



Peter Warns Against False Teaching

The apostles prepared the church to contend for the faith.

Lesson Focus

Peter wrote to believers to warn them of the false teachers who would secretly bring heresies into the church. He instructed believers to build up their faith by adding godly qualities so they would grow in holiness and stand firm against false teaching. The Apostle John and Jude also warned of the danger of false teachers and gave instructions to keep believers from being tricked by counterfeit ideas.

Key Passages

2 Peter 1:5–7, 2:1; Jude 1:12–13

Memory Verse

Philippians 3:20–21 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

Since the beginning, false teachers have threatened the truth of God's words. In Deuteronomy 13, God warned Israel against false prophets who would claim to do signs and wonders in the name of other gods. He warned the Israelites not to listen to them. Rather, the Israelites were to walk after the Lord, fear him, and keep his commandments, serving and holding fast to him. But the false prophet was to be put to death (Deuteronomy 13:1–5). Throughout the Old Testament, we see the truth of that warning as false prophets rose up to speak falsely and to sway the Israelites toward idolatry.

It was on this history that Peter based his warning. Writing to the churches in Asia, Peter told them to watch out for false teachers that would rise among them, secretly introducing destructive heresies, even to the point of denying Jesus as Lord (2 Peter 2:1). Peter didn't tell the believers to put these teachers to death, but he did promise that they brought destruction upon themselves and that they would be condemned (2 Peter 2:3). He then pointed to the work of God as evidence of God's judgment on the unrighteous and his preservation of the righteous (2 Peter 2:4–10).

Peter described false teachers as irrational animals, blots and blemishes, insatiable for sin, and greedy (2 Peter 2:12–16). They are like waterless springs and mists driven by the storm. They boast

and entice by sensual passions, promising freedom but living in captivity to corruption (2 Peter 2:17–19). Jude used very similar descriptions and even quoted Peter's warning. He indicated that the words and lives of the false prophets are empty, as futile as waterless clouds and fruitless trees (Jude 12–13).

But the apostles did not just wish to scare the believers. They intended to prepare the saints to contend for the faith. Jude told his readers to build themselves up in the faith, praying in the Spirit, keeping in the love of God, and hoping in the mercy of Jesus that leads to eternal life (Jude 20–21). Peter charged the saints to be diligent in their pursuit of holiness and to take care not to be carried away by errors but to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus (2 Peter 3:14–18). John added that the Christian should not associate with or offer aid or hospitality to a deceiver or antichrist, thereby taking part in his wicked works (2 John 10). Paul charged Timothy to preach the word, share the gospel, expose false teaching, rebuke false teachers, and exhort believers to truth with patience and teaching (2 Timothy 4:1–5).

We face the same dangers as the Israelites, the apostles, the early church, and every generation of believers since. As long as we live in a fallen world, there will be those who reject the truth of God's Word and strive to lure others into their lies. We must learn to identify false doctrine, expose false teachers, and stand for the truth.

Historical/Apologetics Background

In the Gospels and the first half of Acts, we see a lot about the Apostle Peter. But after the Jerusalem council in Acts 15, we don't hear much about Peter in the Bible. It seems that after his imprisonment and miraculous escape recorded in Acts 12, Peter left Jerusalem under the leadership of James and proceeded to serve elsewhere. There is some indication that he may have served in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:12) and that he and his wife traveled as missionaries (1 Corinthians 9:5). Some scholars believe that Peter ministered in Asia during the time that Paul skirted it on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:7). However, Peter's first epistle was sent to the saints in that area and offers little evidence that he was previously acquainted with them.

Tradition holds that Peter wrote both of his epistles from Rome. In the first letter, he revealed that

he was in Babylon (1 Peter 5:13). This could refer to a Roman outpost in northern Egypt named Babylon, the ancient Babylon of Mesopotamia, or Rome. Because of the obscurity of the Roman outpost and the distance and sparse population of ancient Babylon, as well as evidence from extrabiblical tradition, most scholars agree that Peter used Babylon as an alias for Rome. Clement and Ignatius, early church fathers, both write of Peter's martyrdom. Though they did not specify the location of his execution, the accounts would be consistent with Peter being executed in Rome under Nero's persecution. Near the end of the second century, Dionysius and Irenaeus claimed that Peter and Paul taught together in Italy. Eusebius added that Peter was crucified upside down.

Because of his prominence in the early church, there were many writings that falsely claimed to

be written by Peter, and there are several apocryphal books allegedly connected to the apostle as well. However, it is clear that the biblical epistles were indeed written by Peter. Both letters identify Peter as the author, and the second refers to the eyewitness account of the transfiguration. Some have raised question about the difference in style and the classical Greek that was used in the first epistle, pointing out that Peter was uneducated. But the first letter was written through an amanuensis, Silvanus, who likely aided in grammar and syntax. The

second letter was a warning against false teachers, so it would be unreasonable to expect an imposter to have written it.

Although we don't know much about Peter's later years, we can trust that God continued to use him to advance his kingdom. We can also be confident that God has preserved the narrative and writings we find in the Bible because they are inspired by God and profitable for us as we strive to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

Review Questions

K-1st Review Questions

1. What do we call fake money that is made to look like real money: banknotes, counterfeit, or play money? *Counterfeit.*
2. How is false teaching like counterfeit money? What do people try to do with it? *It is meant to trick people into thinking it's the real thing.*
3. Who did Peter and Jude warn about that would secretly creep in among the believers to spread false ideas: false teachers, thieves, or children? *False teachers.*
4. Heresies are ideas that are true or false according to God's Word? *False.*
5. What will happen to false teachers: they will be blessed, comforted, or punished? *They will be punished (in hell).*
6. False teachers do not know whom? *God.*
7. The apostles and church leaders wanted the believers to understand that false teachers were: nice, dangerous, or okay to have around? *Dangerous.*
8. What word pictures did Jude use for dangerous false teachers: sinking ships and strong winds or hidden reefs and wild waves? *Hidden reefs and wild waves.*
9. What did Jude and Peter encourage believers to do to keep from falling for the tricks of false teachers: read about false teachings, build themselves up in their faith, or stay home from church? *Build themselves up in their faith.*
10. Name one thing believers can do to protect themselves from false teaching. *(Allow several students to answer.) Pray, read the Bible, grow in righteousness (learning to do what's right).*
11. Peter said believers should grow by adding some things to their: knowledge, faith, or love? *Faith.*
12. Peter said to add virtue to our faith, which is doing what's right and honoring to whom? *God.*
13. We should be careful to obey God in how we act and speak. This is called: self-control or self-esteem? *Self-control.*
14. When we live in a godly way, how should we treat others? *Be kind and helpful; show love and care.*

15. True or False: Growing to be more like Jesus will help us stand against the lies of false teachers. *True.*
16. True or False: The more you know Jesus and the Bible, the easier it will be to tell if an idea is counterfeit. *True.*

Pre-K Review Questions

1. What do we call fake money that is made to look like real money: counterfeit or play money? *Counterfeit.*
2. What do false teachers try to do with counterfeit ideas? *They try to trick people into thinking they're truths from God when they really aren't.*
3. Who did Peter and Jude warn about that would secretly creep in among the believers to spread false ideas: false teachers or thieves? *False teachers.*
4. Are heresies true or false according to God's Word? *False.*
5. What will happen to false teachers: will they be blessed or punished? *They will be punished (in hell).*
6. False teachers try to trick people with lies about whom? *Jesus, God.*
7. Peter and Jude wanted the believers to understand that false teachers were: nice, dangerous, or okay to have around? *Dangerous.*
8. What word pictures did Jude use for dangerous false teachers: sinking ships and strong winds or hidden reefs and wild waves? *Hidden reefs and wild waves.*
9. What did Jude and Peter tell believers to do to keep from falling for the tricks of false teachers: build up their faith or stay home from church? *Build up their faith.*
10. Peter said believers should grow by adding some things to their: knowledge, faith, or love? *Faith.*
11. Peter said we should choose to do what's right and honoring to whom? *God.*
12. We should be careful to obey God in how we act and speak. This is called: self-control or self-esteem? *Self-control.*
13. When we live in a godly way, how should we treat others? *Show love and care.*
14. True or False: The more you know Jesus and the Bible, the easier it will be to tell if an idea is counterfeit. *True.*

Let's Face It Game

Materials

- ☐ True or Counterfeit Statements (page 2)
- ☐ Face Cutouts (pages 3–4)
- ☐ Craft sticks (2 per student)
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Optional: scissors and crayons

Instructions

Print and cut apart one smiling and one frowning face for each student. If time allows, have students color and cut out each face then tape each one to a craft stick. If time is short, simply cut the squares apart and have students tape one of each uncolored face onto a craft stick.

Explain that students will listen to each statement and decide if it's true or false (counterfeit). If true, they should raise their smiling face sign; if false, they should raise the frowning face sign. Read each statement, allowing students to show their signs. Briefly give the correct answer for false statements and discuss any statements that students do not understand.

Suggested Discussion

Great job, everyone! Some of the sentences I read were harder than others. Some of them were tricky because there was only one small thing that was not true. That's how it is with counterfeit ideas. Many times false teachers will take a little bit of truth and twist it so that it sounds right, but isn't really true.

- ?** What book will help us be able to tell if an idea is true or counterfeit? *The Bible.*

The better we know the truth in the Bible, the easier it is to know whether something is true or counterfeit. That's one reason why it's so important to listen to the Bible carefully and learn from it so we will not be tricked by counterfeit ideas.

True or Counterfeit Statements

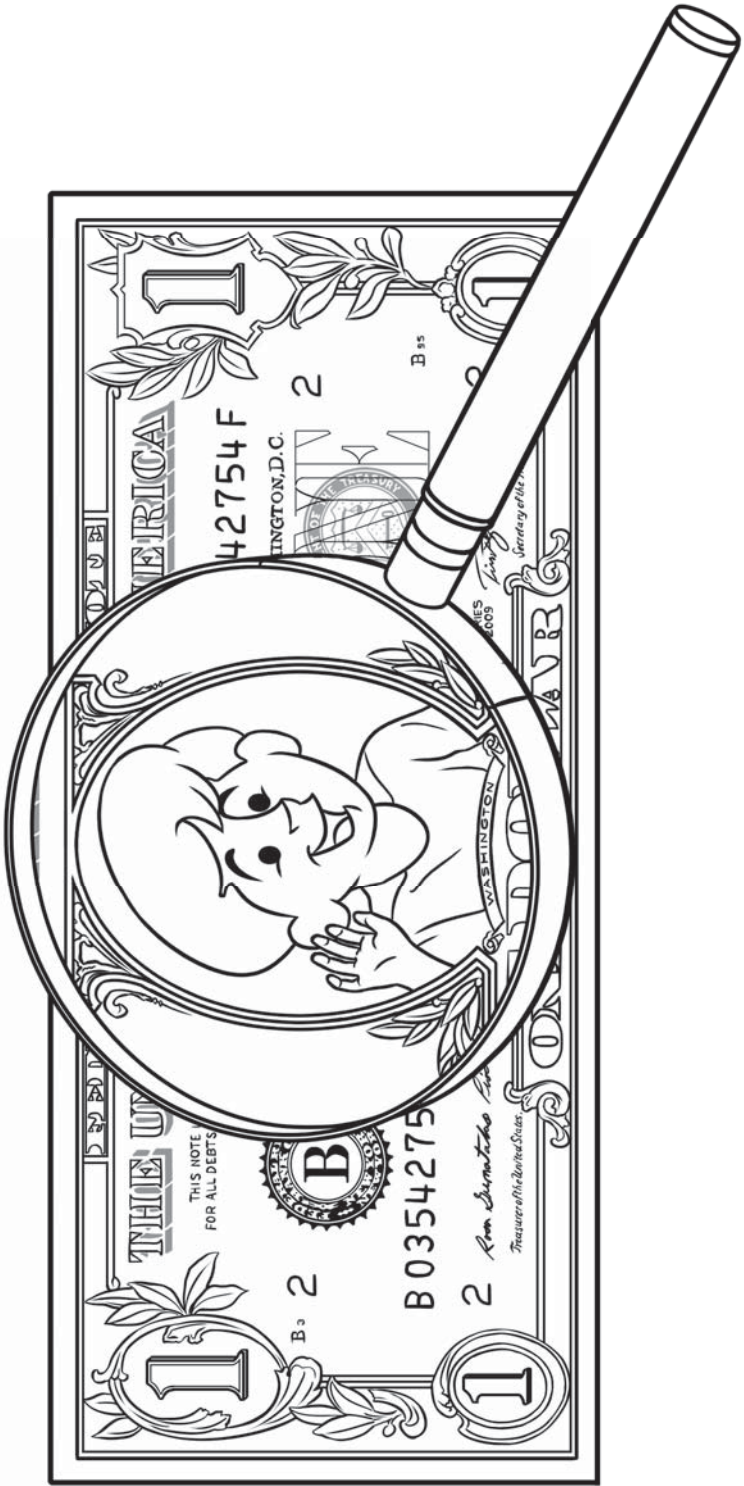
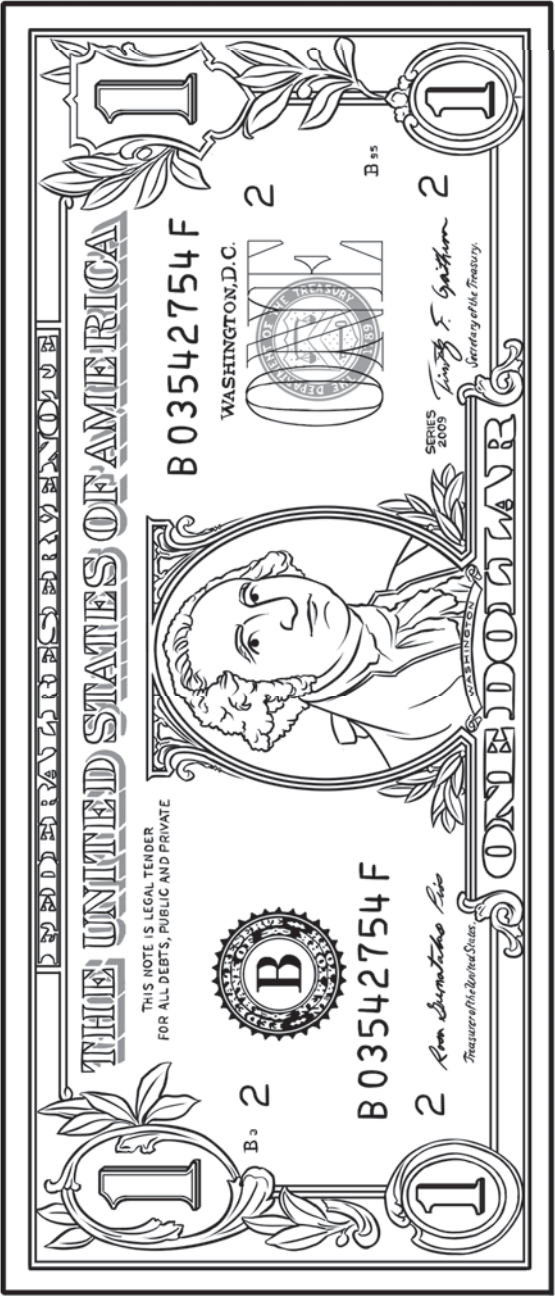
1. The Bible is God's Word. *True*
2. Both the Old and New Testaments are important because they are God's Word. *True*
3. God created people in his image. *True*
4. People are just like animals. *Counterfeit. People are created in God's image, animals are not.*
5. Adam and Eve were the first man and woman created by God. *True*
6. Adam and Eve lived in the garden of Gethsemane. *Counterfeit. They lived in the garden of Eden.*
7. The universe was formed by a big explosion of matter. *Counterfeit. God formed the universe by speaking, for example, "Let there be light."*
8. It took God millions of years to create the universe. *Counterfeit. Genesis says it took six normal, 24-hour days.*
9. Jesus is God. *True*
10. The book of Revelation tells how God created everything. *Counterfeit. The book of Genesis tells about creation.*
11. Everyone will go to heaven. *Counterfeit. Only those who know Jesus as Savior will go to heaven.*
12. Jesus was just a good teacher. *Counterfeit. Jesus was a good teacher, but he is also God.*
13. Only those who trust in Jesus will go to heaven. *True*
14. God created everything in six days. *True*
15. Peter was swallowed by a great fish. *Counterfeit. Peter was a fisherman, but it was Jonah who was swallowed by a fish.*
16. God protected Noah and his family on the ark during the worldwide flood. *True*
17. If you do whatever makes you happy, you are pleasing God. *Counterfeit. Because we have a sinful nature, what makes us happy is not always pleasing to God.*
18. Being a Christian means you will never have any troubles. *Counterfeit. Jesus said Christians will have troubles, but he will help us through them.*
19. Jesus will forgive those who turn to him and confess their sins. *True*
20. God is holy and cannot sin. *True*
21. The four Gospels are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and James. *Counterfeit. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the four Gospels.*
22. The Bible is God's Word and tells how we can be saved from sin. *True*
23. Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after he was crucified. *True*
24. Everyone is a child of God. *Counterfeit. Only those who turn from sin and trust in Jesus to save them are called children of God.*
25. Peter, Paul, and Jude all warned about false teachers. *True*
26. Elijah was one of Jesus' 12 disciples. *Counterfeit. Elijah was a prophet in the Old Testament.*
27. Jesus wants me to follow my dreams. *Counterfeit. Our dreams may not be what is best for us. Jesus wants us to follow him.*
28. God doesn't care how you act. *Counterfeit. God commands believers to be holy because he is holy. We should try to obey God in all we do.*



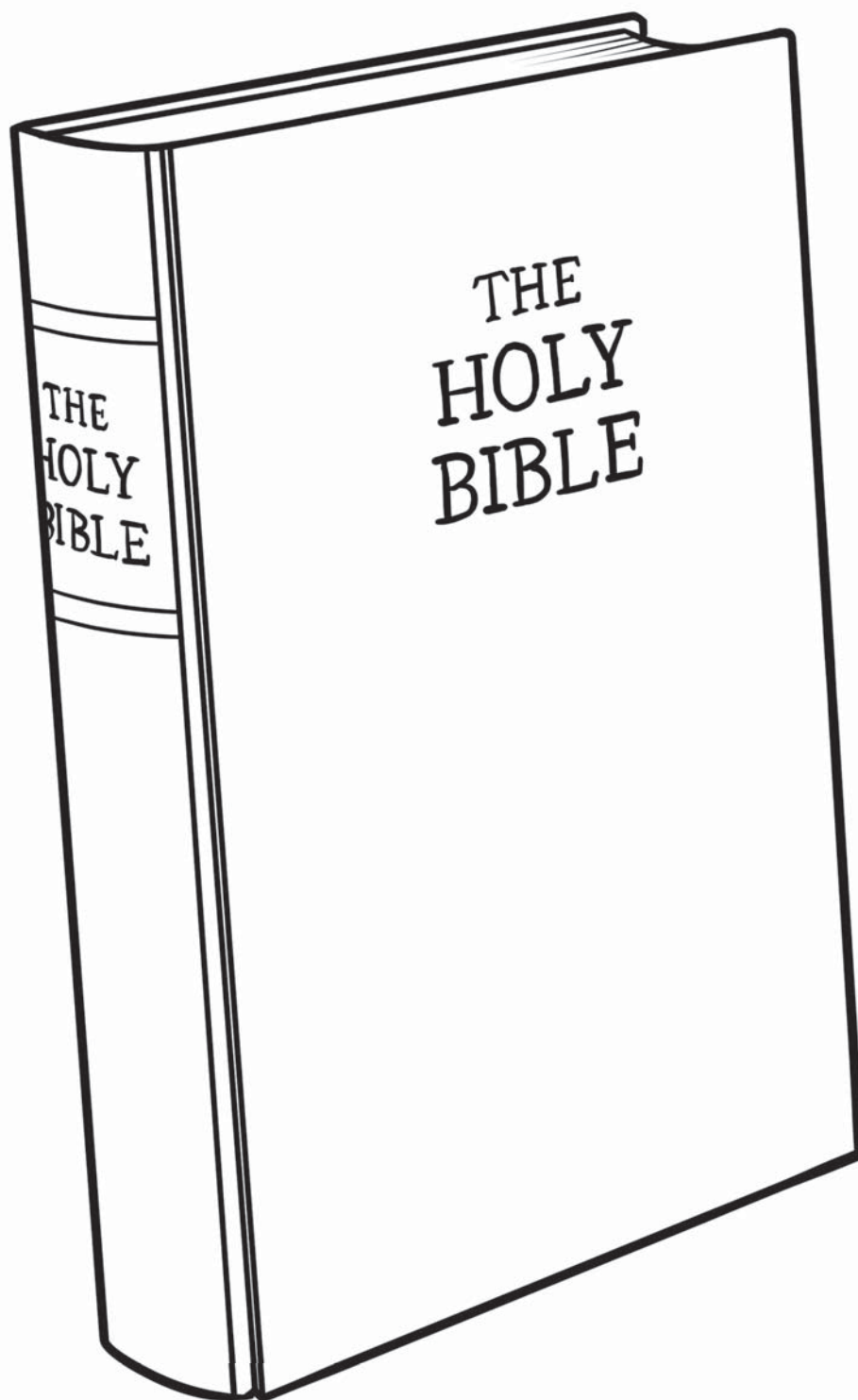
Print and cut apart one for each student.



Print and cut apart one for each student.



Name _____



Come On In Games

We recommend that you work with sets of 10 cards at a time then add on the next 10 until the order of all the cards has been memorized.

We have provided a pronunciation guide for the books of the Old Testament. This document can be found in the Teacher Digital Resources.

Allow students to refer to the Books of the Bible Poster during the games.

Bible Book Match

Teams flip over flashcards to make matches.

Materials

- ☐ Books of the Bible Flashcards
- ☐ Tape or poster putty

Instructions

Print two sets of flashcards on card stock. Lay the flashcards out on the floor facedown or attach them to the

wall. Divide the class into two teams. Teams will take turns choosing two flashcards, turning them over to see if they match. If they do not match, flip the flashcards back over. Teammates can help each other decide which flashcards to choose. You may want to have the whole class play this game together.

As students find matches, discuss each Bible book (give a few details from the back of the color flashcards, if available).

Bible Speed Round

Teams race to get their sets of Bible books in order. How fast can they go?

Materials

- ☐ Books of the Bible Flashcards
- ☐ Timer

Instructions

Print enough flashcards for each team to have a set. Mix up the flashcards in each set. Divide students into teams

and pass sets of flashcards to each team facedown. Set the timer for an appropriate time. Tell the groups to begin. Each group should work together to put their flashcards in order. Check the order by reciting the books of the Bible together using the poster.

You may play this with each team working on the same set, or you may choose to give each team different sets to work on. Check the order of all the teams' flashcards by reciting each set out loud.

Flashcard Take Away

Start with all of the flashcards—but wait! Can students still say them in order when some are taken away?

Materials

- ☐ Books of the Bible Flashcards
- ☐ Tape or poster putty

Instructions

Print one set of flashcards. Attach them in order on the wall as you recite them together. Choose a student to remove one card. Recite the books again. Continue to choose students to remove flashcards one at a time, reciting the whole list of books between each one. When all of the flashcards are gone, see if they can say the whole set together!

I Have You Have

Students will respond to each other with the name of the book on their flashcard in the correct order.

Materials

- ☐ Books of the Bible Flashcards

Instructions

Print one set of flashcards. Have students sit around a table or in a circle. Pass the flashcards out to the students. The person with the first book will say the name of the book on his card and the next person in order will respond, for example, “I have Genesis, who has Exodus?” The person with the next card in order will respond with, “I have Exodus, who

has Leviticus?” You could play a variation of this by having the whole class ask the question. For example, the student says, “I have Genesis.” Then the whole class can ask, “Who has Exodus?” Continue through the set.

Each student will respond and repeat until everyone has repeated their card. Play with any set of 10 flashcards for an easy amount to remember. But if you have a larger class, add enough flashcards so every student has one or divide into groups.

Memory Verse Games

Allow students to refer to the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page during the games.

You may want to cover it up after a few weeks for more of a challenge.

Echo! Echo!

Do what I do—say what I say! Groups will echo each other as they recite the memory verse together.

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page

Instructions

Divide the class into two groups. You will say a word or phrase of the memory verse while doing some sort of action—sit down, stand up, spin in a circle, touch your toes, etc. The groups will take turns “echoing” what you say and do as you recite the verse. Repeat several times. You can whisper, shout, squeak, etc. Switch around and let older students take turns leading.

Egg Hunt

Hunt for all the parts of the memory verse hidden in the eggs! This game can be played all year round. The plastic eggs just happen to be great little containers that can be hidden easily.

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Strips of paper
- ☐ Plastic Easter eggs

Instructions

Write the memory verse on strips of paper with one or two words on each strip. Put one strip inside of each plastic Easter egg. Hide all the eggs around the room.

Have the students search for the eggs and bring them back to the table. They will open the eggs and work together to put the verse in the proper order.

For a larger class, prepare more than one set of eggs (sorted by colors for different teams). Students can work in teams to collect and construct the verse.

Follow the Leader

Follow the leader around the room. Say the verse and do the motion before moving on.

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Follow the Leader Cards
- ☐ Tape

Instructions

Print and cut out the Follow the Leader Cards. Tape each one to a chair or table and randomly place them around the room. You will lead the students around the room and stop at each card. Read the card and lead the children to do what the card says while reciting the memory verse. Then move around to the next one. You may want to repeat this activity or have students take turns leading.

Freeze!

Stomp like a dinosaur or spin in circles, but when it's time to freeze, get ready to say the memory verse.

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page

Instructions

Students will move around the room in a specified action you give, such as crawling, skipping, turning in circles, galloping, walking in giant steps, etc. Then when you say, "Freeze!" the students will stop and freeze in position. Recite the memory verse, then begin again with a different action. You may need to show them how to freeze and hold a position.

Funny Voices

Recite the memory verse together using different voices. Be squeaky like a mouse or whisper as quietly as you can. How many voices can you do?

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Funny Voice Strips
- ☐ Container

Instructions

Print and cut out one set of the Funny Voice Strips and put them into a container. Choose a student to draw out a strip and lead the whole class in reciting the memory verse using that kind of voice. Have fun with it and repeat several times choosing a new voice each time!

Sneaky Stickies

Students will try to be sneaky as they cover up the words and pictures of the memory verse!

Materials

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Sticky notes

Instructions

Open the Flip Chart to the Memory Verse Page. Recite the verse together then choose a student to place a sticky note over one word, phrase, or picture on the Flip Chart. Recite the verse again, including the part that is covered up. Continue to choose students to place stickies, one at a time, reciting the whole verse between each turn—including the words/pictures that are covered. When all of the words/pictures are covered up, try to say the whole verse together!