

Common Sense

Faith Supplement



Freedom in Christ: Paine's
Vision and God's Gift of
Liberty

Objective

Students will explore Thomas Paine's arguments about natural rights and the importance of liberty through the lens of Christian values, connecting Paine's ideas to biblical principles about freedom, fairness, and the importance of standing up for what is right.

Memory Verse

Galatians 5:1 (NIV)

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

- **Teacher Discussion:** This verse reminds us that God created us for freedom. Paine argued that individuals have the right to choose their own path, and as Christians, we believe that God gave us that freedom in Christ – empowering us to live in liberty and truth.

Relevant Scripture

In this lesson, we will explore how Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* helped spark the American Revolution by emphasizing the natural rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We will also discuss how these natural rights align with our biblical understanding of freedom and justice.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV)

"Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves."

Relevant Scripture

- Teacher Discussion: Paine's argument for freedom is not about rebellion, but about standing against unjust systems that oppress people's God-given rights. We should understand that God wants us to have a voice in our government and to live in a just society where people are free to pursue happiness and live according to His will.

Micah 6:8

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

- Teacher Discussion: Paine's push for justice and fairness aligns with this biblical call. In *Common Sense*, Paine argued for a just government that treats people with respect and fairness. This ties into our Christian calling to stand for justice and fairness.

Instructional Goals

- Understanding Natural Rights:
 - Students will recognize that natural rights are gifts from God, meant to be protected and honored in every individual's life.
- Biblical Application of *Common Sense*:
 - Students will relate Christian teachings to everyday situations where they must use wisdom to make decisions, using the Bible as a guide for their action.
- Role of Freedom in Christ:
 - Students will understand that true freedom in Christ is the power to make choices that honor God and serve others, reflecting the importance of liberty as a God-given gift.

4. Practical Application of Faith in Decision Making:

- Students will apply common sense in making decisions that reflect the biblical call to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

5. Memory Verse Retention:

- Students will commit Galatians 5:1 ("It is for freedom that Christ has set us free...") to memory and explain how it relates to the lesson on natural rights and freedom.

6. Reflection on Christian Responsibility:

- Students will reflect on how they can be agents of change in their communities, using common sense and biblical teachings to ensure that everyone's natural rights are respected and protected.



Interactive Lesson:

"Common Sense for Kids"

Objective

Help students understand how common sense applies to their everyday lives and how the Bible provides guidance for making wise and fair decisions, focusing on the Christian principles of freedom, justice, and respect for others.

Materials Needed

- Whiteboard and markers
- "Real-Life Common Sense" Scenarios for discussion
- Paper and pencils for drawing and writing

Steps

Introduction to Common Sense in Everyday Life

Common sense is the ability to make decisions that are wise, fair, and practical. It means thinking about the consequences of our actions and making choices that are good for ourselves and others. While Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* encouraged the colonies to fight for freedom, we can also use our own common sense to make choices that honor God and respect the rights of others. The Bible teaches us how to act with wisdom, fairness, and kindness.

Group Activity - Real-Life Common Sense

Step 1: Split the class into groups and provide each group with a "Real-Life Common Sense" scenario. Some examples of scenarios may include:

- "You see a friend being treated unfairly by others at recess."
- "You and your sibling are arguing over what game to play."
- "You are at a party and someone is feeling left out."

Step 2: Ask each group to discuss the scenario and decide what would be the most sensible, fair, and kind thing to do in that situation. Encourage them to think about how God wants us to treat others and how common sense can help us make good choices.

Interactive Lesson:

"Common Sense for Kids"

Step 3: In their groups, students will create a poster or list that explains their solution to the problem, why it's the right choice, and how their decision shows respect for everyone involved.

Step 4: Groups present their posters and explain how they used common sense to solve the problem, relating their solutions to Christian values like fairness, kindness, and respect.

Independent Activity:

Natural Rights in Action

Objective

Students will reflect on their own natural rights and how they can protect these rights as Christians.

Materials Needed

- Paper and pencils
- Natural Rights Reflection Prompts

Steps

1. Instructions:

- Have students read and discuss the three prompts below:
 - i. What does the right to life mean to you? How do you feel safe and protected in your life?
 - ii. What does the right to liberty mean to you? How do you make choices every day?
 - iii. What does the right to the pursuit of happiness mean to you? What things in life make you feel happy and fulfilled?

2. Reflection: Students should write a short paragraph (or draw a picture) about each of the rights and how they see these rights as gifts from God. Afterward, students can share their reflections with the class or in small groups.

Closing Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the gift of freedom and the natural rights You have given us — rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We thank You for Thomas Paine and the role he played in encouraging the pursuit of freedom and justice in our country. Help us to stand firm in the freedom we have in Christ, remembering that it is a gift from You. Guide us in using our voices for justice, kindness, and love. We pray that we may always protect the rights of others and stand up for what is good and true.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Independent Activity:

Natural Rights in Action

Note to Parents (Optional)

Dear Parents,

Today in class, we explored Thomas Paine's ideas from *Common Sense* and how they connect to the natural rights God has given to all people. Through discussions and activities, students learned that freedom, justice, and the right to live in peace are not just ideas from history, but also important principles in our Christian faith. We encouraged students to reflect on their natural rights of life, liberty, and happiness and how these reflect God's plan for us. Please take some time to discuss these concepts with your child and ask them how they can stand for justice and fairness in their own lives.

We also learned that in Christ, we are called to live in freedom and to stand firm against oppression. This lesson helps us connect both our nation's history and our faith as we live out these truths every day.

Thank you for supporting your child's learning.

In Christ,

[Teacher's Name]