



FAITHweaver

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

**WINTER
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**PARENT
LEADER GUIDE**

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**WINTER
SUNDAY SCHOOL**

PARENT LEADER GUIDE



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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.

Group

group.com/sunday-school

FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum, Parent Leader Guide, Winter

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Visit our website: group.com/sunday-school

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Credits

Contributing Authors: Karl Leuthauser, Kristi Rector, Siv M. Ricketts, Vicki L.O. Witte

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/PickStock

Production Manager: Pam Clifford

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ISBN 978-1-4707-6862-1

Printed in the United States of America.

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* Due to the way Christmas falls, we recommend rearranging 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Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date.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 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 Schultz Joani Schultz

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





Solomon Tells of Jesus' Coming

Psalm 72:1-19

LESSON	WHAT PARENTS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Wait for It... (about 15 min.) Relive what it's like to wait.		
2 Bible Exploration	Looking Forward (about 20 min.) Look at Psalm 72 and 1 Timothy 2:5, and discover who Jesus is and what he's done in the lives of their kids.	Bibles, 4- to 5-inch wrapping paper square for each person, pens or pencils	
3 Weaving Faith Into Families	Preparing for Him (about 20 min.) Create a family tradition that focuses on the greatness of Jesus.	pens or pencils	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenge (about 5 min.) Discuss how to apply God's Word.		
	Weaving Faith at Home (about 2 min.) Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		



► 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 Families

Parents will help their kids celebrate the great things Jesus does in their lives every day.



Every activity incorporates the FaithWeaver NOW Parent Handbook—make sure each parent has one!



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.

[illegible]

1 GETTING STARTED

Wait for It...

 **Tip** Consider bringing in a two-minute timer or a clock with a loud ticking sound to increase the sense of waiting.

What You'll Do

Greet parents warmly as they gather.

Say: **In today's lesson, we'll look at what it means to look forward to the coming of Jesus.**

In these few weeks before Christmas, we're given an opportunity to experience a bit of what the Jews experienced for hundreds of years as they awaited the coming of the Messiah.

So now, parents, let's think about a time we had to wait. Think back to when you were kids. Find a partner, and discuss Question 1 in your FaithWeaver NOW Parent Handbooks.

QUESTION 1

What can you remember from a Christmas season when you were growing up—maybe even when you were the same age as one of your kids? What was the most difficult part about waiting for Christmas?

Gather everyone's attention after five minutes, keeping parents in pairs. Invite them to share highlights and insights from their discussion time.

Say: **You might not have the same level of anticipation for Christmas now. Perhaps that's because you have so much more to do and focus on during the season now than you did when you were a kid. We're going to do a little activity that may bring back some of those memories you had when you were little and had to wait for Christmas. We're going to do absolutely nothing for just two minutes—except wait. Please don't pray, read, talk, close your eyes, or check your cellphones. Just wait. Ready? Go.**

After two minutes of...well, nothing...have partners discuss Questions 2 and 3 in their handbooks.



Looking Forward Supplies

Bibles
4- to 5-inch wrapping
paper square for each
person
pens or pencils

QUESTION 2

How were the feelings you experienced just now like the anticipation of Christmas you had as a kid? How were they different?

QUESTION 3

What things of the season tend to distract you and your family from the *reason* for the season—the great things Jesus has done?

Give pairs another five minutes to talk, and then bring everyone back together. Ask for parents to share insights from their discussion time.

Say: ► **JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS.** Today we're going to look at a prophetic psalm about the great things Jesus would do. This psalm was written hundreds of years before Jesus was born. After you read it, we'll talk about how we can focus on the great things Jesus can do in our homes.

.....

2

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Looking Forward

What You'll Do

Give each person a square of wrapping paper. Make sure everyone has something to write with.

Say: **There are few things that cause anticipation like a wrapped present. What you're going to do now is think about some of the presents Jesus has already given you. Answer Questions 4 and 5 in your handbooks. For now, write your answers on the blank side of the wrapping paper without talking to anyone else.**

QUESTION 4

What great things has Jesus done in your life? in your kids' lives?

QUESTION 5

What special traditions does your family have or what efforts do you make during this season to celebrate those great things?

Give everyone two minutes to write answers, and then call time. Have parents get into groups of four and share the answers they wrote down. Then have them read Psalm 72:1-19 and discuss Questions 6 and 7 in their handbooks with their groups.



QUESTION 6

In what ways have you seen Jesus fulfill this psalm in your kids' lives?

QUESTION 7

What great things has Jesus done in your life that you've also seen reflected in your kids' lives? If you haven't seen those things reflected in your kids' lives, why do you think that is?

After 10 minutes, regain everyone's attention, keeping parents with their groups. Ask for someone from each group to share highlights and insights from the discussion time.

Say: **Our Key Verse today is from 1 Timothy 2:5, which is, "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." In your groups, take a few minutes to answer Question 8 in your handbooks.**

QUESTION 8

What does it mean in your family life for Jesus to be the mediator between humans and God?

After three minutes, ask everyone to call out some of the highlights of what they discussed.

Say: **Jesus has done so many amazing things! We have reason to celebrate his wonders all year long—and during this season especially. Tuck your sheets of wrapping paper into your handbooks as a reminder that ► JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS. Jesus arrived on earth, serves as the mediator between God and us, and is still able to do great things your life.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO FAMILIES

Preparing for Him

What You'll Do

Say: **You probably do a lot of things this time of year without ever really stopping to think about why you do them. For example, have you ever thought about why you put ornaments on your Christmas tree—or maybe why you even have a Christmas tree? Have you ever thought about why you hang lights outside your home? Turn back to your groups, and discuss Questions 9 and 10 in your handbooks.**



Preparing for Him Supplies

pens or pencils

**QUESTION 9**

Which of your Christmas traditions don't have a clear meaning for you? Why do you keep doing them?

QUESTION 10

What year-round traditions can you create to help your kids remember what Jesus has done?

Give groups five minutes to discuss, and then regain their attention.

Say: **It's important to have family traditions—both fun ones and serious ones. I hope you celebrate traditions that have been passed down to you, and that you're creating new traditions for your family, too. Let's develop one new tradition this season that's completely focused on the great things Jesus has done. And right now, let's start thinking through what we want that to look like.**

In your groups, brainstorm a list of new traditions you can start in your homes that focus completely on the great things Jesus has done. Here are just a couple of examples to get you started:

- Have a day or period of fasting as Christmas approaches. It can be a fast from anything—food, the Internet, shopping, and so on.
- Have a day of service during which your family volunteers at church, a nursing home, or a food pantry.
- Throw a birthday party for Jesus—including cake and candles.

Take 10 minutes to work through your own ideas in your groups, and we'll share afterward. Remember, this is just brainstorming, so no idea is a bad idea. As we discuss them later, you can figure out which ones will work best for your family.

After 10 minutes, bring everyone back together. Give each group a chance to share a few of its favorite ideas with the rest of the larger group. To make sure every group gets a chance to share, invite each group to share one idea. When you get through all the groups, rotate through a few more times. Encourage parents to write ideas from this discussion in the "Notes" section of their handbooks. Thank parents for their ideas.

Say: **Use one of these ideas—or come up with one of your own and write it down. Review your handbook this week, and plan how you'll try the idea with your family. See what God does with it from there.**

► **JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS.** Jesus did a great thing when he came to this earth as a baby. Jesus has done great things in my life, and he has done great things in your life. Make a special effort this year to help each of your kids see his greatness this season and every season of the year.



4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenge

What You'll Do

Say: This week, help your kids remember that ► **JESUS DOES GREAT THINGS.** Your Daily Challenge this week is to look at the presents you wrote earlier on the wrapping paper and add to them as you look at what Jesus is doing in this Christmas season. Take a couple of minutes to talk to a partner about what this challenge might look like in daily life. Be as specific as you can be about how you'll help your kids see the great things Jesus does as you complete this challenge. Allow time.

Say: Please join me in a closing prayer.

Pray: God, thank you for sending Jesus to save us from our sins so we can have a relationship with you, and thank you for all the other great things you're doing in our lives. Please help us show our gratitude, awe, and joy to you. Help our kids understand how great you are. In Jesus' name, amen.

Weaving Faith at Home

Say: Your kids should be receiving a letter to you from their Sunday school class today with information about what they'll be doing this quarter. They'll also 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. Finally, please use your FaithWeaver NOW Parent Handbook as a resource to grow your own faith in God and for ideas to help your kids grow in theirs.

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

Thank parents for coming, and wish them well in weaving faith into their families.



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.

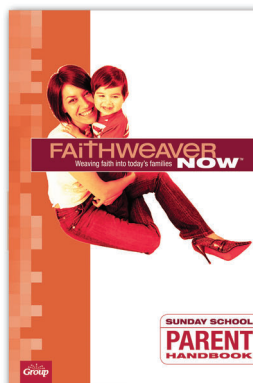
* Due to the way Christmas falls, we recommend moving the lessons as needed to line up Lesson 3 with the week of Christmas.

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 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...



Parent Handbook*

Provides parents with weekly Bible background, lesson information, areas for notes, at-home activities, and devotions.

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



THIS IS A SAMPLE
The number of pages is limited.

Purchase the item for the complete version.

