

# Becoming Familiar with the New Testament

Lesson

# 1

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**Purpose** To acquaint the children with the New Testament and encourage them to study the scriptures.

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- Preparation**
1. Prayerfully study 2 Timothy 3:1–7, 13–17. Then study the lesson and decide how you want to teach the children the main purpose of the lesson. (See “Preparing Your Lessons,” p. vi, and “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.)
  2. Additional reading: *Gospel Principles*, chapter 10.
  3. Select the discussion questions and enrichment activities that will involve the children and best help them achieve the purpose of the lesson.
  4. Prepare the following eight wordstrips: Scriptures, Standard Works, Bible, Old Testament, New Testament, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price. (You could use the chalkboard instead of wordstrips.)
  5. Materials needed:
    - a. A Bible or a New Testament for each child.
    - b. A set of the standard works.

Note: There may be children in your class who do not read very well. Find ways to help them participate that do not make them feel uncomfortable. All the children should have a positive experience with the scriptures every week. Your enthusiasm for the scriptures will help them want to study and learn for themselves.

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## Suggested Lesson

### Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

### Attention Activity

Give the children the following clues and have them raise their hands when they think they know the word that fits the clues.

There are four of these.

(Name of a child in the class or someone they know who has all four books of scripture) has these.

They are called the standard works.

They contain the word of God.

They are books.

When the children have guessed the word *Scriptures*, explain that this lesson will teach them about the scriptures and explain their importance in our lives.

Discussion and  
Application  
Questions

Study the following questions and the scripture references as you prepare your lesson. Use the questions you feel will best help the children understand the scriptures and apply the principles in their lives. Reading the references with the children in class will help them gain insights into the scriptures.

- What are the scriptures? How is scripture different from other writings? (2 Timothy 3:16.)
- Why do we need to study the scriptures? When should we start studying the scriptures? (2 Timothy 3:14–15.) Why is it important to start studying the scriptures when we are young?

Show your copies of the scriptures, and display the wordstrip “Standard Works.” Explain that we call the scriptures the standard works because they are the official scriptures we use in the Church.

Invite the children to share with the class what they know about the scriptures. As you discuss each book of scripture, display the appropriate wordstrips or write the words on the chalkboard. (See *Gospel Principles*, chapter 10.)

- In which of the standard works do we read about Jesus Christ? Read or invite a child to read the following verses: Moses 8:24 (through the words *Holy Ghost*), Doctrine and Covenants 20:29, 2 Nephi 25:26, and Psalm 83:18 (explain that *Jehovah* is another name for Jesus Christ). Help the children understand that all four standard works testify of Jesus Christ.
- Have the children open their Bibles to the contents page (list of the books in the Old and New Testaments). What two major sections is the Bible divided into? What is the list under each section? Explain that the smaller books in the Old and New Testaments were written by different prophets or Church leaders. (If there is a chart of abbreviations, explain these to the children.) Where do we find the account of Jesus’ mortal life and ministry? (The New Testament.) Have the children look at the New Testament list, and explain that the lessons this year focus on teachings from the New Testament.
- Who were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? What did they write about? (Help the children understand that each of these four men wrote an account of Jesus’ life, often writing about the same events, and testified that he was the Savior.) Invite the children to share their favorite stories and teachings from Jesus’ life.
- Have the children turn to Acts, chapter 1. Explain that Acts tells about the Apostles teaching the gospel after Jesus’ death and resurrection. What kind of things do you think the Apostles of Jesus’ time did? What do the Apostles do today?
- Have the children turn again to the contents page. Explain that most of the rest of the books in the New Testament are letters written by Jesus’ Apostles or other Church leaders to members of the Church. Why do you think they wrote them? Explain that these letters helped the early members of the Church understand the gospel and counseled them to be faithful. What do we have in the Church today that are like these letters? (Articles by General Authorities in Church magazines, satellite broadcasts, and general and stake conferences.)

Explain that each book in the New Testament is divided into chapters and verses so we can easily find a phrase in the scriptures.

- Write *Matthew 28:2–9* on the chalkboard. In which of the standard works will we find this scripture? Which number tells us the chapter? Which numbers tell us the verses? Read these verses with the children. What is this scripture account about? Why is it important to have this event recorded in the scriptures?

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## Enrichment Activities

You may use one or more of the following activities any time during the lesson or as a review, summary, or challenge.

1. Help the children memorize the books of the New Testament in order. You may wish to use the song “The Books in the New Testament” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 116). Review the books over the next few weeks.
2. Discuss the eighth article of faith with the children, and help them memorize it (see “Helping Children Memorize Scriptures,” p. x). Remind the children that our Bible was translated from old documents that had been copied and recopied by hand and that mistakes were made in both the translation and recopying. Even though most of the Bible is accurate, the prophet Nephi wrote that many “plain and precious things” (1 Nephi 13:28) have been taken out. The Prophet Joseph Smith reviewed the Bible through the inspiration of God and added parts that had been removed or changed. Explain that these parts help us understand more things about the gospel.
3. If you have an English Bible published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, show the children the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) reference for Matthew 6:13 (footnote a). Help the children find the longer JST references at the back of the Bible.

If you have a non-English Bible, see the JST references at the end of the triple combination. Compare the two verses and discuss how Joseph Smith’s translation helps us understand the verse.

4. If the children in your class have the English LDS edition of the Bible, briefly explain the following sections of the Bible: footnotes, Topical Guide, Bible Dictionary (including the Harmony of the Gospels), Gazetteer, and Maps.
5. Read and discuss Luke 24:27. Help the children understand that Jesus studied and taught from the scriptures often. What scripture would Jesus have studied? (The Old Testament.)
6. Remove the wordstrips, mix them up, and place them on the floor or a table. Ask the children questions similar to the following ones:
  - Which two wordstrips mean the same thing? (“Scriptures” and “Standard Works.”)
  - Which two wordstrips name books that are part of a third book? (“New Testament” and “Old Testament,” which are part of the Bible.)
  - Which books are included in the standard works? (The Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price.)

When a child answers the question, have him or her come up and display the appropriate wordstrips.

7. Sing or read the words to “As I Search the Holy Scriptures” (*Hymns*, no. 277) or “Search, Ponder, and Pray” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 109).

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## **Conclusion**

Testimony

Bear testimony of the truth of the scriptures and their importance in our lives. Share with the children a time in your life when reading the scriptures helped you. Encourage the children to read from the scriptures daily.

Suggested  
Home Reading

Suggest that the children study 2 Timothy 3:14–17 at home as a review of this lesson.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer.