



FAITHWEAVER

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



**SPRING
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL
LEADER GUIDE**

Group

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SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL
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DIGITAL COPY**
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ONE-TIME ACTIVATION CODE:

Group

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

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

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

Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Lifelong

Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.

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FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum, Middle School Bible Studies, Spring

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* We recommend starting the quarter so that Lessons 4 and 5 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Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date.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.

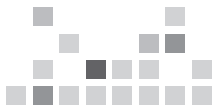


Create a vibrant family ministry that's new...that's wow...that's NOW. FaithWeaver NOW gives you a fresh strategy for being more successful than ever in bringing families closer to Jesus.

Thom Schultz Joani Schultz

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





Jesus Teaches About Good Fruit

Luke 6:43-45

At this age, students probably haven't realized that they can have a lifelong effect on another person. Throughout this study, focus on how important their lives are. Telling stories of your own teenage years, including specific details about the things you remember people saying and doing, helps them see how those moments had a lifelong impact on you. Then draw the comparison that each day they are saying and doing things that their friends may remember years from now!



► Bible Point

Acting like Jesus shows we're Christians.

Key Verse

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Students will reflect their faith in Jesus Christ through their day-to-day actions and attitudes.

STUDY	WHAT STUDENTS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Faith Connection	Stick It to Them <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Play a wild game that introduces the themes of good deeds and spiritual fruit.	shaving cream, cotton balls, sheet or plastic tarp	In an open section of your meeting area, lay down a sheet or plastic tarp that can easily be cleaned. Have shaving cream and cotton balls nearby.
	Media Connection (Option) <i>(about 15 min.)</i> View a clip depicting the consequences of good actions.	video player, movie <i>Pay It Forward</i>	Cue <i>Pay It Forward</i> to 00:30:10, when Trevor's mother walks into the garage.
2 Bible Exploration	Choose Your Own Adventure <i>(about 15 min.)</i>		
	Adventure 1: Fried Fruit Experiment with fruit, and write poetry about a biblical metaphor.	Bibles, 2 bananas, microwave (if possible), paper, pens, Bible Trek	Remove the Study 1 pages from each Bible Trek student book.
	Adventure 2: Bearing It All Depict the consequences of good and bad fruit in their own lives by drawing art on their bodies or cloth.	Bibles, body paint (or water-soluble markers), bandannas or strips of cloth (option), Bible Trek	Set out the supplies for each adventure at different stations. If you don't have access to a microwave, find a place where it's okay to smash the bananas (protect the floor and walls!).

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



STUDY	WHAT STUDENTS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	A Sweet Invitation <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Pass around a plate of fruit, and give examples of spiritual fruit.	tray of fruit	
	Don't Shoot the Messenger <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Create dramatic presentations that connect the things we do to the Key Verse.	Bibles, 1 copy of the "Don't Shoot the Messenger!" handout (at the end of this study), scissors	Cut the scenarios apart from the "Don't Shoot the Messenger!" handout (at the end of this study)
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Trek, pens	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Trek	Remove the letter to parents from the back of each Bible Trek student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Stick It to Them Supplies

shaving cream
cotton balls
sheet or plastic tarp

Stick It to Them Easy Prep

In an open section of your meeting area, lay down a sheet or plastic tarp that can easily be cleaned. Have shaving cream and cotton balls nearby.

Media Connection Supplies

video player
movie *Pay It Forward*

Media Connection Easy Prep

Cue *Pay It Forward* to the scene 00:30:10, when Trevor's mother walks into the garage.

1

FAITH CONNECTION

Stick It to Them

What You'll Do

In this game, students will need to form groups of three to five. Gather them around the sheet (or plastic tarp) you laid down earlier.

Say: **In this game you'll see how it pays to do good deeds! In your group, one person volunteers to have his or her hands covered in shaving cream. The volunteer will hold his or her hands straight out, perpendicular to the floor, in what looks like a "stop" gesture. The rest of you should think of good deeds you did this past week. Then members of your group will stand a few feet away with a bunch of cotton balls. For each good deed your group thought of, you can try to throw a cotton ball onto the shaving cream. See how many you can get to stay—but you can throw only as many as the number of good deeds you did last week. Go!**

Let your students play for a while. Say: **Bet you're glad for every good deed you did last week, huh? Think about all those cotton balls that stuck. Sometimes our good deeds stick to other people, too. They leave a lasting impression on them.**

Talk With Students

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- Have you ever seen a good deed "stick" to someone? Was it something you did or something that happened to you? Explain.
- How does it feel to know that the things you do stick to people? What responsibility does that give you?
- How do you think people show they're Christians?

Say: **Today we're going to think about how we can have a good influence on others. We'll look at how we bear spiritual fruit in the world to touch the lives of people around us because ► ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE'RE CHRISTIANS.**

Media Connection (Option)



■ **Tip** In general, federal copyright laws do not allow you to use videos or DVDs (even ones you own) for any purpose other than home viewing. Your church can obtain a license from Christian Video Licensing International for a small fee. Just visit cvli.com or call 1-888-771-2854 for more information. Many movie clips are available at youtube.com.

What You'll Do

Instead of doing the “Stick It to Them” activity, watch a clip from *Pay It Forward*. Set up the clip by saying: **In this movie a young boy experiences the power of good works. Watch how his generosity spreads to others.**

Show the clip. Begin at 00:30:10 when Trevor’s mother walks into the garage. End the clip at 00:34:50, when she says, “Would you like a cup of coffee?”

Talk With Students

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did Trevor’s good deeds affect others?
- How do you think you have an ongoing effect on others?
- What does it feel like to know that you might?

Say: **Today we’ll see how our good deeds influence the people around us. We’ll see that God wants us to bear spiritual fruit that will change the world, even if we do it one person at a time. Whether we realize it or not, ► ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE’RE CHRISTIANS.**

2

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Choose Your Own Adventure

What You'll Do

Say: **In our adventures today, we have two activities you can choose from. Adventure 1 uses an object lesson and poetry, and Adventure 2 uses body art. The directions are on your Bible Trek papers. Look them over and decide which activity you want to do. You can work with the others who choose the same activity.** Allow time for students to decide which adventure they want to do. Summaries of each adventure follow.

ADVENTURE 1—OBJECT LESSON AND POETRY: FRIED FRUIT

In this adventure, students will visualize the good and bad fruit of Luke 6.

ADVENTURE 2—BODY ART: BEARING IT ALL

In this adventure, students will create visual images of how the good and bad fruit of others has affected them.

Say: **After you finish your adventure, you’ll present some of what you experienced, so keep that in mind. When everyone has finished, we’ll talk about what we’ve learned. You have 10 minutes to complete your adventures.** While students are working, move between the stations, and offer assistance as needed. Let groups know



Choose Your Own Adventure Supplies

.....

Bibles
Bible Trek
Adventure 1
2 bananas
microwave (if possible)
paper
pens
Adventure 2
body paint (or water-soluble markers)
bandannas or strips of cloth (option)

ALLERGY ALERT

Choose Your Own Adventure Easy Prep

.....

Remove the Study 1 pages from each Bible Trek student book.

Set out the supplies for each adventure at different stations. If you don’t have access to a microwave, find a place where it’s okay to smash the bananas (protect the floor and walls!).



when they have about five minutes left so they can wrap up their work.

After 10 minutes, have your groups take turns presenting what they experienced.

Talk With Students ■■■■

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- How does it feel to think about the “bad fruit” in the world?
- What does that motivate you to do?
- What kind of influence do you think you have on other people?
- How can we show we’re Christians?

Say: ► **ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE’RE CHRISTIANS.** Now let’s think of some practical ways that we can bear good fruit in our lives.

.....

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

A Sweet Invitation

A Sweet Invitation Supplies

.....

tray of fruit

! **ALLERGY ALERT**

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Help students experience the power that good deeds can have on their friends.

Say: **Now we’ll see how our good deeds can have a major effect on others. I’m going to pass a tray of fruit to one person. When I do, I’ll tell the person one way that I’m going to display spiritual fruit this week. I might say, “This week I’m going to volunteer at a homeless shelter” or “This week I’m going to be more patient.” When you receive the tray, help yourself to whatever you want, and then pass it on in the same way.**

Begin by passing the tray to one student (for larger groups, you might use two or three trays and pass them to the students). Wait until the tray(s) go around the room.

Say: **The Bible compares heaven to a big banquet with lots of food. When people see the good fruit of our lives, it’s like giving them an invitation to get to know God and come to the banquet. Someone may see your good works and want to know why you live the way you do. It’s like you handed them an invitation to heaven.**

Talk With Students ■■■■

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why did you choose to say the things you did?
- How do you think people will react when you do what you’ve planned?



Say: Remember that ► **ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE'RE CHRISTIANS.** Whether or not we do good works perfectly, God has the power to use them to touch other people. God lets us be the messengers, but he's still in charge of the message!

Don't Shoot the Messenger

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

In this activity all students can take part, even if they don't stand in front of the group.

Say: **The way we live our lives says a lot about what we're living for. If we believe God has sent us into the world with a purpose, that purpose will shine through a lot of what we do.**

I'm going to invite volunteers forward. Each volunteer is a messenger sent here to deliver a message to the group. By listening to the message, try to determine who sent the messenger. Those who don't want to volunteer can help guess who the messenger represents.

Give slips of paper with scenarios on them to the volunteers. Use the scenarios from the "Don't Shoot the Messenger" handout. If you want to, you may have students form smaller groups and add your own scenarios so more students can be messengers.

Proceed with the activity, allowing students to take guesses.

Talk With Students ■■■■

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Was it easy or difficult to tell who sent the messenger? Why?**
- **How could you tell who sent the messenger?**
- **In our lives, how are we messengers? How can people tell who's influencing us?**

Have students form pairs. Have them read the Key Verse, Matthew 5:16, together: "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

Ask:

- **If your life were a message to your friends, what would it say?**
- **How can we show we're Christians?**

Say: **God has a great message of love for the world. We become the messengers in the good deeds that we do. It's as if God is a writer, you are the pen, and your life is the letter. Think about what message God is writing through you.**



Don't Shoot the Messenger Supplies

-
- Bibles
 - 1 copy of the "Don't Shoot the Messenger!" handout (at the end of this study)
 - scissors

Don't Shoot the Messenger Easy Prep

-
- Cut the scenarios apart from the "Don't Shoot the Messenger!" handout (at the end of this study)





Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Trek
pens

Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

Bible Trek

Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

Remove the letter to
parents from the back
of each Bible Trek
student book.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Direct students to the Daily Challenges in their Bible Trek pages, and have them choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Do one random act of kindness in secret for someone at school this week. (Don't get caught, or it doesn't count!)**
- **In what areas do you bring honor to Christ by your actions? In what areas do you fall short? Choose one behavior that you could improve upon, and resolve to do things differently for the next seven days.**
- **Make a yummy, fresh fruit salad for your family. As you serve your family members, share with them what you've learned this week about what it means to bear good fruit for Jesus Christ.**

Talk With Students

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

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

Say: ► **ACTING LIKE JESUS SHOWS WE'RE CHRISTIANS.** Let's act like Jesus this week by following through with our Daily Challenges.

Weaving Faith at Home

Hand out a letter to parents from the Bible Trek student books, one to each student. Also encourage students to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about bearing good fruit. Students can also do the activities on the "Bringing It Home" section of their Bible Trek pages with their families.

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

Close with prayer. Have pairs pray that their lives would bear good fruit and people might come to know God because of them. Invite them to pray specifically for one person they know.



Don't Shoot the Messenger

Use the following messages, and have the group guess who sent the messenger.

**YOU ARE A REPRESENTATIVE OF A POLITICAL PARTY. TRY TO CONVINC
THE GROUP TO VOTE FOR ONE OF YOUR CANDIDATES OR POLICIES
WITHOUT ACTUALLY SAYING WHICH PARTY YOU ARE FROM.**

✂.....

**YOU ARE A STUDENT AIDE WHO WORKS FOR THE VICE PRINCIPAL'S
OFFICE. THE VICE PRINCIPAL HAS SENT YOU TO TRY TO CONVINC
OTHER STUDENTS THAT THE VP IS ACTUALLY A COOL PERSON AND THAT
EVERYONE SHOULD LIKE THE VP. OF COURSE, THE VP DOESN'T WANT YOU
TO TELL THEM HE SENT YOU.**

✂.....

**YOU'VE BEEN SENT BY YOUR CHURCH YOUTH LEADER TO CONVINC THE
GROUP THAT THEY DON'T REALLY WANT TO THROW AN ALL-NIGHT PARTY
AT THE CHURCH. HOWEVER, YOUR YOUTH LEADER WANTS YOU TO ACT
LIKE IT'S YOUR OWN IDEA.**

✂.....

**YOU'VE BEEN SENT BY THE MANAGER OF YOUR FAVORITE STORE TO
CONVINCE THE GROUP TO SHOP THERE. THE MANAGER DOESN'T WANT
THE GROUP TO KNOW THAT YOU'RE BEING PAID TO ADVERTISE FOR THEM.**

✂.....

**YOU'VE BEEN SENT BY SATAN TO CONVINC THE WHOLE YOUTH GROUP
THAT GOD DOESN'T EXIST. OF COURSE, THE DEVIL WANTS TO REMAIN
ANONYMOUS, SO DON'T TELL THEM WHO SENT YOU.**

**! 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 Good Fruit (Luke 6:43-45)	"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).	Acting like Jesus shows we're Christians.
WEEK 2	Jesus Tells the Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32)	"But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love" (Nehemiah 9:17).	God will forgive us when we sin.
WEEK 3	Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17)	"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mark 9:35).	Jesus wants us to serve others.
*WEEK 4	Jesus Is Tried and Crucified (Luke 19:28-40; 23:1-49)	"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).	Jesus died to take the punishment for our sins.
*WEEK 5	Jesus Appears to Mary (John 20:1-18)	"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).	Jesus is alive.
WEEK 6	Apostles Defend Their Faith (Acts 5:12-42)	"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (James 1:2-3).	Keep following God, even when it's hard.
WEEK 7	Saul Meets Jesus Near Damascus (Acts 9:1-20)	"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).	Jesus changes our lives.
WEEK 8	Peter Raises Tabitha From the Dead (Acts 9:36-43)	"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).	God answers when we pray.
WEEK 9	An Angel Frees Peter From Jail (Acts 12:1-18)	"For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" (Psalm 91:11).	Angels protect and help God's people.
WEEK 10	Lydia Is Converted (Acts 16:9-15)	"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2).	Be prepared to tell others about Jesus.
WEEK 11	Paul's Jailer Believes in Jesus (Acts 16:16-34)	"They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved'" (Acts 16:31).	Jesus saves us.
WEEK 12	Paul Describes Living by God's Spirit (Romans 8:9-17)	"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23).	When we live by God's Spirit, God changes us.
WEEK 13	Paul Describes Genuine Love (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)	"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5).	God teaches us how to love.

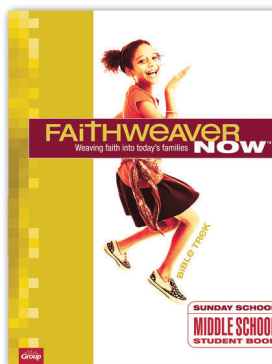
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PLUS...

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

- **FREE digital copies of Leader Guides** in PDF format so you can easily download any lesson for your ministry. Sharing lessons with busy volunteers couldn't be easier! *See inside kit 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 student! Each week, you'll get...**

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

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



THIS IS A SAMPLE
The number of pages is limited.

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