

Lesson 122

We Can Trust the New Testament

The Holy Spirit guided the apostles to record God's words.

Studying God's Word

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Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Introduction

Refer to the Seven C's of History Poster. Let's start with a quick review. The Seven C's of History help us remember the big events in the Bible.

Which C's took place in the Old Testament? Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, and Confusion. Briefly review these events.
Which C's are about the message of the New Testament that the Messiah has come? Christ and Cross.
The seventh C is still in the future. What is it called? Consummation.

The Consummation is when Jesus will create a new heaven and a new earth for those who have put their trust in him to save them from their sins.

Slide #3

Refer to the Lesson 121 Theme Poster. From the beginning, in Genesis, God had a plan to save sinners. He spoke of a descendant (offspring) of Eve who would defeat the serpent—Satan.
How did Jesus defeat Satan when he came to earth? He died on the cross then rose from the dead.

We learned how the Messiah, God's chosen one, was pictured in the death of the Passover lambs, whose blood was shed to save the Israelites from the last plague. Jesus' blood was shed on the cross to save us from eternal death so that those who believe may have eternal life with him in heaven!

Have the prepared papers and other supplies ready for the object lesson.

Print and follow the instructions to prepare the Invisible Ink Object Lesson lettered papers the night before. Bring papers with invisible ink letters and other supplies. To start today's lesson, you're going to reveal a secret word written in invisible ink! Follow the instructions for students to reveal the invisible ink message, "Manuscripts."

Great job, everyone! Raise your hand if you've heard of manuscripts before. Show of hands.

Does anyone know what manuscripts are or what the word means? Allow guesses.

Manuscript means "written by hand," and that's how the New Testament was first made—it was written by hand by different writers. They didn't have computers to type on or the internet to send it all over the world, but

people who heard or read the first writings of the New Testament Scriptures made handwritten copies called manuscripts. God has kept thousands of these copies safe so that we can know the events of Jesus' life in the Gospels and how the church began.

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Which books in the New Testament are called the Gospels? Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

These Gospels were written in Greek and then translated into different languages. Some people made copies to take to other places. When people today read and compare all the copies of Scripture, the manuscripts, they can figure out the message of the writers.

We'll talk more about New Testament manuscripts at the end of the lesson. But first, we'll be answering the important question, "How do you know the New Testament is true?"

God's Word Inspired

To answer that question, we'll start with how the writers knew what to write.

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Turn in your Bibles to the book of John chapter 14. John was one of Jesus' apostles and closest friends. The apostles, also called disciples, were 12 men who followed Jesus when he traveled throughout Israel teaching about the kingdom of God and doing many miracles.

Slide #4

Slide #5

John 14:25–26

We're going to read something Jesus told his apostles before his death when he knew he wouldn't be with them much longer. Who will read John 14:25–26? Choose readers.

Jesus mentioned someone the Father would send in his name. Who was it? The Helper, the Holy Spirit.

What two things would the Holy Spirit do? Teach them all things and help them remember what Jesus had said.

The Holy Spirit would be a teacher and a helper as the disciples wrote about Jesus' time on earth.

Pass out the Class Notes.

Let's start the Class Notes and fill in the crossword puzzle. Who will read #1 and give the answer? Choose a reader. Holy Spirit. Have students complete #1.

Who will read #2 about what the Holy Spirit would do for the disciples? Choose a reader. Remember. Have students complete #2.

Slide #6

Slide #7

John 16:13

Turn to John 16. Follow along as I read what Jesus said in verse 13. Read the verse.

Who is this verse about? The Spirit of truth.

This is the same Spirit—the Holy Spirit—that Jesus was talking about in John 14:26, the verse we just read.

What would the Spirit of truth do? He would guide them into what? Truth. The Spirit would also declare to them, or tell them about, what things? Things to come.

Jesus was telling his apostles that after he was gone the Holy Spirit would come. He would speak what Jesus had spoken and guide them to know the truth and to understand things that would happen later.

When we start talking about the Holy Spirit, people sometimes get confused and wonder, "Who is he?" Well, we have talked many times about the Trinity.

Show the Illustration. The Trinity refers to three persons in the one true God.

Who are the three persons of the Trinity? Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Each of these three IS God. But the Father is NOT the Son. The Son is NOT the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is NOT the Father. Each one is a unique and separate person, but they are all ONE God. The Trinity is hard for people to understand. But we know it is true because we read about it in God's Word. And we know that God cannot lie!

Jesus himself, God the Son, promised the apostles that God the Father would send the Holy Spirit to help them write the truth so that people like us could know all about him. Since God doesn't make mistakes and since he was the one guiding these writers, we know the New Testament is true.

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Our God is an amazing God! We can trust what he has written in his Word because he knows everything. Which attribute means God is all-knowing? Omniscient. God is also wise beyond what we could ever imagine. What does wise mean? God does everything perfectly without mistakes.

We can trust the New Testament because God is wise. He has directed the writing of the Bible perfectly, without mistakes.

Slide #8

Who will read #3 on the Class Notes? Choose a reader. Truth. Have students complete #3.

What will you fill in for #4? Choose a reader. Trinity. Have students complete #4.

The Apostles' Writings Verified

We trust that God directed the writing of his Word, but he also verified its truth in other ways. To verify something means to prove it—to see if it checks out.

One way God has verified the truth of the New Testament is by fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah.

Remember, these prophecies were written many years before Jesus came. They said Jesus would be born in a certain place and be part of certain families, like Abraham's and David's. The only way these kinds of things could happen is if God told the prophets and then made them happen. When we read in the New Testament how God fulfilled these prophecies—how he made them happen, we can see that God's Word is true.

Another way to verify if something is true is to hear from someone who saw it happen, an eyewitness.

Slide #9

Slide #10

John 19:35

One eyewitness was the Apostle John. Let's look again in the Gospel of John chapter 19, verse 35. Choose a reader.

John wrote about events that he saw happen with his own eyes. He was giving his testimony about Jesus.

What is a testimony? Allow discussion.

Testimony: telling what happened by someone who was there
When someone gives a testimony, he is telling others what happened to him or what he saw.

Look at the verse we just read. How did John describe the testimony he wrote about Jesus? It was true.

John said that all he had written was true and that he had written it so that those who read it would what? Believe.

Slide #11

Slide #12

John 20:31

Why did John want others to believe what he wrote? Let's find out. Turn to John 20:31. Listen to this. Read the verse.

What did John want others to believe? That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

And why was that so important to John? What would believing in Christ give to the believers? Life in his name.

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. John wanted to be sure his readers knew that he had walked with Jesus—he saw what Jesus did, like healing a leper; he heard what he said; and he learned from him. John was an eyewitness of Jesus' life. And what he wrote about Jesus was true. He knew that Jesus is the Son of God, and he wanted his readers to know that, too.

John wanted people to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah who would save people from their sins. He knew that everyone

who believes in Jesus and trusts in his name would have forgiveness of sins and the hope of living with God forever in heaven.

Slide #13

Who will read #5 on the Class Notes? Choose a reader. Testimony. Have students complete #5.

And #6, what did John want his readers to believe about Jesus? Choose a reader. Son of God. Have students complete #6.

Slide #14

2 Peter 1:16

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's turn toward the back of the Bible to the book of 2 Peter. Like John, Peter was a disciple and very close friend of Jesus, and he wrote this book. We are going to read 2 Peter 1:16. Choose a reader.

Peter said that he and the other disciples "did not follow cleverly devised myths" when they spoke and wrote about Jesus. What does this mean? What's a myth? Allow discussion.

A myth is a made-up story—something that isn't true. Peter was saying the same thing that John said, only in a different way: what he and the other New Testament writers wrote was true. It wasn't a made-up story!

Who was Peter trying to make known to his readers? Who was he writing about? The Lord Jesus Christ.

What did Peter say about himself and the other disciples? They were what? Eyewitnesses of Jesus' majesty.

Peter was an eyewitness just like John. He also followed Jesus and saw his life, death, and resurrection. This is his testimony.

Slide #15

What will you fill in for #7 on the Class Notes? Choose a reader. Eyewitnesses. Have students complete #7.

We can trust the New Testament writings about Jesus because eyewitnesses, or friends of eyewitnesses, wrote about things that really happened. These men weren't making up myths. They walked and talked and ate and prayed with Jesus. They were Jesus' friends. What they wrote is true!

Now, there was another man who didn't start out as a friend of Jesus. He hated and persecuted people who believed—until Jesus appeared to him! Then he changed and became a faithful follower of Jesus, preaching the gospel and starting churches in many cities.

Does anyone know who I'm talking about? He wrote many of the epistles (letters) in the New Testament. Allow guesses. Saul, Paul.

Saul, also called Paul, was chosen by God to spread the gospel and teach the early believers in the churches he started. The apostles, including Paul, were directed by God the Holy Spirit to write exactly what God wanted

them to. Just as the Old Testament prophets received their messages from God, the writings of the New Testament were inspired by God, too.

Slide #16

Slide #17

Slide #18

2 Peter 3:15–16

Let's see what the Apostle Peter said to verify Paul's letters. Who will read 2 Peter 3:15? Choose a reader.

How did Peter say Paul wrote to the churches, according to what?

According to the wisdom given him.

Who gives true wisdom? God, the Holy Spirit.

Someone read verse 16 now. Choose a reader.

What word does Peter use to describe Paul's writings at the end of verse 16? Scriptures.

What is Scripture another word for? The Bible, the Word of God.

By calling Paul's letters "Scriptures," Peter was saying that God the Holy Spirit helped Paul write the truth like he did for the other apostles.

Let's finish the Class Notes. Who will read #8 about Paul's writings? Choose a reader. Scriptures. Have students complete #8.

Application

We can be sure the New Testament is true! Before Jesus died, he promised that the Father would send the Helper, the Holy Spirit, to teach the apostles and guide them into all truth as they wrote about Jesus. The Holy Spirit is God, and God never makes mistakes, so we know that the words the apostles wrote in the Bible are truth, inspired by the Spirit of truth.

Slide #19

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. We can also trust the authors of the New Testament. They were either eyewitnesses to Jesus' life, like John and Peter, or close friends of the apostles. They testified that the words they wrote were true. The apostles lived with Jesus and saw his miracles. They wrote down their testimony—what they had seen and heard. Others, like Paul, were specially chosen by God, who guided them to write what he wanted them to.

You might hear people say that the Bible can't be believed—that the New Testament is just a bunch of made-up stories because there is no evidence that the events in it really happened.

Refer to "manuscripts" from the Introduction. But we do have evidence! Remember our new word, manuscripts? These are handwritten copies of the books and writings from the New Testament. The authors of the New Testament (like John, Peter, and Paul) wrote their testimony about Jesus on animal skins, papyrus, or other kinds of paper. We don't have the very first manuscripts anymore, but we do have copies of them. And even though some may have

small differences, there are enough copies for “experts” to compare, and they can figure out what the original writers were saying.

There are thousands of these ancient manuscripts from the Bible. They are in different languages and found in different countries. These manuscripts show us that people were not only hearing about Jesus but were also writing down what they heard and sharing the message with others.

God says that the Bible—the Old Testament and the New Testament—will stand forever. It cannot be destroyed. You can trust it. You can be sure God’s Word is true. The New Testament tells us the truth about Jesus Christ—his life, death, and resurrection. It tells the truth about the hope of eternity with God that we have through forgiveness of sins. This forgiveness and hope are freely given to all who will repent of their sins, turn to Jesus, and believe in him.

Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

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