

middle school



Lesson 1 / June 2, 2024

# Excavating God's Word

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as  
**STEP 1**



## Lesson 1

### Focus:

Dig into the Bible to know God better.

## Lesson 1

### Bible Basis:

Acts 17:10-12;  
2 Timothy 2:15

## Lesson 1

### Memory Verse:

The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.  
—Psalm 119:130

**Your students will watch footage of rescuers digging for survivors after the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria as they explore what it means to dig into God's Word.**

### Materials:

- Internet access

**Many of you may have heard about the major earthquakes that happened in February of 2023 on the border between Turkey and Syria. This natural disaster caused the destruction of many buildings and communities. In the aftermath of this destruction, rescuers were committed to digging through the rubble and looking for survivors.**

Share this video with your students [4:09; stop at 3:00].

Rescue teams dig through piles of rubble after two earthquakes in Turkey and Syria

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKF\\_2wF2Dsg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKF_2wF2Dsg)

When you're finished, have a discussion with your class:

**In the midst of devastation and winter weather, the natural response would be to flee and get as far away from the destruction as possible. These rescuers have bravely chosen to help look for survivors.**

- **What did you notice about the way the rescuers were looking?** (Let students share their insights, which might include that many wore safety helmets and visibility vests. Students may also mention some people used lights and machinery to look for survivors.)
- **While some safety equipment and machinery were used, how might all rescuers having the proper tools for digging have made their job easier?** (Accept all reasonable answers. A common response might be: They could spend less energy digging and more energy on actually finding people.)

**The job of rescuers is certainly much easier and more efficient with the right resources.**

➤ **When we study God’s Word, how is it a little like “digging” to find what’s below the surface?** (Since the Bible was written so long ago, its meaning might be more difficult to uncover. We often need to dig and scrape a little to figure out the correct context and meaning. The hard work pays off by finding something of special value!)

➤ **What are some things we might be able to find if we search the Bible?** (We can find historical events, truth about who God is, promises, commands, lessons and sermons, beautiful poetry, interesting people, how much God loves us—you name it!)

**The Bible requires some digging that we might have to work at in order to uncover all its secrets and treasures. Many people before us have committed themselves to learning what God’s Word has to say, so let’s follow their lead and see what’s underneath the surface.**

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher’s guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

# Excavating God's Word

for use as  
**STEP 4** 

## Lesson 1

### Focus:

Dig into the Bible to know God better.

## Lesson 1

### Bible Basis:

Acts 17:10-12;  
2 Timothy 2:15

## Lesson 1

### Memory Verse:

The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.  
—Psalm 119:130

### Materials:

- Internet access
- Pens/pencils (1 per student)
- Prepared index cards (1 per student)
- Whiteboard and marker (or screenshared document)

Before class, label index cards with one of these words or phrases on the front: PROMISES, COMMANDS, NAMES FOR GOD, PROVERBS. Repeat these four labels until you have enough to give each student one card (Example: If you have 20 students, label 5 cards PROMISES, 5 cards COMMANDS, 5 cards NAMES FOR GOD, and 5 cards PROVERBS). If your class is meeting online, invite students to bring supplies with them to class. You can assign the words or phrases above to students ahead of time.

Pull up the following website so that your students can see the illustration.

Four Layers of Soil

<http://web1.pima.gov/deq/ecokids/more/FourLayersSoil.html>

**This (indicate the online illustration) is a miniature version of an excavation site. We can see that as we go from top to bottom, there are layers of dirt, sand, and rocks of different colors. Even though the soil is confined in one place, each layer is a little different.**

**The Bible is a little bit like this. There are 66 different “books,” all with different layers! In order to really know the Bible, you can’t just look at the surface; you have to dig in and find out what’s underneath. Today we’ve got a little homework! But it’s not for a grade—and it’s a lot better than doing a bunch of math problems. You will need a few things to help you: one of these cards—and your Bible or Bible app.**

Mix the cards up and fan them as you would a deck of playing cards. Go around the room and let students pull a pre-labeled index card out of the batch. They will not know ahead of time which one they chose. (If your class is meeting online, invite students to have supplies and pre-assigned words or phrases ready at home.)

**Take a look at your cards. At home this week, you're going to begin excavating to find examples of the hidden treasure listed on your card. In one minute, see how many answers you can think of without even looking in your Bible yet. Ready . . . Go!** (Encourage students to pull up prior knowledge of PROMISES, COMMANDS, NAMES FOR GOD, or PROVERBS.)

➤ **If someone just told you to go home and “read your Bible,” why does that seem hard for most people—even adults?** (If you just pick up your Bible, flip open a page, and start reading, you might end up pretty confused. It takes time and a little bit of direction to get going at first.)

➤ **What can you do to find some examples of these items on the cards?** (You can look in a concordance, you can ask a trusted adult, use a Bible app, you can even do an Internet search! There are lots of ways to find things in the Bible you didn't know before.)

Write the following websites on the board so that your students can copy them on their index cards: [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com) and [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)

Encourage your students to take their cards home and bring them back next week with the back of the card filled with examples of their Bible “excavation.”

Close in prayer, asking for wisdom and perseverance to keep digging into God's Word.

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