

Love My Phone

By George Halitzka

for use as
STEP 1 

Lesson 2**Focus:**

Take time for
God's Word.

Lesson 2**Bible Basis:**

Acts 8:26-31, 34-35;
17:1-3; 1 Peter 5:12-14;
2 John 1

Lesson 2**Memory Verse:**

Do your best to present yourself to God as
one approved, a workman who does not
need to be ashamed and who correctly
handles the word of truth.
—2 Timothy 2:15

Students will learn about how much time American teenagers spend with digital devices and contrast that with the amount of time they spend with God's Word.

Materials:

Internet access

Today, we're talking about love. But by "love," I don't mean getting a date with your big crush. I mean the way you're in love with your phone . . . and tablet, and TV, and laptop, and anything else in your house with a screen.

"Wait a minute," you may be thinking. "I love my mom and my baby cousin, not my *phone!*" Well . . . maybe. But on an average day, I'm guessing you spend more time with your phone than Mom.

➤ **How much time do you think teenagers spend with devices in one day? When I say "devices," I actually mean any kind of electronic media—phones, TVs, computers, and even car radios.** (Encourage your teens to take a guess.)

Let's watch a news report about teen phone use to see if your guesses are right. Show your students this video [1:53].

STUDY: TEENS SPEND AN AVERAGE OF 9 HOURS A DAY WITH MEDIA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1VpWS29mSg>

➤ **Do you think *you* spent nine hours a day with media in the past week?** (Many teens will probably think that number is high, but remind them of times when they may have been *partially* engaged with media. For example, perhaps they were sitting in a room with the TV turned on, or riding in a car with the radio playing in the background.)

Nine hours a day is a lot! That's about as much time as you spend sleeping and more time than you spend in school. Even if you didn't hit the nine-hour mark, I'll bet you spent many hours staring at a screen in the past week.

- **Now, here's a follow-up question: What are some other things you love (besides technology and media), and how much time do you spend with them each day?** (You can be the first to share your answers to get things started. Some students may mention a sport or hobby, or give names of people.)

There's an old saying that love is spelled T-I-M-E. We aren't going on a guilt trip this morning, but we are going to talk about taking more time for one of the super-important things in our lives—the Bible. In today's lesson, we're going to look specifically at why spending time in God's Word is so important.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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Lesson 2**Focus:**

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Materials:

- Internet access
- Optional: Your students' smartphones

In today's Step 4, we suggest guiding your students to download a free Bible app onto their smartphones (YouVersion and Biblegateway are both excellent resources). If you choose to take this route, be sure to explore the resources yourself before trying to navigate them with your students! If you choose not to have students download an app, adapt what you say during Step 4 to refer to traditional printed Bibles, concordances, and other study tools.

At the beginning of our lesson, we talked about how we seem to be in love with the screens in our lives. That's because the average teenager spends nine hours a day with media . . . and that number probably isn't much better for adults. If love is spelled T-I-M-E, then we're passionate about our smartphones and other devices.

However, we also claim to love God's Word. It's not realistic for us to spend nine hours a day reading the Bible. But we could certainly spend a little more time with our Creator's instruction manual. One way you can do that is by committing to read a chapter each day from the Bible this week. You can even do it without putting down your phone.

➤ **Does anybody have a Bible app installed on their phone?** (If some of your students have one, ask them to describe what it does. For example, does it have multiple versions of the Bible? Does it also access Bible reference works?)

If you don't already have one, why not take a minute to download a Bible app now? That will make it super-easy to read God's Word—you just open the app and pick a chapter! I suggest starting with a Gospel (one of the four books in the New Testament about Jesus' life), maybe the Book of Mark. Let's go through the process of downloading an app called YouVersion.

Guide your students to visit the appropriate app store on their phones and search for YouVersion or Biblegateway. Some of your students may be more comfortable with installing apps than you are, but in case you have any technophobic teens in the room, give them all the support

that you can. The kids can assist each other as well.

Need some help understanding what you read? There are free online Bible reference tools available on your phone apps as well! You'll find several tools that can help you dig more deeply into the Bible. If time permits, guide your students in a brief exploration of the Bible reference works (commentaries and Bible dictionaries) that are listed on their apps.

Reading a chapter from the Bible may take you less than five minutes a day. That's nothing compared to the nine hours you spend with other media! Make a commitment to read from your Bible app every day this week. It's a great way grow closer to God.

Close in prayer.

Resources:

HOME – YOUVERSION
<http://www.youversion.com/>

AUDIO BIBLES, COMMENTARIES, DICTIONARIES, AND BIBLE STUDY TOOLS
<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/>

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