



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Explained / Week 4

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

BOTTOM LINE

The Bible brings things to light.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand that while Scripture may not give them all the answers, it illuminates our situations so we can see them more clearly.

SCRIPTURE

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

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you (Psalm 119:11 NIV).

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- Tell a personal story about a gift you purchased for someone or received that wasn't as awesome as you thought it would be.
- Maybe you got a gift or spent your money on something you were pumped to get, but then you discovered that it wasn't all it was hyped up to be. You were expecting more and you got less.

TENSION

- For you, maybe the Bible hasn't delivered what you were told it would.
- Maybe you've heard the Bible described...
 - As a guide book or an instruction manual.
 - As a place to find solutions to ALL your problems.
 - As the place where any question you have about life, it has the answer.
 - As something like Google for your life.
- Sometimes, in fact, it seems like the Bible answers the questions we're *not* asking.
- And sometimes, it feels like the Bible doesn't answer the questions we *are* asking.
- And this leaves us wondering, "If the Bible doesn't really answer my questions, then is it really useful?"
- What are we missing? What needs to be explained to us when it comes to the Bible?

TRUTH

- To get answers for questions that we have about what the Bible should be for us, we're going to look at a passage of Scripture from a book called Psalms.

- We're going to look at Psalm 119, which is the longest Psalm and longest chapter in the entire Bible. (*Psalm 119:105 NIV*).
- The writer is saying that God's word is a light for the path of our lives.
- *Note: The Interactive happens here. See your Teaching Script for details.*
- A map, GPS, or instruction manual will clearly tell you what to do and where to go. The Bible doesn't do that.
- The Bible will light up where you are and show you what's up ahead—what to watch out for. A light illuminates your path so that you're better equipped to make the best choice.
- Because of the Bible, we can see a *lot more*, and a *lot more clearly*, and then move forward and make the best choices.
- The Bible brings things to light.
- The light doesn't force you to go a certain way. Instead, it gives you the opportunity to use wisdom to take the next right step.
- The dark often feels uncertain, scary, and unknown. And if you've ever been in the dark, then you know that light is helpful *before* an emergency becomes an emergency, right?
- The Bible works the same way. It gives us light *before* we stumble into trouble. (*Psalm 119:11 NIV*).
- We should use God's word as a light that is turned on ahead of time, hidden in our hearts, and tucked in our minds and memories.
- When we hide God's word in our hearts, we're prepared to make the best and wisest decisions possible.
- When we use the Bible as a light and a lamp, we'll see a bigger picture. The entire path is illuminated.

APPLICATION

- Here's the thing: The Bible is something that you have to spend time with.
- The Bible invites us to observe what happens on its pages, and then live our lives in response to what we find there.
- Here are a few easy steps to reading the Bible and using it as a lamp in your life:
 - Read a passage from the Bible for 10 minutes.
 - Talk to someone about what you read.
 - Memorize it.

LANDING

- The Bible brings things to light. It may not always give us the specific answers that we want in the moment. But over time, it illuminates the entire path of our lives.
- We have to put in the time to see the benefits of the Bible. Over time, it will help us better understand ourselves, others, and God.
- When we use it like it was meant to be, it can make our lives bigger and better.

INTERACTIVE

For this Interactive you will need:

- A magic 8-ball
- A cellphone
- A car instruction manual
- A flashlight



TEACHING SCRIPT

Explained / Week 4

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BOTTOM LINE

The Bible brings things to life.

INTRODUCTION

1.5 MINUTES

Let's start today with an important question...

You ever heard of a pogo stick? The best way I can describe it is a toy kids stand on and bounce around. They were huge back in the day when I was a kid, and they've tried to make a comeback a few times. "Insane Pogo Stunts" is worth a YouTube search one day if you're bored.

This past Christmas, I got my daughter one for Christmas. I was so excited. I had visions of me being gift-giver-of-the-year! But as it turns out, my daughter doesn't weigh enough to get the springs to go down when she jumps. So, the pogo stick doesn't actually bounce.

So now the pogo stick is leaning against a wall in our garage—the same place it's been since Christmas. And gift-giver-of-the-year went to the dad down the street who got his daughter a puppy. (Don't worry. We still have it.) The ole pogo stick didn't deliver the way I hoped it would.

You've probably experienced that before. You got a gift or spent your money on something you were pumped to get, but then you discovered that it wasn't all it was hyped up to be. You were expecting more and you got less.

TENSION

3 MINUTES

In this series, we've been talking about the Bible. And if we're being real, sometimes the Bible can feel the same way—like it's not all it's hyped up to be. **For you, maybe the Bible hasn't delivered what you were told it would.**

For example, maybe you've heard the Bible described as a guide book or an instruction manual. Or maybe you've heard it described as a place to find solutions to ALL your problems. Maybe

you've been told that for any question you have about life, the Bible has the answer. Maybe the Bible seems like it should work like Google. Got a question? Bible it!

But we all know that isn't true. We can't search the Bible for info on Tik Tok, Clout, or Taco Bell Nacho Fries. I mean, the Bible doesn't even specifically address the topic of dating—how could it possibly have something to say to us about our lives today?!

Sometimes, in fact, it seems like the Bible answers the questions we're *not* asking. Like...

- What to do if there's conflict among church leaders?
- How was the nation of Israel formed?
- Who was Jesus' great great great grandpa?

And sometimes, it feels like the Bible doesn't answer the questions we *are* asking. Like...

- When am I going to have my first boyfriend or girlfriend?
- How can I get my little sister to stop bothering me?
- Why is my schoolwork so exhausting and stressful?

And this leaves us wondering, "If the Bible doesn't really answer my questions, then is it really useful?" Since we're in church, nobody is going to say, "No! The Bible's NOT useful!" Plus, almost every church has some people in it who would confidently say that the Bible has changed their lives.

So, what do they have that we don't? What are we missing? What needs to be explained to us when it comes to the Bible?

That's what we're going to spend the next few minutes talking about!

TRUTH

8.5 MINUTES

To get answers for questions that we have about what the Bible should be for us, we're going to look at a passage of Scripture from a book called Psalms. This is a collection of poems, songs, and prayers from people about their experience with God or their circumstances. We're going to look at Psalm 119, which is the longest Psalm and longest chapter in the entire Bible.

The writer says this...

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

We all understand the idea of light. We know the good that it serves. Nobody wants to drive at night with the headlights off. Nobody wants the electricity to go out in the place where we live. Nobody likes to try and find your way to the bathroom in the middle of the night in the dark. When it's dark, light makes all the difference!

The writer is saying that God's word is a light for the path of our lives. Which is great, but it's also saying what it's not...

- It's like headlights, but not a GPS.
- It's like a headlamp, but not a map.
- It's like a flashlight, but not a survival guide.



Communicator note: This interactive is about illustrating what the Bible is or isn't. Using a Magic 8 ball, your phone's map app, an instruction manual, and a flashlight, compare what we want the Bible to do, and what the Bible actually does.

Say this...

(Bring out a Magic 8-ball) Imagine asking this ten-dollar toy to decide what you're doing after graduation. Let's try that. "Magic 8-ball, should I go to a local college?" *(See what answer you get from the 8ball)*. Great, but what does that mean? Should I go to *any* school? Should I stay in state? What should I major in? Don't you even care about that, magic 8-ball?! Of course, I'm being silly, but you get it. THIS isn't helpful for that.

(Open a maps app on your phone) OR, imagine if I tried to use my phone's GPS to deal with my friend drama. I feel like it would keep saying "Rerouting" over and over.

(Bring out your car's instruction manual) And even if there was an instruction manual for dating, let's be honest—no one reads instruction manuals. I spend more time in my car than anywhere else. If it breaks, my whole life is put on hold until it's fixed. But do I read the instruction manual? Nope.

Do you see the difference? A map, GPS, or instruction manual will clearly tell you what to do and where to go. The Bible doesn't do that. The Bible will light up where you are and show you what's up ahead—what to watch out for. But it doesn't always tell you an *exact answer* like we often want. **A light illuminates your path so that you're better equipped to make the best choice.** Most of the time, however, we get frustrated because we want the Bible to give us specific answers. Instead, the Bible lights up the whole picture. It helps us connects ALL the pieces in life.

Because of the Bible, we can see a lot more, and a lot more clearly, and then move forward and make the best choices. Simply put, think of it this way...

The Bible brings things to light.

So instead of seeing the Bible as an instruction manual, we can look at like a light that guides us. It's a light for our path as we take steps forward. It can help us navigate paths that feel uncertain, scary, and confusing. The light doesn't force you to go a certain way. Instead, it gives you the opportunity to use wisdom to take the next right step.

The dark often feels uncertain, scary, and unknown. And if you've ever been in the dark, then you know that light is helpful *before* an emergency becomes an emergency, right? That's why you turn on your headlights *before* you start driving—so that you don't crash your car. The Bible works the same way. **It gives us light before we stumble into trouble.** It's helpful to us way before we even need it!

Earlier in Psalm 119, the writer says...

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you (Psalm 119:11 NIV).

That's how we should use God's word: not as a genie, Magic 8-ball, Google Maps app, or instruction manual that we only turn to when we're desperate for help. But instead, as a light that is turned on ahead of time, hidden in our hearts, and tucked in our minds and memories. When something comes up, we're ready for it. We have what we need. **When we hide God's word in our hearts, we're prepared to make the best and wisest decisions possible...**

- We avoid trouble.
- We avoid hurting ourselves.
- We avoid hurting others.

At some point, we'll all face decisions where we need answers. And it will be tempting to treat the Bible like Google and search for specific answers. But when we treat the Bible that way, it can actually lead to more confusion. On the other hand, when we use the Bible as a light and a lamp, we'll see a bigger picture. The entire path is illuminated. It doesn't mean our immediate questions get immediate answers. But it does mean that we'll see all of life with more clarity.

APPLICATION

5 MINUTES

Here's the thing: **the Bible is something that you have to spend time with.** If you want to learn to play the guitar, crush a new video game, or learn the lyrics to every Billie Eilish song, you have to spend some time with it. It takes time. And the more time you spend with it, the more you know it. The Bible works the same way. The more you use it as a light, the more you'll see that the Bible is best understood this way. It's not an instruction manual—it's a light to show you what's ahead. It helps you correct things BEFORE they go wrong.

This happens when we learn from the experiences of the people written about in the Bible. We learn from choices they make. We learn what wisdom looks like by reading about their lives. Their accounts and experiences reveal more about who God is and what He's like. **The Bible invites us to observe what happens on its pages, and then live our lives in response to what we find there.** And over time, we discover that it influences the decisions we make.

Practically speaking, what does this look like? Here are a few easy steps to reading the Bible and using it as a lamp in your life...

- 1. Read a passage from the Bible for 10 minutes.** John is a great place to start. The other Gospels, Psalms, or Proverbs are great as well. The point is to spend 10 dedicated minutes reading. As you read, think about what you can observe from the writer's life or what they talk about.
- 2. Talk to someone about what you read.** Maybe that's your small group leader or a different trusted adult. For as long as there has been a Bible, there have been traditions of talking about it, debating it, and asking questions about it with other people. Reading and learning the Bible was never intended to be a solo event. When you invite other people in with their experience and their own wisdom, they'll be able to help you understand what the Bible is lighting up in your own life.
- 3. Memorize it.** Pick a verse and commit it to memory. Deciding to memorize a verse is like making a decision to pack a flashlight for a camping trip just in case you need it. When you memorize a verse, you're tucking away something that you may not need to use in the current moment, but it might be helpful later. When you *do* need it, the wisdom and truth of what you have memorized will come to mind and help you know what to do from that moment forward. I get memorizing doesn't sound like a good time, but hear me out on this: I dare you. That's right. I dare you to try it. Test it and see if the part you memorized doesn't come in handy, or remind you of something or pop into your brain at a moment you need it. Especially if you're someone who follows Jesus, don't miss this. He quoted Scripture all the time which means...He had it memorized. He understood how knowing something by heart can affect how you live. So, give it a go. Maybe even have your whole small group memorize something together.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

The Bible brings things to light. It may not always give us the specific answers that we want in the moment. But over time, it illuminates the entire path of our lives. And *that's* why there are people in your church who talk about how the Bible has changed their lives.

Yes, it can be confusing and tricky at times. But for anybody who knows how to play the guitar or drums, it was confusing and tricky for them at first, too. We have to put in the time to see the benefits of the Bible. Over time, it will help us better understand ourselves, others, and God. And when we use it like it was meant to be, it can make our lives bigger and better.

The question is, are you willing to give it some time? Are you willing to stick with it until it begins to light up your life? I think you'll be glad you did!



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS