

Junior 1 Year 3 Book 1 Lesson 11
The Benefits of Reading the Bible
Passages: As listed in the lesson.

Memory Verse

“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.” (John 15:2)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
Understand the benefits of reading the Bible.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God is truth.2. God is strength.3. God is hope.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have a habit of reading the Bible daily.2. Meditate on God’s word.3. Memorize God’s word.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. The Origin of the Scriptures
- B. The Purposes of the Scriptures

Life Application

1. Develop a Habit of Daily Bible Reading
2. Meditate On and Memorize the Scriptures

Memory Verse

Conclusion: In these perilous times, when sin continues to increase and false teachings abound, it is necessary for every believer to remain true to the teachings of the Scriptures.

Events and Spiritual Teachings

A. The Origin of the Scriptures

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

(2 Tim 3:16–17)

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, as the Scriptures were written under God’s direction and guidance, not under the writer’s own will (2 Pet 1:20–21). Just as Adam became a living being when God breathed into him (Gen 2:7), God breathed life into the Scriptures and made the Bible His living word.

Many believers know the Bible is important to them, but few actually know how to read, study, and memorize the Bible. There are so many benefits of reading the Bible that it is not possible to cover them all in one class. So today, we’ll just look at ten benefits of why we should read and study the Bible.

B. The Purposes of the Scriptures

The Scriptures testify about Christ (Jn 5:39), and make us wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Through the Scriptures, we can come to the knowledge of our Savior and put our faith in Him for salvation. Let us examine ten different ways the Bible helps us.

1. Gives the Wisdom of Salvation

The primary purpose of the Scriptures is to show us the way to salvation. 2 Timothy 3:15 says that the Scriptures “are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” But not all people know or believe that they need salvation. The Bible shows us that we, separated from God because of sin, now require salvation.

2. Gives Us Assurance of Salvation

The Bible teaches us that God keeps His promises. John wrote, “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God” (1 Jn 5:13). As God has promised, we have already received salvation; we need only believe in Jesus’ name.

3. Provides Warnings

The Scriptures contain many warnings. Sins such as blaspheming against the Holy Spirit (Mk 3:28–30), sexual immorality (1 Thess 4:3), and not keeping the Sabbath (Heb 4:9) will have consequences. Paul wrote, “Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come” (1 Cor 10:11). The Bible serves as a caution sign against sin, and those who refuse to listen will be condemned (2 Pet 2:6).

The Bible also offers a warning regarding the approaching end times (Mt 24:30–31). We do not know when it will come, but the Bible assures us that it is indeed approaching, and when it does arrive, we will face the consequences of our actions (Heb 3:12–14).

4. Gives Us Spiritual Effectiveness

2 Timothy 3:16–17 tells us that Scripture is useful for “doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for

every good work.”

The Scriptures reveal to us God’s will, rebuke us when we have sinned, show us where we have gone wrong, and guide us onto the right path. Through learning and applying the Scriptures, we can be transformed into clean and useful vessels of God, equipped for every good work.

5. Leads Us to Spiritual Growth and Maturity

Just as our physical bodies need food to grow, our spiritual bodies also require nourishment. The Bible is food for our spiritual bodies. Peter teaches us that “as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious” (1 Pet 2:2–3). We need the food that the Bible offers in order to grow in spirit. Let’s read Hebrews 5:12–14:

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

- a. “For though by this time you ought to be teachers” refers to the spiritual immaturity of the letter’s audience. They have clearly been believers for some time, but the author of Hebrews chastises them for their lack of spiritual growth.
- b. “First principles of the oracles of God” refers to the very basics of God’s will. We cannot grow if we do not understand the basic principles of our beliefs.
- c. “Milk” refers to elementary teachings, whereas “solid food” refers to teachings that only the spiritually perceptive can understand and learn from. We cannot thrive on milk forever, but must learn to take solid food.
- d. “Word of righteousness” means the word of God, which shows us what is right before God, and how to discern good from evil.

While the spiritually immature must rely on others to maintain their faith, those who grow in their faith are able to understand the Bible on a deeper level. A sure sign of spiritual growth is when we can discern what is good, reject evil, and learn to please God with our lives (Ps 119:104).

6. Cleanses and Sanctifies Us

To be cleansed means to be freed from sin, and to be sanctified means to be set apart for God. How does the Bible cleanse and sanctify us? Jesus said, “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you” (Jn 15:3), and, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” (Jn 17:17).

Jesus came into the world to proclaim the truth. The Holy Spirit uses the Scriptures, showing us the truth to make us aware of our sin, and to teach us to confess and repent. The truth of the Scriptures sanctifies us when we accept it, because we have chosen to leave darkness, and now belong to God. But that is just the beginning of our spiritual journey. It continues to sanctify us daily when we read, study, meditate, memorize, and apply its truths to our daily life. These actions continually set us apart from the world, sanctifying us and marking us as God’s children.

Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:25–26, “[As] Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.” He also wrote, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess 4:3). God’s will for us is to be holy (1 Thess 3:13). But to become holy, we must first be cleansed by the washing of water by the word. This refers to when His precious blood washes away our sins during baptism. But both water and words are involved, meaning that a spiritual cleansing takes effect only when the baptism is performed according to God’s word (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

7. Makes Us Examine Ourselves

Let’s read Hebrews 4:12. God’s word has a penetrating effect. It discerns our thoughts and intentions, cuts to our hearts, and leads us to repentance. Like a mirror, the word of God compels us to come face-to-face with our sins and inadequacies, to examine our motives and actions, and to bare our hearts before God’s presence. When we examine the Bible, it points out the things we need to change in our life, and shows us how to correct our ways. Without it, we would never know how to abide by God’s standards, or see where we have gone wrong.

8. Gives Us Spiritual Hope and Strength

With the knowledge of sin comes a heavy burden. How can we possibly live up to God’s standards? But the Bible offers more than knowledge of our inadequacy. It also offers us hope. Paul wrote in the Epistle to the Romans, “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” (Rom 15:4).

God understands that we are weak, and He knows that we need His help to obtain the eternal life that He offers us. We cannot live up to His standards on our own. So He has given us the Bible to offer us the hope that there is a way to receive salvation, and the strength to overcome the obstacles in our way. One psalmist wrote, “The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy” (Ps 147:11). We must learn to rely on God, for “He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength” (Isa 40:29). When we study the Scriptures and draw closer to Him, He will help us overcome our weaknesses.

9. Equips Us for Spiritual Warfare

Jesus showed the importance of the Scriptures in spiritual battles when He used its words to resist temptation (Mt 4:1–11). Paul also wrote in Ephesians 6:13, “Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” When we don the whole armor of God, we can stand against the wiles of the devil and withstand evil (vv. 11–14). The Bible teaches us how to put on this armor so that we can remain firm in our journey to the end.

10. Produces Victory and Success in Our Lives

How does the Bible produce victory in our lives? 1 John 2:14 says, “I have written to you, fathers, because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.” With the help of the Scriptures, we can emerge victorious over sin and temptation, and thus over death and the wicked one.

Joshua told the Israelites to meditate on God’s words day and night and to observe His teachings, so that their way will be prosperous and they will have good success (Josh 1:8). In the

New Testament, Jesus urges us to pursue God and His righteousness above all else (Mt 6:33), something that we must do by studying and following the Scriptures. When we do so, He has promised to guide us and take care of all our needs.

Satan's goal is to make us feel weak and useless, and to ultimately destroy us. But the Bible offers many promises, gives us hope in hard times, and encourages our faith when we feel despair. If you're struggling in your walk with God, read the words of the Bible, and you will find that they provide strength, comfort, and hope. As Christians, it should be our goal to memorize God's word so that we can draw from them in times of need.

Check for Understanding

- 1. Name at least five benefits that come from reading the Bible.** Gives us the wisdom of salvation; gives us the assurance of salvation; provides warnings; gives us spiritual effectiveness; leads us to spiritual growth and maturity; cleanses and sanctifies us; makes us examine ourselves; gives us spiritual hope and strength; equips us for spiritual warfare; or produces victory and success in our lives.
- 2. How is the Bible food for us? What do "milk" and "solid food" refer to in Hebrews 5:10–14?** It is food for our spiritual bodies. "Milk" refers to elementary teachings, and "solid food" to teachings that only the spiritual perceptive can understand and learn from.
- 3. How does the Bible make us examine ourselves?** It points out the things we need to change in our life, and shows us how to correct our ways. Without it, we would never know how to abide by God's standards, or see where we have gone wrong.
- 4. What hope does the Bible offer?** Although we cannot live up to God's standards, the Bible offers the hope that there is a way to receive salvation. We need only rely on God.
- 5. How do we pursue God's righteousness? What has He promised to those who do?** By studying and following the Scriptures. He has promised to guide us and take care of all our needs.

Life Application

1. Develop a Habit of Daily Bible Reading

Reading the Scriptures is different from reading other books. It is an exercise in godliness that must be worked into our daily routine. We need to shift into a frame of mind that is open to God's voice, and be determined to heed what we read (1 Tim 4:6; cf. 2 Tim 3:10). Having a daily Bible reading habit is a helpful start. When we get into the habit of regular Bible reading, it should not be spur of the moment, rushing through several chapters in one sitting and neglecting it altogether on another day. Making time for personal Bible study is vital in the process of continual learning. How do we do it? (*Manna 67, 3*)¹

- a. Make a schedule:** Rather than thinking "sometime today," it is always best to decide on what time is best for you each day, and even setting an alarm as a reminder. Try waking up fifteen minutes earlier or going to bed fifteen minutes later to read God's word. If need be, try asking a family member to wake you up earlier, or to remind you before you go to bed.
- b. Start small:** Start by reading small portions of the Scriptures. It is important to understand what we are reading. Otherwise, we will lose interest very quickly.

¹ FF Chong, "Be Equipped with God's Word", *Manna Magazine Issue #67*, September 2012, <http://ia.tjc.org/elibrary/ContentDetail.aspx?ItemID=25893&langid=1>

- c. **Keep working your way up:** Work on gradually increasing your Bible-reading time. Don't be content with inspirational reading only, but progress to more in-depth studies of the Bible. Aim to equip yourself with the word as a spiritual weapon.
- d. **Find a buddy:** Find a spiritual companion, such as your parents, a sibling, or a friend, who can read on the same schedule, or who shares common interests in which topics they would like to study. Knowing that someone is reading the Bible at the same time can be a huge boost to our persistence and confidence, and brings us closer together. As the Bible states, "Two are better than one" (Eccl 4:9). When one begins to fall, the other can give them a lift. Studying the word together also provides the opportunity to talk about our readings in greater depth, to build on each other's insights, and to develop our understanding of the Scriptures. This is much more rewarding than studying alone.

Discussion: What does your Bible reading schedule look like? When was the last time you hungered for the word of God and grew as a result of studying God's word?

2. Meditate On and Memorize the Scriptures

In these perilous times, when sin continues to increase and false teachings abound, it is necessary for God's children to remain true to His teachings. But in order to do this, each believer cannot rely on the understanding of others, but should take the time to learn to meditate on and memorize the Scriptures themselves. When we do this, we will not fall prey to the increasing wickedness of the world, but instead be equipped for every good work. Let's examine how we can begin this process.

Meditating on God's word

Like any other skill, meditating on God's word is something that requires practice. It is a form of worship, so it is important that we first learn to quiet our hearts and focus on God. Once we begin reading, break down the verse into different sections, and then pay close attention to each word. It also helps to read it aloud several times.

For example, let's turn to Joshua 1:8: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." One way to break this verse down would be the following:

- *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth.*
- *but you shall meditate in it day and night*
- *that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it*
- *For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.*

As you meditate on the verse, ask questions about it, and consider how it applies to your own life. Ask, "How does this affect my life?" Reflect upon each word and "chew" on it, which means thinking, reflecting, and internalizing the verse. Meditating on God's word should bring meaning to it. Over time, it will influence our attitude, whether consciously or subconsciously. This is because God's word is living and powerful. When we take the time to study it, it will respond in kind.

Memorization

It is important to remember that a verse should not be considered memorized at the point when we can simply quote it. We can consider a verse truly memorized only when we have reviewed it frequently enough for it to become ingrained in our memory. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col 3:16a). Letting the word of Christ dwell in us in all wisdom is a continuous process that

cannot be finished in a hurry.

With this in mind, the most critical element in memorizing the Scriptures is *review*. The most important time to review a verse is after you can quote the whole verse without making a mistake. Review the verse a minimum of once daily after that, but preferably several times a day. The more you review, the greater your retention. There are several methods for reviewing and memorization, but a common and effective way is to use index cards. However, it is most important to first ask the Holy Spirit to help us memorize God's word.

Using Index Cards to Memorize God's Word

- 1) Once you have grasped the meaning of the text, write out the verse on a card.
- 2) Be sure to write one idea per line, as this is how it is stored in your memory (see above example).
- 3) Read it slowly and listen carefully to each word a few times.
- 4) Write out the text from memory on a new card, beginning with the book and verse.
- 5) Check to see if you've written the verse accurately.
- 6) Throughout the day, recite the verse frequently, using your card if you have difficulty. Sharing the verse with your family members can reinforce it in your memory!
- 7) At the beginning of each week, review the memory verse from the previous week.
- 8) Every month, have your family members hold you accountable and review all that you've learned.

Exercise: Pick a verse that you like, and start meditating and memorizing!

Memory Verse

"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit." (John 15:2)

Meaning

1. Jesus is our vine and we, His branches, making Him our source of life. He wants us to bear fruit, by which He is glorified, but the only way we can is by abiding in Jesus. Separated from Him, we can do nothing (Jn 15:5). If we don't connect with Him, we will be cast out from our Father's presence like withered branches severed from the vine.
2. Pruning the branches refers to God cleansing us, His children. He often prunes us through the word of God, letting it penetrate our soul and spirit to expose the thoughts and intents of our hearts, and enabling us to see any impurities within us (Heb 4:12-13).
3. Although it is painful, such pruning shapes our character and trains us to bear the fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:5-11).

Conclusion

In these perilous times, when sin continues to increase and false teachings abound, it is necessary for God's children to remain true to His teachings. But in order to do this, each believer cannot rely on the understanding of others. We need to take the time to learn to meditate on and memorize the Scriptures so that we do not fall prey to the increasing wickedness of the world, but instead be equipped for every good work.

Lesson 11 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. Who or what is the branch that bears fruit? Why does it need to be pruned?
We are the branches, making Jesus our vine and source of life. Pruning may be painful, but it shapes our character and trains us to bear the fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:5–11).
2. Pick three of the Scriptures' purposes that we learned, and explain each in your own words.
See Events and Spiritual Teachings, Section B. Try to ensure that the students know not to simply copy the student handout.
3. How do you plan to make a habit of reading the Bible daily? If you already have, what are some suggestions you can make to someone who has trouble keeping up the habit?
Personal answers.
4. Pick a verse, meditate on it, and memorize it. Record the verse and write what you have learned.
Personal answers. (Perhaps have the students share their verse during class the following week.)