



Hey, students! How are you doing today? My name is _____ and if I haven’t had a chance to meet you yet, I want to tell you that I am so glad you’re here, and I would love a chance to get to know you.

I want to do a little survey with you. How many of you have ever been on an airplane? How many of you have ever been on a boat? How many of you have a heart? Ok, so most of you have been on a boat, some of you have been on a plane, and almost all of you have a heart.

There are some obvious differences between the first two things and the last, right? For the first two, if there is an *emergency*, they have some utilities that could potentially save you. For the airplane, you’ve got the masks that drop from the ceiling with oxygen and the flotation devices under your seat cushion, and the pilot has radios. I’m sure there are parachutes. For the boat, everyone knows about the fiasco that was the Titanic. There weren’t enough lifeboats, lifejackets, or life preservers. Those utilities could have saved more people. They are great things.

But that third item is your heart. And your heart isn’t a utility in case of emergencies. It is your *lifeline*. Your heart doesn’t work for you just when there is danger. Your heart works for you all day every day, even while you are sleeping, and never takes a day off. It pumps your blood through your body. You need it. Not just when disaster strikes, but 24/7. It is your lifeline.

Merriam Webster’s dictionary defines a lifeline as, “Something regarded as indispensable for the maintaining or protection of life.” Indispensable. That means a lifeline is absolutely necessary.

I believe the Bible is our lifeline, too.

You may balk at that. You may think the Bible is boring. I want to change that for you. You may think it’s untrustworthy and old and irrelevant. I want to show you why it has stood the test of time and is still as true as ever—full of wisdom. You may think you are doing great on your own and you don’t need it. I want you to experience the depths of your great need for Jesus. You may feel too depressed to bring yourself to open its pages—I

want to read it to you and carry you to Jesus. Let’s explore Proverbs together and get some wisdom—our lifeline.

Proverbs 3:14-26 (NLT)

*“For wisdom is more profitable than silver, and her wages are better than gold. Wisdom is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. She offers you long life in her right hand, and riches and honor in her left. **She will guide you down delightful paths; all her ways are satisfying. Wisdom is a tree of life** to those who embrace her; **happy are those who hold her tightly**. By wisdom the Lord founded the earth; by understanding he created the heavens. By his knowledge the deep fountains of the earth burst forth, and the dew settles beneath the night sky. My child, don’t lose sight of common sense and discernment. Hang on to them, for they **will refresh your soul**. They are like jewels on a necklace. **They keep you safe** on your way, and **your feet will not stumble**. You can go to bed without fear; you **will lie down and sleep soundly**. You **need not be afraid of sudden disaster or the destruction** that comes upon the wicked, for **the Lord is your security**. He will keep your foot from being caught in a trap.”*

God wants to take you on an adventure with Him. It will be a quest full of action, excitement, joy, and love. He will take you to the highest heights as you follow Him into the unknowns. You will see miracles. But Genesis 3 teaches us that we live in a broken and fallen world, tarnished by sin. So, this adventure will also have grief and doubt and pain and tears. But! We have a guide! The Holy Spirit. And we have a lifeline—God’s words to us, giving us wisdom for everything we will experience day to day.

What did Solomon say in those verses he wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the book of Proverbs? He said the absolute safest place you can be is in the presence of God. The best thing you can do at any moment is to heed God’s wisdom for your life. If you want to hear God speaking to you, open the Bible. We believe it is the inerrant word of God, written down for us so we don’t forget.

[Leader note: Tell a story here about how the Bible and God’s promises got you through a difficult time. You could also consider asking a student or a small group leader to share their story.]

God’s Word, the Bible, truly is our lifeline. If you’re desperate, you need His Words to you. If you are on the top of the world, you need His Words for you. It may be a great season of life for you right now, so this is a perfect time to get into God’s Word and gain the wisdom He gives that leads to full life.

As we look at the book of Proverbs for the next three weeks, we are going to see some key themes come up again and again.

1. We are going to see that there are two paths we can take in life: the wise path and the foolish path. You can be a wise person who builds your life on the Engineer’s plan, or you can be a fool who does things your own way.

[Leader note: Share this illustration. Have you heard the story from the Brothers Grimm called “Hans In Luck?” In the story, Hans worked hard for 7 years at a mill grinding grain to make bread. Finally, he wanted to bring his hard-earned money home and see his mother because he missed her. He wanted to provide for her with the money. He was given a huge heavy piece of gold. Well, Hans was foolish. He traded his gold for a wild horse simply because the gold was too heavy. Then he did it again. He was frustrated with the horse, so he traded it for a cow. The cow wouldn’t give him milk, so he traded it for a pig. On and on he went making foolish decisions because it was simply too much work. When he finally returned home to his mother, he had absolutely nothing left to give her, and his 7 years of working were wasted.

God’s Word in Proverbs has wisdom that Hans could have used to save himself from having nothing! If he would have chosen the wise path, he would have been able to take care of his mother for the rest of her life.]

Proverbs talks about the wise and the foolish paths. Let’s check out what happens on these two paths.

Proverbs 10:23 (NLT)

“Doing wrong is fun for a fool, but living wisely brings pleasure to the sensible.”

Proverbs 11:8 (NLT)

“The godly are rescued from trouble, and it falls on the wicked instead.”

Proverbs 11:19 (NLT)



-What has your experience been with God speaking to you? How has God illuminated His Word to you when you've read it?

-What does it mean that the Bible is "inspired?"

-Who do you look up to in the way they read the Bible and Interact with God?

-How has following Jesus been an adventure for you? If it hasn't been an adventure – if church is something you do because you must or because you've always attended – what do you think the speaker meant when they talked about following Jesus as an adventure? What would that look like?

-Have someone read Proverbs 18:10. How might the Bible be a strong tower for you? Why does the Bible keep us safe even though no one is physically chasing us right now?

-How has God convicted you through the Bible? What is the difference between conviction and condemnation/shame?

-What is your biggest distraction to reading the Bible?

-What decisions are you wrestling with right now? How might God use His Word to give you guidance about your future?

-How have you allowed your religious acts to become a badge of pride?

-How are we like babies in diapers in regard to sin?

-What tools have you found helpful to understanding the Bible or reading it more? Which ones that the speaker mentioned would you like to try next? Who could help you and spur you on as you take steps to utilize the Bible more in your everyday life? (**Pass out handout**)

-Study Bible

- Journal
- Devotional
- Prayer or Scripture cards
- Bibleproject.com/App
- Your church's reading plan

-Which of these keys (on their handout) to understanding the Bible do you overlook, or did you not know about?

- Knowing where the Bible came from and why the Bible's authorship and translations are reliable.
- Grabbing one verse and making it mean what you want it to mean, instead of asking, "What is the context?"
- Being aware that there is one big story the Bible is telling, not just individual stories.
- Always interpreting Scripture with other Scripture.
- Relying on Church tradition to determine what a passage means.

-What would change in your life if you embraced the Bible as your lifeline and spent time in it more often?

-Prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to show you who you know who needs a lifeline – someone you could invite to read the Bible with you.

****Challenge students to take the 5-day Bible reading challenge in the book of James. They can scan the QR code for the YouTube videos. Come up with ways to incentivize your whole group to participate (candy, pizza, stickers, privileges at youth group).***



<https://tinyurl.com/yc8fzb3d>



Proof For The Bible's Reliability



- We have 1500+ manuscripts of the New Testament (more than any other historical document scholars use today to determine history).
- Writers had to be eyewitnesses or know an eyewitness (Example: Luke was not a disciple but traveled with the apostle Paul and interviewed many eyewitnesses. He was a doctor).
- Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection were at the front and center of the New Testament. Looking at the evidence, this can't be disproved as a historical event.
- Many blunders are recorded in the New Testament. Why would Jesus' followers do this if they were lying? (Example: Peter denying Jesus three times, the disciples constantly not understanding what Jesus was talking about)
- The major discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (the oldest Old Testament copies we have) showed the accuracy of older and newer manuscripts.
- Most scholars agree that the New Testament documents were written (already had be circulating orally) only 30-60 years after Jesus' death and resurrection—so still within the lifetime of people who could reject or deny their accuracy.



How The Books of the Bible Came Together



- 40 Different Authors Inspired by the Holy Spirit Over 1500 years telling the same story: The creator God is glorious, loves humanity, and saved them through Jesus.
- The orally circulated eyewitness accounts, testimonies, and letters that became the New Testament documents began being accepted as “canon” together with the Old Testament before the apostles died.
- Books were not chosen to be in or out at the church “councils” (Example: The Council of Nicaea was for the purpose of weeding out false doctrines like Gnosticism).
- The rejected books did not line up with Christian doctrine, were written later (example: in “The Gospel of Thomas” Jesus did not die on the cross and women had to become men to get into Heaven).
- The scribes who would make copies (manuscripts) of the original “autographs” were meticulous.

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