FAITHWEAVER NOW®

Weaving faith into today's families

WINTER
SUNDAY SCHOOL
MIDDLE SCHOOL
LEADER GUIDE

Group
Real. Bold. Love.

FAITHWEAVER NOW®

Weaving faith into today's families

WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL LEADER GUIDE

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FAITHWEAVER NOW

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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, Winter
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Credits
Contributing Authors: Rick Beno, Chad Kimberley, Joy-Elizabeth Lawrence, Amy D. Lumanog, Michael McConnell, James W. Miller, Siv M. Rickets, Kelli B. Trujillo
Editors: Jennifer Hooks, Lee Sparks, Ali Thompson, Christine Yount Jones
Copy Editors: Erica Feucht, Deborah Helmers, Becky Helzer, Andrea Zimmerman
Chief Creative Officer: Joani Schultz
Cover Design and Art Direction: Jeff Spencer
Interior Design Team: Jeff Brunacci, Randy Kady, Rebecca Swain
Cover Photography: © iStockPhoto.com/LattaPictures
Production Manager: Pam Clifford

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* Due to the way Christmas falls, we recommend moving the lessons as needed to line up Lesson 3 with the week of 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Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date.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 point 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 and Joani Schultz
Chairman and Chief Creative Officer
Group Publishing, Inc.

Solomon Tells of Jesus' Coming

Psalm 72:1-19

Middle schoolers/junior highers have a lot to think about—new decisions, new feelings, new responsibilities, and new expectations. And in the midst of all this, Jesus is at work in their lives. However, students often find it difficult to see how Jesus is working in them and their situations. If things start going badly, they may become overwhelmed with discouragement or depression. This study will help students look at the great things Jesus has done and see his work in their own lives.

STUDY	WHAT STUDENTS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Faith Connection	**Choose Your Own Adventure** *(about 20 min.)* **Adventure 1: The Worst Weatherperson Ever** Create a comedy skit of the worst weatherperson they can imagine. **Adventure 2: Next!** Figure out the sequences in several logic problems.	Bible Trek, pencils pencils, paper, Bible Trek	Tear out the Study 1 pages from each Bible Trek student book. Set out the supplies for each adventure at different stations.
2 Bible Exploration	**He Will** *(about 20 min.)* Explore the prophecies about Jesus and compare them to the New Testament account of Jesus.	Bible Trek, Bibles, paper, markers, scissors	
	Only One *(about 10 min.)* Discuss the Key Verse.	Bible	Highlight or flag 1 Timothy 2:5, and bookmark the page.

▶Bible Point

Jesus does great things.

Key Verse

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Students will be thankful every day for the great things Jesus has done and is doing in their lives.

STUDY	WHAT STUDENTS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Great Things** *(about 10 min.)* Reflect on and record specific great things Jesus has done in their lives.	pens, sticky notes	
	Media Connection (Option) *(about 10 min.)* Watch a movie clip, and discuss how they can showcase the great things Jesus does in their lives.	video player, movie *Charlotte's Web*	Cue *Charlotte's Web* to 0:36:20, when the sun shines on a weather vane.
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Commit to a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.		
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Trek	Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each Bible Trek student book.

Solomon Tells of Jesus' Coming

Psalm 72:1-19

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

Writing Psalm 72

Some believe that Psalm 72 was written about Solomon and not by him. It is true that some elements of the psalm could well describe Solomon, but many elements describe a king whose actions go far beyond Solomon's capabilities. The early church believed that this psalm was written as a prayer for a king to come in the line of David and Solomon: the Messiah, Jesus. That's the approach taken in today's lesson.

The Psalmist Points Beyond Himself

Some elements of the psalm could indeed describe Solomon. He judged righteously and with great wisdom, as illustrated in the story of the two women who each claimed to be the mother of the same infant (1 Kings 3:16-28). He reigned over a prosperous kingdom, the wealthiest in Israel's history. He expanded the boundaries of the kingdom to encompass more territory than ever before. And he was sought by the queen of Sheba, who came to him bearing gifts.

However, much of this psalm points directly to the Messiah. Only Jesus' kingdom will truly extend to the ends of the earth (Psalm 72:8), and only to Jesus will all rulers eventually bow down (Psalm 72:11). There isn't a lot of biblical evidence that Solomon cared for the needy and afflicted (Psalm 72:12-14), but Jesus' life and ministry were characterized by such caring. And while the statement that all nations would be blessed through him (Psalm 72:17) could possibly refer to Solomon indirectly, it definitely refers to Jesus.

The Works of the Messiah

If Jesus is indeed the subject of Psalm 72, it is easy to answer the question: What does Jesus do? Jesus does amazing things for us! He takes care of the needy and their children, and he defeats oppressors (Psalm 72:4, 12-14). He lives forever, despite the fact that he died on the cross for us (Psalm 72:5). When he returns, Jesus will reign over the entire earth (Psalm 72:8). Surely he deserves from us the same kind of praise and honor given in verses 18 and 19!

The Jesus Connection

We've learned about many different facets of Jesus' life and ministry on earth. But let's never forget what Jesus has done for us. He is worthy of all our praise for that alone.

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you think about Jesus?

Who is Jesus to you? A teacher…a minister…a preacher…a martyr…a savior? Concentrate on the last one—*savior*. Spend two minutes prayerfully considering how Jesus is your Savior. You can write your prayer here.

Choose Your Own Adventure
Supplies

Bible Trek
pencils
Adventure 2
pencils
paper

Choose Your Own Adventure
Easy Prep

Tear out the Study 1 pages from each Bible Trek student book.

Set out the supplies for each adventure at different stations.

1 FAITH
CONNECTION

Choose Your Own Adventure

What You'll Do

Hand out the Bible Trek pages, and have students fill in answers to the questions in the "Solomon Tells of Jesus' Coming" section.

Say: **In our adventures today, we have two activities you can choose from. Both will allow you to think some more about making predictions. Adventure 1 uses a comedy skit, and Adventure 2 uses logic. The directions are on your Bible Trek pages. 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 the adventures follow.

ADVENTURE 1—COMEDY SKIT: THE WORST WEATHERPERSON EVER
In this adventure, students will create a skit of a weatherperson making wacky predictions about the weather and connect the process of prediction with the prophecies in today's Bible story.

ADVENTURE 2—LOGIC: NEXT!
In this adventure, students will figure out the missing items in several sequences and connect the process of prediction with the prophecies in today's Bible story.

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 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

When groups have finished their presentations, call everyone back together. Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How did the answer to your first question from the "Solomon Tells of Jesus' Coming" section shape your predictions about what Jesus would do in the future?**
- **How was making predictions in your adventure like or unlike making predictions about Jesus?**
- **How well do you think people can predict what God will do?**
- **What makes a prediction trustworthy? untrustworthy?**

Say: **The Bible is full of prophecies, which are different from predictions since they aren't just *guesses* about the future. Prophecies come from God and are always trustworthy. Today we're going to focus on a prophecy that helps us see that ▶ JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

He Will

What You'll Do

Say: **Many people in the Old Testament made prophecies about the future based on what God told them would happen. Solomon did this, and we're going to read about it in Psalm 72. This prophecy focuses on Jesus doing great things.**

Form five groups. Number each group, and tell them to look up their group's passages from their Bible Trek pages in the "He Will" section. The passages are listed below for your reference.

- Group 1: Psalm 72:1-2; John 8:1-11
- Group 2: Psalm 72:3, 7; Matthew 14:13-21
- Group 3: Psalm 72:4-6; Matthew 15:21-28
- Group 4: Psalm 72:8-11; John 12:12-16
- Group 5: Psalm 72:12-14; Mark 2:1-12

Distribute paper, markers, and scissors. Say: **As a group, read your two passages. Your verses from Psalm 72 will give you Solomon's prophecies about Jesus. Your verses from Matthew, Mark, or John will be an event in Jesus' life. Compare your prophecy with what really happened, and see how the two line up. Then draw a "before" picture to show what the event was like before Solomon's prophecy about Jesus came into play. Use another paper to make cut-out figures that you can hold up to make an "after" picture that shows what happened because Solomon's prophecy was fulfilled.**

Allow about 10 minutes for groups to read their passages and make their pictures. Then have groups use their pictures to share in order the prophecy and how it was fulfilled.

Say: **Jesus has done great things! He did them in the New Testament, and he's still doing them today. Let's read Psalm 72:17-19 aloud together in response to the great things Jesus has done.** Read Psalm 72:17-19 aloud with students.

He Will
Supplies

Bible Trek
Bibles
paper
markers
scissors

Talk With Students

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What picture of Jesus do these prophecies create? What is he like?**
- **Why did the people we looked at need Jesus to do great things?**
- **What great things do you need Jesus to do for you?**

Say: **Solomon lived long before Jesus came to earth. The two never met face to face on earth. And yet Solomon knew it would be true that ▶ JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS. The same great things Solomon predicted for the people during Jesus' day can be true in our lives. Let's look at another verse that will help us understand why we need Jesus to do great things.**

Only One
Supplies

Bible

Only One
Easy Prep

Highlight or flag 1 Timothy 2:5, and bookmark the page.

Only One

What You'll Do

Send a student outside the room to wait. Tell him or her that another student will come out in a few minutes and deliver a message to read upon his or her return.

Say: **There is only one person here who has all the qualifications needed to go and get our friend who's waiting outside. Let's have everyone stand. If I say a qualification that does not apply to you, please sit down. The last one standing will be the only one qualified.**

List the qualities of students, starting broadly and getting very specific (so that only one person qualifies). You will want to think of this person beforehand and determine a way to narrow it down to just him or her. Some sample statements include "This person is here today," "This person is a girl," and "This person has at least one sister." You will probably end it with a statement about what the specific student is wearing.

Once only one person is standing, send him or her to give the Bible to the person outside and pass along the message to read the verse that is bookmarked and highlighted. The student waiting outside should return and read the verse to the rest of the group.

Talk With Students

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How does this verse tie in with the activity we just did?**
- **Based on this verse, what makes Jesus so great?**
- **How are our lives impacted every day because of this great work of Jesus?**

Say: **This particular great work of Jesus occurred in the past, but its result is also happening in the present, as people continue to approach God with confidence because Jesus offers salvation. Jesus is our mediator, now and in the future. And just as there was only one person in our activity who was qualified, only Jesus was qualified to fulfill the prophecies made about him.**

Not only has Jesus done great things in the far past, but he has done great things in our own pasts and ▶ JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS in our lives right now! Solomon knew Jesus would do great things, and we can experience those things!

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Great Things

Great Things
Supplies

pens
sticky notes

What You'll Do

Find a fairly blank spot on the wall. Say: **Let's see if we can fill this wall with a collage of great things Jesus has done in our lives. You have five minutes to complete this challenge. Write one great thing per sticky note, and we'll all work together to stick as many sticky notes to the wall as we can in five minutes.**

Allow five minutes for students to fill the wall with a collage of the great things Jesus has done in their lives.

Talk With Students

Have students survey the wall of sticky notes, and then lead them in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What are some of the greatest things you saw on the wall?**
- **How can you respond to Jesus in light of the great things he's done for you?**
- **How does seeing this wall give you confidence that Jesus will continue to do great things in your life?**

Say: **Solomon accurately prophesied many of the great things Jesus would do while he was here on earth. But Jesus' greatness didn't stop when he came back to life and went to heaven. He's still working in our lives. This wall is proof that ▶ JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS.**

Media Connection (Option)

Media Connection
Supplies

video player
movie *Charlotte's Web*

Media Connection
Easy Prep

Cue *Charlotte's Web* to 0:36:20, when the sun shines on a weather vane.

Tips 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.

You can legally access many video clips at cvli.com. This clip is also available at wingclips.com with the title "Some Pig."

What You'll Do

Instead of using the "Great Things" activity, show a brief clip from the movie *Charlotte's Web*. Start the clip at 0:36:20, when the sun shines on a weather vane. In this scene, a spider weaves a message showing off a pig named Wilbur, and news of the web spreads all around the region. You'll end the clip at 0:39:47 as Fern sits on a stool.

Talk With Students

Lead students in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How did you see greatness displayed in this clip?**
- **Explain whether you're more like Charlotte, showcasing Jesus' greatness while staying behind the scenes, or like Wilbur, reveling in the spotlight.**
- **If you could weave a message in a web about Jesus, what would it say?**
- **What can you do to show off Jesus this week?**

Say: **Charlotte did something pretty great, but it wasn't to show off her own web-weaving skills. She wanted to point out that Wilbur was "some pig." Solomon showed off Jesus when he wrote about the great things he would do. We can share with everyone we know that ▶ JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about ways we can focus on how ▶ JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS every day! Instead of a Daily Challenge, keep a journal of the things Jesus does this week and try to match up each thing with one of the "He will…" statements from Psalm 72. Stop and look at your list several times during the week. Thank Jesus for the great things he is doing, and then pray in hope for a great thing you would like Jesus to do in your future.**

Talk With Students

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to keep your journal? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.**

Say: **Solomon journaled Jesus' great deeds even before Jesus did them! Let's look for ways ▶ JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS by keeping up with our journals this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Hand out the letter to parents from the Bible Trek student books, one to each student. Also encourage students to talk with their parents about the journal they'll be keeping and what they learned about the great things Jesus does. 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 in prayer, asking specifically that Jesus will do great things in your students' lives and for their families.

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

Bible Trek

Weaving Faith at Home
Easy Prep

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

FAITHWEAVER NOW®
Weaving faith into today's families

WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL MIDDLE SCHOOL LEADER 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	Solomon Tells of Jesus' Coming (Psalm 72:1-19)	"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).	Jesus does great things.
WEEK 2	An Angel Appears to Joseph (Isaiah 7:13-14; Matthew 1:18-25)	"'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'" (Jeremiah 29:11).	Trust God's plans.
*WEEK 3	Jesus Is Born (Luke 2:1-20; Hebrews 1:1-4)	"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (John 14:6).	Jesus was born to be our Savior.
WEEK 4	Foreign Visitors Worship Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12)	"For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'" (Romans 10:12-13).	Anyone can worship Jesus.
WEEK 5	Joseph Takes His Family to Safety in Egypt (Matthew 2:13-23)	"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him" (Nahum 1:7).	God guides us.
WEEK 6	Jesus Is Baptized (Matthew 3:13-17)	"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).	Jesus is God's Son.
WEEK 7	Peter and Andrew Meet Jesus (John 1:35-42)	"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).	Jesus is our friend.
WEEK 8	News About Jesus Spreads (Matthew 4:12-25)	"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).	Jesus wants everyone to follow him.
WEEK 9	Jesus Gives the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)	"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Philippians 4:8).	God blesses us when we choose his ways.
WEEK 10	Jesus Teaches That We Are to Be Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13-16)	"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).	Help others see Jesus.
WEEK 11	Jesus Walks on Water (Matthew 14:22-33)	"If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself" (2 Timothy 2:13).	Jesus helps us believe.
WEEK 12	Zacchaeus Climbs a Tree to See Jesus (Luke 19:1-10)	"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).	Jesus accepts everyone.
WEEK 13	Jesus Blesses the Children (Mark 10:13-16)	"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Mark 10:14).	Everyone is important to Jesus.

* Due to the way Christmas falls, we recommend moving the lessons as needed to line up Lesson 3 with the week of Christmas.

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- **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 for activation code.*
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- **FREE weekly FamilyConnect pages** you can print out or email to parents to help families grow together in faith throughout the week.

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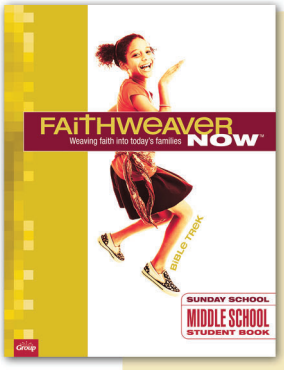

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- Engaging activities that bring the Bible to life for every student
- Easy faith conversation-starters for students to take home
- Meaningful at-home activities for families to dig into Scripture

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

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THIS IS A SAMPLE

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