



# Better

**DISCIPLESHIP FROM  
THE INSIDE OUT**

STUDENT LESSON

LESSON 4

## Get Smart

I love the first day of a new school year. It's a clean slate, a fresh start. I have the potential to learn so much and earn all A's. But as the year goes on, teachers assign work that isn't always fun or easy. I used to procrastinate, putting off the work I didn't want to do, and then I'd pull all-nighters to finish a paper or cram for a test. I realize now that I never learned as much as I could have because I wasn't willing to do the hard work. God gave us a mind, and it's important that we use it to grow intellectually. We shouldn't waste our minds by spending too much time scrolling through social media, playing video games, or binge-watching our favorite shows instead of making time to learn.

### Icebreaker

**What's your favorite subject in school? Why do you like this subject?**

### Daily Devotions

Day 1 : Read It

**Read Acts 17:10–12.**

- 1. How were the Jews in Berea described in comparison with those from Thessalonica?**
- 2. How did the Bereans receive Paul's teaching?**
- 3. What did they do after hearing the word that Paul and Silas shared with them?**
- 4. What was the result of their teachable posture?**

## Day 2 — Today's Theme: Cultivating a Teachable Heart

### Read Proverbs 1:8–9; Acts 17:10–12.

Many teens I talk to feel like their parents are behind the times. They think that their parents are totally out of touch with what's happening today and secretly believe they know it all. It's easy to dismiss their advice, but the Bible has a different take. Proverbs 1:8–9 reminds us: *"Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck."*

This isn't just about listening to your parents; it's about a posture of **teachability**, just like the Bereans in Acts 17, who were described as "more noble" because they were eager to learn. They didn't assume they knew everything. They listened with an open mind, ready to examine what they were hearing and grow.

Being teachable means being humble enough to admit you don't have all the answers and hungry enough to want to learn more. It's a mindset that applies to everything—not just spiritual things. It's about being open to new ideas, different perspectives, and even criticism, whether it's from your parents, teachers, a mentor, or even a podcast.

If you admire a good quality in someone, ask them questions about it to learn how they do it. For example, if a person has a strong relationship with Jesus, ask what they do to keep it that way. Or, if you see a couple with a strong, Christ-centered marriage, ask them what principles they always follow to make it work.

A teachable attitude is a sign of strength, not weakness. It shows a **noble character**—a desire to be shaped by truth and to continuously grow in wisdom.

5. Today's devotional mentions that many teens feel their parents are "out of touch" and that they "know it all." How much do you agree or disagree with that statement? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Proverbs 1:8–9 talks about listening to a father's instruction and a mother's teaching. What is the promise in this verse? What does it mean for their teaching to be a "graceful garland" or "pendants for your neck"?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. The passage describes the Bereans as being "more noble" because they listened carefully to Paul's teaching. How does being teachable make someone a "noble" person?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What is one practical thing you can do this week to show a teachable attitude at home, at school, or with your friends?

## Day 3 — Today's Theme: More than Just a Book: Your Confidence in God's Word

### Read 2 Peter 1:20–21 and 2 Timothy 3:16.

The Bereans examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. There is an assumption in that verse that the Scriptures are true. But how do we know that the Scriptures are reliable and accurate?

#### The Bible is one continuous story<sup>1</sup>

- The Bible was written over 1400 years by over 40 authors from all walks of life (kings, peasants, philosophers, poets, statesmen, scholars, doctors, businessmen, etc.).
- It was written on three continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe) in many different places (dungeons, palaces, while traveling, the wilderness, etc.).
- It was written during a variety of moods (sorrow, joy, anger, excitement, tranquility).
- It was written in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek).

With all of those unique characteristics of the Bible, it is one continuous story without any contradictions.

#### Unparalleled Manuscript Support<sup>2</sup>

Author	When Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	Number of Copies
Caesar	100–44 B.C.	900 A.D.	1000 years	10
Tacitus	100 A.D.	1100 A.D.	1000 years	20
Suetonius	75–160 A.D.	950 A.D.	800 years	8
Herodotus	480–425 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 years	8
Aristotle	384–322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1400 years	49
New Testament	45–100 A.D.	fragment: 125 A.D.; full copies: 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> centuries	fragment: 25 yrs full copies: 200–300 years	24,000

#### Prophecy that shows supernatural involvement<sup>3</sup>

Jesus' birthplace in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), His Galilean heritage (Isaiah 9:1–7), and the peculiar circumstances surrounding His burial (Isaiah 53:9) are among many prophecies which foretell His coming. According to Peter Stoner in *Science Speaks*, the probabilities that any one person fulfilled merely eight of the numerous prophecies predicting the Messiah are 1 in 10 to the 17<sup>th</sup> (100,000,000,000,000,000).

Here is an illustration from Josh McDowell:

*Suppose you took the state of Texas and spread silver dollars two feet deep across the whole state, then marked just one of them and buried it somewhere in the state. Then, if you chose one person, blindfolded him, and told him to pick just one silver dollar, his chances of getting the marked one on his first try would be one in 10 to the 17th power!*

#### Archaeology<sup>4</sup>

In 1963, a tablet was found during a renovation of the amphitheater in Caesarea (on the Mediterranean Sea). This tablet had the name "Pontius Pilate" inscribed on it. Up until that time, the name Pilate was found only in the New Testament and in a few other secular historical sources. This find is just one more validation that the people and events of the Bible are real.

<sup>1</sup> Gary Poole and Judson Poling's tough questions booklet, *How Reliable is the Bible?*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1998

<sup>2</sup> McDowell, Josh, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, 1999 p. 32

<sup>3</sup> McDowell, Josh, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, 1999, pp. 144, 167

<sup>4</sup> McDowell, Josh, *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, pp. 307–308.

9. What do 2 Peter 1:20–21 and 2 Timothy 3:16 say about the Bible?

10. Which fact above is the most helpful to you to give you confidence that the Bible that we have today is God's Word without error? What would your answer be, and why?

## Day 4 — Today's Theme: Teachable Practice: Examining the Truth

### Read Acts 17:10–12.

The Bereans didn't stop at curiosity. Their eagerness to learn led them to open the Scriptures and search them diligently on a *daily* basis. The word "examining" (Greek: *anakinō*) means to investigate, question, or scrutinize something carefully. It's the same word used for legal cross examinations. In other words, they weren't flipping through the Bible for inspirational quotes. They were weighing Paul's message against the truth of God's Word.

That's what teachability looks like in practice: it's not blind belief or shallow agreement, but an intentional, thoughtful pursuit of truth. And it's a practice we're called to develop not just for spiritual growth, but for every area of life. Whether we're discerning advice from friends at school, hearing a message on tik tok or YouTube, or evaluating a decision, we need to ask: *Does this line up with God's truth?*

This is where Mac Lake's disciplines of asking questions, listening deeply, and reading daily come into play.<sup>5</sup> Teachable people don't just collect facts, they seek understanding. They ask clarifying questions. They listen for insight, not just affirmation. And they return to Scripture again and again as their source of wisdom.

But this kind of examination takes effort. It takes discipline. And it takes time. That's why many people opt for shortcuts—just accepting what sounds good or going with what feels right. But the Bereans show us a better way: **truth is worth the work.**

11. Think about a time you heard something on social media—TikTok, YouTube, or Instagram—that you instinctively questioned. What was it, and how did you figure out if it was true?

12. How do you keep Scripture central in your learning process? What are some habits that help you examine what you hear through the lens of God's Word?

13. When you're testing a new idea against Scripture, how do you make sure you're letting the Bible speak for itself and not just using it to confirm what you want to be true?

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<sup>5</sup> Mac Lake, *Leading Yourself: A Guide to Cultivating Personal Leadership* (100 Movements Publishing, 2024), 76–84.

## Day 5 — Today's Theme: Beyond the Grind: Finding Direction in Discipline

### Read Acts 17:10–12.

Imagine a boy named Kevin who has to practice his guitar every single day. He doesn't like it at all. He just sits there, strumming boring songs and wishing he could be outside playing baseball with his friends. For Kevin, practicing feels like a chore—it's just a bunch of boring work with no real point. This is like **discipline without direction**. It's doing something you have to do, but you don't know why it matters.

One day, an angel appears and shows Kevin a vision. He sees a future version of himself on a huge stage, playing the guitar like a rockstar! His fingers fly across the strings, and the music is beautiful and amazing. Kevin is totally blown away. He can't believe that's what he could become.

The angel tells him, "The wonderful musician you saw is you in a few years, but you have to practice!"

Suddenly, Kevin's whole attitude changes. He still has to practice, but now he knows **why** he's doing it. He has a goal—to become that amazing guitar player. His practice isn't boring anymore; it's a step toward his dream. This is **discipline with direction**.<sup>6</sup>

The story teaches us that when you know your **goal** or **purpose**, hard work doesn't feel like a chore. It becomes something you want to do because you know it will help you get to where you want to be. The story uses this idea to talk about the Christian life, saying that spending time with Jesus isn't a chore, but a way to get to know Him better and become more like Him.

**14. The story describes Kevin's guitar practice as "discipline without direction" and calls it "a chore" ( a bunch of boring work with no real point). What is something in your life that you feel is "a chore"? Why does it feel that way?**

**15. In the story, what was the "direction" that changed Kevin's attitude? What was his goal?**

**16. Think about your own walk with Jesus. What are some spiritual disciplines (like reading the Bible, prayer, or worship) that can sometimes feel like "a chore or burden"? Why do you think that is?**

**17. The passage implies that simply being told to do something isn't enough to create a lasting discipline. How can we make our daily time with Jesus something we *want* to do, rather than something we feel we *have* to do?**

**This study was written by Pastor Mario Arindaeng, based on the adult study written by the VBC Pastoral Team.**

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<sup>6</sup> Donald S. Whitney, c. 2014 chapter 1, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*.