

God's Message

Trust It. Treasure It.

BIBLIOLOGY



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STRONG

curriculum

A world weak on truth needs a strong, trustworthy message. STRONG Curriculum builds stronger churches by teaching all Scripture to produce spiritually mature believers who measure up to the stature of Christ.

A Plan You Can Trust

The Bible has the answers to what students need most. No other book or philosophy contains God's power to save and transform lives. Because of this, we've made it our unwavering commitment to build Strong Students upon the sure foundation of God's Word. With this curriculum, your church can develop teens who will be strong defenders of the faith.

The Strong Students scope and sequence is designed around the seven teaching aims Jesus modeled in His ministry. Since these are Jesus' aims, teachers can be confident in the aims' effectiveness and purpose. Every lesson in the Strong Students scope and sequence addresses at least one of Jesus' teaching aims.


Every lesson also focuses on students' needs. We understand the challenge of teaching the Bible to today's teens because of four barriers culture has pushed on them:


- Struggles with identity
- Subjective view of truth
- Hope in a social utopia
- Belief that a career and wealth guarantee happiness


Strong Students takes care of the tough part for you by striking at the foundation of these barriers and providing a Biblical response to each one. With Strong Students, you can concentrate on communicating to your teens and helping them grow into strong believers in Christ without worrying whether you are effectively addressing the philosophies competing for their minds.


Look for the **BuildUP** icons in the table of contents and on the first page of each lesson.


JESUS' TEACHING AIMS


 **BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.** Jesus taught His students to trust in Him alone for salvation and to share the gospel with others. This aim is obviously fundamental to all the rest


 **UNDERSTAND BIBLICAL ETHICS.** Jesus instructed His students to live according to moral values. These values provided them with the tools to make wise decisions.

 **INTERNALIZE GODLINESS.** Jesus taught His followers to be godly on the inside. He warned them not to become like the Pharisees, with a mere outward appearance of godliness.

 **LEARN DOCTRINE.** Jesus knew the importance of teaching His students the truth and identified doctrine as one of the means for spiritual growth. Wishy-washy doctrine leads to faulty practice.

 **DEVELOP LIFE SKILLS.** Jesus taught His followers to meet life's challenges in a way that honored and glorified God. He gave them the skills to navigate those challenges successfully.

 **UPLIFT OTHERS.** Jesus' life was all about others. Leading by example, He taught His followers to be all about others too.

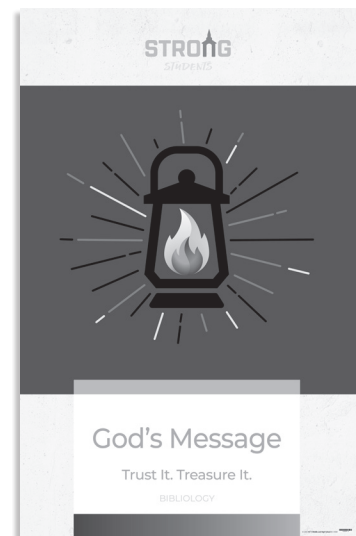
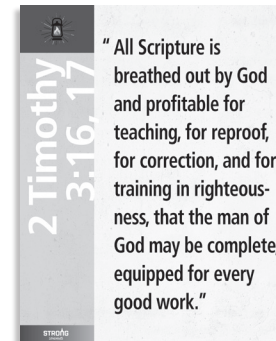
 **PREPARE TO SERVE.** Jesus prepared His followers to serve in the context of local churches that were established soon after His ascension. He emphasized sacrifice and dedication.

STRONG[®] curriculum

In this quarter's Strong Students for Middle and High Schoolers, the students will study bibliology. They will cover topics such as the inspiration of Scripture, the Bible's reliability, and the Spirit's illumination ministry. Students will be encouraged to trust and treasure their Bibles.

Kit Contents

- Teacher Guide
- Student Book
Order one book for each student
- Card with online download code
Includes PowerPoint, resources, Home Connection Tool, and additional teacher resources
- DVD
- Verse Poster
- Posters



Ordering Information

All materials are available from Regular Baptist Press.

- Web: www.StrongCurriculum.com
- E-mail: orders@rbpstore.org
- Toll-free orders in the United States: 1-800-727-4440
- Fax: 1-847-843-3757
- Canada: Contact your distributor.



The Doctrinal Basis of Our Curriculum

A more detailed statement with references is available upon request.

- The verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures
- Only one true God
- The Trinity of the Godhead
- The Holy Spirit and His ministry
- The personality of Satan
- The Genesis account of creation
- Original sin and the fall of man
- The virgin birth of Christ
- Salvation through faith in the shed blood of Christ
- The bodily resurrection and priesthood of Christ
- Grace and the new birth
- Justification by faith
- Sanctification of the believer
- The security of the believer
- The church
- The ordinances of the local church: baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper
- Biblical separation—ecclesiastical and personal
- Obedience to civil government
- The place of Israel
- The pretribulation rapture of the church
- The premillennial return of Christ
- The millennial reign of Christ
- Eternal glory in Heaven for the righteous
- Eternal torment in Hell for the wicked

How to Teach STRONG STUDENTS Lessons

Leading a Student to Christ

STRONG STUDENTS has been designed to help you clearly present God's Word to your students. Each lesson will guide students through the Bible, encouraging them to interact with the material and apply it to their lives.

Familiarize yourself with the resources included in the kit so that you can maximize your effectiveness in the classroom. The key resources you need are Student Books, the PowerPoint (CD), and the Home Connection Tool (CD).

Encourage students to use their Student Books during each lesson so they can follow the PowerPoint presentation by taking notes. The words to fill in the blanks are either part of the outline or highlighted in orange in the sentences in the PowerPoint.

Some of the PowerPoint presentations contain additional slides that obviously tie into the teacher guide lessons. Make sure you review the PowerPoint presentations before teaching.

The student books include a daily devotional. Encourage your students to complete them either before or after coming to class.

The Home Connection Tool gives the parents of your students an idea of what you are teaching in class. Consider emailing those to each family represented in your class. You can find them on the CD or online using the download code.

Before Each Lesson

- Read the Scripture Focus passage several times.
- Do the Time with God section of the Student Book to know what your students are studying.
- Memorize the key verses.
- Prepare the materials you will need for each activity.
- Work through the Bible Study section and carefully plan the lesson.
- Plan how you will apply the Bible lesson to your students' lives. Make sure what you say is clear and shows students how they can use the lesson.
- Pray for yourself, your students, and your lesson.

AS A TEACHER, your most important concern is the personal salvation of your students. Find out whether your students know Jesus Christ as their Savior in a way that doesn't introduce doubt in their minds. An easy and gentle way to find this out is to give your students several minutes to write out an answer to a question like, How can a person get to Heaven? Collect their answers and read them during the following week. If any of your students seem confused about salvation, you can present the gospel to them and provide the opportunity for them to receive Christ. If possible, deal with students individually.

The Plan of Salvation

- Everyone is a sinner. No one can live up to God's perfect standard (Romans 3:23).
- Sin's penalty is death (Romans 6:23).
- God loves us and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay for our sin. Christ died in our place (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).
- When a person places his trust in Jesus' payment for sins, Christ becomes his Savior. His sins are forgiven, and he receives God's gift of eternal life (John 1:12; 5:24).
- Everlasting life begins the moment we trust in Jesus (John 3:36).
- After that, nothing we ever do will take us out of God's hand; we are secure (John 10:27–29).
- The experience of the new birth (being born into God's family) is not based on a feeling, but on confidence in God's Word (1 John 5:11, 12).

Encourage students to pray, but explain that prayer does not save a person. Prayer is how we communicate our inward thoughts to God. Ask new believers to explain what they have done and what has happened to them.

Discipleship

Encourage new believers to read the Bible, and explain the importance of prayer. Also explain 1 John 1:9 to them so they can deal with sin in their new Christian life. Make it a priority to follow up with new believers.

Knowing Your High School Students

Description of Physical, Social, and Emotional Development

- I MAY feel developmentally out of step with my peers—behind or ahead in physical changes—as I experience puberty.
- I MAY be sensitive about my weight and body shape and worry about whether I am normal.
- I AM developing my own sense of identity.
- I AM more interested in and influenced by my peer group than by the adults in my life.
- I MAY be moody, depressed, or anxious about academic or social issues in my life.
- I AM very focused on myself and may feel both high expectations and lack of confidence.
- I AM better able to express feelings through talking, but I tend to respond dramatically, feeling that no one else has ever experienced the same feelings and emotions.
- I DO NOT always exhibit the emotional maturity that matches my more adult-like appearance. I have trouble thinking before acting; sometimes I seem silly and unfocused on the task at hand.

Effective Responses

- Provide emotional and spiritual support and encourage students to develop a strong sense of self as a valuable person created by God.
- Accept students as they are and avoid comparing them to others. Resist stereotyping. Not every tall boy is a basketball player.
- Generate an atmosphere of acceptance and love for all, demonstrating interest and care for each student.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect so youth feel they are part of a community.
- Help build genuine relationships by honestly sharing mistakes and life experiences.
- Help students talk through the ramifications of their choices without asking, How could you? What were you thinking?

- Avoid arguments by remaining calm and not engaging in banter over an issue.
- Be patient with the tendency of some youth toward constant personal grooming.

Cognitive (Learning) Development

- I MAY be hesitant to try new things for fear of embarrassing myself in front of my peer group.
- I AM developing new thinking skills and am able to think about multiple options and possibilities.
- I CAN think more deeply and significantly about abstract ideas such as faith.
- I AM developing a stronger sense of right and wrong.
- I MAY be ready to take significant steps in areas of faith and Christian growth.

Effective Instructional Methods

- Create an open and stress-free environment where youth can learn and share concerns in a confidence-building atmosphere.
- Provide background information, a purpose to the lesson, and understanding of the text.
- Combine love, high energy, enthusiasm, and seriousness with engaging ways to present the lesson.
- Use personal stories that illustrate Biblical principles to keep students engaged in learning.
- Provide honest answers to questions.
- Stimulate thinking in areas of salvation and Christian growth.
- Help Christians work through issues of assurance of salvation and to begin studying the Bible for daily decision making.
- Encourage students to articulate Biblical principles of right and wrong that they are learning from God's Word.
- Invite volunteers to look up and read aloud Bible passages. But don't put students on the spot or ask them to do things that make them feel foolish.

SESSION 1

GOD REVEALED TRUTH FOR LIFE

Scripture Focus

Various Scripture passages

BuildUP Theme



LEARN DOCTRINE

God reveals Himself to us through His world and His Word.

Measurable Response

The students will demonstrate that they treasure God's Word as God's loving revelation of Himself.

Memory Verses

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork . . . The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (Ps. 19:1, 7). NKJV

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork . . . The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (Ps. 19:1, 7). ESV

Teacher Preparation

- Read Psalm 19. What did David learn about God from observing creation? What could creation not reveal about God? What did God's Word reveal to David?
- We should never come to the place of taking the Bible for granted. It reveals that we are helpless without God and that God loves us and wants us to have eternal life. We ought to be grateful for God's Word and its sure message of hope for eternal life.
- This session will cover how God reveals truth to us. Understanding the difference between general and special revelation will show the importance of God's written Word, the Bible—the only way to personally know God and to live for Him.

Cultural Barrier

This session addresses the false belief that truth is subjective. God revealed His objective truth in His Word because He loves us and because we would be forever lost without knowing the truth about Him. We should be glad for the opportunity to know God through His Word.

Session Starters

Option 1—Connect the Dots

Gather

- Resources 69-R1 and 69-R2.
- Pencils.

Steps

1. Give each student a copy of resource 69-R1. Students take a minute or two to connect all the dots to create a picture.
2. Students share their pictures. Discuss whose picture seems correct.

ASK: Whose picture do you think is correct?

ASK: What is missing? *The numbers next to the dots.*

3. Give each student a copy of resource 69-R2. Students work the dot-to-dot to reveal the word “hello.”
4. Transition to the Bible study.

The Bible helps us connect the dots so we can see God’s creation, including ourselves, from God’s perspective. Without God’s revelation in His Word, we would never know the complete truth about ourselves and about God. Life would become one big guess. This session will help us appreciate and value God’s Word as essential to understanding life and our purpose in God’s world.

Option 2—Play-Doh Clues

Gather

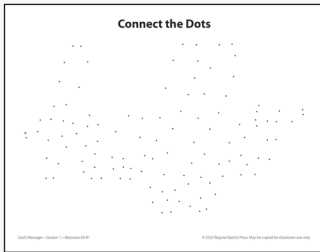
- Cans of Play-Doh.

Steps

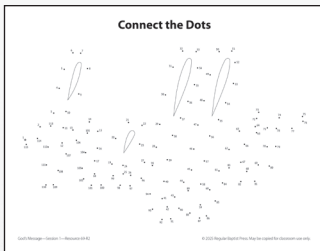
1. Give each student half a can of Play-Doh and three minutes to make a sculpture.
2. Students display their sculptures. Discuss what the sculptures reveal about the students.

ASK: What can you learn about each other from your sculptures?

ASK: Which sculpture do you think best represents its sculptor?

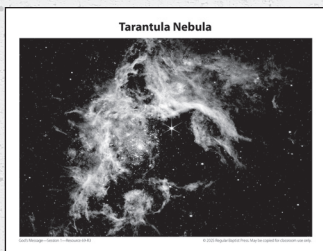


69-R1



69-R2

This study assumes the student believes God exists and can be known. Another Strong Students study called "Apologetics: Answers to Honest Questions" deals with proofs for the existence of God. You can order Strong Students courses from RBPstore.org.



69-R3

3. Transition to the Bible study.

All of creation is in a sense God's sculpture. It reveals clues about Who He is and what He is like. But as we will see in this session, we need the Bible to truly know God. This session and this course will challenge us to appreciate the Bible. God wants us to trust it and treasure it.

Bible Study

Gather

- Resources 69-R3 and 69-R4.

I. Natural Revelation Gives Clues about God

Creation helps us understand what God can do.

A. Clues about God's works

1. Creation's immensity: God must be powerful

READ: Romans 1:20.

Since time began, creation has revealed God's power, especially when we look into deep space using satellite telescopes. The James Webb Space Telescope, which orbits the sun at about one million miles from earth, can detect infrared light from around 13.5 billion light-years away. A light year is the distance light travels in one year. Light travels at 186,000 miles per second. So, 13.5 billion light years is the distance light travels at 186,000 miles per second over 13.5 billion years. That is an unfathomably great distance. Yet, the universe goes beyond 13.5 billion light years away. No one has seen an "edge" to the universe.

DISPLAY: Resource 69-R3. The image is of the Tarantula Nebula.

The Tarantula Nebula is about 161,000 light-years away from earth. Images of the nebula captured by the Webb telescope include smudges of light in the background. Many of those smudges are galaxies that lie far beyond the Tarantula Nebula. Those galaxies are 100,000 or more light-years across. If one of those galaxies was brought forward, it would occupy two-thirds of the distance between the earth and the tarantula nebula.

ASK: What do think must be true about God when you consider creation's immense size?

God made the universe big as a testimony of His great, incomprehensible power.

2. Creation's intricacies: God must be wise

We can also learn about God from observing our world through microscopes. The intricacies of creation show God's wisdom.

Just as we cannot see to the farthest reaches of the universe, we also cannot see atoms, the smallest parts of the universe. Consider that about five million hydrogen atoms could fit in a pinhead and that a sheet of paper is about one million atoms thick. A single atom is so small that it takes extraordinary efforts just to map where the atom is, resulting in a visualization of the atom but not a true picture of the atom. Furthermore, each atom is made up of still smaller parts that we may never be able to see.

The universe is intricate, meaning it has complex interrelating parts that we cannot fully understand or explain. Such intricacies tell us that God must be wise beyond our understanding. The apostle Paul wrote about God's deep wisdom.

READ: Romans 11:33, 34. **ASK:** What is the answer to Paul's questions about God's mind? *No one has known the mind of the Lord or given Him advice about the decisions God makes.*

God spread countless stars across space that we cannot fully search and made those stars and everything else out of atoms that we also cannot fully search. The unsearchable nature of God's creation points to the depth of His wisdom.

B. Clues about God's ways

1. Problems in creation: God must be just

Though we see God's power and wisdom in creation, we also recognize that something went terribly wrong with the world and the rest of the universe. Death and destruction are everywhere. Serious problems affect every person and every part of our environment.

Some might think the presence of death and destruction in the world is proof that God isn't good. They might argue that a good God wouldn't give people bodies that get sick and die and that He wouldn't allow for deadly earthquakes and devastating weather events. They might also say that a good God wouldn't let people hurt and kill each other. They are right in that God would never create a world already filled with death and destruction. He didn't, of course (Gen. 1:31).

READ: Genesis 1:31. **ASK:** What problems were not part of God's "very good" creation on God's last day of creating the universe? *Things such as sickness, animal violence, environmental disasters, and death.*

But the problems of death and destruction obviously exist in creation

today. The presence of death and destruction in the world tell us something about God.

ASK: What do you think we could learn about God from the existence of death and destruction in the present world?

Death and destruction show us that God must be holy and that He demands holiness in His creation. The problems we observe and endure must reveal that God's creation didn't remain holy and that God responded with just judgment.

Diseases, disasters, and death are all part of God's just response to man's sin. They serve as God's warning signs to humanity that He isn't okay with His creation in its present state. Problems in the world and in people's personal lives should alert people to their bigger problem with God. Everything is broken because God responded to injustice in His creation. He wants His creation to know He is just and must punish sin. Moses sang about God's justness after God delivered the Israelites from Pharaoh by parting the Red Sea.

READ: Deuteronomy 32:3, 4.

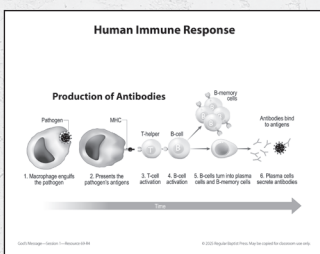
Moses declared God's works are perfect and all His ways are justice (judgment). Nothing God does is unjust. God created the world perfect and then judged the world when man sinned. His judgment on the world is just.

2. Provision in creation: God must be gracious

Despite the presence of destruction and death everywhere in the world, there are means of renewal, protection, and survival. For example, our bodies have immune systems and a means of healing from wounds and injuries. Medications provide relief and can prolong life. Over time, advances in medicine have brought about the elimination of diseases and plagues that used to carry death sentences for those infected by them. Smallpox used to kill a third of the people it infected. The viral disease caused high fever, a rash, severe headache, and body pain. On May 8, 1980, the World Health Assembly declared the world free of smallpox thanks to an effective smallpox vaccine. Vaccines work with the immune systems God gave us. Without our immune systems, life would be much more difficult in our fallen world.

DISPLAY: Resource 69-R4. In the human immune response diagram, note that our bodies both deal with the present problem and produce cells that remember how to deal with the problem in the future.

ASK: What do you think we can learn about God from the existence of our immune system, effective medicines, and the human body's ability to heal?



69-R4

Though God justly judged the world when man sinned, He limited the troubles we experience. The limits demonstrate His loving grace and point to Him as the solution to all of life's problems.

READ: Psalm 33:5. **ASK:** What evidence of God's graciousness and goodness do you see in our fallen, sin-cursed world? *God waters the earth with rain; God provided many varieties of food to grow in the earth's varied climates.*

We are all well aware that there isn't an answer to *all* of life's physical afflictions. There are many diseases and illnesses that destroy our bodies and lead to certain death. Further medical research might alleviate some of those symptoms and even provide new cures for some diseases, but no amount of medical advancement will bring a person back to life. Every person is essentially terminally ill. There is no medical cure for physical death. We need more from God than a testimony of His graciousness.

II. Special Revelation Reveals Truths about God

All of creation reveals that God must be glorious, meaning He must be powerful, wise, just, and gracious. But what we learn about God's glory from creation doesn't reveal God's solution for sin, death, and destruction. We need direct communication from the God about His plan to bring restoration and salvation. We need special revelation to fill in the important knowledge gaps left by merely observing creation. The Bible is God's primary special revelation for us today.

A. Truths about God's person

While creation gives us some compelling clues about God, the Bible gives us sure and clear truths. We can be confident in our knowledge of God by reading and studying His Word.

READ: Exodus 34:5–7; 1 Samuel 2:2; Psalm 116:5. **ASK:** What other Bible passages that reveal truths about God are particularly meaningful to you?

The Bible also reveals Christ. While talking to some unbelieving Jews, Jesus shared that the Scriptures (Old Testament) testify of Him.

READ: John 5:39, 40.

Isaiah has some of the most revealing passages about Christ.

READ: Isaiah 9:6, 7; 53:3–6.

We could spend the rest of the sessions in this study just learning what the Old Testament says about Christ. There is a lot we could unpack simply because we have the benefit of reading the Old Testament passages in the context of the New Testament record of Christ's coming, death, and resurrection.

READ: John 1:14, 18; Hebrews 1:1–3. **ASK:** What have you learned about God the Father through the life and work of Christ?

Jesus reveals God by showing us God's love for humanity, His hatred of sin, and His graciousness toward sinners who repent.

B. Truths about God's plan

Beginning in the Garden of Eden, God communicated His plan to save the world from sin. He didn't leave a trail of clues for Adam and Eve to hopefully find and understand. God directly and clearly verbalized His plan so Adam and Eve wouldn't miss it and could share it with future generations. More than 2,500 years later, Moses penned Genesis and quoted the message God spoke to Adam and Eve. The message had been passed along verbally up until that point.

READ: Genesis 3:14, 15. **ASK:** What message of hope do you see in these verses?

When God condemned the serpent (Satan) for tempting Adam and Eve, He gave the couple and their future generations a sure hope. The Seed Who will crush the serpent's head (defeat Satan) is Christ. God promised Adam and Eve that He would fix the sin, destruction, and death problems for them by sending His Son to them to suffer the punishment for their sins. Jesus, the Son of God, fulfilled God's promise.

Moses also wrote about God's promise to Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel. Abraham lived about 500 or so years before Moses.

READ: Genesis 12:1–3. **ASK:** How are all the families of the earth blessed through Abraham? *Christ is a descendant of Abraham. He took on a human body and came to die for the sins of the world so He might offer the world salvation.*

The nation of Israel carried God's promises to Abraham throughout their history, though they didn't always serve God. When Jesus came to earth, very few Jews were aware of His arrival. God used angels to announce Jesus' birth and John the Baptist to declare Jesus' identity.

READ: John 3:16, 36. **ASK:** Summarize the messages Jesus and John the Baptist shared with the world. *God loved the world so much that He sent Jesus to die for the sins of the world. God saves those who believe in Jesus and brings His wrath on those who never trust in Jesus.*

Praise God that He gave us His Word so we can connect the dots of our observations of creation and understand His message of salvation. We would be confused and lost without God's Word.

Memory Builder

Gather

- Whiteboard and marker.

Steps

1. Write Psalm 19:1 and 7 on the board and explain its meaning.

God's creation reveals that He must exist and must be all-powerful, all-wise, and glorious beyond our comprehension. But creation can't tell us how to be saved. We must read God's revelation in the Bible to understand His plan of salvation. God's Word is perfect and complete. It tells us all we need to know to have spiritual restoration and live wisely before the Lord.

2. Have students take turns giving answers to the following sentence starters.
 - The heavens declare that God . . .
 - The Word of God tells me . . .
3. Review the verse with your students and have them say it together a few times.

Session Application

Gather

- Play-Doh.

Steps

1. Review the session.

Natural revelation gives us clues about God's works. We can learn that He must be powerful, for His creation is immense, and that He must be wise, for His creation is so intricate we could never fully discover it. Natural revelation also reveals God's ways. The problems in creation show that God must be just. And God's provisions for dealing with problems in creation show that He must be gracious. Special revelation, meaning the Bible and Jesus Christ, reveal truths about God's person and plan of salvation. We need God's special revelation to know His solution to our sin problem.

2. Give each student some Play-Doh. Students use the Play-Doh to sculpt something that reflects an answer to one of the following questions.

ASK: What would life be like without God's Word?

ASK: How is your life different because of God's Word?

ASK: How might giving more attention to God's Word make your life better?

3. Students share their sculptures as you discuss the questions above.

Session Takeaways

Before dismissing the students, draw their attention to the Time with God page in their student books. Instruct them to complete the study on their own. The activity will help them appreciate God's natural and special revelation.