

FAITHWEAVER NOW®

Weaving faith into today's families



BIBLE TREK

WINTER
SUNDAY SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENT BOOK

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:

R·E·A·L
RELATIONAL EXPERIENTIAL APPLICABLE LIFELONG

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.

Tear out pages one by one from this book, starting with Lesson 1 at the center of the book.

Group
group.com/sunday-school

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FAITHWEAVER NOW™
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Dear Parents,

Your family is important to our church, and we want to support your role as spiritual leader to your child.

In our effort to provide the highest quality Christian education, we are using **FaithWeaver NOW®** Sunday school. FaithWeaver NOW makes Bible learning fun by using a variety of active experiences to help students learn in the ways they learn best.

FaithWeaver NOW also helps people of all ages "weave faith into life" by applying the Bible to their lives throughout every week. With FaithWeaver NOW, students walk through the Bible over the course of three years.

Research shows that the most powerful influence on children's faith development is the conversation about faith that takes place in the home. We want to partner with you in your child's Christian education.

With the resources that are part of FaithWeaver NOW, you can make a huge contribution to your child's Christian growth by leading activities and discussions that help make connections and apply what's learned at church to daily life. That's why every week your child will receive a take-home page that includes ideas for family discussions and activities that will help cement what your child learns at church.

All FaithWeaver NOW resources—for infants through adults—explore the same Bible passage each week, making it easier for you to help your family grow in faith together.

This quarter, we hope you'll find encouragement in your role as a parent and a spiritual leader to your child. May these tools serve to remind you how important you are in your child's life—and how blessed you are to be entrusted with this awesome responsibility!

God bless you,

Your **FaithWeaver NOW** Church

Bringing It Home

Read this quote with your family, and then talk it over.

"We learn wisdom from failure much more than from success. We often discover what will do by finding out what will not do; and probably he who never made a mistake never made a discovery."
—Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help*

- ***When have you ever learned from failure?***
- ***What does failure teach you about yourself?***
- ***What does failure teach you about your need for God?***

Try This

Have all your family members express one need they don't think they can meet on their own. Talk about how you might help each other fulfill that need, then try to do that this week. Have everyone write down a need on a sticky note, place it on the refrigerator, and only take the note down after the need has been met. Talk about what needs only God can fulfill.

Daily Challenge®

- Spend time in prayer, telling Jesus about the ways you don't measure up, and ask him for his help.
- When you do your chores, pray about areas of your life God wants you to let him clean up.
- Write your own psalm of repentance, using Psalm 51 as your model.



Reading the Bible This Week



Sunday/MATTHEW 25:1-13 • How are some people ready for Jesus and others not?

Monday/PSALM 116:1-6 • When was a time you asked God for help with something you needed?

Tuesday/Psalm 51:10 • What are you praying for when you pray for a clean heart?

Wednesday/JAMES 4:10 • What do you know about yourself that makes you feel humble?

Thursday/ISAIAH 40:3-5 • Why would people need to get ready if God were coming?

Friday/2 CHRONICLES 7:14 • How does admitting our mistakes affect our relationship with God?

Saturday/MATTHEW 9:10-13 • Who are you: a sinner or a Pharisee? Explain.

Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc. • Study 1

Bible Trek

BIBLE TREK STUDY 1

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).***

John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus

Think It Over

Churches do many things to bring people to God—hold conferences, hire musicians, or organize retreats. John the Baptist's most effective method was to stand out in the desert eating bugs and telling people to stop sinning. Go figure.

Still, he was preparing people for Jesus by reminding them of their need for God. Only when they knew that they weren't perfect would they be willing to ask God for forgiveness. No bug-eating required.

- **What kinds of things do you prepare for? Why?**

- **If you were preparing to meet someone special and wanted to put your best foot forward, what do you think you'd do?**

- **If Jesus were to walk in the room right now, would you feel prepared to meet him? If not, what would make you feel prepared to meet him?**

"The wish to relieve guilt may motivate a confession, but the wish to avoid the humiliation of shame may prevent it."
—Paul Ekman, U.S. psychologist

Just for Fun

- A Gallup poll of teenagers revealed that girls are more likely than boys to say they get along better with their mom than with their dad. (Moms surveyed were most likely to say, "I love you both the same, so stop fighting.")

- Only 40% of teenagers floss at least a few times a week. (The other 60% sheepishly smiled after responding, and then were informed they had broccoli stuck in their front teeth.)

- Only 37% of teenagers say public profanity is "very serious." (The others could only say "Nyah bwa mumph" because they were busy having their mouths washed out with soap.)

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Choose Your Own Adventure

ADVENTURE 1

Clean Hands

Here's What You Need to Do...

1. To start off...

Say hi to the other people in your group. Then, with your group, follow the rest of the instructions for your adventure!

2. Stain your hands.

Grab a washable marker, and find a quiet place to sit and reflect. Roll up your sleeves if you have them, and talk to God about some of the sins you've committed. Write each one on your hands and forearms. Take about five solid minutes to reflect and cover your hands with words.

3. Wash them clean.

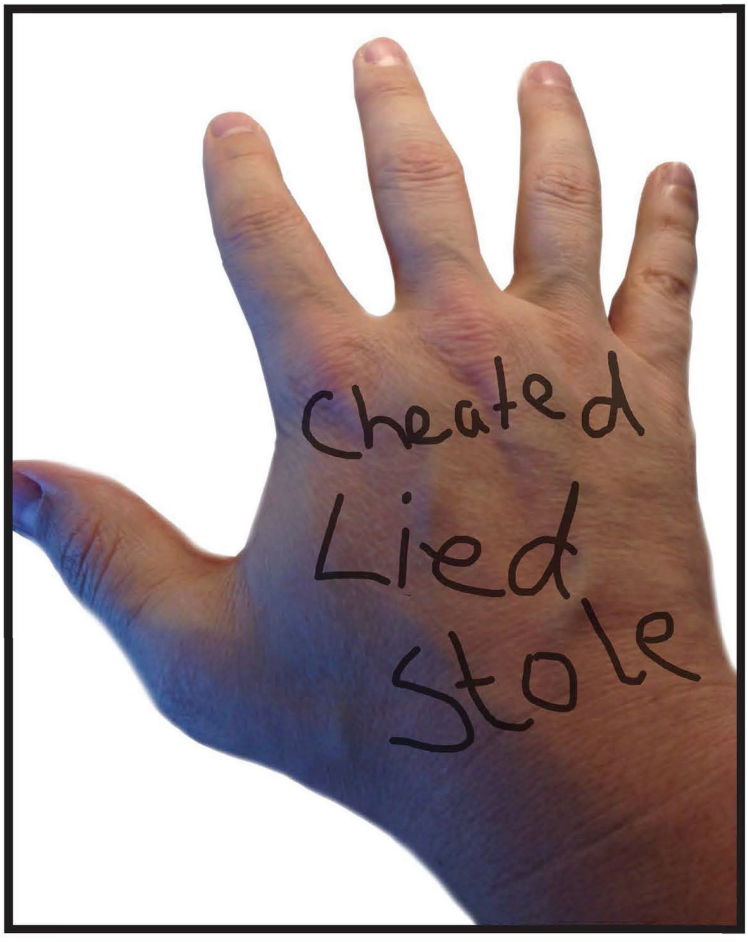
When you're ready, head to the bathroom and scrub until the marker comes off. When you're all clean, head back to the room and wait quietly for the rest of the Adventure 1 group to finish up. If you're waiting a while, spend some time thanking God for helping you have a clean heart.

4. Discuss.

When everyone from your group is finished with step 3, discuss these questions.

- **What was this experience like for you?**
- **In what ways does sin make a mess of our lives?**
- **Does preparing our hearts for Jesus mean we have to get rid of all our sins first? Explain your answer.**
- **What does it mean to prepare your heart for Jesus?**
- **What role do we play in cleaning sin out of our lives? What role does Jesus play?**

Decide how you'll present your adventure to the other group. Maybe you'll have a few people share highlights from your discussion, or one person could write "sin" on his or her arm and then scrub it off with a wet paper towel.



Choose Your Own Adventure

ADVENTURE 2

In My Heart

Here's What You Need to Do...

1. To start off...

Say hi to the other people in your group. Then, with your group, follow the rest of the instructions for your adventure!

2. Map it out.

There's a book called *My Heart, Christ's Home* by Robert Boyd Munger that takes a look at our hearts from the perspective of a house floor plan. (It's a great one to check out later!) Think about your own heart that way. Draw a heart, and then draw a floor plan with different rooms in a house, such as the bedroom, kitchen, living room, bathroom, closet, and so on.

3. Decorate.

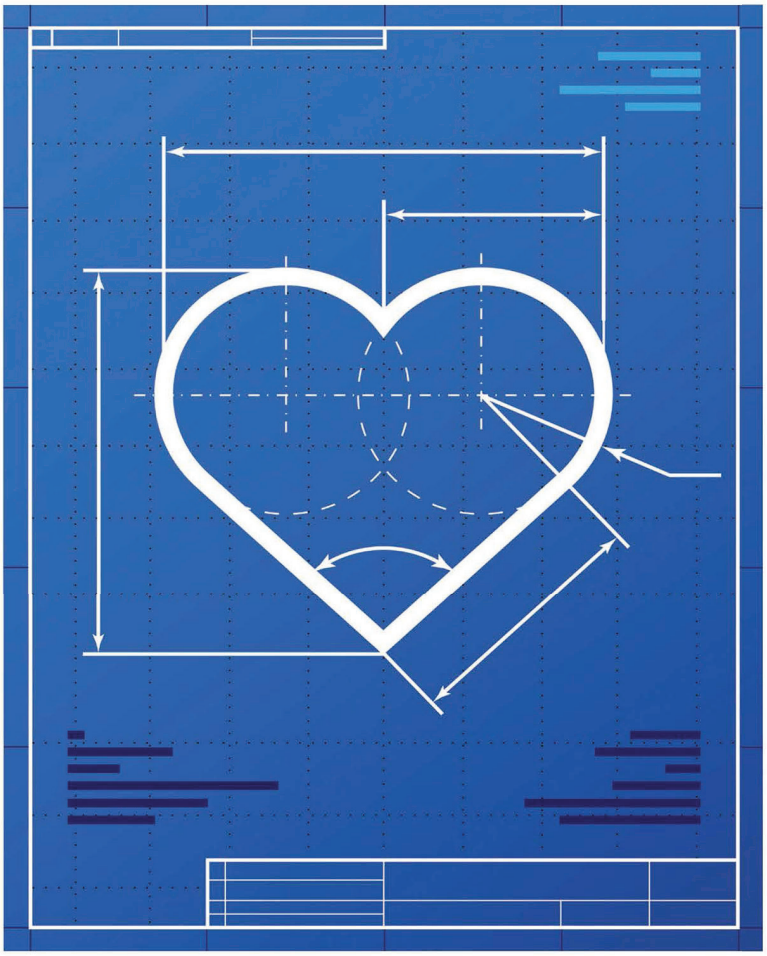
Now it's time to decorate each room. Think of each room as a metaphor. For example, the kitchen is where you eat, so you might draw things that represent what you're trying to fill your life with to satisfy your needs. The bedroom might represent the things that are personal to you. The closet might represent your secrets. Draw some items in each room to represent that room—including the good things and the not-so-good things. What you draw is between you and God.

4. Discuss.

After about 10 minutes, discuss these questions.

- **What discoveries did you make about your life as you mapped it out?**
- **In what ways is your heart already ready for Jesus?**
- **Does preparing our hearts for Jesus mean we have to get rid of all our sins first? Explain your answer.**
- **What does it mean to prepare your heart for Jesus?**
- **What role do we play in cleaning the sins out of our lives? What role does Jesus play?**

Decide how you'll present your adventure to the other group. A few brave souls might be willing to show some of the things from their maps, or you could make a more generic map as a group that doesn't show any individual's private thoughts.



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FAITHWEAVER NOW®
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The FaithWeaver NOW Student Book is woven into every lesson to provide an essential transformative experience that makes the Bible unforgettable.

BONUS...every Student Book includes weekly take-home activities!

WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT BOOK

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.

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