



VOL. 1
God

MILESTONES

Connecting God's Word to Life





VOL. 1
God

MILESTONES

Connecting God's Word to Life



Student Ministry Publishing

Ben Trueblood

Director, Student Ministry

John Paul Basham

Manager, Student Ministry Publishing

Karen Daniel

Editorial Team Leader

Drew Dixon

Content Editor

Stephanie Livengood

Production Editor

Amy Lyon

Graphic Designer

© 2019 LifeWay Press®

No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted in writing by the publisher.

Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to LifeWay Press®,
One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234.

ISBN: 978-1-5359-6583-5
Item Number: 005816978

Dewey Decimal Classification Number: 204
Subject Heading: RELIGION/ RELIGIOUS
EXPERIENCE, LIFE, AND PRACTICE

Printed in the United States of America.

Student Ministry Publishing
LifeWay Resources
One LifeWay Plaza
Nashville, TN 37234

We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review LifeWay's doctrinal guideline, please visit www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright ©2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

Table of **CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION	4
HOW TO USE	5
SESSION 1: The Triune God	6
SESSION 2: God is Holy	16
SESSION 3: Worthy of Worship	26
SESSION 4: God the Creator	36
SESSION 5: Spiritual Disciplines	46
SESSION 6: The Greatness of Our God	56
SESSION 7: The Promise Keeping God	66
SESSION 8: God is Righteous	76
LEADER GUIDE	86

MILESTONES / INTRODUCTION

Milestones was developed by the creators of *Bible Studies for Life: Students*, which exists to point students and student leaders to the application of biblical teaching to everyday life through weekly group Bible studies and additional resources. Every lesson within *Bible Studies for Life* contains a bible study that points students to Jesus, is rooted in Scripture, and provides application for living in today's context. The topics and subjects chosen in each quarter of *Bible Studies for Life* fit within a larger framework called *Levels of Biblical Learning*. *Levels of Biblical Learning* consists of ten theological topics we believe students should grasp before graduating high school. These include:



Within these ten topics are 52 theological statements, which make up the core content students would be exposed to and learn each year as they go through *Bible Studies for Life*. The quarterly topics and Scripture passages that make up each lesson in *Bible Studies for Life* are tied the framework of *Levels of Biblical Learning*, which guides the Scripture selection.

While we are able to connect students to the *Levels of Biblical Learning* and the theological statements in each lesson of *Bible Studies for Life*, we wanted to provide a resource capable of going deep into the weight and significance these levels have for personal faith and discipleship. This is what *Milestones* seeks to do. Over the course of six volumes, each of the 52 theological statements will be explored in depth, noting both the theological importance and personal application each has for everyday life. By going through these six volumes, we hope students will grow in their personal knowledge and understanding of God and His world. We also pray that God will use these resources to equip another generation to boldly proclaim the truth of the gospel in a world where Jesus—the truth—is desperately needed.

MILESTONES / HOW TO USE

This Bible-study book includes eight weeks of content for group and personal study. Each session is divided into the following components:

ENGAGE

Each session opens with a *Levels of Biblical Learning Statement*, which gives an overview of the session's topic. Following the statement, each session contains an introduction to help your group as you begin your time together, setting up a natural transition into the material for each week.

DISCUSS

The Discuss section expands upon the *Levels of Biblical Learning Statement*. During this time, groups will explore Scripture, answer questions, and engage with additional content to help explain the session statement.

LIVE IT OUT

The Live It Out section is designed to close out your group time by calling out three specific points of application under the headings of Christ, Community, and Culture. By doing so, this section seeks to demonstrate specifically what the session material teaches us about Christ, how to live in Community, and how to engage with Culture.

DOING, BEING, AND APOLOGETIC STATEMENTS

This section also contains Doing, Being, and Apologetic statements. These statements are directly related to the *Levels of Biblical Learning Statement*, and provide opportunity for the group to expand on what these doctrinal truths communicate about us as individuals, how we are to live, and how we might engage culture apologetically.

DEVOTIONS

Three personal devotions are provided for each session to take students deeper into Scripture and to supplement the content introduced in the group study. With biblical teaching and introspective questions, these sections challenge students to grow in their understanding of God's Word and to respond in faith.

LEADER GUIDE

At the back of this book, you'll find a leader guide to help you prepare each week. This guide will help you gain a broad understanding of the content and learn ways to engage with students throughout your time together.

THE TRIUNE GOD

1



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING STATEMENT



There is one eternal God who reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person of the Trinity has distinct personal attributes.

Think about a person thousands of years ago standing on his land, feeling the wind whipping around his head, watching clouds gather above him, and seeing the beginnings of a tornado form in the distance. All at once, this person, a speck on a tiny patch of an enormous planet is struck with the inescapable feeling:

I am not very big at all.

These kinds of feelings lead us into what it's like to talk about God. He's the biggest, most majestic thing we could ever talk about or pursue. Some of us have grown up in the church talking about Him every week, making Him a staple around our dinner tables or in the music we listen to. Others of us don't know much about Him at all.

Whatever your situation and experience with God, know this: There is not a single thing in this entire universe more all-encompassing, more awe-inspiring than our Creator. And you have a chance to encounter Him.

As we begin this experience of encountering God in His Word, let's build from the ground up. We'll start by exploring one of the most important truths about Him: He is One, and He reveals Himself to us.

Try to think of a few things that “sum you up.” It might be activities you are usually involved in, something you're known for, or just places you can usually be found, like the weight room or a dance studio. Describe yourself in one sentence.

ONE GOD

Every day, Benjamin Franklin would wake up at 5 a.m. and ask himself what good he would do that day before beginning his three hour morning routine. Not everybody has three hours to devote to getting ready, but most of us still have a few things we like to when we wake up.

Are you a morning or night person? What is usually the first thing you do when you wake up? Do you have a morning routine? If so, what does it look like?

When practicing Jews wake up in the morning, the first thing they do is recite the Shema. The Shema comes from Deuteronomy 6, and is one of the most important passages of Scripture for any Jewish man, woman, boy or girl. Read it together out loud:

"Listen, Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One."

DEUTERONOMY 6:4

This tells us something incredible: We have one God. There are so many other things that demand our attention, our affection, and our worship, but we have only one thing we're truly devoted to. If this verse were the very first thought that crossed your mind every morning, it would affect the way you go about your day. It would influence the things you consider important. It would color the way you treat people, see yourself and the world around you.

God wanted His people to remember He, alone, is the One deserving of worship and praise and adoration—nothing and no one else is deserving. In Exodus 20:3, He brought the point home by saying, "Do not have other gods besides me."

What are some things in our world today, besides God, that demand our worship?

Why is it so easy to give things that aren't God the worship He deserves?

Our God is one God, and He is the only one worthy of our worship. But He is not some disconnected, distant deity who remains beyond where we can know and understand Him. Instead, He finds it important enough to come to us. We can know Him because He wants to reveal Himself in ways we can understand.

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US

Throughout history God has used many ways to show us He's there and to tell us He is knowable. Out loud, read how the writer of Hebrews put it:

Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways. In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son.

HEBREWS 1:1-2a

A prophet was simply someone who spoke words God told them to speak. The Bible records a lot of prophets' words from Genesis to Revelation. Fortunately for us, they recorded those words so we could continue reading them to this day. Prophecy doesn't necessarily mean someone was predicting the future, but they were speaking the words God told them to say. Speaking through regular people is one way God reveals Himself to us.

But God also used another human to speak to us: Jesus Christ. Jesus was the most unique person to ever live, because He wasn't just a human, He was God's Word in human form. He was totally human, but He was also totally God. Take a look at part of Jesus' prayer just before His arrest:

"Righteous Father, the world has not known you. However, I have known you, and they have known that you sent me. I made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love you have loved me with may be in them and I may be in them."

JOHN 17:25-26

Jesus showed His disciples and the entire world who God was by coming to earth and living among them. He taught them the things that God treasures, lived the kind of life they should imitate, and sacrificed Himself so we could understand the kind of love God has for us.

Paul pointed out another way God reveals Himself to us in the Book of Romans.

For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made. As a result, people are without excuse.

ROMANS 1:20

God makes Himself known to us through people and through His Son, but He also made Himself known by creating everything we see. He set the world in motion, hung the stars in place, and established the laws that everything in the Universe follows.

Have you ever felt completely in awe of something? How does the Universe reveal God's majesty?

ONE GOD, THREE PERSONS

God's nature is not like anything we can fully understand. As we've seen, our God is one God. We do not have multiple gods we worship, and yet He exists eternally in three distinct persons. We call this the Trinity: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each of these distinct persons of the godhead have personal attributes.

One of the easiest ways to see this is at the very beginning of everything.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

GENESIS 1:1-3

We can see each member of the Trinity here. We see the Holy Spirit "hovering over the surface" of the waters. We see the Father speaking something in to the darkness. We see His Word going out from His mouth and filling the darkness with light. All three Persons of the Trinity worked together to bring everything in the whole universe to being.

Take a look at this distinction between Father and Son:

For us there is one God, the Father. All things are from him, and we exist for him. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ. All things are through him, and we exist through him.

1 CORINTHIANS 8:6

- God the Father is the originator of everything we see. He is the uncreated Creator. He is the unmoved Mover. He speaks and things happen.
- His Son is Jesus: the Word of God in human form. He is the official, eternal mouthpiece of all God has ever said.
- God's Spirit is His Power, and Jesus made it available to every one of us—not as something we have to find or call on, but as something that lives inside of us. As Paul said, "Don't you yourselves know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God lives in you" (1 Cor. 3:16)?

We have one God who is the Creator of everything who has revealed Himself to us throughout history in hundreds of different ways, showing us He has three distinct Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What is most incredible about all of this is that He is still revealing Himself to us today, and we can experience Him as real as ever before.



BEING // All people are created in God's image to reflect Him and live in relationship with Him. Sin damaged that image and brought separation, but Christians are new creations with the distinct privilege of enjoying a restored relationship with God and reflecting His character to the world in a special way.

DOING // Because we are created to reflect God and live in relationship with Him, we should continually pursue God in His Word and through prayer, live in continual fellowship within the church, and help people who do not know Him find Him so they can live in fellowship with Him, too.

APOLOGETIC // Many today believe there are many gods and many ways to heaven, and that we are free to define God according to our personal perspectives. However, Scripture teaches there is one God (Deut. 6:4). The Christian God is different than others worship, because He is the Creator of everything, and He actively reveals Himself to us. He wants us to reach out and search for Him. He wants us to listen carefully to what other people are saying and test to see if it is true, because He knows those who seek the truth will find it, and they will find it in Him, because He is the perfect, ultimate source of truth.

CHRIST

The second Person of the Trinity is God the Son. God reveals Himself to us through Jesus. Jesus was not only fully God, but also fully man. He had a physical body, He walked around the same as you and I do, and He experienced the same kinds of temptation we do, except He did it without sinning. He was the only human who ever lived in perfect harmony with the Father.

Can you be a Christian if you don't believe Jesus is God? Why or why not?

COMMUNITY

The Trinity is the perfect model of what community looks like: three persons, one God, all working together for the same purpose. While we are most certainly not part of the Trinity, we can try to model the kind of relationship the Trinity embodies—one where we are completely devoted to one another and work together with other believers for God’s glory.

How would you describe your relationship with other believers? What kinds of things do you value?

What things could you do to work together with them to advance God’s kingdom?

CULTURE

A large part of our culture doesn’t even believe God exists. Some simply don’t believe in the God they’ve heard about, while others just might not think about Him at all. Jesus had something to say about this. He told His disciples, “By this everyone will know you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35).

How can the way we love each other help people see God?

Session 1

DEVOTIONS

ONE GOD

To some it seems arrogant to make an exclusive claim to the truth. As mere humans whose senses are limited and who possess a sin nature, we cannot make the call. We can observe truth through mathematics. We can factually say two and two makes four and doesn't equal "squirrel." However, we lack the authority and even ability to stick a flag in the ground and say, "My personal version of the truth is true and every other version is wrong." However, God can. God is able. He has the authority we lack.

Look at what the Bible says about God's authority to make such claims:

Do not have other gods besides me.

EXODUS 20:3

"Listen, Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."

DEUTERONOMY 6:4

For there is one God and one mediator between God and humanity, the man Christ Jesus.

1 TIMOTHY 2:5

It is not prideful of Him to make the statements He clearly made in these passages. He is the one true God and there is none above Him. So, it is not you as a Christian making this exclusive claim to the truth: it is God Himself. Any objections to this must be taken up with Him. We have no authority on our own, and our own versions of the truth would differ from one to the next. By His authority, God provides the truth and that truth comes to us in a person: Jesus Christ.

Journal here your personal proclamation to God that you believe Him when He rightly claims to be the only God.

GOD REVEALED

You find yourself having been called into existence in a Universe whose Creator is good and who has not hidden Himself. He has revealed Himself in different ways throughout human history. He spoke through prophets of old. He has spoken through His Son. He has given us Scripture. Review how the author of Hebrews explained this:

Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways. In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. God has appointed him heir of all things and made the universe through him.

HEBREWS 1:1-2

It is clearly understood from everything that has been made that God exists. We can simply observe the Universe and see God's timelessness. We have no excuse (Rom. 1:20). And He didn't leave us in the wilderness to connect vague dots across creation. Instead, He inspired the Bible for us! Look at the way Paul taught Timothy this truth:

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness,

2 TIMOTHY 3:16

Do you believe all of Scripture is inspired by God? If so, you must feel a sense of urgency to explore all of Scripture. List all the books of the Bible you have read, then compare that list to the whole list of Books in the Bible.

Be brutally honest with yourself. Have you made an effort to get to know God in His Word? Explain.

Create a catalog of how you spend your time. Are there things in your routine you could sacrifice in favor of time in God's Word? If so, journal a commitment to God to prioritize His Word.

TRINITY

Mankind was not created to help God deal with loneliness. Rather, mankind was created out of the overflow of fellowship already present in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here's how God Himself described it:

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.

GENESIS 1:26a

Have you been drawn by the Holy Spirit to confess that the Son is Lord so you might be reconciled to the Father? This is what happens when someone is saved. We can see the Trinity at work in salvation. Check out what John said about the Trinity's role in salvation.

And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know the true one. We are in the true one—that is, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

1 JOHN 5:20

The idea of the Trinity can be difficult to explain. Theologians with fancy degrees have argued for generations over the best way to illustrate the concept of the Trinity. In fact, skeptics of Christianity may try to use this confusion to make you feel insecure about your faith. However, you likely know more about the Trinity than you realize. If you are able to share the story of how the Holy Spirit convicted you of sin, how you came to confess Jesus as Lord, and you look forward to eternity with the God who made you, you are actually better acquainted with the triune God than you may realize. Don't get too caught up worrying about what you don't know, rejoice in what you do know, and ask God to help you grow in your knowledge of and love for Him.

How are the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at work in salvation?

Instead of trying to illustrate the Trinity, tell the story of your personal encounter with the Trinity.

LEADER GUIDE / SESSION 1

ENGAGE

Start the session by reading the *Levels of Biblical Learning Statement* on page 6. Then, use the introduction provided as a way to begin your group time before transitioning to the Discuss section.

DISCUSS

Be sure to read the Discuss section on pages 7-9 before coming together as a group. Doing so will allow you to be familiar with the material and will help you select which portions of the material you would like to cover in the allotted amount of group time. Look for places in the Discuss section where you can add a personal anecdote to a question or a Scripture passage to share in addition to what has been provided. Making preparations like these will help your group time run more smoothly and be more effective in the end.

LIVE IT OUT

After your group works through the Discuss section, take some time to move through the application found in the Live It Out section on pages 10-11. Look for specific, personal ways you can connect with the material from your own past. Sharing a personal story or illustration that connects with the lesson is a great way to connect with students and creates an atmosphere where students also feel comfortable sharing.

WEEKLY LEADER TIPS

- Introduce the personal devotions that follow Session 1, and remind students to complete the session devotions on pages 12-15 before your next meeting.
- Challenge students to memorize the Levels of Biblical Learning Statement for Session 1.
- Encourage students to be in the habit of building into their personal prayer lives with what they have learned this week.

WEEKLY LEADER NOTES

.....

.....

.....

.....