

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

LESSON SNAPSHOT



BOTTOM LINE:

Paul wrote several letters encouraging the church to stay unified in Christ.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will memorize the next 6 books: 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

KEY PASSAGE:

Philemon 8-21, Paul's instructions regarding a runaway slave who is now a Christian

MEMORY VERSE:

"God has breathed life into all Scripture. It is useful for teaching us what is true. It is useful for correcting our mistakes. It is useful for making our lives whole again. It is useful for training us to do what is right." - 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

SUMMARY:

Paul also wrote letters to friends. These letters not only teach us more about following Christ, they also show us the importance of having friends to encourage our faith.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for friends who help us grow in Jesus.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

MEMORY VERSE



“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.” 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

“God has breathed life into all Scripture. It is useful for teaching us what is true. It is useful for correcting our mistakes. It is useful for making our lives whole again. It is useful for training us to do what is right.” 2 Timothy 3:16 (NirV)

LARGE GROUP:

Write each word of the verse on a poster board. Bring enough kids on stage so each kid can hold one of the words. Then have the kids unscramble the words and put them in order on stage so it can be read by the audience.

SMALL GROUP:

Read the memory verse aloud for each kid. Each time you do, leave out one word. See if the kids can tell you what word you left out.

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SKIT

LETTERS TO FRIENDS

ITEMS NEEDED:

None

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

1M, 1F

CHARACTERS:

Mike and Elaine - Bible fans

Mike and Elaine enter.

MIKE: Hey guys, I'm Mike.

ELAINE: And I'm Elaine.

MIKE: And we are Bible fanatics!

ELAINE: And today, we are going to talk about the rest of Paul's letters.

MIKE: Last week we learned about some letters that Paul wrote to the churches he helped to start, from Rome to Ephesus to Corinth and more. This week, we're going to look at the rest of Paul's letters - letters he wrote to friends.

ELAINE: Most people who still write letters don't write letters to big groups of people. They write them to friends, and Paul was no exception. These letters are a little more personal. Some a lot more personal. They teach us more about how we should live as Christians, but they also teach us the value of having good Christian friends and teachers to encourage our faith.

MIKE: First up are the letters to the Thessalonians. These letters were written to the church at Thessalonica, but they are more personal than the other church letters. The Thessalonians were undergoing a lot of persecution for their faith. Paul wanted to remind them that Jesus would one day return and their suffering would end. For the two letters to the Thessalonians, count one and two on one hand, then make a T with your hands, putting the left hand over top of the right.

SKIT

ELAINE: The next two letters were written to Timothy, a student of Paul's who became a pastor. These letters are full of advice for young Timothy and pastors today. For these two letters, we'll count one and two on our fingers, then make a T with our hands again - only this time, put the right hand on top.

MIKE: The next letter was written to Titus. Titus was traveling with Paul when he went to the island of Crete and started a new church. Titus stayed to help lead the new church, and Paul wrote this letter of advice to Titus. Let's "tie" a bow in the air with our hands to remember the name Titus.

ELAINE: The last letter is the most personal one of all. Paul wrote this letter to a man named Philemon about a runaway slave that belonged to Philemon. The slave's name was Onesimus, and Paul wanted Philemon to not only forgive his slave for running away, but welcome him back as a fellow believer. It's a short letter, but powerful.

MIKE: Onesimus was a slave who Christ set free from sin. Put your wrists together, then break them apart as if breaking chains. That will help us remember Philemon.

ELAINE: Can you guys review these six books with me? Here we go! Count 1 and 2 and make a T for Thessalonians. 1 and 2 and another T for Timothy.

MIKE: Tie a knot in the air for Titus, then break the chains to remember Philemon.

ELAINE: I'm so proud of you guys! We're so close to the end!

MIKE: Next week, we'll learn the last books of the Bible, but until then, keep practicing, Genesis through Philemon.

ELAINE: See you next week, gang!

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

HAND MOTION LESSON

During the middle 10 lessons of this series, there will not be a traditional object lesson. Instead, use this time to teach and reinforce the hand motions that go with each book.

Last week we learned the letters that Paul wrote to six churches. Today, we're going to learn six more letters from Paul that get a little more personal.

These letters start with two Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica. The Thessalonians were being persecuted for their faith, and like Paul, they suffered for believing in Jesus. Paul wrote to them about Jesus' return to encourage them to keep their faith. Count 1 and 2 fingers, then make a T with your hands, left hand on top, to help you remember 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

1 & 2 Timothy were written to a man named Timothy. Timothy was a student of Paul's who became a pastor. These books are full of great advice for pastors. Count 1 and 2 fingers, then make a T with your hands, right hand on top to remember 1 and 2 Timothy.

Titus was also a pastor and a friend of Paul's. Paul wanted to encourage Titus just as he did Timothy with this letter. Pretend to "tie" a knot in the air with your fingers to help you remember Titus.

Last we come to the letter to Philemon, a letter so short, it's not broken into chapters! This is a letter about a runaway slave. Put your wrists together and pull them apart as if breaking chains free from your wrists to remember Philemon.

Great job, guys. Now let's review these letters a few more times.

Repeat the letters, then go back and review all of Paul's letters 2-3 times then review from Genesis to Philemon to wrap up the lesson.

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LARGE GROUP GAME



ADDRESS IT

ITEMS NEEDED:

Buzzers (whoopee cushion, bike horn, or table bell make good buzzer alternatives)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose two players for this quiz game. In this competition, you will give the names of states, and the kids will try to buzz in to give the proper abbreviation for those states if they were going to mail a letter. Give 10 questions, with a tiebreaker if needed. The kid with the most points wins a prize.

VARIATION:

Instead of a quiz game, print poster boards with state names and abbreviations, and let the kids try to match them up.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

Paul wrote personal letters to encourage his fellow believers and young pastors to live godly lives.

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LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

Paul wrote several letters encouraging the church to stay unified in Christ.

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Kids will memorize the next 6 books: 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

KEY PASSAGE:

Philemon 8-21, Paul's instructions regarding a runaway slave who is now a Christian

INTRO:

Last week we learned the first seven letters written by Paul as they appear in the Bible. These letters all have one thing in common: they were written to churches, to large groups of people. They are full of encouragement and wisdom for people who want to live godly lives and follow Christ.

But you know what's odd about those letters? They're written to groups of people. Not one person, but persons. Can you imagine writing a letter to Chicago? Or Dallas? Or how about Gatlinburg? "Paul, a disciple of Jesus Christ, to the people of Gatlinburg. Grace and peace to you... and thanks for the box of salt water taffy!"

Most people who write letters write to one person, whether it's an email, a note passed in class, or a letter they plan to put in the mail. Paul was no different. He had personal friends, friends who were pastors, students, and simple fellow believers, and the last six letters can all be classified as personal letters.

These personal letters have something in common with the letters to the churches. They are filled with wisdom for godly living and service. But they also teach us something more. These letters show us how important it is to have not only good Christian friends, but teachers like Paul to help us grow in our faith.

Let's listen in to the letter to Philemon, a very personal letter Paul wrote concerning a man named Philemon and another named Onesimus.

READ PHILEMON 8-21

LARGE GROUP LESSON

MAIN POINT:

Philemon was a wealthy man and a believer who owned slaves. One of those slaves was a man named Onesimus, who ran away from his master and made his way to see Paul. While Onesimus was staying with Paul, he gave his life to Jesus. Becoming a Christian changed Onesimus, and he knew that one of the things he had to do was set things right with Philemon.

Paul wrote this letter to help Onesimus and Philemon. He wanted Philemon to forgive Onesimus, and he hoped Philemon would do one thing more. He wanted Philemon to welcome Onesimus not as a slave, but as a brother in Christ. This is a letter about forgiveness, about doing the right thing, and about loving other believers.

Paul was a great teacher whose wisdom helped Philemon and others to live for Jesus. These letters can help us to become better servants and leaders, and they will remind us that we need teachers and friends like Paul to help us grow our faith as well.

DRIVE IT HOME:

There are six personal letters in the New Testament, but they were sent to four places. The first went to the church of the Thessalonians, a group of people who suffered greatly for their love of Jesus. At the time Paul wrote these letters, the persecution of the church was very bad. People were being imprisoned and killed for their faith. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians to stay strong and remember that one day, Jesus would return!

The next three letters are very similar. They were written to two dear friends and former partners who traveled with Paul. Timothy and Titus both left Paul to become pastors of churches. Paul wanted Timothy and Titus to be wise leaders. He wrote to them about how to manage their churches, but he also wrote to them about how they could keep their faith strong in such a demanding job.

Finally, we come to Philemon, a short but powerful letter about forgiveness and doing the right thing. It isn't always easy doing things God's way, but it is always RIGHT. Onesimus did the right thing, seeking his master's forgiveness, and while we don't know what happened when this letter was delivered, I can imagine Philemon did the right thing as well.

1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Six letters, four addresses, endless wisdom for God's people. Let's learn these letters well, and let's ask God to give us friends and mentors like Paul to help us grow our faith.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for friends who help us grow in Jesus.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

ICEBREAKER:

Who can go through the entire Old Testament with the hand motions?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

2 Timothy 3:16

Read the memory verse aloud for each kid. Each time you do, leave out one word. See if the kids can tell you what word you left out.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Philemon 8-21

What did Paul ask Philemon to do?

Why did Onesimus decide to go back to Philemon?

Why is it important to have friends and mentors to help us grow our faith?

ACTIVITY:

Review the hand motions with the kids for the personal letters.

1 & 2 Thessalonians - Count 1 and 2 fingers, then make a T with your hands, left hand on top

1 & 2 Timothy - Count 1 and 2 fingers, then make a T with your hands, right hand on top

Titus - Pretend to tie a knot in the air with your fingers

Philemon - Break your hands apart as if breaking chains free from your wrists

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Give us friends and teachers to help us grow in Jesus.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

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POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

TRUE OR FALSE

Paul wrote a letter to Onesimus.

FALSE

Paul encouraged the Thessalonians by talking about Christ's return.

TRUE

Paul wrote two letters each to Titus and Timothy.

FALSE

Titus and Timothy were both working to share the gospel like Paul.

TRUE

We all need friends who can encourage us to grow in Jesus.

TRUE

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MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With Your Kids

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: PAUL'S PEN PALS



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

Paul also wrote letters to friends. These letters not only teach us more about following Christ, they also show us the importance of having friends to encourage our faith. Philemon 8-21, Paul's instructions regarding a runaway slave who is now a Christian.



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Ask the kids to teach you the hand motions they learned to help them remember Paul's personal letters. See if they can remember all of the books of the Bible from the beginning.



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- To whom did Paul write personal letters?
- Why is it important to have friends and teachers to help you grow in Jesus?
- Can you think of at least one person who has helped you grow your faith?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"God has breathed life into all Scripture. It is useful for teaching us what is true. It is useful for correcting our mistakes. It is useful for making our lives whole again. It is useful for training us to do what is right." 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIRV)



PARENT TIME:

What you need to know:

Paul's personal letters are full of encouragement and advice. They also remind us that we need spiritual mentors and encouragers in our lives. Thank God for the special people in your life who have helped you grow your faith, or ask God to send you someone like Paul if you need one!

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CRAFT ACTIVITY

Each week, the kids will cut out and make “book spines” for the books of the Bible they learn that week. The goal is by the end of the series, they will be able to put all of these crafts end to end on a wall or other display at home to show all the books of the Bible lined up, if they so choose.

Use construction paper to cut out the book ends. They can either do different colored strips for each book and paste them onto another piece of paper, or they can use one color and use a marker to draw lines to divide the books. Help them write the book names on each book “spine” in order.

This week's books are:

- 1 Thessalonians
- 2 Thessalonians
- 1 Timothy
- 2 Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon