

Be a Berean

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The Bereans searched the Scriptures everyday to see if what Paul said was true.

Acts 17:11

1. Someone whispers in your ear something that you wanna hear
But how do you know it's true?
Someone tells you something new, and it sounds pretty good to you
But how do you know it's true?
Well here's what you should do: You better . . . [Refrain]

Refrain

Be a Berean: Read your Bible ev'ry day – hey, hey, hey
Be a Berean: Find out what God has to say – hey, hey, hey
Be a Berean: Don't trust what you're seein'
Don't believe anything you've heard
Until you hear it from God's Word!

2. When Paul went to Berea, the people said we're glad to see ya
But is your message true?
They searched the scriptures ev'ry day to see if what Paul had to say
Was completely true
You need to do it too: You need to . . . [Refrain]

Bridge

Don't believe anything you hear, and only half of what you see
Until you check it with God's Word – that's the only authority! [to Verse 3]

3. Your friends sing a catchy song. They ask you to sing along
But are the words really true?
You saw it on the internet, and now your mind just can't forget
But how do you know it's true?
Well here's what you should do: You gotta . . . [Refrain]

Ending (after final refrain)

Hey, hey, hey! Be a Berean
Hey, hey, hey! Be a Berean
Hey, hey, hey! Be a Berean
Hey, hey, hey! Be a Berean!

Be a Berean

Teaching Resources

Background

All of us are confronted daily by a bewildering barrage of information and ideas from an ever-increasing number of sources, many of which are completely unreliable. At the same time, our society has been slowly drifting farther and farther away from Biblical literacy and Biblical Truth. Without the firm filter of Biblical Truth, it is easy for false, deceptive, and dangerous ideas to take root and grow in our minds and lives. Children are particularly vulnerable because they possess limited Biblical knowledge and are highly impressionable.

The problem of discerning truth is increasingly exacerbated by the onset of artificial intelligence (AI). With AI, it is now possible to create completely fictitious people and events that look and sound real and truthful. Visual images of people can be fabricated and made to appear to say or do things they have never spoken or done – and in their very own voices! Frightening!

Now, more than ever, children need to be taught to be highly skeptical of the information and ideas they see and hear. They need to be taught that the only reliable source of Truth is God's Word, and that is where they need to look for guidance whenever in doubt.

Centuries ago, the people of Berea gave us this example. During his missionary journey to Macedonia (Northern Greece), Paul took the Gospel message to the Jews at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-10), but he was not welcomed there and his message was not received by many. During the night, he and Silas fled south to the smaller town of Berea. At Berea, Paul was welcomed and the people eagerly listened to his message. However, they didn't just blindly accept everything Paul told them. The Bereans actively checked up on Paul by *examining the scriptures daily* to see for themselves whether or not his message was consistent with what they knew of God's Word (Acts 17:11).

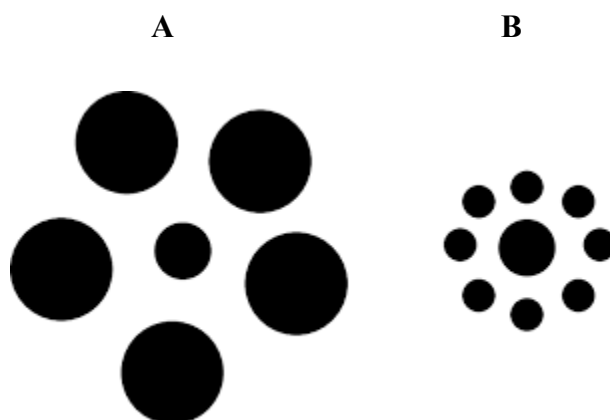
So even if we're not actually from the town of Berea, all of us can be "Bereans" by following their example and using God's Word to determine which ideas are true and which are false. That's what it means to be a "Berean." This song reminds children that each of us needs to "be a Berean" who reads and studies God's Word daily so that we are equipped to evaluate the truthfulness of all that we see and hear.

Preparing Activities

1. Make a list of all the places where we might get information or ideas: magazines, newspapers, books, TV shows, movies, songs, internet, social media, artificial intelligence,

billboards, friends, teachers, politicians, etc. How do we know what we can trust or believe from these sources of information? What is at least one feature of each of the sources listed that should make us suspicious of the information and ideas we receive from that source?

2. We humans can easily be deceived – even when we are looking right at something with our own two eyes! Optical illusions are a fun and easy way to demonstrate this fact. One of my favorites is the circle illusion. Show children the two sets of circles below and ask them which of the two center circles is larger – is it A or B? Most people will say incorrectly that the center circle of B is larger than A. In reality, they are exactly the same size! If we can be fooled easily by something simple we are directly looking at, how easily can we be fooled by things we hear from other people that we cannot look at directly? The only way to be certain the two center circles are exactly the same is by using a trustworthy standard, like a ruler, to measure them. God's Word is a trustworthy standard we must use to determine what is true and false, right and wrong, because we cannot trust our own eyes and ears.



3. Help orient children to the geographic location of Berea by showing them age-appropriate maps. I like to begin with a world map and show children where we are located and where Greece is so they can see how far away it is. Then I like to get progressively more detailed with a map of the Mediterranean area, then a map of Greece, then Northern Greece, and finally a map showing the locations of Thessalonica and Berea.

4. Read an age-appropriate account of Paul's travels to Thessalonica and Berea. What was the same at each city (e.g., Paul first took his message to the Jews at the synagogue, at each city some believed)? What was different about how Paul's message was received at each place? Read story of Paul's travels to Thessalonica and Berea.

Extending Activities

1. What were the “scriptures” that the Bereans would have used to check on the truth of Paul’s message? Demonstrate how Old Testament prophecies such as those found in Isaiah 53 could have been used by the Bereans to confirm the truth of Paul’s message. Find additional scripture passages from the Old Testament that point to the life of Jesus and the gospel message.
2. Make a list of “truth statements” about God’s character, expectations for us, and the gospel message, along with their scripture references. For example . . .

Truth Statements

- Children should obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3, Colossians 3:20, Exodus 20:12)
- God loves everyone (John 3:16)
- Jesus died for our sins (I Corinthians 15:3-4, Romans 5:8, I Peter 2:24)
- Jesus is always with us (Matthew 28:20)
- More!

Have children create colorful posters that visually represent these truth statements.

3. Encourage children’s daily (or regular) Bible reading. Older children could be challenged to read through the entire Bible in a year, using a pre-structured program. There are many Bible reading programs for children available – just do an internet search to find them. Many of these programs have accompanying study guides and activities to accompany daily Bible reading. Children could be encouraged to keep journals where they write down important “truths” about God and the gospel message as they encounter them in their Bible reading.

Related Scripture

Psalm 119:11

Psalm 119:105

Psalm 119:160

Proverbs 12:22

John 8:32

John 14:6

Ephesians 4:25

Ephesians 6:14