Preschool–Grade 6

The Books of the Bible

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: The Bible is God's Word: 66 books given by God, all pointing to Jesus. Knowing it well is how we grow, and loving it means doing what it says.
Bible passage: 2 Timothy 3:14–17, 2 Peter 1:21, Luke 24:25–27, 44–45 and 2 Kings 22:1–13; 23:1–3. Students read them out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" *2 Timothy 3:16 (KJV)* and "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." *Psalm 119:105 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read the passages. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Group Race (5–10 minutes)

Split the class into two teams. Write the ten groups on the board: Law, History, Poetry and Wisdom, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets, Gospels, History (Acts), Paul's Letters, General Letters, Prophecy. Call out a book name (Leviticus, Nehemiah, Proverbs, Ezekiel, Micah, Luke, Acts, Colossians, James, Revelation, Ruth, Haggai). The first team to point to its right group gets the point. Say: "These groups aren't in the Bible text. They are a study help. But they make finding your way around God's Word much easier."

2. Bible lesson: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: 2 Timothy 3:14–17 and 2 Peter 1:21. Old words in these passages:

- **assured of** (3:14): sure of; **from a child** (3:15): since you were little
- **inspiration of God** (3:16): God gave the words; **profitable**: useful
- **doctrine**: teaching what is true; **reproof**: showing what is wrong; **correction**: setting it right; **instruction in righteousness**: training in right living
- **perfect** (3:17): complete; **throughly furnished**: fully equipped
- **spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost** (1:21): spoke as God's Spirit carried them along

Tell them: many writers wrote over many years, like Moses (Deuteronomy 31:9) and Paul (Romans 1:1), yet one God gave every word. 39 Old Testament books, 27 New Testament books, 66 in all.

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Read out loud: Luke 24:25–27 and 24:44–45. Old words: **slow of heart** (24:25): slow to believe; **expounded** (24:27): explained; **opened he their understanding** (24:45): He helped them understand. Notice: Jesus spoke of the things written "in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms" (24:44) and showed them Himself in "all the scriptures" (24:27).

Read out loud: 2 Kings 22:1–13. Old words: **reign**: rule as king; **scribe**: a writer and official; **rent his clothes** (22:11): tore his clothes in sorrow; **enquire of the LORD**: ask God; **hearkened**: listened and obeyed. Josiah became king at eight (22:1). In his eighteenth year as king, Hilkiah the high priest found the book of the law in the house of the LORD (22:3, 8). Josiah heard it, tore his clothes, and sent to ask the LORD, because their fathers had not obeyed it (22:11–13). God said Josiah's heart was tender (22:19).

Read out loud: 2 Kings 23:1–3. Josiah read the whole book to everyone, "both small and great," and made a **covenant**, a solemn promise, to keep God's commandments "with all their heart and all their soul." All the people stood to it.

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. 2 Timothy 3:16 names four things scripture is good for. Which one is hardest to receive? Why?
2. 3:17 says scripture makes us "throughly furnished unto all good works." What "good works" do you need to be ready for this year?
3. Jesus showed His followers Himself in all the scriptures (Luke 24:27). How does knowing the whole story help us understand Jesus better?
4. God's book was lost in His own house until Hilkiah found it (2 Kings 22:8). How can a Bible be "lost" in a home today, even sitting on a shelf?
5. Josiah didn't just hear God's book; he obeyed it and led others to obey it (23:3). What is one thing you already know from the Bible that you need to start doing?
6. Timothy knew the scriptures from a child (2 Timothy 3:15). What habit would help you know them well by the time you are grown?

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4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Read both verses together. Old words in Psalm 119:105: **thy** means your, **unto** means to or for, and **path** means the way you walk, the choices you make. Students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say 2 Timothy 3:16 this week; keep working on Psalm 119:105 next week too.

5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "The scriptures make us 'wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3:15). God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). Notice 'according to the scriptures': the Old Testament pointed to it. We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it in Acts: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

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6. Activity: My Bible Plan (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share.

1. **Where:** a time and place you can read your Bible each day.
2. **What:** pick a book to start. Mark (a Gospel, 16 chapters) is a good first book; then try Acts or Psalms.
3. **How:** after each chapter, write one thing it shows about God and one thing to do (James 1:22, "be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only").
4. **Who:** someone who will read with you or ask how it's going.
   Or use the books of the Bible word search, crossword, maze or worksheet (vbshq.com/bible-stories/books-of-the-bible).

This week: follow your plan every day, and learn one group of books in order each week.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for Your Word. All scripture comes from You. Open our understanding like You did for Your followers, give us tender hearts like Josiah's, and make Your Word a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Help us be doers of Your Word. In Jesus' name, amen."

About the groups: the group names are a common study help, not Bible text; the book names and their order are those of a King James Bible. "Major" and "minor" prophets mean longer and shorter books, not more or less important.

About "moved by the Holy Ghost": there is one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). The Holy Ghost is God's own Spirit, the same one God who was manifest in the flesh in Jesus (1 Timothy 3:16).

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