



FAITHWEAVER

Weaving faith into today's families **NOW**[®]

**SPRING
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**ADULT
LEADER GUIDE**

Group

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SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**ADULT
LEADER GUIDE**



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ONE-TIME ACTIVATION CODE:

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Real. Bold. Love.

Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's



Relational

Learner-to-learner interaction enhances learning and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What learners experience through discussion and action sticks with them up to 9 times longer than what they simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of Christian education is to equip learners to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Learner-based

Learners understand and retain more when the learning process takes into consideration how they learn best.

Group

FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum, Adult, Spring

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Visit our website: group.com/sunday-school

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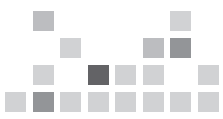
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* We recommend starting the quarter so that Lessons 5 and 6 align with the dates of Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. Visit the Digital Download Center for a suggested schedule.

The future of Sunday school + family ministry is NOW.



No doubt about it, the world is changing. Families used to go to church every week. Kids used to have longer attention spans. Teachers used to have more time to prepare. And didn't our budgets used to be bigger?

Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date. But there's one thing that's never changed: the need to grow families closer to Jesus.

That's why we created FaithWeaver NOW®, and it's different from anything you've ever seen before!

It combines Sunday school with family ministry. ■■■■

Sure, you've seen Sunday school aimed at families. But FaithWeaver NOW actually hits the target by having everyone in the family learning about the same Scripture each week.

It's simpler and easier. ■■■■

Sometimes change is a wonderful thing. Gone are the days when you needed to spend hours preparing your lessons and hunting for supplies. FaithWeaver NOW will have you and your team ready to go in a snap.

It's made for NOW. ■■■■

Life is complicated and full of distractions. FaithWeaver NOW keeps faith on track through even the most frenzied lifestyles.

What makes FaithWeaver NOW the perfect curriculum for TODAY's church?

- Families learn the same Bible passage in age-appropriate ways.
- Kids don't just hear the Word. They experience it.
- Simple and easy lessons fit even the busiest lives.
- Kids see God in their everyday world.
- The Scope & Sequence goes through the Bible every three years.
- You can customize it however you like, with both print and digital versions.

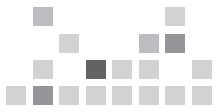


Create a vibrant family ministry that's new...that's wow...that's NOW. FaithWeaver NOW gives you a fresh strategy for being more successful than ever in bringing families closer to Jesus.

Thom Schultz Joani Schultz

Thom and Joani Schultz
Chairman and Chief Creative Officer
Group Publishing, Inc.





Jesus Teaches About Commitment

Mark 8:31-38

Most adults have been surviving on their own for quite some time. They're often feeling very confident in their ability to handle life, because they've had to do so ever since they became adults. Consequently, following Jesus might not feel necessary. After all, if they've got their lives together, why would they need to follow Jesus? As you lead this lesson, help people see the benefits and joys of following Jesus. But also help them see the challenges so that they can truly commit to following Jesus, knowing what it costs.



► **Bible Point**
Commit to follow Jesus.

Key Verse
"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Romans 1:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Adults will grow in their commitment to Jesus.

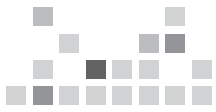
LESSON	WHAT ADULTS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Door Number 1? <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Play a game where they discover the world's odds versus God's odds.	paper, pens, nickels (optional), dollar bills (optional)	
2 Bible Exploration	A Big Commitment <i>(about 25 min.)</i> Go through stations to experience the passage, and discuss the difficulty of following Jesus.	Bibles, Adult Handbooks or 1 copy of the "A Big Commitment" handout (at the end of this lesson), chairs, duct tape, several pairs of scissors, paper lunch bags, string, paper, pens, tape, a tennis or golf ball	Set up stations with the corresponding section of the handout (if using), Bibles, and the following supplies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station 1: a few chairs • Station 2: duct tape and scissors • Station 3: paper lunch bags, scissors, string, paper, pens, tape, a tennis or golf ball • Station 4: paper, pens, scissors

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT ADULTS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Not Ashamed <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Examine the Key Verse, and discuss what it means to follow Jesus.	Bibles, poster board or whiteboard, marker	
	My Priorities <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Commit to keeping Jesus as their highest priority.	index cards, pens	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Discuss how to apply God's Word.	Adult Handbooks or 1 copy per person of the "Digging Deeper" handout (at the end of this lesson)	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to dig deeper into the lesson all week long.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Jesus Teaches About Commitment

Mark 8:31-38

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Rebuked Peter

The disciples were likely counting on a great earthly kingdom in which Jesus would lead the Jews in overthrowing the Romans and would place his disciples in important positions. Jesus’ statements didn’t go along with those expectations! Peter wanted Jesus to change his mind and forget all this talk about dying.

Peter’s thinking was based on wrong assumptions because he saw things from a purely human point of view. Here we see a clear statement about what it means to follow Jesus. Too often we think of God as a powerful being who can help us advance our own agendas. Instead, truly following Jesus means listening to what he says, discovering his will for our lives, and then obediently following, no matter how attractive or repulsive that may seem to us at the time.

Jesus Challenged the Crowd

A crowd had apparently gathered to hear Jesus, and he wanted to clarify his meaning. This is not a description of what some call “easy believism.” Instead, Jesus points out how denying oneself means turning away from selfish, self-protective attitudes and seeking the true humility and faith God wants to see in us.

What does it mean to take up your cross? For Jesus’ disciples to each take up his own cross didn’t mean just to endure suffering. It meant to accept fully the suffering they would face because of their faith in Christ. Jesus wanted his disciples to know that their faith came with a cost.

Stand Firm in Faith

As he spoke of what it means to follow him, Jesus knew that many in the crowd around him wouldn’t

be followers he would recognize as his own when he returns. Our generation is much like that of Jesus’ day. People who claim to be religious—or even Christian—often shy away from bold witnessing for Jesus. It’s easy to say you believe in God, but it’s much more difficult to confess you’re a Jesus-following Christian.

The Jesus Connection

Humans are willing to sacrifice a lot for the sake of those they love. Your relationship with Jesus *will* require sacrifice, risk, and loyal commitment—but it’s all worth it!

How can you take up your cross? Try living out the “Joy” acronym: Pray about one specific way you’ll put *Jesus* first (such as spending time with him first thing each day), put *others* second (such as washing a friend’s car), and put *yourself* last (such as giving up time watching TV in order to help someone else). You can write your prayer here.





Door Number 1? Supplies

paper
pens
nickels (optional)
dollar bills (optional)

1 GETTING STARTED

Door Number 1?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Greet people warmly as they gather. Say: **We're going to begin today with a game show! We're going to pick a number between 1 and 100. You'll have two chances to try to guess the correct number. If you get it right, you'll win a new car!** Now talk really fast as if you're reading the fine print. Say: **No cars will actually be given away in this game.** If you brought nickels and dollars, offer a nickel instead of a new car.

Invite two people to the front. Have one person write down a number between 1 and 100, making sure the other person doesn't see it. Read the number silently, and then give the second person a chance to guess. Say: **I'm going to narrow it down for you and give you a second chance. The correct answer is either** (name the correct answer and the number the person guessed. In the event that someone guessed correctly, name their guess and one other number.) **Would you like to keep your guess or switch?** Allow the contestant to decide whether to stay with his or her original guess or to switch to the other number you named. Then announce the winning number. If you brought nickels, give one to the contestant to keep if he or she selected the winning number.

Repeat the game several times, if possible giving everyone a turn to guess the right number. (You'll need a new number for each round.)

Talk With Adults ■■■■

Lead everyone in this discussion. Participants can find these questions in their Adult Handbooks.

Ask:

- **How did you decide whether to stick with your original number or switch?**
- **Why did it seem like a better choice to switch?**
- **Tell about a time you made a decision but then got more information and changed your mind.**

Say: **In this game, the odds were greatly in your favor if you switched your guess to the second number I named. But what if I told you that those who stuck with their original guess—whether or not it was right—would win something *better* than a new car (or nickel)?** If you brought dollar bills, distribute them now to anyone who didn't change his or her guess. **Today we're going to read some things Jesus says will happen when we ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS. When you hear all it may cost you, it may be tempting to change your mind about Jesus! Sticking with Jesus will cost you things the world values, but you'll end up with something far better.**



2

 BIBLE
EXPLORATION

A Big Commitment

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have adults form pairs. Make sure each pair has at least one Bible, and have everyone open to Mark 8. Say: **There are four stations around the room. Each one will walk you through a different section of today's Bible passage. You can go in any order, and the instructions for what to do are included on page 14 of your handbooks or at each station. Plan on spending about five minutes per station.**

Have adults spread out evenly among the stations and follow the instructions in their handbooks or at each station. At station 3, pairs may need to work with other pairs so they can avoid a wait. After 20 minutes, gather everyone back together.

Talk With Adults ■■■■

Lead everyone in this discussion. Participants can find these questions in their Adult Handbooks.

Ask:

- What are some costs of being a Christian?
- Why is it worth it to follow Jesus if it means denying ourselves, giving up the things of this world, and enduring hard times?
- Based on all Jesus said, why is it important to have a strong commitment to following him, rather than being on the fence?

Say: **When we ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS, it's not an easy road. Jesus wasn't offering an easy, pain-free life. He wasn't trying to sell something easy to get a lot of people to follow him. Jesus told it like it is—it will be hard. It will mean putting God's ways before our own. But it's worth it because when we boldly follow Jesus, one day we'll get to meet him face to face, and he won't be ashamed of us.**



A Big Commitment Supplies

Bibles
 Adult Handbooks or
 1 copy of the "A Big Commitment" handout (at the end of this lesson)
 chairs
 duct tape
 several pairs of scissors
 paper lunch bags
 string
 paper
 pens
 tape
 a tennis or golf ball

A Big Commitment Easy Prep

Set up stations with the corresponding section of the handout, Bibles, and the following supplies:

- Station 1: a few chairs
- Station 2: duct tape and scissors
- Station 3: paper lunch bags, scissors, string, paper, pens, tape, a tennis or golf ball
- Station 4: paper, pens, scissors



Not Ashamed Supplies

Bibles
poster board or
whiteboard
marker

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Not Ashamed

What You'll Do

Have everyone turn to the Key Verse, Romans 1:16, and follow along as you read it aloud. Say: **“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile” (Romans 1:16).**

Say: **To think about this verse in more depth, let's make a list. First we'll list reasons people could be ashamed of the gospel.** On your whiteboard or poster board, make a two-column chart. Write down ideas as people share why people might be ashamed of the gospel.

Say: **Now in the second column, let's make a list of reasons we're *not* ashamed of the gospel. Our Key Verse already gives us one reason!** In your second column, write “salvation” and any other ideas people share.

Talk With Adults

Lead everyone in this discussion. Participants can find these questions in their Adult Handbooks.

Ask:

- Which column seems like a stronger list? Why?
- How does someone who's ashamed of the gospel live?
- How does someone who's *not* ashamed of the gospel live?

Say: **With all Jesus said about what it means to ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS, there's really no room to be ashamed! Following Jesus means making him the top priority and denying our own desires. And the cross we're supposed to be carrying? The cross is full of shame, but Jesus told us to carry one. Truly committing to Jesus will mean we're going totally against the grain—but with confidence that it is all worthwhile!**

My Priorities

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's create a visual reminder that following Jesus means denying ourselves and putting him first.**

Distribute six index cards to each person, and make sure everyone has a pen. Say: **On one index card, write "Jesus." On the other five, write the top five other priorities in your life.** Allow time.

Say: **Now stack the pile in order of importance to you. If you're willing to truly commit to Jesus, put the Jesus card on top.** Allow time.

Talk With Adults

Lead everyone in this discussion. Participants can find these questions in their Adult Handbooks.

Ask:

- **How did you decide what's most important to you? Would other people who know you well be able to guess that order from the way you live?**
- **In what ways can following Jesus influence the other things you wrote on your cards?**
- **How can we live in such a way that it's obvious we've denied ourselves and put Jesus first?**

Say: **It's easy to say Jesus is our top priority. But do we really live that way? Most of us probably don't *all* the time. This week I challenge you to take your index cards home and remember to put Jesus first above all the other priorities in your life. Deny yourself, take up your cross, and ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS.**



My Priorities Supplies

.....
index cards
pens



Daily Challenges Supplies

Adult Handbooks or 1
copy per person of
the “Digging Deeper”
handout (at the end of
this lesson)

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do

Say: **In this session, we’ve seen what it really takes to ► COMMIT TO FOLLOW JESUS. Let’s think about how we can stand firm in that commitment this week.**

Have participants turn to the Daily Challenges section of their Adult Handbooks, or distribute the “Digging Deeper” handouts. Have everyone read the Daily Challenges and choose at least one to do this week. Have participants each turn to a partner and say what challenge they’ll do this coming week and share the specifics of how they plan to do it.

Weaving Faith at Home

Say: **If you have kids in Sunday school, they should have a take-home paper from this week’s lesson to show you. It has their Daily Challenges for this week and ideas for weaving faith at home as a family. Please help your kids follow through with their Daily Challenges. If you don’t have kids in Sunday school, you can still use your own Digging Deeper page to further reflect on following Jesus this week.**

Close with prayer. Have adults pray with their partners from the “A Big Commitment” activity that they’d be strong and steadfast in their commitment to Jesus.



A Big Commitment

STATION 1

With your partner, read Mark 8:31-33. Then choose one person to sit in a chair and name bad things that can happen to Christians. The other partner will hold an index finger against the seated partner's forehead. Then the seated person will try to stand. If time allows, switch roles. Then discuss these questions:

- Which of these pressures have you personally faced as a Christian?
- What do you think of the fact that Jesus was so open to bad things happening to him?
- How might you view these pressures differently if you focused on the "concerns of God" rather than "merely human concerns"?



STATION 2

With your partner, read Mark 8:34-35. Then you'll each tape your hands together in front of your body as if you're handcuffed. You'll need to help each other with the tape, and you may wish to put it sticky-side out so it's easier to remove later on. Keep the tape handcuffs on as you visit other stations and as you discuss these questions:

- The cross was a symbol of punishment for criminals, similar to our handcuffs only much more serious. What do you make of the fact that Jesus was telling his disciples to take up something that was the result of lawbreaking?
- In what ways have you had to go against what people expected of you in order to follow Jesus?
- What risks are there to being a Christian?



STATION 3

With your partner, read Mark 8:36-37. Then create scales (or use scales another group has already created) by taping the ends of a piece of string inside two paper bags. Have one partner stand with one arm extended and the string draped over this arm so the bags hang evenly. Together, brainstorm things that the world values. The other partner will write each one on a separate slip of paper and place it in one bag. Finally, place a ball in the second bag and see what happens to your scale. Then discuss these questions:

- Why do you personally value some of the things you placed in the first bag?
- Why would it seem beneficial for people to chase after those things?
- Why is our soul more valuable than anything the world values?

STATION 4

With your partner, read Mark 8:38. Have one partner write *heaven* several times on one side of a piece of paper. Have the other partner write reasons people might be ashamed of God on the other side of the paper, making sure they line up with the word *heaven*. Then take turns cutting out the reasons to be ashamed. Take a look at both sides of the paper. Then discuss these questions:

- In what ways did all those excuses change the original message of our paper?
- Jesus' statement is pretty strong. What does it mean for your own personal faith journey?

OK
TO COPY



Jesus Teaches About Commitment—Mark 8:31-38

► **Bible Point**—Commit to follow Jesus.

Key Verse—“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile” (Romans 1:16).

Daily Challenges

Choose one or more of these activities to do this week.

- Each day, pick one card from your priority stack and consider what it means to deny yourself and follow Jesus in that area.
- Pray about any big decisions this week, and journal about them as God answers. Deny your own desires, and let God lead you.
- Give up something that distracts you from following Jesus, just for the week.

Through the Week

Use the following passages and questions to explore additional biblical insights about following Jesus.

Monday—Psalm 111:10

- What does it mean to fear the Lord? How does following God show that you have wisdom and good understanding?

Tuesday—Ecclesiastes 11:9

- What can happen when people follow the ways of their own hearts? Why do these things ultimately disappoint?

Wednesday—John 12:26

- What’s the connection between serving and following Jesus? How can you live it out this week?

Thursday—Romans 15:5

- What would be different about your life if you really had the same attitude as Jesus? What can you do to model after the way he lived?

Friday—1 Corinthians 11:1

- Could you honestly say this verse to someone? Why or why not?

Saturday—Revelation 14:13

- What’s the ultimate benefit of following Jesus? Why is it worth the difficult commitment?

DIGGING
DEEPER



Talk Topics

- Why is it important to live for Jesus?
- Talk about a time you really blew it and didn’t keep following Jesus as a priority.
- Discuss what you feel it means to take up your cross.
- Discuss a time you were able to follow Jesus in a difficult situation.

! **OK**
■ **TO COPY**



FaithWeaver NOW is for today's Sunday school teachers. It's developed by real Sunday school teachers, examined by real ministry leaders, and tested and approved by thousands of churches so you get great lessons that work with today's families.

This quarter you'll explore these Bible passages:

	BIBLE CONTENT/SCRIPTURE	KEY VERSE	BIBLE POINT
WEEK 1	Jesus Teaches About Commitment (Mark 8:31-38)	"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Romans 1:16).	Commit to follow Jesus.
WEEK 2	Jesus Clears Merchants From the Temple (John 2:13-22)	"Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker" (Psalm 95:6).	God wants sincere worship.
WEEK 3	Jesus Explains Why God Sent Him (John 3:12-21)	"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).	Jesus came to save us.
WEEK 4	Jesus Notices a Widow's Giving (Mark 12:41-44)	"Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).	Give cheerfully to God.
* WEEK 5	People Rejoice as Jesus Enters Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-11)	"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10-11).	Jesus is our king.
* WEEK 6	Jesus Is Alive! (Mark 16:1-8)	"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies'" (John 11:25).	Jesus is alive.
WEEK 7	Jesus Appears to His Disciples (John 20:19-31)	"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1).	Believe in Jesus.
WEEK 8	Paul Teaches About Spiritual Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-27)	"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10).	God gives us gifts to serve him.
WEEK 9	Peter Tells the Sanhedrin About Jesus (Acts 4:5-14)	"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).	Trusting God makes us brave.
WEEK 10	Philip Tells the Ethiopian About Jesus (Acts 8:26-40)	"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).	Follow where God leads.
WEEK 11	Peter Visits Cornelius (Acts 10:1-44)	"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).	Tell everyone about Jesus.
WEEK 12	Barnabas Encourages Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:19-26)	"But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Hebrews 3:13).	Encourage each other to believe in Jesus.
WEEK 13	Jesus Sends Power From God (Acts 2:1-21)	"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26).	God gives us the Holy Spirit.

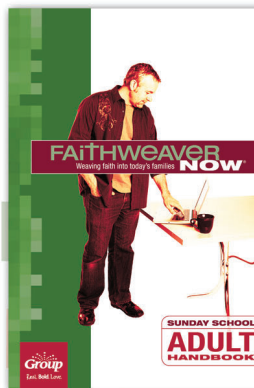
* We recommend starting the quarter so that Lessons 5 and 6 align with the dates of Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. Visit the Digital Download Center for a suggested schedule.

PLUS...

Access all these FREE FaithWeaver NOW digital resources at group.com/digital:

- **FREE digital copies of Leader Guides** in Word and PDF format so you can easily customize any lesson to your ministry. Sharing lessons with busy volunteers couldn't be easier! *See inside for activation code.*
- **A FREE downloadable Director Manual** to help you structure your program for maximum effectiveness.
- **FREE weekly FamilyConnect pages** you can print out or email to parents to help families grow together in faith throughout the week.

Don't forget...



Adult Handbook*

This handbook gives participants a guide to the "Adult Talk Topics" used during class. It also provides a list of Scripture readings for daily devotions and a space for journaling throughout the week.

***Optional—get one for each participant.**



THIS IS A SAMPLE
The number of pages is limited.

Purchase the item for the complete version.

