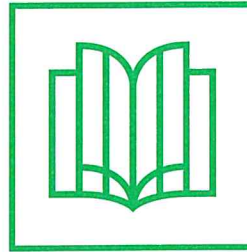


Question 42

How is the Word of God to be read and heard?



Answer

With diligence, preparation, and prayer; so that we may accept it with faith and practice it in our lives.

Big Idea

The Word of God should be read and heard prayerfully and with reverence and humility.

Aim

To help the children understand how to approach the Bible in a way that pleases God.

Bible Passage

2 Timothy 3:10–17

Memory Verse

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”
(2 Tim. 3:16–17)

Virtue
Hope





Notes

Leader's Notes

Reading Scripture is a most precious process. Through Scripture God has chosen to reveal himself to men and women, and as the Word is heard, God the Spirit transforms the hearts and minds of those with ears to hear. Many approach the reading of Scripture in a careless way. Some treat the Bible as any other book, approaching it in a casual and unthinking manner. This question will encourage the children to approach God's Word in a serious fashion. It will cause them to remember that when we read God's Word, we believe that God is actually speaking to us. This lesson aims to equip children to approach the reading and hearing of the Word with prayerful anticipation and hope. It will encourage the children to spend time in God's Word and to hide it in their hearts.

Things to remember when planning and teaching:

- Be careful not to encourage worship of the Bible, but rather worship of God as revealed in the Bible.
- Help the children to be excited about the thought of meeting God as they hear his Word. Clearly communicate to the children that God speaks through his Word.
- Remember to mix and match the activities in the lesson to fit your time frame (see p. 12 for some sample outlines). You won't have time to do them all. Feel free to adapt each activity based on your class's strengths and weaknesses.

Leader's Prayer

Gracious God, I praise you for the gift of your Word. Thank you that you have revealed yourself through it and that it contains all things necessary for life and salvation. Please develop in me the right attitude as I come to study Scripture; may I be teachable, humble,

and eager to meet you in your Word. Grant understanding to the children who will hear this lesson. May they to be challenged to approach Scripture in faithful expectation. In Jesus's name. Amen.

Leader's Tool Kit

- 8 business size envelopes
- Poster board
- Glue
- Index cards
- Red construction paper
- Scissors
- Slips of paper with 2 Timothy 3:16–17 printed on them
- Pens or pencils



10 Catechism Recap

Seal eight business size envelopes, then cut each one in half so that you have sixteen open-ended pockets. Attach them to the poster board with the cut end up—four across and four down. In each pouch place a card. Leave four cards blank and write one of these sentences on each of the others:

- ZAP—Switch points with the other team.
- ZAP—Add two points to your team score.
- ZAP—Lose two points from your team score.
- ZAP—Both teams lose four points.
- ZAP—Your team's score goes back to zero.
- ZAP—The other team's score goes back to zero.

Keep score on two sheets of paper so that the scores can be swapped when that card is drawn.

Divide the group into two teams. Take turns to ask each team to recall the answer to a catechism question. Read a question, and the team must come up with the right answer. They have one chance to recite the answer. If they get the answer right, they get a chance to go to the board and pick a card out of one of the pouches. The teams will end up gaining, losing, switching, or totally zapping out! The team with the most points when all of the cards have been drawn wins. The aim of the game is to help the children have fun while reviewing the answers to the catechism questions.

Notes

5 Introduction to Question 42

Explain to the children that before we get into today's Bible lesson, they will need to do some imagining. Ask them to pretend that they are the citizens of a small kingdom. Their land is in the middle of a famine, but their king has been wisely storing food for years so that, should a famine come, his people will not starve. However, he has only enough food to feed his own people.

Tell the children that word reaches your city that other kingdoms are plotting to steal your kingdom's food. For this reason, the king has stored the food in a secret location outside the city walls, far away. He knows that when the other kingdoms attack, he

may be killed, so he calls his citizens into his throne room.

"Listen carefully," he says. "We are about to face a great battle. I don't know which of us will survive the attack on our city. I am going to tell you where I have hidden our food. Without that food, you will not survive the famine. But it is hidden far away. If you do not listen carefully and follow every word of my directions, you will never find it."

Ask the children: What kind of listeners would those citizens be? Do you think they would be distracted? Would they be thinking about other things? Would they talk to each other while the king was talking?

**Notes**

Confirm to the children that when you know someone is telling you a message of life-or-death importance, you will listen attentively. God has spoken to us in his Word, and his message is the most

important that there ever has been. We should listen with as much attentiveness and respect as those citizens would have listened to their king!

10 Activity

Divide the children into small groups. Invite the children to come up with a movie trailer for a film about the Bible. Tell them that the trailer should tell the audience a bit about the story of the Bible (but not the ending!)

and also all the many reasons why people should be interested in the Bible. After a little while, invite each of the groups to act out their movie trailers while you film them on a smartphone.

15 Teaching Outline

Begin the teaching time by asking for God's help. Ask that the lesson would be taught faithfully and that the children might listen well.

Ask the children to consider whether they think they should listen to the Bible in the same way as every other book. Ask the children if they think that any preparation is needed before reading the Bible.

Remind the children that God speaks. God has caused his words to be written down by human writers so that people can know everything necessary for life and salvation. Try to encourage the children to grasp the magnitude of the truth that God revealed himself in his Word. He is not an unknown deity, nor is he some thoroughly mysterious being. God delights in making himself known, and he longs to be known.

We need to think carefully about how we read and hear the Word of God.

Explain that Paul's letter to Timothy will help the group think about how to approach God's Word.

Read 2 Timothy 3:10–17. Provide Bibles for the children to read along.

Explain to the children that as they prepare to read the Bible, they must realize that they are about to hear from the living God and they need to be ready to listen to his Word.

Explain to the children that the Bible is the most important book ever written because it is God's primary way of communicating with humanity. God still speaks through his Word to his world today.

Explain to the children that in this section of 2 Timothy, Paul is encouraging Timothy



to be different from the world, to stand for what he believes in the face of doubters and critics. Paul is encouraging Timothy to have confidence in the truth he has come to believe, which he observed in Paul's life and encountered in God's Word.

Paul tells Timothy that all Scripture is God-breathed, fully inspired by God. He identifies God as the origin of Scripture. But he also describes the purpose of Scripture: it is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." Tell the children that the Bible is God's means of bringing Christians to maturity.

Remind the children that when someone becomes a Christian, the Holy Spirit comes to live in him or her. When a Christian reads the Bible, the Holy Spirit applies it to his or her life. So every time Christians read the Bible, they are hearing God's Word. We must determine to listen well and allow the Holy Spirit to work in our life.

Ask the children to give some examples of what they think "teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness" means.

Ask them where they will encounter God's Word in their lives each week.

Ask them how and why they should prepare to listen to God's Word.

These are some of the attitudes we adopt as we come to God's Word:

Prayerful

- Thanking God that he speaks

- Rejoicing that he has given his Holy Spirit to apply the Word
- Asking that God would teach, reprove, correct, and train us

Reverent

- Remembering that it is God who speaks through Scripture

Humble

- Expecting God to work and sanctify
- Thanking God that he wants to change and mature his people

Help the children to understand that we should be eager to meet God in his Word, and in order to do that, we must approach reading the Bible respectfully. We should prepare to hear God's Word. We should pray before we hear God's Word, and we should seek to listen carefully to what God is saying to us by his Spirit.

God longs to see his people transformed as they seek to glorify him. When we have listened well to God's Word, we will respond in how we live.

Finish the teaching time by helping the children commit Question 42 and the answer to memory.

These notes are just for guidance. Please expand or amend them to suit your own children and context. Write out your talk in your own words and include illustrations and applications that you know will connect with your children.)

Notes

**Activity**

Give the children red construction paper, a pen or pencil, scissors, and glue. Have ready the slips of paper with 2 Timothy 3:16–17 printed on them.

Instruct the children to place two pieces of construction paper together and fold them down the middle. Next draw a half heart against the fold. Cut through all the pages at once along the lines they've drawn so that when you unfold the paper, there are two identical heart shapes. Fold one heart

back up and cut a tiny slit along the fold. Run a small line of glue only around the outside edge of one heart, and glue the two hearts together.

Hand out the slips of paper with 2 Timothy 3:16–17 and have the children slip one inside their heart through the slit.

Ask the children what they think these hearts are meant to represent. If they can't figure it out, invite someone to look up Psalm 119:11.

**Discussion and Question Time**

Some questions that might arise include:

? What should I do when I don't understand the Bible?

First, we should pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give us understanding. Then, we can ask other Christians, including our pastor or our parents, what a Bible passage means. There are also many books called commentaries that have been written to help us understand the Bible.

continues to watch baseball or soccer and learns the rules, he will start to enjoy the game more and more. His interest will grow as his knowledge grows. If we find the Bible boring, we should keep reading and trust that as we start to understand it better, we will learn to love and enjoy it.

Also use this opportunity to help the children think about their own lives and how this question and answer affects them personally.

? Can I admit that I find the Bible boring?

Many people assume that the Bible is boring, but that's usually because they don't know it well. If someone watches a baseball or soccer game for the first time, he may find it boring because he doesn't know what's going on. But if he

- Are they challenged to think about how they prepare to listen to God's Word?
- Will they approach reading and hearing God's Word differently?
- Are they excited and hopeful that God will work through his Word in their lives?



10 Virtue Vision

Hope

Have a Bible on hand.

Ask the children if they can think of a time that they or their friends have felt a lack of hope. Perhaps it may have been before a sports game against a really good opposing team. Maybe it was before a difficult test that they did not study for. Maybe their pet was lost, and they gave up all hope of finding it.

Encourage the children that in times like these, we can turn to God's Word to restore



our hope. Tell them that God's Word will not promise any particular outcome to the kind of situations you've talked about. It does not promise you will win your game or that your dog will find its way home safely. But it gives us hope that God will use every circumstance for the good of his children.

Ask for a volunteer to look up Romans 8:28 in the Bible. How does Romans 8:28 encourage us to hope, even in hard times?

Notes

10 Memory Activity

Ask the children to read the memory verse or catechism question and answer out loud, together. Next, divide the children into two groups. Have them say the words of the verse or catechism question and answer by

alternating between groups. The first group says the first word, the second group says the second word, the first group says the third word, and so on. Go through the verse several times, getting faster each time.

5 Closing Prayer Time

Encourage the children to give thanks to God for his Word and to pray that God would help them hear his Word with great attentiveness.

