

# THE BIBLE: PUZZLE OR PASSION?

## THEOLOGICAL QUESTION

Why should I study the Bible, and how do I do it?

## BIG IDEA

The Bible's truth informs, instructs, counsels, and encourages us to boldly live in a way that points others to Jesus. It also draws us nearer to the heart of God.

## SCRIPTURE USED

### **Psalm 119:9-16:**

*How can a young person stay pure?*

*By obeying your word.*

*I have tried hard to find you —*

*don't let me wander from your commands.*

*I have hidden your word in my heart,  
that I might not sin against you.*

*I praise you, O LORD;*

*teach me your decrees.*

*I have recited aloud*

*all the regulations you have given us.*

*I have rejoiced in your laws  
as much as in riches.*

*I will study your commandments  
and reflect on your ways.*

*I will delight in your decrees  
and not forget your word.*

**2 Timothy 3:14-15:** *But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus.*

**Romans 15:2-4:** *We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord. For even Christ didn't live to please himself. As the Scriptures say, "The insults of those who insult you, O God, have fallen on me." Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.*

## OPENER

### For the opener you will need:

- A relatively small puzzle that is an appropriate size for the number of students you expect (+/- a few pieces for leaders if you need them to help round it out). If possible, try to get a puzzle that is rather vague and generic, rather than an easily recognizable person, place, movie character, etc. If you have a very small group, consider giving out two (or more) pieces to each student.

Hand students their puzzle piece(s) as they walk into the room (prior to your mingling or social time). Instruct them to not show their piece(s) to anyone, but also to be certain not to lose them!

When you are ready to begin, ask a few students what they can tell about the puzzle from the piece(s) that they have. But then, subtly lead them to the conclusion that they cannot know the entire story of the puzzle with so few pieces. You can press this issue as intensely as you deem fit, asking questions that they cannot know the answer to with just one or two pieces, or revealing knowledge that only you have (because you've seen the whole). Then, see if they can put the puzzle together without the picture (you can make this a "how quickly" challenge if you have older students and an easier puzzle).

## TRANSITION

### ASK

- **What did you know about this puzzle when you only had your piece(s) compared to what you learned when you started putting all the pieces together?**
- **When you were telling me about just your single pieces, why was your vocabulary and what you were describing so limited?**
- **Is a single piece of a puzzle very engaging or interesting? Can you do much with just a piece or two? Why or why not?**
- **Sometimes there are situations or circumstances in our lives that make us feel like we only have part of the puzzle. Has there ever been a time when you felt like you only had part of the puzzle and may have been struggling to grasp the bigger picture?** (Leaders, let students answer this question in a personal way if they willing to; it need not be overtly spiritual. Perhaps you could think of a situation from your life to share such as a medical uncertainty, a relationship that seems complicated, a divorce or difficulty in the family, etc. There are many ways to answer this question.)