FAITHWEAVER NOW®

Weaving faith into today's families

WINTER
SUNDAY SCHOOL
PRESCHOOL AGES 3&4
TEACHER GUIDE

Group
Real. Bold. Love.

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WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL

PRESCHOOL AGES 3&4

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!

We strive to provide products that are mechanically reliable and hold together during normal, intended usage. Items are also checked for flammability, and both paint and surface coatings are checked for heavy metals—including lead.
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, Preschool/Ages 3 & 4, Winter
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ISBN 978-1-4707-6162-2

Printed in the United States of America.

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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

Preschoolers don't often think about preparation. They live in the present, absorbed in the toy, the friend, or the imaginative idea in front of them at that moment. To help your preschoolers prepare for Jesus, remind them of everyday preparations. For example, mom helps a child put on a hat, coat, and mittens to prepare for the cold outdoors and dad helps a child "wash up" to prepare for dinner. Use this lesson to help kids understand that in the same way, we prepare for Jesus by telling him we're sorry for the wrong things we do and by showing him that we love him.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started *about 5 min.*	**Welcome and Celebrate** Welcome each other, and praise God through music.	CD player **Teacher Pack:** CD, "Jesus and the Cross" poster	
2 Key Verse Activity *about 10 min.*	**Spread the News** Use different voices to share the great news that Jesus is born.	Bible	
3 Bible Exploration *about 15 min.*	**Puppy Pointers** See something that comes from the desert.	CD player, Theo puppet, resealable plastic bag, sand, string **Teacher Pack:** CD	Tie a plastic bag with sand to Theo's paw.
	Bible Time: Who's Coming? Listen to John the Baptist tell about preparing the people for Jesus.	Bible, CD player, bag of sand from Puppy Pointers, markers, shawl, 2 copies of the "John the Baptist" script (at the end of the lesson) **Teacher Pack:** CD, "John Preaches About Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack), "Who Is J-E-S-U-S?" book template	You'll need a second adult leader to play the part of John.

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point

We get ready for Jesus.

Key Verse

"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).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will get their hearts ready for Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
4 Weaving Faith Into Life *about 20 min. (Choose 2 centers.)*	**Center 1: Where Is Jesus?** Trace paths to "Jesus."	My Bible Hugs, child-safe scissors, 3 paper cups for every 2 children, crayons, paper clips	Remove the Lesson 1 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them.
	Center 2: Locusts and Honey Snack Make "locusts" to eat.	celery sticks, cream cheese, pretzels, raisins, spoons, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	Center 3: Set the Table for a King Set a place at the table for Jesus.	1 plastic place setting per child, 1 fancy place setting for Jesus	
	Center 4: A Changed Heart Create two-sided heart puppets.	crayons, 1 wide craft stick per child, glue, child-safe scissors, chocolate powder, 2 copies per child of the "Heart" page (at the end of the lesson)	Cut out the hearts from the "Heart" page.
5 Lasting Impressions *about 10 min.*	**Daily Challenges** Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Hugs	
	Action Prayer Pretend to be in a desert as they pray.		
	Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	My Bible Hugs	Tear out the letter to parents in the back of each My Bible Hugs student book to give to parents when they pick up their children.

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.

Welcome and Celebrate
Supplies

CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Lots of Friends" (track 2), "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6)
"Jesus and the Cross" poster

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Welcome and Celebrate

Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do

As the children arrive, greet each one with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to gather the children together in a circle.

Lead children in singing "Lots of Friends" to the tune of "Ninety-Nine Bottles of Pop" (track 2 on the CD). Encourage children to follow the motions in parentheses.

Lots of friends have come to church; *(show gathering motion with arms)*
Lots of friends are here. *(point down)*
Come on over and join the fun. *(wiggle arms above head)*
We're all happy to see you today! *(smile and point to cheeks)*
(Repeat 2x.)

Say: **Christmas is coming soon, and Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus' birth. This week we'll learn how ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS. One way we do that is by coming to church and singing to him.**

Show the "Jesus and the Cross" poster. Say: **At church we can sing together to Jesus because he came to earth for us. We sing to Jesus because he's king. Let's bow as we sing our next song to show God we know he's our king.**

Lead children in bowing as they sing "God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) (track 6).

Let's sing about the Lord,
The greatness of our God,
God is the king of everything.
We're wild about his love
And all that he has done,
God is the king of everything.

I know God; I talk about him every single day.
I pray to him at all times; he's the only way.
I love him! He loves me no matter where I go,
And everything I do will be for God and God alone.

Let's sing about the Lord,
The greatness of our God,
God is the king of everything.
We're wild about his love
And all that he has done,
God is the king of everything.

Let's sing about the Lord,
The greatness of our God,
God is the king of everything.
We're wild about his love
And all that he has done,
God is the king of everything,
God is the king of everything,
God is the king of everything.

"God Is the King" (Psalm 47:7) by Jay Stocker and Ben Glover. © 2005, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **God is king, and when we bow, we show God we know he's great. Even though God is a great king, he sent his Son, Jesus, to earth to live with us. Christmas is when we celebrate that Jesus came to earth as a baby. This week we'll learn how ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS, our king.**

2 KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Spread the News

Spread the News Supplies

Bible

What You'll Do

Have children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Luke 2:10-11, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible, Luke 2:10-11, says, "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). This means it was great news that Jesus was born. Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in saying the adapted Key Verse with you: **I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).**

Ask:

- **Turn to a friend and tell what you do when you hear great news.** Allow time.

Say: **In this verse, it's an angel who's telling the great news that Jesus was born! The angel is telling this to shepherds. Jesus is God's Son, and he came to earth**

as a baby. We celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas. And Jesus' birth is great news because everyone who believes in Jesus can go to heaven.

Say: **The angel wanted the shepherds to get ready for Jesus, and one way to get ready for Jesus is by telling others about him. Let's practice telling the great news that Jesus was born on Christmas.**

Sit with children in a circle on the floor. Explain that children will pass around the circle the great news that Jesus is born. You'll say what kind of voice to use as children pass the news. Start by having everyone say the Key Verse aloud several times: **I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).**

Then tell children that the first time around the circle, they'll each whisper the verse to the person to the left. Begin by whispering the verse to the child sitting to your left. Have that child whisper the verse to the next child and so on until the verse comes back to you. Then vary the way children pass the message. For example, you might shout the verse one time, and sing it another. Practice the verse with several different voices.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you like about sharing good news?**
- **Why do you think Jesus being born is great news?**
- **Tell about who you can tell the good news to this week.**

Say: **The angels told the great news that Jesus is born, and we can tell the great news about Christmas, too! Let's say our Key Verse together one more time.** Lead children in saying the Key Verse with you: **I bring great news; Jesus is born! (Luke 2:10-11).** Lead children in a big cheer to thank God for sending Jesus. Then say: **Remember ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS. Let's see what that means.**

Puppy Pointers
Supplies

CD player
Theo puppet
resealable plastic bag
sand
string
Teacher Pack
CD: "Here, Theo" (track 4)

Puppy Pointers
Easy Prep

Tie a plastic bag with sand to Theo's paw.

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Puppy Pointers

What You'll Do

Say: **Listen, everyone, Theo's coming! He has something to show us. Let's find out what it is.** Play "Here, Theo" (track 4 on the CD), and bring out Theophilus the FaithRetriever.

Theo: Hi, everybody!
Teacher: Hello, Theo! It's so good to see you at church with us today. What do you have there?

Theo: I brought this bag of sand.
Teacher: Why did you bring a bag of sand?
Theo: Because I heard you'd be talking about the desert.
Teacher: That's right, Theo! Today we're going to learn about a man who lived in the sandy desert and told everyone that Jesus was coming soon. Friends, let's tell Theo our Bible Point for today.
(Lead children in saying the Bible Point for Theo: ▶ **WE GET READY FOR JESUS.***)*
Theo: What do you mean that you get ready for Jesus?
Teacher: That's a great question, Theo. There are lots of ways we can get ready for Jesus. We can ask Jesus to make our hearts clean, we can pray and thank God for sending Jesus, and we can celebrate Jesus' birth.
Theo: I like that. I'm going to go home and draw pictures in my sand that show you getting ready for Jesus.
Teacher: That's a great idea! Friends, let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Theo said he was going to draw pictures in his sand of us getting ready for Jesus. What pictures could Theo draw?**
- **What do you want to do to get ready for Jesus?**

Say: **Theo heard that there'd be a bit of sand in what we read in the Bible today. He was right—today we'll hear about a man in the sandy desert who tells about Jesus. He tells the people to get ready for Jesus. But he wasn't just talking to those people. He was saying to everyone,** ▶ **WE GET READY FOR JESUS. This week, we'll learn how we can do that.**

Bible Time: Who's Coming?

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Mark 1:1-8, and show children the words. Tell children that the Bible is God's special book. **Today we'll learn in the Bible that** ▶ **WE GET READY FOR JESUS. We'll hear about a man in the desert named John. Close your eyes and pretend you're in a desert now.**

Play "Desert Sounds" (track 8 on the CD) to provide background sound effects for the dramatization. While the children have their eyes closed, have a second adult leader wrap a shawl over his or her head, as one would do to protect from sand in a desert.

Say: **Open your eyes now. Look! Here's John the Baptist.**

Follow the "John the Baptist" script with your second adult leader who's playing John.

Bible Time: Who's Coming?
Supplies

Bible
CD player
bag of sand from Puppy Pointers
markers
shawl
2 copies of the "John the Baptist" script (at the end of the lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: "Desert Sounds" (track 8); "Jesus Is His Name-o" (track 9)
"John Preaches About Jesus" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)
"Who Is J-E-S-U-S?" book template

Bible Time: Who's Coming?
Easy Prep

You'll need a second adult leader to play the part of John.

At the end of the dramatization, have the kids stand up and tell three friends about Jesus as "John the Baptist" asked them to do.

Say: **Friends, let's say thank you and goodbye to John the Baptist.** Have kids clap, say thank you, and hug or wave goodbye to your volunteer. **Close your eyes, and let's count to 10. When we open our eyes, we'll be back from the desert.** Count slowly to 10, turn off the CD player, and have children open their eyes. Lay the "John Preaches About Jesus" poster on the floor in the middle of your circle.

Say: **The people had to prepare their hearts before they could serve Jesus, their king. ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS by asking Jesus to forgive us for the bad things we do and asking him to make our hearts clean. Let's put new, clean hearts on all these people in the poster to show that John the Baptist helped them get their hearts ready for Jesus.** Encourage each child to draw a heart on a person in the crowd on the poster. If you have more children than people in the poster, kids can draw more people in the crowd.

Say: **Let's sing a new song about Jesus coming to earth.**

Hold up the "Who Is J-E-S-U-S?" book template. Play "Jesus Is His Name-o" (track 9 on the CD) to the tune of "Bingo," and point to the letters on the colored side of the page as you lead children in singing.

John the Baptist made the way for the King to come-o.
J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S,
And Jesus is his name-o.

God came to earth dressed as a man, and Jesus is his name-o.
J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S,
And Jesus is his name-o.

On Christmas Day the King was born, and Jesus is his name-o.
J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S,
And Jesus is his name-o.

We thank God for all his love, and Jesus is his name-o.
J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S, J-E-S-U-S,
And Jesus is his name-o.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What seemed important about what John said?**
- **Why do you think it's important to get ready for Jesus?**

Say: **John the Baptist told us that ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS. He knew Jesus is king and it's a wonderful thing that Jesus came to earth for us. Let's remember this week to get ready for Jesus in our hearts and celebrate Jesus at Christmastime.**

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

Where Is Jesus?

Center 1: Where Is Jesus?
Supplies

My Bible Hugs
child-safe scissors
3 paper cups for every 2 children
crayons
paper clips

Center 1: Where Is Jesus?
Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 1 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them.

What You'll Do

Give each child a Lesson 1 page from My Bible Hugs. Say: **John the Baptist came to prepare the way for Jesus, the king of the world. Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus coming to earth as a baby, but he grew up to be a man who saved the whole world.** Point out Jesus and John on the bottom of the My Bible Hugs pages. Then have the children color the figures and cut them out. Show your preschoolers how to bend the tabs so the figures will stand up.

When kids are done, say: **Let's play a game where we help John show the way to Jesus.** Put kids in pairs. Explain that one child in each pair will place a John the Baptist figure somewhere on the My Bible Fun page, while the partner turns away with eyes closed. The first partner will then hide the Jesus figure under one of the three paper cups somewhere else on the edge of the picture.

The partner whose eyes were closed will turn back to the picture, guess which cup is hiding the Jesus figure, and draw a line with his or her finger from the John the Baptist figure to the cup. After the children lift the cups to see if the guess was a good one, have the partners change roles and play again.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What helped you find Jesus?**
- **Why do you think John came to tell about Jesus coming?**
- **What can we tell others about Jesus?**

Say: **John told people that Jesus was coming soon, and John helped people know what to do to get their hearts ready for Jesus at Christmas. We can tell others about Jesus' love and help them get to know Jesus this Christmas. One way ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS is to tell other people about him, too.** Help children paper-clip the figures to their pages so they don't get lost.

Center 2: Locusts and Honey Snack
Supplies

celery sticks
cream cheese
pretzels
raisins
spoons
antibacterial gel (optional)

! ALLERGY ALERT

CENTER 2:

Locusts and Honey Snack

What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands and then sit down for the snack. Say: **There wasn't very much food in the desert, so John the Baptist ate locusts and honey. Let's pretend we're in the desert, eating locusts and honey like John.**

Show your kids how to make locust snacks by using spoons to spread cream cheese on the celery sticks and adding raisins for eyes. Show the children how to bite the pretzels into legs and use cream cheese to attach them to the celery sticks.

Lead children in a prayer, thanking Jesus that he can help us get ready for him.

Talk With Kids

Say: **Our locusts and honey weren't too bad. Just like we can eat like John did, we can also do other things like John did. John told others about Jesus coming, and we can tell others about Jesus coming, too. Like John, we can tell people and show them that ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS by asking God to make our hearts clean. Let's ask God to make our hearts clean now.** Lead the children in a prayer.

Center 3: Set the Table for a King
Supplies

1 plastic place setting per child
1 fancy place setting for Jesus

CENTER 3:

Set the Table for a King

What You'll Do

Say: **John the Baptist told the people to get ready for Jesus! Let's pretend that Jesus is coming to have lunch with us. Let's get ready!**

Give each child a place setting, and show kids how to set the table. Say: **We make a very special place for Jesus because he's king. Sometimes at Christmas, people forget that Jesus is the reason we're celebrating. He deserves the most important place as we celebrate at Christmas.**

When children are finished, make a big deal out of placing the "fancy" setting for Jesus.

When the table is set, pretend to invite Jesus to your special banquet.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What did you like about preparing a special place for Jesus?**
- **What special guests have come to your house?**
- **What can you do to prepare a special place in your heart for Jesus?**

Say: **When we believe in Jesus, he doesn't just come for a visit at Christmas—he comes to live in our hearts. That's why ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS by preparing a special, clean place in our hearts!**

CENTER 4:

A Changed Heart

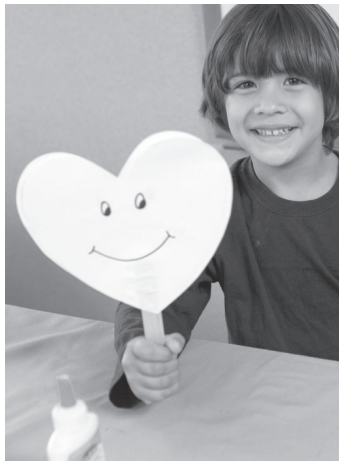
What You'll Do

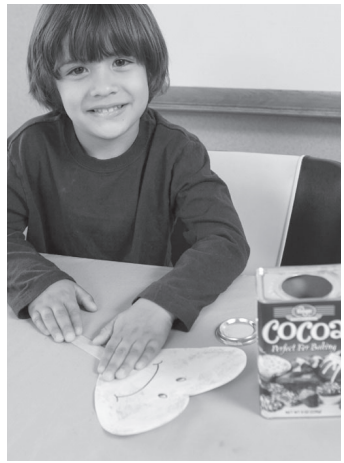
Say: **John the Baptist said ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS by cleaning our hearts. That means we say sorry to God for wrong things we've done. Let's make some hearts that show how a dirty heart can change to be clean.**

Have each child draw a happy face on one heart and a sad face on the other. Then have them rub chocolate powder on the sad face to make it look dirty. Have the children glue the hearts together and to the craft stick, faces showing outward to make puppets.

Say: **The bad things we do make our hearts look dirty, just like the dirty side of our puppets.** Have the children show the dirty sides of their puppets. **We want our hearts to be nice and clean, but only Jesus can help us have nice, clean hearts. When we ask Jesus to forgive us and take away the bad things we do, our hearts are nice and clean and ready for Jesus.** Encourage the children to silently say sorry to God for wrong things they've done. You can demonstrate by saying: **God, I'm sorry for** [fill in a thought or an action here]**.**

Then encourage children to flip their heart puppets around to show the clean hearts. Say: **When we say we're sorry and Jesus forgives us, our hearts are made clean.**





Center 4: A Changed Heart
Supplies

crayons
1 wide craft stick per child
glue
child-safe scissors
chocolate powder
2 copies per child of the "Heart" page (at the end of this lesson)

! ALLERGY ALERT

Center 4: A Changed Heart
Easy Prep

Cut out the hearts from the "Heart" page.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What things make our hearts dirty?**
- **What do you think about when you do something wrong?**
- **What can we do to have clean hearts this week?**

Say: **Our hearts get dirty when we say or do bad things. ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS by asking Jesus to forgive us and make our hearts nice and clean again.** Encourage children to take their heart puppets home with them as a reminder that Jesus can change our dirty hearts into clean hearts.

5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges
Supplies

My Bible Hugs

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up their centers, bring everyone back to a circle area on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they remember about what they learned from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids

Say: **Today we learned that ▶ WE GET READY FOR JESUS. I would like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to get your heart ready for Jesus this week.**

Give kids these two challenges to choose from:

- **Make an ornament that shows a clean heart, and hang it on your Christmas tree. As you hang it up, pray and thank Jesus for coming to earth.**
- **Help your mom or dad wash dishes. As you wash the dishes, ask God to wash your heart and make it clean for Jesus.**

Say: **If you want to make an ornament, circle the choice with one dot. If you want to wash dishes, circle the choice with two dots.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Hugs page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

Action Prayer

What You'll Do

Form a circle, and have the children sit down. Have them close their eyes and think of the sounds of the desert, such as sand blowing in the wind. Start the prayer by asking for Jesus' forgiveness. Then ask the children to take turns praying after you.

Finish the prayer together. Pray: **Lord Jesus, thank you for making our hearts clean so we can show love to everyone we meet. We love you. In your name, amen.**

Weaving Faith at Home

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.

Have children take home their My Bible Hugs pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the "Daily Challenges" activity. Encourage the parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

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

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

My Bible Hugs

Weaving Faith at Home
Easy Prep

Tear out the letter to parents in the back of each My Bible Hugs student book to give to parents when they pick up their children.

John the Baptist

John: Hello, children. Did you come all the way out here in the desert to see me? It's hot and sandy here in the desert, isn't it? Believe me, this sand gets really hot after being in the sun all day. I've lived in the desert a long time. *(Hands bag of sand to the children so they can touch the sand and pass it around the circle)*

Leader: John, why do you live way out in the desert?

John: God gave me a special job to do. My job is to get the people ready.

(Pretends to catch an insect) Excuse me, friends. I'm going to eat some lunch. Mmm, locusts. Would you like some?

(Has kids pretend to catch and eat bugs)

Leader: John, do you really eat locusts? Aren't locusts big bugs?

John: Yes, they look like grasshoppers. They're real crunchy, too! If you dip them in honey, they're even sweeter. Mmm, mmm! Here, have some. *(Has kids pretend to catch bugs, dip them in honey, and eat them)*

Leader: *(Gulps and hesitates)* Thanks for sharing your locusts with us, but…Why do you eat locusts?

John: Because there isn't very much food in the desert. *(Pauses)* Listen, I have a job to do out here in the desert. It's more important than food, or clothes, or a bed. I have to get the people ready!

Leader: Get the people ready for what?

John: Not "what"—"*who"!* My job is to get the people ready for Jesus! He's the King of the world.

Leader: Wow! That *is* an important job. *(Turns to the children)* Kids, the king of the world is coming! *(Leads children in a cheer)*

John: It's definitely something to cheer about! For thousands of years, we've been waiting for our Savior, King Jesus, to come. I'm the voice calling in the desert. Your Bible tells about me. *(Puts both hands to mouth, megaphone style)* Prepare the way for the Lord! Make straight paths for him. Say you're sorry for your sins. Turn away from the bad things you've done and do good things! This is what I tell everyone I see. *(Leads the children in making megaphones with their hands and saying, "Prepare the way for the Lord")*

Leader: We get ready for Jesus, too. Have all the people listened to you?

John: Not everyone. But many people came from cities to listen to me. They're getting their hearts ready. They're asking God to forgive their sins. Then I baptize them in the Jordan River.

Children, are your hearts ready for Jesus? *(Pauses so they can respond)*

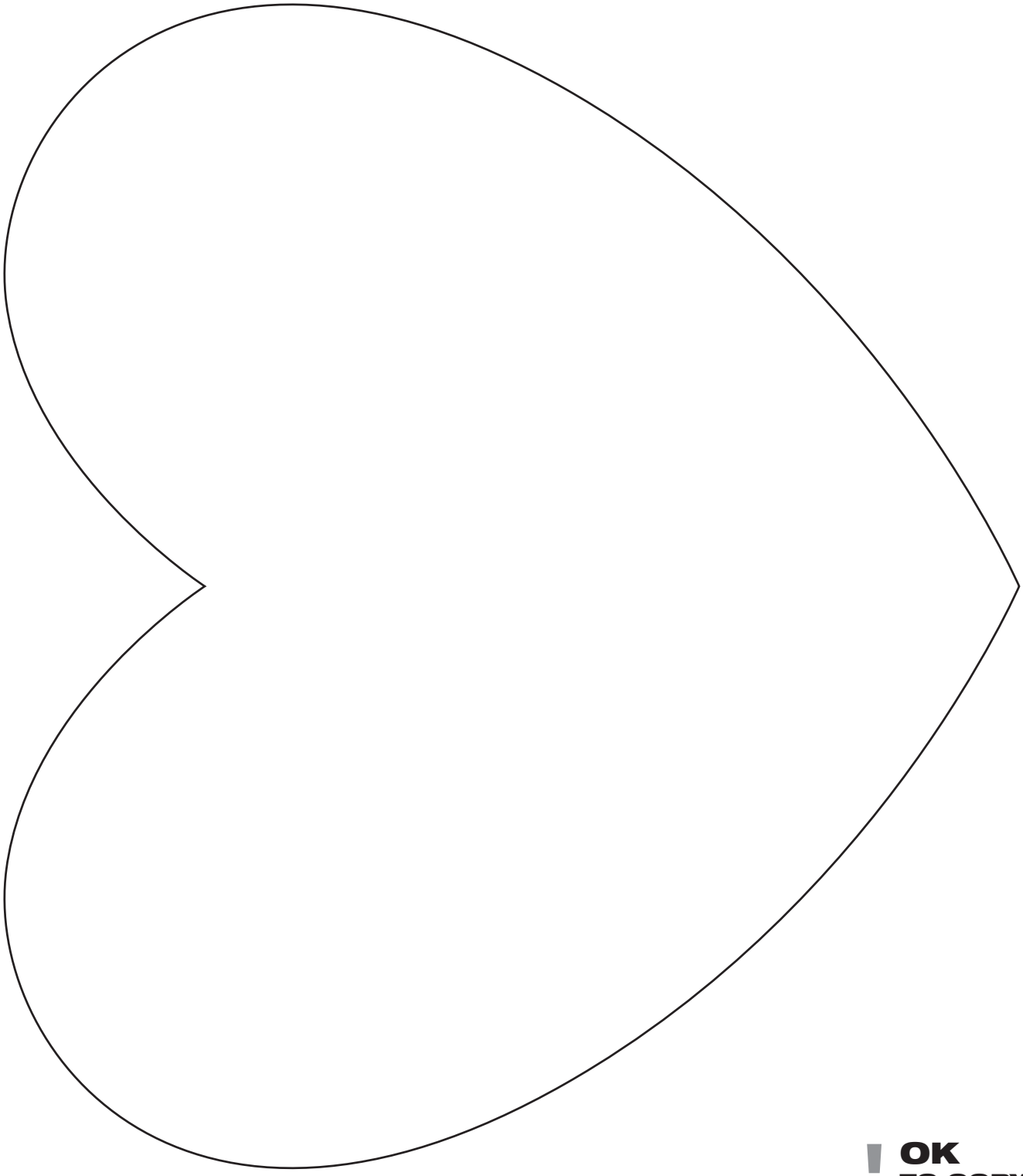
John: Jesus is God, so he never sinned, but he asked me to baptize him in the river so that he would be a good example for us to follow.

Leader: John, I had no idea what an important person you are.

John: No. I'm not the important one! In fact, I'm nothing compared to Jesus. Jesus is God. He's so wonderful and powerful that I'm not even good enough to be his servant and untie his sandals. I'm like a sign pointing to Jesus. *(To children)* Will you help me be a sign to tell others about Jesus? Stand up and tell three people that Jesus is coming.

! OK TO COPY

Heart



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FAITHWEAVER NOW
Weaving faith into today's families

WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL PRESCHOOL AGES 3&4 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)	I bring great news; Jesus is born! (adapted from Luke 2:10-11).	We get ready for Jesus.
WEEK 2	God Dwells With Us (John 1:1-14)		Jesus is God.
WEEK 3	Jesus Is Born (Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20)		Jesus was born.
WEEK 4	Faithful People Thank God for Jesus (Luke 2:22-40)		We thank God for Jesus.
WEEK 5	Wise Men Find Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12)	God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (adapted from John 3:16).	We worship Jesus.
WEEK 6	John Baptizes Jesus (Mark 1:4-11)		Jesus made God happy.
WEEK 7	Jesus Surprises Nathanael (John 1:43-51)		Jesus knows us.
WEEK 8	Disciples Follow Jesus (Mark 1:14-20)		Follow Jesus.
WEEK 9	Jesus Demonstrates His Authority (Mark 1:21-28)	Come to me and rest (adapted from Matthew 11:28).	Jesus is strong.
WEEK 10	Jesus Heals, Prays, and Preaches (Mark 1:29-39)		Jesus cares for us.
WEEK 11	Jesus Calms a Storm (Mark 4:35-41)		Jesus helps us when we're afraid.
WEEK 12	Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man (Mark 2:1-12)		Jesus forgives us.
WEEK 13	Jesus Heals the Blind Man (Mark 10:46-52)		Jesus cares for us.

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.***

Printed in the U.S.A.

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