



# COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Best Seller / Week 2

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

## BOTTOM LINE

The Bible brings things to light.

## GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand that the Bible can make their life better.

## SCRIPTURE

*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path (Psalm 119:105 NIV).*

### CONTEXT OF SCRIPTURE

Sometimes life can feel like we're walking in the dark. But God's Word is a lamp that helps us see our next steps. The psalmist in this verse is saying that God's Word can illuminate the next steps—the next decisions—that we need to make to continue following Him.

## TEACHING OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

So, confession: My life is mostly just Googling stuff and watching YouTube videos.

Let's face it. We are all looking a lot of stuff up.

### TENSION

In some ways, all the new ways of searching for information have replaced the old ways.

Just about everything we buy comes with a manual, which we only read when we need to.

And for many of us, the Bible can feel that way, too.

In fact, at some point, I bet all of us have asked ourselves this question (though most of us don't ask it in church): *Why would I read the Bible when I can just look up the answer to everything?*

If you've ever tried to find a specific answer in the Bible, you know that it isn't easy.

So the question is, how should we use the Bible? If it's supposed to help us know how to live, but you can't just Google the answers to life, how exactly is this supposed to work?



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## TEACHING OUTLINE

### TRUTH

Last week we learned that the Bible isn't a book, but a collection of books written by a number of authors over a long, long period of time.

One of those books is a collection of prayers and songs, things people said in response to their relationships with God.

You've walked in the dark before, haven't you?

The psalmist tells us that life can be a lot like that. We don't always know which way to go or what to watch out for.

But the Bible brings things to light.

The Bible doesn't help you see the answer to just one question you have. It helps you light up the whole path.

When you take time to read the Bible and understand what it means, it will keep you from walking in darkness.

### APPLICATION

Unfortunately, getting the big picture, learning the framework for how to live, is never as quick as just searching for an answer or asking Siri.

The Bible is something you have to spend time with. And as you spend time with it, you'll begin to know it.

Don't get caught up in the trap of believing the Bible is a manual you only go to when things are about to fall apart. Treat it as a book you have been invited into by a Friend. In fact, the Bible actually is an invitation. It's an invitation for you to get to know God.

This week, I want to give you some real, actual, start-here steps on how to read the Bible.

### LANDING

A lot of people think reading the Bible is too hard. But try living life in the dark. That's a lot harder than reading what God wrote down for us.



# TEACHING SCRIPT

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## BOTTOM LINE

THE BIBLE BRINGS THINGS TO LIGHT.

## INTRODUCTION

1 MINUTE

So, confession here: My life is mostly just Googling stuff and watching YouTube videos. Anybody with me? Okay, I'm kidding. Sort of. But seriously, when I don't know how to fix something, I YouTube it. When I'm in an argument with someone about which running back had more career yardage, I Google it. When I want to know how to get somewhere, I Google it. When I want to know which restaurants around me have the best *chile con queso*, you guessed it, I Google it!

Let's face it. We are all looking a lot of stuff up. I know I am. Turn to the person next to you and tell them what search engine you use the most and for what.

## TENSION

4 MINUTES

In some ways, all the new ways of searching for information have replaced the old ways. We don't read books or manuals or even instructions anymore because our brains are trained to wait and search for information when we need it.

Here's what I mean . . . have you ever been on an airplane and read the safety information? I haven't. But at the first sign of turbulence, you bet I'm fumbling through the seat pocket trying to find that card that tells me how my floating seat cushion will save my life.

Or what about the instruction manual that came with your phone? Did you read it? No. Did you even know you had one? I bet you just started messing with your phone to figure it out. Now, of course, if your phone messes up, you better believe you'll be searching for how to fix it.

# TEACHING SCRIPT

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Just about everything we buy comes with a manual, which we only read when we need to. When we're desperate. When we need help.

*(Communicator Note: Show a cell phone manual, a car manual, and a few other long instruction manuals.)*

And for many of us, the Bible can feel that way, too.

We think of the Bible like our manual for life. It's what God included with the package of being a human. It came in the box. **And oftentimes, it gets put away or tossed aside like all the other manuals we have.** We see the Bible like all those other manuals:

- It's hard to understand.
- It has tiny print.
- It's long.
- It's hard to know where to start.
- And it's not totally necessary unless there's an emergency.

So it's easier to just leave it on the shelf. **In fact, at some point, I bet all of us have asked ourselves this question (though most of us don't ask it in church): Why would I read the Bible when I can just look up the answer to everything?**

We've all kind of felt that. We've all assumed we'd wait until we need it and then Google the answer or maybe look it up in an actual Bible. But there's a problem with that, isn't there? If you've ever tried to find a specific answer in the Bible, you know that it isn't easy.

**Sometimes you don't know where to look.** When you're depressed, you can't open to the Bible's table of contents and look up, "How to stop depression." When you need to forgive someone, there's no clear "how to" section on forgiveness. When you want to know how far is too far with your boyfriend or girlfriend, you can't turn to a specific page and see exact instructions for what's allowed and what isn't.

**Sometimes you don't even know what to ask.** Most of the time we don't know we need answers until we've already stumbled into a mess. So then what? When you can't see the future and you don't know what's headed your way, how do you search for the answers ahead of time?

It's really hard to know where to look for answers when you need them. And it isn't really all that helpful to Google, "What does God think about . . ." Or "What should a Christian do when . . ." because the Internet is a weird place. The person who wrote that advice may be awesome. Or they may be a 10-year-old on their mom's iPhone. You just don't know. Now, I'm not hating on the Internet. I'm just saying you should be smart about where you go for advice on how to live your life.

So the question is, how should we use the Bible? **If it's supposed to help us know how to live, but you can't just Google the answers to life, how exactly is this supposed to work?** And does it work? Really?

## TRUTH

4 MINUTES

Last week we learned that the Bible isn't a book, but a collection of books written by a number of authors over a long, long period of time. In fact, the authors who wrote the Bible would have called their writings letters or records of their own story. It wasn't until later that these writings were collected and bound together as the Bible we have now.

One of those books is a collection of prayers and songs, things people said in response to their relationships with God. We call that book *Psalms*. Not only is it the longest book in the Bible, but inside, you'll find the longest chapter, too. Don't worry. We're not going to read all of it today, but this super-long chapter of the Bible, Psalm 119, is all about this very topic of why and how God's Word can actually be helpful in our lives.

Verse 105 says it like this.

*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path (Psalm 119:105 NIV).*

You've walked in the dark before, haven't you? At my house that usually ends with me stepping on a LEGO. Ever stepped on one of those things in the dark? It's the worst. And the only thing worse than trying to find your way through the dark in your house is trying to find your way through the dark outside. It can be painful. It can be scary. You can get lost or run into things you weren't expecting.

And the psalmist is saying life can be a lot like that. We don't always know which way to go or what to watch out for. It can be a lot like walking in the dark. But God's Word is a lamp that helps us see our next steps. It helps us see what we couldn't see before. In other words:

**The Bible brings things to light.**

It doesn't help you see the answer to just one question you have. **It helps you light up the whole path.** Think about it. You don't go get a flashlight when you're halfway down a dark road. No, you need it with you to light up the *whole* path so you don't trip.

And when you get to know God's Word, that's what happens. **When you take time to read it and understand what it means, it will keep you from walking in darkness.** It will keep you from being surprised by life. It will keep you from tripping over things that can hurt. It will literally give you enough light to see the next moves for your life. When you get to know and understand the Bible, it can give you enough light to know what to do about the big life questions that you can't just Google. Questions like . . .

- Should I date him/her?
- Should I be friends with them?
- Does it even matter if I cheat or not?
- What do I do when I'm hurt?
- What do I do when I'm scared?
- How do I deal with my parents?

# TEACHING SCRIPT

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- My dating life?
- My stress?
- My future?

Listen, life is full of moments with too many “what ifs” to just search for an answer online and hope the person who wrote that Wikipedia page was right. You need a way to see the whole picture. You need a way to see what you can’t see. And that’s what the Bible does. It brings things to light.

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## APPLICATION

4 MINUTES

Unfortunately, getting the big picture, learning the framework for how to live, is never as quick as just searching for an answer or asking Siri. But lots of good things happen over time, which take time. You don’t learn to play guitar overnight, but when you do learn, it’s awesome. You don’t get a six-pack by doing sit-ups the night before camp. But if you do sit-ups over a period of time, you get your six-pack and you know it’s worth it.

The Bible is like a six-pack. You can quote me on that.

Just kidding.

But it does work a similar way. You have to spend time with it. And as you spend time with it, you’ll begin to know it. And when you know it, you’ll find yourself in fewer positions where you need to Google an answer. It will be like you are Google. You’ll be the one with the answers to life stored up in your brain ready for whatever comes your way.

It won’t happen overnight.

It’s not a magic pill.

But it is possible.

You can see the next move.

You can be ready for difficult paths.

You can walk in the light without fear of darkness in your life.

And knowing God’s Word, the best seller of all time, is the key.

So get started this week. Don’t wait until you feel like you’re about to trip over life.

Don’t get caught up in the trap of believing the Bible is a manual you only go to when things are about to fall apart. Treat it as a book you have been invited into. Where you can learn from the mistakes of people who have gone before you. Where you can read about a God who loves you and wants the best for you.

Because here’s the thing: The Bible is much more than a manual. The Bible is an invitation to get to know the God who loves you. Yes, the Bible is much, much more than a manual.

Which is good. But maybe that also sounds intimidating. In fact, a lot of people don’t pick it up because they don’t know where to start. But this week, I want to give you some real, actual, start-here steps.



# TEACHING SCRIPT

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First, I want you to **get a Bible**. And while you're at it, get a version you can understand. *Life Application* Bibles are great. NIV, NLT, ESV—these are translations where experts took the original language of the Bible and translated it to modern, anybody-can-read-it English.

Then decide you are going to **read it this week**. And look, I get it. It's a big book. So, let me give you three options. This week you can read in Psalms, Proverbs, or Philipians. For most of us, just opening up a Bible and actually reading it is a huge step. But it's also important to **remember what you read**. A light's no good if you don't carry it with you, right? Now I'm not saying memorize it, but I am saying you have to find a way to really take in what it's saying. And here's a great way to do that. I call it the 10/10/10 plan.

**Read for 10 minutes.** You can do ANYTHING for 10 minutes.

**Write SOMETHING for 10 minutes.** It could be a prayer. It could be questions. It could be a verse you bumped into that you want to remember.

**Talk about it for 10 minutes.** I'm not saying you call your grandma and read her Psalm 149, although you could. What I mean is, text somebody in your small group and tell them what you're learning, or mention your readings to one of them between classes. Talking about something you read and wrote about can get it stuck in your brain. And that's a good thing.

Maybe you do one of these things each day. Or maybe you do all three at the same time. However you do it, 30 minutes could mean you're on your way to turning on the light for your life—to engaging in the Bible in a way it was meant to be engaged with, and not just as an emergency manual.

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## LANDING

1 MINUTE

Listen, no one wants to go through life tripping over obstacles. And we don't want you to be walking into situations blindly. But you know what else? I don't want that for your friends either. You could be the person who is carrying the flashlight for them. You could be the one who knows the next step, has the next answer, and helps out somebody else because you took the time to really get to know who God is and what He says about life.

A lot of people think reading the Bible is too hard. But try living life in the dark. That's a lot harder than reading what God wrote down for us. So read it. Read it often. And when you do, you'll find, over time, that you have the light to see the next step. And that will make all the difference in your life.



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS