

FAITHWEAVER NOW®

Weaving faith into today's families

WINTER
SUNDAY SCHOOL
GRADES 5&6
TEACHER GUIDE

Group
Real. Bold. Love.

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WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL

GRADES 5&6

TEACHER GUIDE



YOUR ACTIVATION CODE IS NOW LOCATED INSIDE THE TEACHER PACK!

Group
Real. Bold. Love.

FAITHWEAVER NOW

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

group.com/sunday-school

We know you care about kids...

We do, too!
That's why we attempt to ensure that all crafts, toys, and gizmos meet or exceed national safety standards—*and* are produced by manufacturers that don't use child labor or abuse their labor force. You can order Group resources knowing that in addition to caring for *your* kids, you're also caring for children elsewhere.

Let's keep kids safe!

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You can help your children stay safe by seeing that toys and gizmos are used as designed, for the purposes designed, and that any broken pieces are disposed of promptly and properly. We value your feedback. If you become aware of a problem affecting the safety of any of our products, please inform us immediately.

FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum, Grades 5 & 6, Winter
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* Due to the way Christmas falls, we recommend shifting lessons as needed so Lesson 3 lines up with Christmas.

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Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date.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.

John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus Mark 1:1-8

Fifth- and sixth-graders can get hung up on getting all dressed up for church and in all the outward appearances of preparation and miss out on the inward heart preparation. Challenge kids to focus on getting prepared for church by praying for the session or service they are about to attend. In this way you can help kids come to church just a little more focused on what is most important—a heart ready to worship.

LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Circle of Holiness** *(about 10 min.)* Move away from a symbol of God's holiness as they think about sins, and move toward it as they consider God's forgiveness.	Bible, masking tape	
2 Bible Exploration	**Make Room for Jesus** *(about 25 min.)* Cover themselves with sins, and then have the sins torn off.	Bible, Bible Buzz, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), scratch paper, pens, tape, CD player **Teacher Pack:** CD, "Purity and Holiness" poster 	Tear out the Lesson 1 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*



▶Bible Point

We prepare our hearts for Jesus.

Key Verse

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Preteens will take an active step to prepare their hearts for Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Make Room for Jesus in Me** *(about 10 min.)* Write sins in a giant heart shape, and then erase them as kids ask for God's forgiveness.	Bible Buzz, CD player, pens, 1 pencil with an eraser per preteen **Teacher Pack:** CD	
	Clean Out Your Hearts *(about 15 min.)* Try to stand in the middle of a heart shape filled with trash; then clean out the trash.	CD player, paper trash, chairs, masking tape, items from around the room **Teacher Pack:** CD	Create a heart on the floor of one side of the room with masking tape. Make sure it's big enough for everyone to fit in it.
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Buzz	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Buzz	Tear out the letter to parents from each Bible Buzz student book.

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*

John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus

Mark 1:1-8

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

Jesus Brings Good News

Mark saw Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection as the beginning of the gospel. The word *gospel*, derived from the Old English *godspel*, means "good news."

Prophets Foretold About Jesus

As Mark began his Gospel, he launched into a quotation from the Old Testament. By connecting what he was saying about Jesus with the words of the prophets, Mark built validity for his own message in the minds of his Jewish readers.

Some question why Mark said the quotation is from Isaiah when in reality the first part is from Malachi 3:1. Mark is mentioning together two quotations on the same topic, and crediting both to Isaiah would have been acceptable for Mark's audience.

By using the quotation from Isaiah in Mark 1:3, Mark emphasized the kingly nature of Jesus. In those days, a servant often traveled ahead of a king to alert people that the king was coming.

John the Baptist Comes Before Jesus

The last half of this passage shows that John the Baptist did what was prophesied in the Old Testament: He came to prepare the way—more specifically, the people—for Jesus' coming. As people repented in response to John's preaching and confessed their sins, their hearts were prepared to accept their coming King.

John the Baptist's choice of clothing was not accidental: He likely was identifying himself with the prophet Elijah, who dressed the same way (2 Kings 1:8). His was the clothing of the poor, and his food was also that of the very poor. John was humbling himself, knowing how great the coming Jesus would be. In those days, it was the job of the lowest servant to untie a visitor's sandals and wash his feet. John let people know that as eloquent and persuasive as his preaching might be, he was the lowest of the low in comparison with the glory of the coming Savior, Jesus.

The Jesus Connection

At Christmas, we anticipate the birth of Jesus. His birth, death, and resurrection make our lives in heaven possible. There is always much to do before Christmas. But Jesus cares more about our hearts than about gifts and decorations. We can prepare our hearts by turning from actions and attitudes that distract us from Jesus. What do you need to turn from? You can write your prayer here.



Circle of Holiness
Supplies

Bible
masking tape

1 GETTING STARTED

Circle of Holiness

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids stand and form a circle, facing outward. Use masking tape to create a big circle on the floor around the kids.

Say: **Have you ever done something that really messed up a relationship with someone else? I bet we all have. Let's see what happens when we hurt others.**

I'm going to read a list of things you might have done in the past year or so. Take one step forward (away from the circle) every time I mention something you've done that could hurt someone else.

Read the following list of questions. Stop as soon as all the kids are at least three steps away from the circle. If necessary, add some additional questions until everyone has moved three steps forward.

- **Have you yelled at a sibling in anger?**
- **Have you yelled at a parent in anger?**
- **Have you avoided someone because they weren't "cool" enough?**
- **Have you lied to a friend or a parent to avoid getting into trouble?**
- **Have you said something bad about a classmate or a teacher?**
- **Have you disobeyed your parents?**
- **Have you made fun of someone even though you knew you might hurt that person's feelings?**

Once all the kids are standing away from the masking-tape circle, have them turn around and look at the circle.

Say: **All of these behaviors can affect our relationships with others—our friends, our families, and God. We're moving away from these relationships with our actions, and away from how God wants us to interact with others and himself.**

But we can turn away from those behaviors and move back toward the behavior God wants to see. I'm going to ask another series of questions. Every time you can answer yes to one of these questions, take one step toward the center of the circle.

- **Have you ever apologized for something you've done wrong?**
- **Have you ever admitted to your parents that you lied to them, and then asked for forgiveness?**
- **Have you ever felt sorry for making fun of someone, and told him or her that you were sorry?**

- **Have you ever included someone who seemed left out?**
- **Have you ever asked someone to forgive you for taking something that wasn't yours?**
- **Have you ever asked your parents to forgive you for disobeying them?**

Most kids should be back in the circle now, but even if some aren't, continue the lesson.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why do we sometimes choose to distance ourselves from people through our actions?**
- **How can we make things right with people we've hurt?**

Say: **People are going to hurt us, and we're going to hurt other people, even if we don't mean to. But it's important to realize it and make it right. We can do that with people, and we can do it with God. When we move away from sinful behavior and toward the way God wants us to act, ▶ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS. Let's learn more about what it means to prepare our hearts for Jesus.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Make Room for Jesus

Make Room for Jesus
Supplies

Bible
Bible Buzz
copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)
scratch paper
pens
tape
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Create in Me a Pure Heart" (track 2)
"Purity and Holiness" poster

What You'll Do

Distribute pens and this week's Bible Buzz, and have kids turn to the "That Means What?" section. Have kids write what they think the words *holiness*, *purity*, and *repentance* each mean, and then ask kids to share their responses.

Say: **God sent someone to teach people about holiness, purity, and repentance. He was preparing the people for Jesus' arrival. And the world would never be the same.**

John came to prepare the way for Jesus by telling people to repent of their sins. As we read what he wrote, let's see if we can discover more about what that means.

Ask for a willing preteen to play the role of John the Baptist. Give each of the other kids several pieces of scratch paper, and have tape available.

Say: **I'm going to read a passage about John the Baptist. Every time I stop, write on one of the papers a different sin people commit—for example, murdering, stealing, lying, cheating, abusing drugs, drinking, or hurting others physically or emotionally. Then tape that sin onto your clothes.**

Read aloud Mark 1:1-8, stopping after verses 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8. Have kids tape their sins onto their clothes.

Set the "Purity and Holiness" poster on the floor, and have the group form a circle around it. Have "John the Baptist" stand inside the circle. Read aloud Mark 1:1-8 again, and have "John" act out the passage. Have the kids slowly approach the poster. At this point, stop the action.

Say: **John told the people to repent of their sins in order to prepare for Jesus' coming. The people repented and were baptized. Let's explore another way we can prepare our hearts for Jesus. We'll sing about having a clean heart for him.**

Hand out copies of the lyrics, and play "Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) (track 2 on the CD).

Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.
Before you, Lord.
Clean before you, Lord.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God.

"Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Sing the song with the kids once or twice, depending on your time frame. While kids are singing, have "John" tear off all the paper "sins" on their clothes and then lead them closer to the "Purity and Holiness" poster. Once everyone is near the poster, stop the music and direct kids' attention to the poster.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to have your sins removed and to move closer to the poster?**
- **How can we know when something is sinful?**
- **What did this experience show you about how to prepare our hearts for Jesus? Do we have to get rid of all our sins first? Explain.**
- **Why was John's arrival an important step in preparing people for Jesus?**
- **What does John teach us about how we can prepare our hearts for Jesus?**

Say: **Everyone does wrong things, and we all have things we need to make right. That's where repentance comes in. Repenting means asking God to forgive us for the things we've done wrong, and asking him to give us pure hearts so we won't continue to sin in the same way.**

No matter how long you live, you'll never get to the place where you won't do things wrong. But it's good to know that God will always forgive us if we sincerely turn toward him, when ▶ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS.

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Make Room for Jesus in Me

Make Room for Jesus in Me
Supplies

Bible Buzz
CD player
pens
1 pencil with an eraser per preteen
Teacher Pack
CD: "Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) (track 2)

What You'll Do

Say: **Today we're talking about how ▶ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS. Our Key Verse talks about cleaning our hearts.**

Have kids find the Key Verse, Psalm 51:10, on their Bible Buzz pages, and ask a willing preteen to read it aloud: "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

Play "Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) (track 2 on the CD), and have kids listen quietly. Have them find the "My Heart" section on their Bible Buzz pages, and hand out a pen and a pencil to each preteen.

Say: **This song talks about the hearts God wants us to have. It's based on the Key Verse—Psalm 51:10—which was written by David as a cry to God to show his repentant heart. Write this psalm in your own words in the lines next to the heart. Don't try to make it polished or professional—just write a heartfelt statement that tells God how you want to live for him.**

Give kids a few minutes to write their statements. Then ask for willing preteens to read aloud their new psalm.

Say: **We all have sins that keep us from living the way God desires. Now write—in pencil and in the heart—the sins that have kept you separated from God.**

Give kids a few minutes to write out their sins.

Say: **Even though we all sin, God continues to forgive us if we ask him. Quietly ask God to forgive you for each sin, and then erase each sin from your heart.**

Give kids time to pray.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How did writing the psalm in your own words change the way you felt about that Scripture?**
- **If it feels so great to have a clean heart, why do we still sin?**
- **How can we maintain a steadfast spirit when it comes to sin?**

Say: **God offers to forgive you and cleanse your heart. When we sin, it's important to realize we're walking away from God, that we need to ask for his forgiveness, and then move back toward him in our thoughts and our actions. When we turn back toward God, ▶ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS, and he can clean up the sin in our lives. That's what John wanted people to do to get ready for Jesus to work in their lives.**

Clean Out Your Hearts

Clean Out Your Hearts
Supplies

CD player
paper trash
chairs
masking tape
items from around the room

Teacher Pack
CD: "Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) (track 2)

Clean Out Your Hearts
Easy Prep

Create a heart on the floor of one side of the room with masking tape. Make sure it's big enough for everyone to fit in it.

What You'll Do

Lead the kids to the tape heart on the floor. Have them use the paper trash, chairs, and other items from around the room to fill the heart so it's piled high and overflowing. Then ask for willing kids to try to stand in the center of the heart without moving any trash, chairs, or other items. Allow several kids to try.

Ask:

- **What made that task so difficult?**

Have kids go inside the heart one at a time, identify an object, and tell how that object represents ways we sin. For example, someone could identify a chair and say, "This chair represents how I sit by when friends are being bullied, rather than standing up for them." After each preteen has done this, the whole group should be in the heart, amongst all the clutter.

Make sure kids have lyrics sheets to refer to, and play "Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) (track 2 on the CD) again. As they're listening, have the kids clean out the trash, chairs, and other clutter from the heart. Once the mess is cleaned up, have them gather in the heart and continue to sing the song.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.
Before you, Lord.
Clean before you, Lord.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God.

"Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How is this exercise like Jesus coming to live in our hearts while our lives are filled with sin?**
- **How is standing in this area different than it was before?**
- **Why is it important to ask God for forgiveness in order for Jesus to come into our lives?**
- **Why is it important to know that God is pure and holy?**
- **What do you need God to help you clean out of your heart?**

Say: **John the Baptist came to tell people to repent. When we repent of our sins, God comes and cleans out the clutter in our hearts—just like we did with that clutter on the ground. Then there's space for things such as peace, love, joy, and kindness. Repenting helps us turn back toward God, and ▶ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS. When we do that, we'll follow him more closely.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Buzz

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about how ▶ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS and decide on ways to do that this week.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Buzz pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Write down a sin you have a habit of committing, such as lying to your parents or cheating, and ask God to help you turn away from doing that this week.**
- **Spend time praying for God to help you change an attitude.**
- **Share with a parent or a trusted friend one of the temptations you face, and ask for their prayers to help you lean on God for his help in overcoming that.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **God wants us to be close to him and to keep becoming more and more like him. But when we sin we're not doing that. God wants us to repent, because by doing so, ▶ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS. Let's think about our walk with God as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

Bible Buzz

Weaving Faith at Home
Easy Prep

Tear out the letter to parents from each Bible Buzz student book.

Send the letter to parents home with your kids or give it to parents when they pick up their children. This is a great way to show families they're important to your church and to support their role as spiritual leaders to their children.

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about preparing our hearts for Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Buzz pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God for offering to clear out our cluttered hearts.

Lyrics

Create in Me a Pure Heart (Psalm 51:10)

Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.
Before you, Lord.
Clean before you, Lord.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God.

"Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

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FAITHWEAVER NOW®
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WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL
GRADES 5&6
TEACHER GUIDE

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:

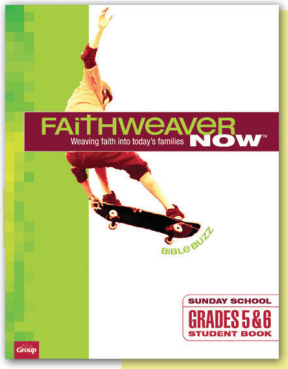
	BIBLE CONTENT/SCRIPTURE	KEY VERSE	BIBLE POINT
WEEK 1	John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus (Mark 1:1-8)	"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).	We prepare our hearts for Jesus.
WEEK 2	God Dwells With Us (John 1:1-14)	"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).	Jesus is God.
WEEK 3	Jesus Is Born (Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20)	"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).	Jesus was born for us.
WEEK 4	Faithful People Thank God for Jesus (Luke 2:22-40)	"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name" (Psalm 100:4).	We thank God for Jesus.
WEEK 5	Wise Men Find Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12)	"For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations" (Psalm 100:5).	Jesus deserves our worship.
WEEK 6	John Baptizes Jesus (Mark 1:4-11)	"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).	God sent Jesus.
WEEK 7	Jesus Surprises Nathanael (John 1:43-51)	"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me" (Psalm 139:1).	Jesus knows all about us.
WEEK 8	Disciples Follow Jesus (Mark 1:14-20)	" 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men' " (Mark 1:17).	Follow Jesus.
WEEK 9	Jesus Demonstrates His Authority (Mark 1:21-28)	"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).	Jesus is all-powerful.
WEEK 10	Jesus Heals, Prays, and Preaches (Mark 1:29-39)	"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).	Jesus cares for us.
WEEK 11	Jesus Calms a Storm (Mark 4:35-41)	"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).	We turn to Jesus when we're afraid.
WEEK 12	Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man (Mark 2:1-12)	"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).	Jesus forgives us.
WEEK 13	Jesus Heals the Blind Man (Mark 10:46-52)	"He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy" (Titus 3:5).	We have faith in Jesus.

PLUS...

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

- **FREE digital copies of Teacher Guides** in PDF format so you can easily download, print, and email any lesson. Sharing lessons with busy volunteers couldn't be easier! *Look inside the teacher pack 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...



***Get a colorful, age-appropriate student book for every child! Each week, you'll get...**

- Engaging activities that bring the Bible to life for every child
- Easy faith conversation-starters for kids to take home
- Meaningful at-home activities for families to dig into Scripture

****You'll need one per child. Sold separately.***

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