help them remember the things Jesus had told them and the things God wanted them to write down. They had been with Jesus for three years now. And there was a lot to think about! The Holy Spirit would help them.
- ? Now let's go to #2 on your class notes. What else did Jesus say about the Holy Spirit? Can someone read that? Use the Word Bank to find the answer. *Assign a reader. Teach. Complete #2.*

► Use the New Testament History Poster included with your teacher kit as you teach the lesson. Emphasize that Jesus ministered only 3 years and He lived only about 35 years. Yet His life changed the world forever and brought eternal life to all who believe.

- ? And what about #3? Who can read that? What is the answer? *Assign a reader.*
Help. Complete #3.

Jesus said the Holy Spirit would come to the disciples to help them and teach them.

That isn't all Jesus said about the Holy Spirit. Listen as I read John 16:13.
Read John 16:13a emphasizing "Spirit of truth" and "all truth."

John 16:13a

- ? This verse is about the Holy Spirit. What did Jesus call Him? The Spirit of what? *John 16:13. The Spirit of truth.*

Yes. Jesus would send The Holy Spirit, also called the Spirit of truth, to teach and help the disciples.

- ? Can someone tell me the answer to #4 on your class notes? *Assign a reader.*
Truth. Finish #4.

- ? What would this Spirit of truth do? What would He guide them to? *Re-read John 16:13a. All truth.*

Jesus was leaving them soon. He knew it was time for Him to die. But He would send the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit would guide His apostles and friends into all truth.

- ? What was the Holy Spirit, the Helper, going to help the disciples do? What would the Holy Spirit help them write? *Allow discussion.*

The Holy Spirit would help them write about Jesus's life in the New Testament and the Gospels. He was the Spirit of truth, and He would guide them in all truth.

- ? Find #5 on your class notes. Can anyone read that? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Life. Finish the word on #5.*

The Spirit of truth, the Helper, the Holy Spirit would help the disciples to write about Jesus's life. We can trust that what is written in the New Testament is true because God the Holy Spirit helped them to remember what to write.

Discover the Truth

Let's review for a minute. Look at #1–3 on your class notes. Jesus told His apostles that after He was gone—after He died and rose from the dead—the Father would send the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would do three things:

1. Come to help them.
2. Teach them.
3. Help them remember.

Wise
(Refer to Attributes Poster)

OMNISCIENT
(Refer to Attributes Poster)

He said the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. The Holy Spirit helped them write about Jesus's life.

God knew what He was doing! He wanted us to know about Jesus! He is all-knowing. And He is also wise beyond what we could ever imagine!

? When I say God is wise what do I mean? Wise is an attribute of God. Look at the Attributes of God Poster. What does wise mean? *He does everything perfectly without mistakes.*

? And when I say God is all-knowing, what attribute am I talking about? *Allow discussion. Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Omniscient.*

We can trust that God is wise and completely omniscient. We know that what is written in the Bible is exactly what God wanted us to know, and it is perfect, without mistakes. We can trust the New Testament.



READ THE WORD

And, we know we can trust the New Testament for another reason. You see, a lot of the New Testament and the Gospels were written by Jesus's apostles—people who were His close friends or people who knew His friends. Let's look in the Bible at the book of John.

John 19:35

John lived at the same time as Jesus. John was a very close friend of Jesus. He traveled with Jesus, prayed with Jesus, learned from Jesus, and he watched as Jesus died on the Cross. Listen to what John said in his Gospel. *Read John 19:35 emphasizing the answers to the following questions.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's answer some questions about that!

Observe the Text

? First, who was John writing about? Who is the book of John about? *Jesus.*
Yes. The Gospel of John is John's testimony about Jesus.

? What is a testimony? Can you tell me? *Allow discussion.*

When someone gives a "testimony" he is telling others what happened to him, or what he saw with his own eyes. And John said that his testimony about Jesus is true. He knows what he wrote is true because he saw it all happen!

? And why did John want to write the truth about Jesus? Listen again for the answer. *Re-read John 19:35. So that you may believe.*

Yes! John wrote about Jesus. He was helped by the Holy Spirit. And the Bible says that everything John wrote was true. John wanted people who read the Bible to believe.

But what did John want us to believe exactly? Well he tells us that, too.

Listen as I read John 20:31. *Read John 20:31 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

John 20:31

? John wanted us to believe something about Jesus. What was that? Who is Jesus? *Re-read John 20:31 if necessary. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God!*

? What if we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. What will we have? *Life in His name.*

Life in His name. John is talking about eternal life. John wanted people to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. John knew that everyone who believed in Jesus and trusted in His name would have eternal life. Faith in Jesus, the Son of God, brings forgiveness of sins and being with God forever in heaven! That is why John wrote!

? Let's go back to the class notes. Who can read and answer #6 for us? *Assign a reader. Friend. Complete #6.*

? Can someone read #7 on your class notes? What did John want us to believe about Jesus? How would you answer that? *Assign a reader. Son. Fill in the answer.*

? And what about #8? What will all who believe in Jesus have? *Assign a reader. Name. Complete #8.*

Discover the Truth

John wanted to be sure that his readers knew that he walked with Jesus. He was an eyewitness to Jesus's life. He learned from Jesus. What he wrote about Jesus was true: Jesus is the Son of God! And everyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life.

Many of the other men who wrote the New Testament also knew Jesus personally. They were His friends, too! They walked and talked and ate and slept and prayed and traveled with Jesus. Some of the other authors may not have met Jesus face to face, but they knew the men who were Jesus's friends. We can trust what they wrote, too!





Tic-tac-toe Review

MATERIALS

- ☐ Tic-tac-toe Review Questions
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Small paper plates in two different colors

INSTRUCTIONS

Using masking tape, put a tic-tac-toe grid pattern on the floor large enough for a paper plate to fit inside each square. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team different colored paper plates—blue and red. Ask each team a question. If Blue Team answers correctly, students can place a plate on the tic-tac-toe grid. If the team cannot answer correctly, allow Red Team to answer. If no one gets the answer, give the correct answer and repeat the question later. Repeat the process above until a team gets tic-tac-toe. Continue play as time allows. Encourage the students to look at their class notes, the Lesson Theme Poster, and other posters that may help them during the game.

We're going to play a fun game to see how much you remember from our lesson today. As I read the question, one person from each team will answer. If he gets the answer

right, he may place a paper plate on the tic-tac-toe grid. If the answer is incorrect, the other team may try to answer. You may use your class notes and the posters to help you. So, let's get to it! *Play game.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Great job everyone! We have a winning team.

God's Word is true. The Holy Spirit helped men—some who even walked with Jesus—to write down the New Testament Scriptures for us. Our all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful God gave us His Word for us to study and apply to our lives. There will be times in your life when people will let you down with their words. They will not always tell the truth. You may be disappointed. But God's Word is true! And you can always trust it. Just like you can always trust God!





Memory Verse Review Game (Optional)

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

If you find you have extra time, please consider reviewing the memory verse with your class using this activity.

MATERIALS

- ☐ Memory Verse Cards printed on cardstock
- ☐ Tape or poster putty

INSTRUCTIONS

Print, preferably onto cardstock, and cut out one copy of the Memory Verse Cards. Tape the cards in order on the wall or board as you recite the verse together. Review the verse as you point to each card. Choose a student to remove one card of his choice. Recite the verse again.

We're going to practice our memory verse. Let's say it first. *Point to each card as you say each word and have the students repeat.*

Good job! But wait! I'm going to ask one of you to come up and take one of our cards down. Then we'll have to say the verse without that card! Are you ready? *Continue to choose students to remove cards one at a time reciting the whole verse between each one.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

The New Testament is true! We can believe what it says. And like our memory verse says, we can believe that Jesus is the Word. He is the Son of God who came to earth as a baby. He is full of grace and truth. And everyone who believes in Him will have eternal life.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

We know that the New Testament is true. Before Jesus died, He promised the Father would send the Helper, the Holy Spirit, who would teach the apostles. The Spirit of truth—which is another name for the Holy Spirit—would guide the writers of the New Testament in all truth. The Holy Spirit would help them to remember all that God wanted them to write about Jesus and His life. The Holy Spirit is God, and God never makes mistakes, so we can be sure the New Testament is true!

Many of the men who wrote the New Testament were personal friends of Jesus! They lived with Jesus and talked with Him. They wrote down what they knew and what they had seen—their testimonies. And because the Holy Spirit guided them, we can be confident that the events they wrote down for us are true.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

We can trust what the Bible says. It's the only book that is totally true. It's very important to read God's Word so we can know Jesus better. The New Testament tells us the truth about Jesus Christ—His life, death, and Resurrection. It tells us how Jesus came to save sinners like you and me. When Jesus died on the Cross, He took the punishment for sinners. And the Bible tells us that if we turn away from our sins and believe in Him as our Savior, we will live with Him forever in heaven one day!

It will take time to learn what's in the Bible and understand it really well. Right now you can start by asking someone at home to read parts of it to you and help you understand it. That would be a great start! The whole Bible is God's Word. You can trust it to be true!



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

- Praise God because we can always trust His Word to be true!
- Thank God for the faithful men who wrote the Bible and for the Holy Spirit who brought to their remembrance what Jesus had said.
- Pray that your students will one day grow up to love the Bible and want to read it every day!