



CONTENTS




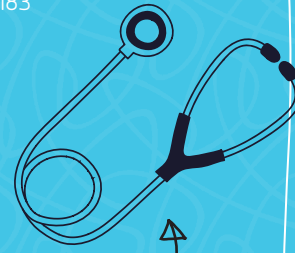
Warning: High Voltage!!

- 
- 1 Building a Bible Telescope / 2
 - 2 The Great Escape / 6
 - 3 Exploring Proverbs / 10
 - 4 Making Hard Decisions / 14
 - 5 Any Questions? / 18
 - 6 Radical Food / 22
 - 7 Building Bridges: Hannah More / 27

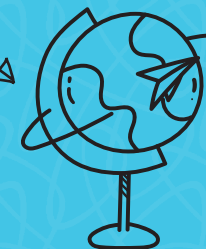
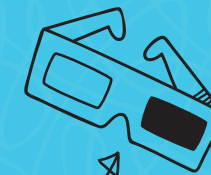
- 
- 8 Dealing with Parent Problems / 34
 - 9 What's Wrong with Me (and You)? / 37
 - 10 Make Your Own Secret Code (Using Your Bible) / 40
 - 11 The Sum of Your Life / 44
 - 12 How to Become a Christian / 48
 - 13 Pioneer for God: Lemuel Haynes / 52
 - 14 Exploring Genesis (Part 1) / 58
 - 15 Exploring Genesis (Part 2) / 64
 - 16 Snakes, Dragons, and the Bible / 69

- 
- 17 Two Bible Shapes You Should Know / 73
 - 18 Lifelong Learner: Pandita Ramabai / 80
 - 19 Humor in the Bible / 85
 - 20 World Record Wisdom / 94
 - 21 Battles of the Bible / 96
 - 22 What's in a Name? / 107
 - 23 How Does Prayer Work? / 112
 - 24 What's Your Proof? / 116
 - 25 Running the Race: Eric Liddell / 121
 - 26 Speak Up! / 127
 - 27 Exploring Romans / 134
 - 28 Reading the Bible in 3D / 140
 - 29 Two More Bible Shapes You Should Know / 146
 - 30 Around the World / 150
 - 31 Exploring Mark / 154

- 
- 32 Bad Words, Good Words / 158
 - 33 Two More Battles of the Bible / 161
 - 34 The Story of Jesus / 172
 - 35 The Most Important Wind in the World / 177
 - 36 Why Do You Go To Your Church? / 183
 - 37 The Great Divide / 186
 - 38 Two Truths and a Lie / 189
 - 39 Superhero Heresies / 192
 - 40 Five Bible Facts about Sickness / 197
 - 41 The True Meaning of Easter / 202



How to Find Anything in This Book
Acknowledgments



WARNING: HIGH VOLTAGE!



We've all seen ragged bolts of electricity blaze out from storm clouds. In a flash, they zigzag across the sky and crash down with a bang! But what do you really know about lightning? Which of the following is not true?

- 1. Lightning is hotter than the surface of our sun.**
- 2. Lightning can strike the same place twice.**
- 3. Lightning can make glass.**

It may be shocking to hear, but they're all true.

(1) Lightning, at 53,540 degrees Fahrenheit, is five times hotter than the sun's surface (that's 153 times hotter than the oven temperature needed for baking cookies).

(2) Lightning has no problem striking the same place more than once. (On the evening of June 30, 2014, lightning struck the Sears Tower in Chicago ten times in a single storm!)

(3) If lightning strikes sand, the heat can transform the sand into a fulgarite, a sand-coated tube lined with glass. (And humans have learned to do the same thing. Four thousand years before Jesus, ancient people discovered that amazing things happen when you heat sand to crazy hot temperatures. The result: all different kinds of glass.)

So I hope the book you're holding becomes like lightning in your hands.

As a sequel to *The Radical Book for Kids*, I hope it strikes you in the same way as the first book. (Like the subtitle says: "More Truth, More Fun"!)

I also want to help change the way you see God's Word. Like super-hot lightning can turn sand into glass, I hope that God will transform what may seem like dusty statements in Scripture into crystal clear windows. And that what you'll see through those panes of glass will change your life.

When the fire falls—

*When the Lord helps you see what's truly there and
electrifyingly beautiful—*

*When words become windows—
You will be changed—radically!*



BUILDING A BIBLE TELESCOPE

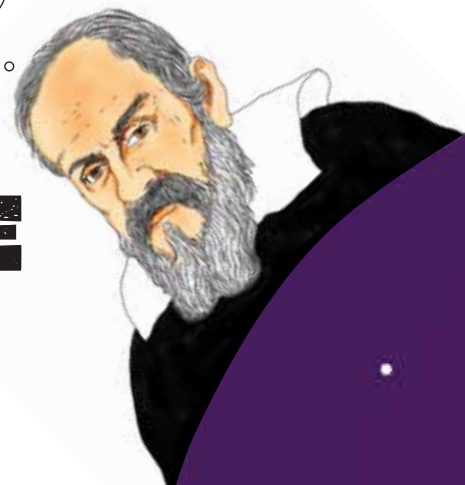
In the year 1610, stargazing scientist Galileo had a problem.

On the one hand, he had done something amazing. Using two glass lenses, he had constructed a telescope that enabled him to see craters on the surface of our moon and also four of the moons orbiting Jupiter. Yet, there was a big downside.

What Galileo could see, though magnified thirty times, was blurred and rimmed with a rainbow effect of colors. Today astronomers call this distortion a chromatic aberration.

Fast forward 150 years and enter the man

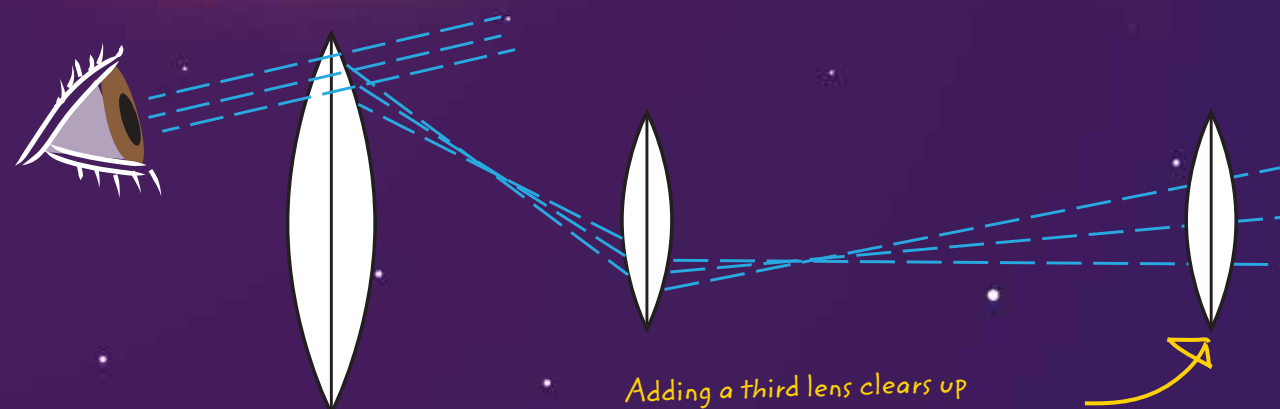
Huh?



chromatic aberration

who solved Galileo's problem: English optician, John Dolland. With his discovery, even distant images snapped into focus, and the color halo vanished. Dolland's solution? If you want to clearly see what's going on among the stars, add a third lens.

Want to see what's going on in the history written about in the Bible? Want the stories in Genesis or the Gospels to pop into focus? Then you also need three lenses. Three kinds of glass can help you understand the Bible: a window, a stained-glass window, and a mirror.



Adding a third lens clears up the chromatic aberration!

1 WINDOW

God made the stories in the Bible like a window. You look through a window to see what's going on outside—you see people, activities, stuff happening. In the same way, you can look through the Gospels to understand what really happened in the life of Jesus.

For example, in Mark 4:35–41, Jesus calms a storm that's about to sink his disciples' boat. When we look at what happened through the window of this story, we see Jesus's amazing power over the forces of nature.



2 STAINED GLASS

God made the stories in the Bible like stained glass. You don't look through a stained-glass window. You look at it—like you look at a painting. In a stained-glass window, each carefully crafted piece of glass is arranged to tell a story. For example, the author of each Gospel weaves together the true events of Jesus's life in a way that makes a point.

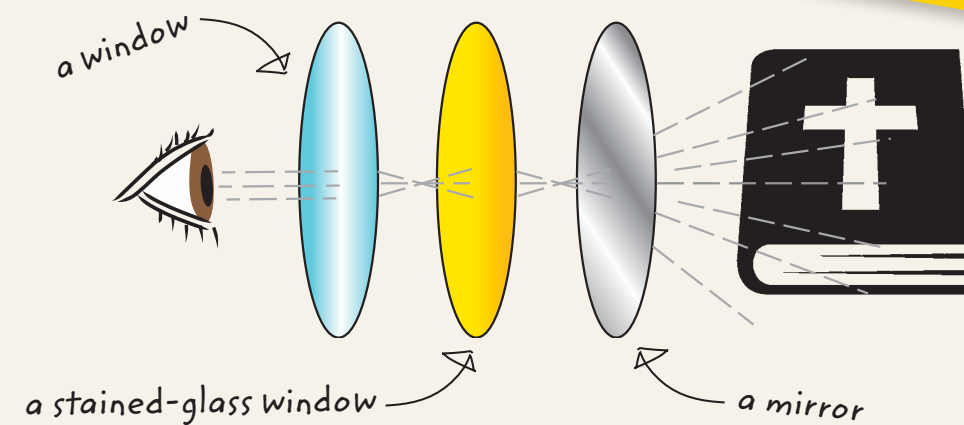
If you read the same story from Mark 4—about Jesus calming the storm—through the stained glass of Mark's storytelling, you can see more. Mark places four stories back-to-back that show Jesus helping people that no one else can help:

- Not one of the disciples could escape the storm (Mark 4:35–41)
- No one could restrain the demon-possessed man (Mark 5:1–20)
- No doctor could help the bleeding woman (Mark 5:25–34)
- No one could bring someone back from death (Mark 5:21–24, 35–43)

3 MIRROR

God also gave us Bible stories to be like mirrors, to help us see ourselves as we really are. For example, when we read the Gospels, we see ourselves in the stories—and it isn't always pretty. Like when Jesus quiets the storm in Mark 4:35–41, he also gets to the heart of the real problem with his disciples' fear.

So when we look at our own fearful hearts in the mirror of Scripture, we are able to reflect on Jesus's question: "Do you still have no faith?" (Mark 4:40). We look at this story, and we see ourselves.



When all three lenses are in place, you'll see God's Word with clarity.



EXPLORING PROVERBS

When my oldest son was six years old, we bought a video gaming system for our family to play. We also bought a few simple games. Nothing too hard, some Lego games, but I soon discovered a problem.

For the first few months, my son needed help playing the games. And I quickly figured out that I did too. *How do I jump from rock to rock without falling in the lava?!* I tried and tried to beat this level. It was really hard.

And then I learned about walk-throughs, secrets, and cheats. (The Internet is a beautiful thing!) On these web pages, gamers with way too much time on their hands, explain how to defeat each level on every game ever created! Brilliant! (These days, of course, my son can beat me on every game we own.)

But can you imagine how amazing it would be if the game designer had built a site to help you? Who else would be better able to explain each level, warn of any danger, and give tips for total domination!

Now if you think some video games are hard, let me tell you: real life is much harder. It's more complex (because it involves real people). And it's more difficult (because it involves real pain). And then there are times when real people are a real pain.



Wisdom is the knowledge and skill to rightly relate to God, the world he has made, the people in the world, and yourself.



READ PROVERBS



LIKE A PRO

Wisdom is living in harmony with what is real—rightly relating to God, his world, people, and yourself. Proverbs is a starter kit for how to begin doing this.

Proverbs doesn't cover everything you'll face in life, but it gets you started. And it gives you what you need to make good decisions about other areas. If Proverbs is like a map—helping you navigate life as mapped out in its 915 verses—then the more you study the map, the more it actually becomes a compass. Proverbs helps you navigate life off the map.

So while you learn Proverbs, learn life too. Take time to observe life around you. Read your environment. Listen carefully to people. Observe and note. And before long you'll be learning to rightly relate to life—in harmony with God's Word—and that's living in wisdom.

But thankfully in the real world, the real Designer has given us a behind-the-scenes look at how the world really works. In the Bible, the book of Proverbs contains 31 chapters (that's 915 verses!). And each verse gives insight about how best to live in the world God created. The Bible calls this skillful living *wisdom*.

Here's how the book of Proverbs works. The first 9 chapters keep telling you how important it is to be wise. By the time you finish these chapters, you should be thinking, *I really need wisdom!* And this is good, because chapters 10 through 31 tell you what wisdom looks like.

But you don't get wise by simply reading Proverbs. You can have all 31 chapters memorized but still not be a wise person. How? Because rightly relating to life begins by relating to God. In other words, if you don't live in light of the Designer of life, you won't be able to wisely play the "game" of life. Proverbs says it this way:

Fear of the Lord is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. PROVERBS 1:7 NLT

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE BIBLE CALLS PEOPLE WHO TRY TO LIVE WITHOUT GOD?

Who don't have the Lord as the foundation of all they know about life?

Fools. And Proverbs explains that there are three kinds of fools—three levels, and each one gets worse and worse.

WANT TO AVOID BEING ANY KIND OF FOOL—BEGINNING, COMMON, OR HARDENED?

Spend time drinking in the wisdom of Proverbs. One easy way is to read one chapter each day of the month (on day 1, read Proverbs 1; on day 2, Proverbs 2; etc.).



LEVEL 1 BEGINNING FOOL

(aka the "simple" person)

This person hasn't decided if they are going to follow God and live life according to his wisdom. They are open to lots of options—God's wisdom, their own wisdom, the wisdom of all sorts of people (Proverbs 19:25; 22:3; 27:12). If this person doesn't start living in the "fear of the Lord," and choosing God's wisdom, then they'll slide down to the next level.



LEVEL 2 COMMON FOOL

(also known as just the "fool")

This person knows what God's wisdom says to do, and then does the opposite. They don't obey the Lord and don't care. They live according to their own rules and plans, not God's (Proverbs 1:22; 8:5; 12:15). But if they keep being a common fool, they'll sink to the next level.



LEVEL 3 HARDENED FOOL

(aka the "scoffer")

This person doesn't just ignore God's wisdom, they hate it. They don't just disobey the Lord's rules, they love to disobey. And they refuse to turn back to the Lord. This fool's path doesn't end well. There will be consequences (Proverbs 1:22; 9:7-8; 15:12).