

X-MEN: HOW TO BE A CHRISTIAN

Unit 2: The Bible

Welcome to Unit 2 of X-MEN: How To Be A Christian. This curriculum is geared for upper elementary children to teach them the basic tenets and disciplines of Christianity. Think of it as Christianity 101 for kids. The lessons are a mix of theory and practice best done in small groups or class settings where children can ask questions and participate in discussions.



Fun Fact: The Greek word for Christ is "**ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ**" and the Chi Rho is an early Christian symbol (like today's fish symbol) taken from the first two letters, X and P. If we take that first letter, X, that stood for the C in Christ, you can say we really are X-Men!

There is a Workbook for the children that goes along with this curriculum. We recommend printing one for each child and keeping it in a safe place at church so the children don't have to worry about losing it or remembering to bring it every Sunday.

I also recommend having a Bible for each child, or giving them incentives to bring their own every week, since there are a lot of Scripture references in the lessons.

It is my prayer that children will have a basic understanding of Christian beliefs and disciplines that will become a foundation for their spiritual journey. Reading the Bible consistently is one of those foundational disciplines that even some long-time Christian adults have a hard time with. I pray that through these lessons, the children become more interested in the Bible and start to develop the discipline of reading it.

I also encourage you, leader, not to discount the ability of your children to understand any concepts that seem too big, too hard, or only for adults and big church. Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you teach and your children to understand, and allow these lessons to be spiritual seeds in their lives. Pray that God will create a hunger in them to read His Word.

-Angela of Kidmin Together



UNIT 2: The Bible

“So faith comes from hearing the Good News. And people hear the Good News when someone tells them about Christ” Romans 10:17, ICB.

The Bible - all of it - points to Jesus Christ. It contains the Good News. It is the Word of God. When we read it and really hear its words, our faith grows.

Often times, however, reading the Bible feels like homework, especially for those who haven't yet discovered how the Word of God changes lives. For children, it can be intimidating when they come across words they don't understand and concepts they can't grasp. It can also look intimidating. It's such a big book!

Unit 2 will introduce the Bible to children in a way that will demystify it as a book for adults only or a book with concepts they don't understand. It will help them get familiar with its contents and history. It will give them practical ways to start reading and understanding the Bible for themselves.

Lesson 1 ends with a challenge for the children to memorize the Books of the Bible in order. Remind them to do this each week and see who completes it during Lesson 4.

Lesson 2 goes over every book of the Bible and what it is about. I suggest taking two Sundays to cover this lesson.

Lesson 3 introduces praying through Scripture. If you haven't done this personally, start today!

Lesson 4 is optional, but a great way to practically challenge the children to read their Bibles. The children will create their own prayer journals. Since this is the last lesson in Unit 2, you can also use this time to have an end-of-the-unit party or to review what the children have learned. It is also a great time to see who completed the challenge in Lesson 1 and hand out prizes to those who did.

Overview

Lesson 1: What is the Bible?

Lesson 2: Books of the Bible Big Picture

Lesson 3: How to Use the Word of God

Lesson 4: DIY Prayer Journal

Lesson 1: What is the Bible?

Icebreaker

Ask: What is your favorite book?

Say: Today we're starting Unit 2 of X-Men: How To Be A Christian. Every hero has a code, sometimes put inside a codex. Our codex as X-Men for Jesus is the Bible. This is no ordinary book. Let's find out why.

Ask: What is the Bible?

1. The Bible is the Word of God
2. The Bible is the holy book of Christians

Ask: Where did the Bible come from?

1. The Bible came from God.
2. The Bible came from the Jews/Israelites, the chosen people of God.

Ask: Who wrote the Bible?

1. Different people wrote the Bible.
2. Who are these people?
 - a. Hint 1: Look at the names of the books of the Bible. Ie: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Isaiah, Jeremiah
 - b. Hint 2: For the New Testament epistles, read Chapter 1 verses 1-2.
 - i. Epistles is an old word for "letters" and back in those days, when they wrote letters, they wrote their name and their title or position at the top of the letter, instead of the bottom/end like we do today.
 - ii. So if Wolverine wrote a letter to Professor Xavier, he would write, "Logan aka Wolverine, an X-Men and history professor at Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters. To Professor Charles Xavier, leader of the X-Men and founder of Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters."
 - iii. Activity: Write the introduction of your letter. Follow the template of [Your name aka your alias] + [your title or position]
3. If people wrote the Bible, why do we say the Bible came from God?
 - a. Because God inspired those people as they wrote every word of the Bible.
 - b. Because God guided them to write the right words.
 - c. Different X-Men for Jesus wrote the Bible!

Say: Let's see how the Bible came together.

1. The books of the Bible are historical records, letters, prophecies, and royal decrees written on parchments and scrolls.

2. These were first passed down by word of mouth, like stories passed down by family members.
3. Then the stories were written down and records were kept, and these were copied by hand (because there's no copy machine back then), passed around, and passed to the next generation.
4. God protected these documents until they came together into the Bible

Say: The first part of the Bible is called the Old Testament

1. The Old Testament is made up of the writings of Moses and other prophets that were collected over time.
2. There are 39 books in the Old Testament.

Say: The second part of the Bible is the New Testament

1. The New Testament is made up of records and letters written by the disciples of Jesus. These writings and letters were copied and circulated around the early church.
2. There are 27 books in the New Testament.

Activity: Books of the Bible

1. Ask: Why is it important to memorize the names of the Books of the Bible when there are Table of Contents, Bible tabs, and apps?
 - a. Because it gives us a foundation. A foundation is something that keeps us steady and something that we can build on.
 - b. Instead of saying, "The Bible says we should be courageous." We can know where in the Bible it says that, who said it, and why. One example is in Joshua. God told Joshua to be strong and courageous. Do you know why? (Joshua was about to go to battle against a much bigger army). It helps to remember that the book of Joshua is filled with stories on having to be courageous. The next time we face something too big or scary for us to handle alone, we can remember the book of Joshua, and read God's promise that He will always be with us.
2. Option 1: Sing the "Books of the Bible" song. There are many versions to choose from! Search for one you think your children would like. Start your search on YouTube.
3. Option 2: Play a "Books of the Bible" game where children in teams race to arrange the Books of the Bible in the correct order. There are many ways to play this game. The simplest is printing the Books of the Bible on strips of paper and mixing them together. Give one set to each team. You can tape the Books of the

Bible on cardstock, paper cups, popsicle sticks, etc. Find a version of this game that you like on Pinterest.

Unit 2 Challenge: Memorize the Books of the Bible in order

Pose this challenge to the kids for this unit: memorize the Books of the Bible in order.

Give them an incentive or prize. You can choose to give individual prizes for everyone who successfully completes the challenge (if your budget permits it, their very own Bible would make a great prize), or you can give one class prize (like a pizza party) if everyone in class successfully completes the challenge.

Lesson 2: Books of the Bible Big Picture

You may need 2 Sundays to complete this lesson. Don't rush it.

A question you can ask throughout this lesson is, "How does this book point to Jesus?"

Review the Books of the Bible

Review the Books of the Bible. You can sing a "Books of the Bible" song or play a game (see Activity options 1 and 2 from Lesson 1).

Dividing the Books of the Bible

Say: The Books of the Bible can be divided into different sections, which can help us memorize their order and also give us an idea of what a book is about. We'll divide the Books of the Bible into 10 sections. I'll also give you a short summary of what the book is about. Knowing these things will help us understand the Bible better, and help us know what each book teaches us about God or Jesus.

As you go through each section, the children can fill in their workbooks.

Section 1: Law aka The Pentateuch (Pen-ta-took)

The first five Books of the Bible is called The Pentateuch (it means "five scrolls") or the Books of the Law. These books are the first five pieces of writing that the Hebrew community acknowledged as Scripture, and they credit Moses for writing them.

1. Genesis - a book about beginnings: the beginning of the world, the beginning of God's relationship with us, and the beginning of the nation of Israel
2. Exodus - a book about the exodus or the exit of the Israelites from Egypt and God giving them laws or commandments to follow
3. Leviticus - a book of instructions on how to worship God and other laws to follow
4. Numbers - a census and the story of Israel wandering in the desert
5. Deuteronomy - a review of the laws on how to love and obey God

Section 2: History

The next 12 books are historical books about the history of Israel.

1. Joshua - a book about the life of Joshua and conquering the Promised Land

2. Judges - a book on the history of Israel from Joshua to Samson, the leaders called "judges" that God picked to lead Israel
3. Ruth - a book about Ruth, a woman who's an ancestor of King David
4. 1 Samuel - a book about Israel's first king, Saul, and the prophet Samuel
5. 2 Samuel - a book about David and his reign
6. 1 Kings - a book about King Solomon's reign, how Israel split into two nations (Judah and Israel), and the different kings that followed
7. 2 Kings - a book about the different kings of Judah and kings of Israel, and what happened to the nations when the kings obeyed or disobeyed God
8. 1 Chronicles - the 1 and 2 Books of Chronicles are the
9. 2 Chronicles - official historical records of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel
10. Ezra - a book about rebuilding the temple of God in Jerusalem as written by a scribe named Ezra
11. Nehemiah - a book about Nehemiah leading the people to rebuild the wall around the city of Jerusalem
12. Esther - a book about the life of Esther and how God used her to save the Jewish people

Section 3: Poetry

The next five books are known as Poetry or Wisdom books because they use some form of ancient Hebrew poetry or they give wisdom on how to live everyday in a way that honors God.

1. Job - a book about the life of Job, a man who loves God and what he does when bad things happen to him
2. Psalms - a book of songs the Israelites sang to worship God
3. Proverbs - a book of wise sayings

4. Ecclesiastes - a book exploring the meaning of life
5. Songs of Solomon - a book of songs about love and marriage written by King Solomon

Section 4: Major Prophets

These books are considered “major” because they’re longer (not because they’re more important). God used prophets to give direction and wisdom to the kings and the Jewish people.

1. Isaiah - prophecies from Isaiah about Israel and also about Jesus and His kingdom
2. Jeremiah - prophecies from Jeremiah about Babylon coming to capture the Jews, but the people didn’t really listen
3. Lamentations - a book about Jeremiah’s sorrow because the Jews were captured (like he said they would be)
4. Ezekiel - a book with prophecies and messages of warning, comfort, and justice for the Jews while they are in captivity
5. Daniel - a book with some of the events that happened while the Jews were in captivity, and also a book with prophecies about Jesus

Section 5: Minor Prophets

There are 12 minor prophets.

1. Hosea - a book about the prophet Hosea who married a prostitute and had to keep bringing her back. It’s a picture of God’s relationship with Israel.
2. Joel - a book with a locust invasion and prophecies of God’s judgement for those who don’t repent and favor for those who repent
3. Amos - a book about exposing the crookedness of the nation of Israel
4. Obadiah - prophecies about the doom of the nation of Edom because they plundered Jerusalem

5. Jonah - a book about the prophet Jonah, a big fish, and the nation of Nineveh
6. Micah- prophecies on justice, judgement, and the birth of Jesus
7. Nahum - prophecies about God's judgement and the downfall of Nineveh because they turned away from him about 100 years after Jonah came to them
8. Habakkuk - a book of Habakkuk's Q&A with God about injustice and how God will deal with the wicked in His way and His time
9. Zephaniah - prophecies about the day of the Lord, a day with judgement for the wicked and restoration for the righteous
10. Haggai - a book about finishing the rebuilding of the temple of God
11. Zechariah - another book about finishing the rebuilding of the temple of God, and a call to repent and return to God
12. Malachi - a book about obeying God and prophecies about the coming of Jesus Christ

Section 6: The Gospels

The first four books of the New Testament are called The Gospels. They tell the life story of Jesus (not everything that happened in the life of Jesus, but some key events). While the events recorded in The Gospels overlap, they have different focuses.

1. Matthew - a book about the life of Jesus, focusing on His role as the true king of the Jews
2. Mark - a book about the life of Jesus, focusing on His authority and being a servant
3. Luke - the most thorough book about the life of Jesus, focusing on Jesus as the perfect man who faced everything we face and meets everything we need
4. John - a book about the life of Jesus, focusing on signs and miracles to prove Jesus is God

Section 7: Church History

There is only one book in this section.

1. Acts - a book about the history of the early church, also known as the New Testament or the Christian church, and how the Gospel spread to different countries and people

Section 8: Paul's Letters

The next 13 books are letters written by Paul to different churches or people.

1. Romans - a letter from Paul to churches in Rome about how the gospel of Jesus works
2. 1 Corinthians - a letter from Paul to a church in Corinth about how they should behave
3. 2 Corinthians - a letter from Paul to a church in Corinth about some of their concerns
4. Galatians - a letter from Paul to churches in Galatia telling them that salvation is by the grace of God alone, not grace plus works
5. Ephesians - a letter from Paul to the church in Ephesus about how your belief in God should change the way you behave
6. Philippians - a letter from Paul to the church in Philippi encouraging them to have joy in Jesus
7. Colossians - a letter from Paul to the church in Colossae about who they are as believers of Jesus and how they can live holy lives for Jesus
8. 1 Thessalonians - a letter from Paul to the church in Thessalonica encouraging them to keep doing what they're doing, which is living by faith for Jesus
9. 2 Thessalonians - a second letter from Paul to the church in Thessalonica about standing firm in their faith until Jesus returns
10. 1 Timothy - a letter from Paul to Timothy (his protege) about how to lead a church

- 11.2 Timothy - a letter from Paul (who was near the end of his life) to Timothy encouraging him to continue telling other people about Jesus
12. Titus - a letter from Paul to Titus about how to choose and train church leaders to help him run the church in Crete where the people have a bad reputation
13. Philemon - a letter from Paul to Philemon advising him to welcome back his runaway slave as a brother, not as a slave

Section 9: General Letters

The next eight books are “general letters” because they are written to the general Christian public.

1. Hebrews - a letter instructing Christians to keep believing in Jesus even when it's hard because He's greater than everything
2. James - a letter from James instructing Christians to live in a way that shows their faith in action, sort of like “actions speak louder than words”
3. 1 Peter - a letter from Peter to Christians scattered throughout the Roman Empire and are being persecuted for their faith, encouraging them to continue living for God
4. 2 Peter - a letter from Peter to Christians instructing them to increase their knowledge of the Word of God so they can point out false teachers who tell lies about Jesus
5. 1 John - a letter from John to Christians about the important things they need to know
6. 2 John - a letter from John to Christians about walking in truth, love, and obedience
7. 3 John - a letter from John to a Christian named Gaius about helping other Christians
8. Jude - a letter from Jude to Christians about fighting for the faith because there are people who tell lies about Jesus

Section 10: Prophecy

There is one book in this section, and it's the last book of the Bible.

1. Revelation - a book written by John about the things that will happen when Jesus returns

Activity: Bible Drill

Bible drill is a team-race where you call out Bible verses and the first team/player to find the verse and read it out loud gets a point. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins. This game helps children navigate the Bible.

Options:

- Teams can work together or team members can take turns
- You can make it a rule not to use the Table of Contents or not to use Bible with tabs
- You can use a bell, and the first player to ring the bell gets to read the verse.
- You can instruct the players to stay seated and only stand up if they found the verse.
- You can try to keep the children quiet by instructing them, and only speak if they found the verse.

Popular Bible Verses:

1. John 3:16
2. Philippians 4:14
3. Joshua 1:9
4. Psalm 23:4
5. Jeremiah 29:11
6. 1 Corinthians 13:4
7. Romans 8:28
8. Isaiah 41:10
9. Galatians 5:22-23
10. Hebrews 11:1
11. 2 Timothy 1:7
12. Zephaniah 3:17
13. James 5:16
14. Deuteronomy 31:6
15. Matthew 11:28

Lesson 3: How to Use the Word of God

Icebreaker

Say: Every X-Men has an ability or power. Wolverine has indestructible claws and the ability to heal. Storm can control the weather and fly. Cyclops shoot laser beams from his eyes. What's is your X-Men ability? What makes you powerful? (The children can refer to their workbooks if they have forgotten what they wrote in their X-Men Profiles).

After a short discussion, say: As X-Men for Jesus, we have power through our codex. Do you remember what our codex is? It's the Bible. That's right, the Bible is powerful.

Scripture: Hebrews 4:12 (ICB)

God's word is alive and working. It is sharper than a sword sharpened on both sides. It cuts all the way into us, where the soul and the spirit are joined. It cuts to the center of our joints and our bones. And God's word judges the thoughts and feelings in our hearts.

Say: Let's take a moment to look and analyze today's Bible verses. What can you learn about the Word of God from these verses? (Give the children time to read and think. There's section in their workbooks for them to write down their thoughts. Take some time to go over what the children wrote down).

Some things we can learn from the Bible verses:

1. God's Word is alive and working.
2. God's Word is sharp.
3. God's Word cuts into where our soul and spirit are joined.
4. God's Word cuts to the center of our joints and bones.
5. God's word judges the thoughts and feelings in our hearts.

Say: We can boil all these down to this: God's Word changes lives.

How Can God's Word change lives?

Say: Some books are so awesome, they stay with you for the rest of your life. They change the way you think and act. They may inspire you to become a doctor, a teacher, a pilot, etc. The Bible is more powerful than those kinds of books. It is the Word of God. When we read the Bible, it changes our lives because it tells us about God and how He loves and helps us. Here are some examples.

John 3:16 - It tells us that God loves us very much, what He did to show us that love, and how we can get to heaven.

Joshua 1:9 - It reminds us to be strong and brave, and reminds us that God is always with us.

1 Peter 2:24 - It tells us what Jesus did on the cross and how what He did heals us today.

Say: Whenever we're in a tricky situation, we can rely on the Word of God to help us. That's our power as X-Men for Jesus. But we can only use that power if we remember what the Word of God says. That's why it's important to read the Bible and memorize Bible verses.

Workbook Activity: Bible Verse and Topic Match

Every child will need a Bible. This activity also helps children learn how to look up verses in their Bible.

Answer Key:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| <u>G</u> 1. Matthew 6:15 | A. Prayer |
| <u>J</u> 2. Jeremiah 33:3 | B. Love |
| <u>L</u> 3. Deuteronomy 30:16 | C. Strength |
| <u>B</u> 4. 1 John 4:11 | D. Sharing |
| <u>E</u> 5. Joel 2:28 | E. Prophecy |
| <u>D</u> 6. Hebrews 13:16 | F. Fear |
| <u>K</u> 7. 1 Peter 4:10 | G. Forgiveness |
| <u>F</u> 8. Isaiah 41:10 | H. Broken heart |
| <u>A</u> 9. Matthew 18:19-20 | I. Freedom |
| <u>H</u> 10. Psalm 147:3 | J. God Answers |
| <u>C</u> 11. Habakkuk 3:19 | K. Service |
| <u>I</u> 12. 2 Corinthians 3:17 | L. Blessing |

Application

Say: The Bible has a lot to say about the things we go through. When we're going through something, we can turn to the Bible to help us remember what God says about our situation. Many Bible verses are promises of God not just to the people back in the Bible days, but also to us as well. Here are

1. We can memorize Bible verses and say them out loud when we face a situation. For example: If you're about to do something that scares you (like take a big test or do something new), you can say Joshua 1:9 out loud or to yourself to remind you to be strong and brave, and that you're not alone because God is with you.
2. We can pray Bible verses. For example: You're praying for someone who's sick. You can pray, "God, you said in 1 Peter 24 that by Your wounds we are healed. We pray that healing for [person]. By Your wounds, Jesus, [person] is healed!"

Practice

Say: We'll practice praying the Word of God. What are some of your prayer requests? What are some things we can pray for? What Bible verses can we use to help us in our prayer? Look at your list of Bible Power Verses.

Gather prayer requests or think of things to pray for if the children have no prayer requests. Find a Bible verse that goes with the prayer requests and assign a child to pray for that request. Help them phrase the prayer if they're not sure how to.

Bible Power Verses (this is in the workbook)

Courage: Joshua 1:9

Direction: Isaiah 30:21

Facing Enemies: Romans 8:31

Facing Fear: 2 Timothy 1:7

Facing our Future: Jeremiah 29:11

Forgiveness: 1 John 1:9

General Needs: Philippians 4:19

Going on a trip: Psalm 121:8

Healing: 1 Peter 2:24

Learning: Proverbs 9:9

Money: Malachi 3:10

New Day: Psalm 118:24

Perseverance: Galatians 6:9

Protection: Psalm 91:14

Sadness: Matthew 5:4

Salvation: John 3:16

Self-Esteem: Psalm 139:14

Worry: Philippians 4:6-7

Challenge

Challenge the children to add to this list. Tell that when they read the Bible and come across a verse that helps them out, they can write it on a list, even in a blank page of their Bible. When they are facing something (like sickness or fear), they can look at their list and go back to the Bible verse to read what God has to say about what they're going through. They can also use this list to know which Bible verses they can use in their prayers.

Lesson 4: DIY Prayer Journal

Say: In this lesson, we'll use a prayer journal to put into practice what we learned in Unit 1 and Unit 2. Does anyone know what a prayer journal is? A prayer journal is a way we can keep track of our prayers, Bible verses we learned from, and what God tells us. Today, we're going to make our own prayer journals.

Materials:

[] Plain notebooks, composition notebook, blank DIY books, or several papers folded and stapled together into a notebook (one per child)

[] Markers, pens, crayons

[] Construction paper, decorative cardstock paper, pretty wrapping paper

[] Glue sticks, glue

[] Embellishments like stickers, ribbons, cut-out letters, inspirational quote cards, stamps

Instructions

Make sure you give clear explanation and instructions to your children before letting them loose.

1. Use construction or decorative paper to cover the front and back covers of the notebook. Make sure you glue it securely. If you're using blank DIY books, this step can be skipped.
2. Use markers, pens, crayons, and embellishments to decorate the cover.
 - a. In the front, write: [Name's] Prayer Journal
3. In the first page, write the template below. The children will use this template for every prayer journal entry. The template is also in their workbooks.

Template

Date:

Bible Verse:

What this verse means to me:

My prayer:

What God told me today:

Challenge the kids to start using their prayer journals right away.

You can turn it into a prize challenge. Tell the children to bring their prayer journals every week, and for each entry, they get a point or a prize. Keep it up for the duration of the X-Men Curriculum or for however you want. The point is not to get the reward, but the reward system is a good way to establish a habit.