



APOLOGETICS FOR TWEENS

7TH GRADE LESSON CURRICULUM

T H O M A S J . G R I F F I N



APOLOGETICS FOR TWEENS

*How to save your children from doubts and
unanswered questions about Christianity*

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Please read the Leader's Guide first before the curriculum to understand what is included, how to use the curriculum, and importantly the background and purpose for the curriculum as well as real world stories that emphasize the need for apologetics with our youth. To summarize here for you, the curriculum includes a weekly scripture lesson and apologetics lesson for a school year. It also has some recommendations for activities, contests and games as well as top questions and answers about the Bible and Christianity that came up over a twelve year period.

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TALK ABOUT GOD

Scripture verses	Matthew 16:13-20
High level key topic	God is the model of commitment. We show our commitment by sharing Jesus with others.

SCRIPTURAL LESSON NARRATIVE

This month our theme is commitment. We know what commitment is by how God loves us and helps us always. Commitment is deciding to do something and sticking with it in spite of difficulties. We learn commitment through practice, doing something over and over until we are our best. So far we learned we can show commitment by practicing to hear God's word in the Bible, by praying, and today by talking about God with others. Read the memory verse 1 Tim 4:8a.

Have you ever had a situation where afterwards you think back and realized you missed an opportunity to say something to someone that you really wanted to or should have? It happens to me sometimes. When you realize that God creates opportunities for us in our lives to speak with others about Him or the Bible or God or Christianity, then you will begin to prepare and practice so you can take advantage of that opportunity.

Even as an adult I find it sometimes difficult to talk about God with others. This doesn't mean I am ashamed or afraid to talk about God or have any doubts. But I don't want to force the conversation on people either. It needs to happen naturally. So one good way to do this is to ask a question or say something or wear a symbol that leads people to ask us questions. Let's list a few examples.

- I carry a symbol of a cross on my key chain. I leave it on the table sometimes when I meet with people to spark a conversation and when they ask me about it I tell them I am a Christian and that God is the central part of my life. Then I ask if they are a Christian or maybe what they think about God and it flows naturally.
- You could accomplish the same by wearing a cross or a bracelet that has a symbol of Christianity
- Sometimes when people ask me how things are going or what my week was like I tell them I had an awesome time teaching my Sunday school class about Jesus or maybe I mention one of the apologetic lessons. Then I ask them what they think about that lesson. You could do the same and if it is a friend of yours ask them to visit with you next Sunday.

- Or think up a few great questions and just pop them into a conversation sometime like – Where do you suppose the universe and life came from? How did we get here? Or what do you think our purpose is in life? Do you ever pray? How do you handle it when things are going bad in your life and you feel depressed?
- Or maybe some fascinating trivia you learned in our class like - Did you know that a one celled organism has the equivalent amount of information in it to that of 1000 sets of encyclopedias? Did you know that it is almost impossible that life began by chance? Did you know that all religions cannot be true?
- Or think of your own facts or questions that make you think the most.

In today's lesson many people were talking about Jesus because of all the miracles He performed and because of the things He told people like forgive people for everything, love your enemies, and turn the other cheek. So Jesus asked his disciples who those people thought He was. Answers went from Elijah and John the Baptist and others. Then Peter said, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus responded by saying he was blessed because that was revealed to him by his Father in heaven. So this is another example where Jesus admits that He is the Messiah or Christ. Many skeptics and Muslims say He never claimed to be God. But here he did not say no and actually praised Peter for recognizing it.

Talking about God can be a little scary or difficult. So the key as always is to practice it. Think about the ideas we discussed above and pick one and try it a few times and see what happens. Then bring your experience to class and we can talk about it.

Let's pray. Lord I ask that you grant us all an ability to find ways and opportunities to talk about you with others. Amen.

WHAT ABOUT THE TRINITY; ARE THERE 3 GODS IN CHRISTIANITY?

Only Christianity believes in the trinity. Although this word is never mentioned in the Bible, numerous scriptures are available to see that God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are three separate Persons all with the nature and essence of God. But they are not 3 Gods. They are three persons in one. How do we know?

We know this because in different parts of the scripture, all are described as having key attributes that only God possesses such as omnipotence, omniscience and eternity. In the great commissions, Jesus referred to all of them when He commanded us to go forward and preach the gospel and baptize.

But how does this make any logical sense? There are no perfect analogies to use but there are a couple to help us understand it better in human terms.

Triangle. The triangle itself represents God, all God's special attributes, His nature, His essence. But the three points of the triangle are all part of the triangle yet each represents a separate person; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There is one essence or nature that is God, but it is expressed in three separate persons. Each has a different function and responsibilities even, like the chairman of the board, the CEO and the President.

Love. In order to have love, there is a lover, the beloved and the spirit of love. The Father is the lover, the Son is the loved, and the spirit of love is the Holy Spirit. Together they are all part of the essence of love.

Human mind. Our mind is the essence of self-consciousness or self-awareness of who we are, and it consists of ideas and thoughts, which are expressed in words.

Although the trinity is a difficult concept for humans to understand, it is not illogical and not contradictory. It goes beyond reason but not against reason. It is a mystery but not a contradiction. Most other religions misunderstand completely and think we are saying we have three Gods. Islam thinks we are stating

the three Gods are Jesus, Mary and the Father. Others think we are actually worshipping three different Gods and are practicing polytheism.

So, no other religion believes in the trinity. Even some so-called Christian organizations such as JW and Mormons say they are Christians but do not believe in the trinity. It is an essential part of believe in Christianity. If Jesus was not God, then Christianity is not true. We will continue to provide historical evidence to show that Jesus was God and Christianity is true.

BIBLE BOWL CONTEST

100 pts each for first answer; 50 points for second team answer if first team is wrong

1. Is the universe eternal or did it have a beginning?

It had a beginning

2. A word we use to call the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together?

Trinity

3. Adam and Eve lived over 900 years old. True or False?

True

4. After the flood, God changed people's average life span to how many years?

120 years

5. He was over 9 feet tall.

Goliath

6. He wrote most of the Psalms.

King David

7. He wrote most of the Proverbs.

King Solomon

8. He led the Israelites out of the wilderness over a period of 40 years.

Moses

9. He was in the burning furnace along with Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego.

Jesus

10. Spell one of the above correctly.

see above

11. Describe apologetics or give a definition defense, defending Christianity

12. What is a prophecy prediction, message from God

13. The famous characters of the Bible are role models for Christians. True or False?

False

14. Which famous character of the Bible is a role model for Christians?

Jesus

TOP TOUGH QUESTIONS

The following are typical questions you may encounter and should be prepared to answer. In case some of the curriculum lessons do not cover a few of these or go too deep, I have provided some short answers or suggestions to review. This material can be used to fill in gaps when scriptural or apologetics lessons are not available or to mix up the format with something a little different. Mix a few of these in here and there as regular discussion items.

1. Were there dinosaurs when Adam and Eve lived?

- *No, dinosaurs went extinct 66 million years before humans were created. This occurred in the earlier part of day six in Genesis. (be prepared to address young earth/old earth at some point and explain that the Bible actually supports an old earth or a young earth whichever is found to be true ultimately)*

2. Where did all the people come from if only Cain and Abel were the children?

- *Actually the Bible mentions a third son Seth and says that Adam and Eve had other children. It is a sensitive fact to discuss that until after the flood, God allowed marriage between cousins, nieces, nephews, etc. After about 48 generations God laid down a new law prohibiting such. This corresponds with our science today that shows birth defects can occur after about 48 generations. God already knew that.*

3. How did they get all the animals on the ark?

- *If you read Genesis carefully, it talks about certain 'kinds' that entered the ark. So insects and fish and other related species like of the cat family for example were not necessary to be boarded. The ark in its recorded measurements was large enough to hold about 16,000 to 50,000 animals but perhaps only about 2,000 were needed (equivalent space of 569 railroad cars).*

4. Did people really live to 900 years old?

- *Yes, Methuselah was the oldest and lived to 969 years old. Adam and Eve both lived to about 920 years old. This is best answered by a supernovae explosion called Vela that occurred after the flood and sent destructive cosmic radiation pouring onto earth and eventually limited human life spans. More specifically, Gen. 6:3 explains that after the flood sometime, God limited human life spans to 120 years so we could not do so much evil. Genetic mutations may also play a major role over the millennia.*

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