Group

Teacher Guide

PRE-K & K (ages 5 & 6)

Winter

Teach as Jesus Taught!®

Pre-K & K (ages 5&6)

Teacher Guide • Winter

group.com/sunday-school

Group
Real. Bold. Love.

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.

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.

Hands-On Bible Curriculum®, Pre-K & K, Ages 5 & 6, Winter

Copyright © 1994 and 2018 Group Publishing, Inc./0000 0001 0362 4853

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without prior written permission from the publisher, except where noted in the text and in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information, visit group.com/permissions.

Visit our website: **group.com**

Current Edition Credits

Authors: Janet Reeves and Bonnie Temple
Chief Creative Officer: Joani Schultz
Managing Editor: David Jennings
Editors: Ann Diaz and Ali Thompson
Senior Designer: Randy Kady
Illustrators: Joan Holub, Judy Love, Bonnie Matthews, and C.A. Nobens

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007, 2013. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-1-4707-6897-3

Printed in the United States of America.

Contents

Welcome to the Adventure! 5

Making the Most of Your Hands-On Bible Curriculum® 6

Introduction 7

Understanding Your 5- and 6-Year-Olds 8

The Lessons

Module 1 Jesus' Birth 9

Lesson 1 Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7; Micah 5:2 11

*__Lesson 2__ Luke 2:1-7 25

Lesson 3 Luke 2:8-14 39

Lesson 4 Luke 2:15-20 53

Lesson 5 Matthew 2:1-12 65

Module 2 Jesus' Miracles 79

Lesson 6 John 2:1-11 81

Lesson 7 Mark 4:35-41 93

Lesson 8 John 6:1-15 105

Lesson 9 Matthew 14:22-33 117

Module 3 Jesus' Parables 131

Lesson 10 Luke 8:4-15 133

Lesson 11 Luke 15:11-32 145

Lesson 12 Luke 10:25-37 157

Lesson 13 Luke 19:11-26 169

* Due to the way Christmas falls, we recommend moving the lessons as needed to line up Lesson 2 with the week of Christmas.

Welcome to the Adventure!

So, you're going to be spending time with 5- and 6-year-olds! These kids have a natural love for God, for you, and for anything that piques their interest. If you've been around them for a while, you know. If you're just starting, you'll find out quickly! Everything is an adventure and fills their minds with wonder. You can be the one who helps them wonder about Jesus. What a blessing for you and for them!

Five- and six-year-olds think very concretely, using what they have experienced, seen, touched, tasted, and smelled. They have been working on mastering their physical movements and love to test their abilities. They wonder about the world that they are discovering. They accept Jesus on a simple basis and want to know who he is and how he works. The love of Jesus will become real to them through the love they experience from you. You will be an example of Jesus that they themselves can touch!

Your children will learn best by experiencing new ideas and concepts with their senses—touching, tasting, smelling, hearing, and seeing. They will naturally want to ask questions and interact with you, so allow plenty of time for questions. If you encourage them, they will try new things and learn so much. You'll change their lives because you will have opened their minds and hearts to the most important person in their lives—Jesus.

Here are a few helpful do's and don'ts to make experiential learning work best for you and your kids:

- **Do think outside the learning-space box!** Move tables so students can move around freely and work in groups. Use blocks and blankets to create unique spaces.
- **Don't expect them to sit still.** Allow children to move through experiences—touching, manipulating, tasting, smelling, and making noise—all for the glory of God.
- **Do take advantage of teachable moments.** Watch how your children act, and weave what happens into the lesson. Look for ways to bring in tastes, smells, and sounds to your classroom and use them during the lesson.
- **Don't show children the contents of the Learning Lab®** before they are used in the lessons. Keep them guessing what's coming next!
- **Do get to know your children.** They are anxious to share what they are learning. They will look for you every week.
- **Don't forget—experiential learning is fun and captivating!** Enjoy it! A positive experience learning about God within the safe boundaries of your classroom will lead to more positive experiences with God outside the classroom. What a great way to encourage your students to discover the joy of the Lord firsthand and to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ!

Be aware that some children have food allergies that can be dangerous. Know your children, and consult with parents about allergies your kids may have. Also, be sure to read food labels carefully as hidden ingredients can cause allergy-related problems.

Making the Most of Your Hands-On Bible Curriculum®

⚠ **WARNING:**
CHOKING HAZARD—
Learning Lab items may include small parts. Not for children under 3 years.

Module Introductions Within each quarter of Hands-On Bible Curriculum, there are three or four modules. Each module has a theme that runs throughout the lessons. The introduction to each module includes an overview of the lessons and a chart listing the Bible Point and Scripture used in each lesson.

Bible Point There's one point that you want your children to take home at the end of your lesson. That's the Bible Point. You'll see it referenced in the margin as well as italicized and underlined in the lesson. We've designed for it to be repeated numerous times during the lesson so no one will miss it.

Bible Verse These words, taken from God's Word, show the biblical basis for the lesson. The Bible verse appears in boldface in the lesson.

Teacher Enrichment This part of the lesson is just for you. If you can, read it early in the week. It includes an explanation of the Bible passage and some suggested ways to pray during the week so you'll be prepared, heart and mind, for your important hour with your children.

This Lesson at a Glance This valuable chart shows you the big picture for your lesson. You can quickly see what supplies you'll need and what needs to be done before you begin. A minute on this page will save you 10 during your lesson!

The Jesus Connection To us, this is the most important thing—making the connection between the story and Jesus, the reason for the story. You'll find a Jesus Connection in every lesson, set apart in a box. We want children to find Jesus every week in your class, so don't miss this part of the lesson.

Teacher Tips You'll find these in the margin throughout the lesson. They're just to give you additional ideas to enhance what you're doing. They vary from alternative ideas for activities to age-level insights.

Take-Home Papers These photocopiable pages that you send home with your families every week will help to reinforce the lesson and encourage learning all week long!

"There is only one thing worth being concerned about."

—Luke 10:42

What is this one thing?
It's the whole reason for this curriculum—

it's the whole reason for Sunday school. It's what we (and you) want your kids to know! Check out what Thom and Joani Schultz (Group's chairman and chief creative officer) have to say about the one thing and what it means in your life.

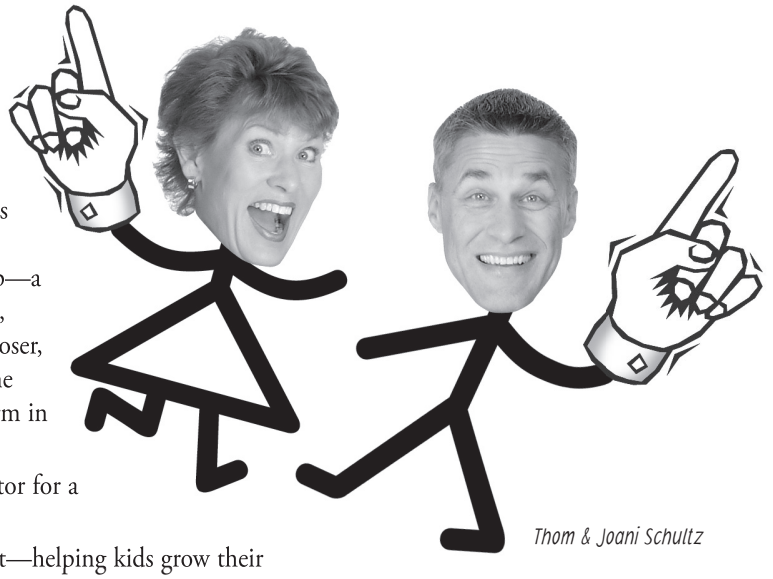
In Luke chapter 10, Jesus visits the home of Mary and Martha. As Martha worries about preparing dinner and being a busy servant, she gets upset because Mary isn't helping. But Jesus tells her, "There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her."

Martha was doing good work. In fact, she was serving the Lord. But Jesus made his priority for us clear. He wants to have a loving relationship with us even more than he wants us to serve him.

Many might say Jesus is the one thing. But no, it's a **growing relationship with Jesus.** Martha would have identified serving Jesus as the one thing. But Mary better understood the *real* one thing.

We believe that the church, like Martha, is often distracted by many things. It tends to deprioritize the one thing. Many other well-intentioned things get in the way. Churches and Christians can get sidetracked with an emphasis on rules, political positions, appearances, social action, secondary goals, theological disputes, solemnity, rituals, and more. To the spiritually hungry, churches often seem more preoccupied with these distractions than the one thing.

If the church wishes to pursue a growing relationship with Jesus, it will need to rethink and reprioritize its ministry. A one-thing ministry emphasizes relationship. And we believe a relationship with Jesus resembles in many ways a human-to-human relationship—a friendship. The process of attraction, getting acquainted, enjoying one another's company, having fun, growing closer, and forming a bond of love and devotion is a natural one that lends clues to how a one-thing relationship may form in the context of church ministry.



Thom & Joani Schultz

How can we build a church that becomes an incubator for a one-thing relationship, for *real* friendship with Jesus?

That's what Hands-On Bible Curriculum is all about—helping kids grow their friendships with Jesus. As they experience the Scriptures and do the activities, they're building that relationship in a real and relevant way.

What's the most important thing your church can do for kids? Help them choose the one thing. And use tools like Hands-On Bible Curriculum to make it a reality.

Understanding Your 5- and 6-Year-Olds

Physical Development

- Developing fine motor skills.
- Most can use scissors and color within the lines.
- Developing hand-eye coordination; can copy patterns, handle paste or glue, and tie shoes.

Emotional Development

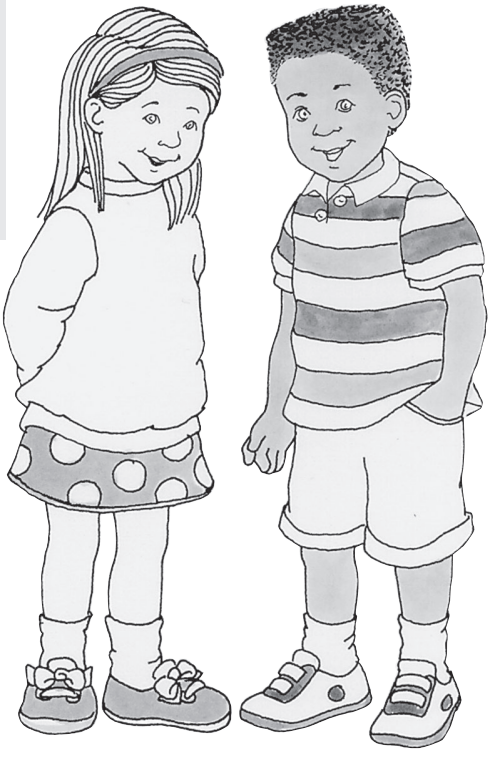
- Proud of their accomplishments.
- Have their feelings hurt easily.
- Beginning to gain self-confidence.

Social Development

- Learning to share and cooperate.
- Can understand and follow rules.
- Enjoy extensive dramatic play.
- Eager to please teachers and parents.

Mental Development

- Can listen to and create stories.
- Can distinguish between real and pretend.
- Need simple directions—understand one step at a time.



Spiritual Development

- Understand that God made them.
- Trust that God loves them.
- Beginning to develop sense of conscience.

Jesus' Birth

"Say to those who are afraid, 'Be strong, and do not fear, for your God is coming… to save you' " (Isaiah 35:4).

God's people were persecuted, ruled by hostile nations, and punished for following their faith. As the years passed with no sign of relief, God's people looked with hope to the words of prophets like Isaiah. They waited for a sign that God would keep his promise to send a Savior. On a starry night in the small village of Bethlehem, God's promise became flesh. Jesus, the promised Savior, was born.

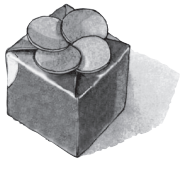
Many kindergarten children know a lot about babies. They cry, they eat and sleep, they wear diapers, and they play with their toes. To some 5- and 6-year-olds, babies are uninteresting and common. In this module, children will learn about a baby who was anything but common! The stories of Jesus' birth, such as God's promise of an infant king and the Magi's visit from the East, will fascinate the children in your class. The five lessons in this module focus on the Savior who was promised by God, announced by angels, sought by shepherds, and worshipped by kings. Children will learn about and celebrate the special events surrounding the birth of Jesus.

Five Lessons on Jesus' Birth

Lesson	Bible Point	Page	Bible Basis
1	Jesus is the Savior God promised.	11	Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7; Micah 5:2
2	Jesus is the Savior born in Bethlehem.	25	Luke 2:1-7
3	Jesus is the Savior the angels told about.	39	Luke 2:8-14
4	Jesus is the Savior the shepherds found.	53	Luke 2:15-20
5	Jesus is the Savior the wise men worshipped.	65	Matthew 2:1-12

Time Stretchers

Surprise Package



Before doing this activity, wrap a small box and lid with colorful wrapping paper, or use one of the *gift boxes* included in the Learning Lab box. Cover the box and lid separately so they can be reused. Write the numbers one to seven on slips of paper. Place the slips of paper in the box. Have the children sit in a circle. Pass the

surprise package to a child, and let him or her draw a slip of paper from the box. Have the child tell you the number on the paper. Then read the question below that matches the number. Encourage the children to suggest answers for the questions, and let them help each other if they're unsure of an answer or need help.

1. How would it feel to sleep in a manger?
2. What was the best gift you ever gave someone?
3. What was shining over the stable the night Jesus was born?
4. Who visited Jesus and brought him gifts?
5. Why do we give gifts at Christmas?
6. Where was Jesus born? In which city?
7. Why is Jesus God's wonderful gift to us?

Jesus Jump-Rope

You'll need a jump-rope to play this game. Choose two children to hold the ends of the rope and sway it back and forth a few inches above the ground. Let pairs of children hop over the swaying rope while the class sings the following jump-rope jingle:

SING

Jesus loves me; this I know.
How many ways? Let me tell you so.
One, two, three, four...

Continue counting until someone in the pair misses a hop or until the pair reaches the number 20. Have children take turns holding the jump-rope. Keep playing until all the children have had a turn to hop.

Fun variations include saying the alphabet instead of counting, or singing familiar songs such as "Jesus Loves Me" or "Happy Birthday to You" using the words "dear Jesus."

Remember That Night?

Use this tactile memory game to review the Christmas story with your children. Gather two each of the following items: gift bows, birthday candles, Christmas cards, cotton balls (for sheep's wool), squares of cloth (for swaddling clothes), and paper stars. Place the items in a paper grocery sack.

Seat the children in a circle, and place the sack in the center. Allow a child to reach into the sack and choose an item. Have the child identify what he or she is holding before pulling it out of the sack. Then ask a second child to reach into the sack and find the matching object. When a pair of items is found, set the objects beside the sack.

As each pair of items is identified and pulled from the sack, have children tell how the items relate to the story of Jesus' birthday.

Bible Point ► Jesus is the Savior God promised.

Bible Verse

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will
- learn that Jesus was God's promise to us,
- understand that God always keeps his promises,
- teach Pockets that keeping promises is important, and
- anticipate the fulfillment of a joyful promise.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ **Prophets predict Jesus' birth.**

Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7; Micah 5:2

For some people, it's hard to believe that these passages predicting the coming of Jesus were written around 700 years before his birth! Amazingly, at that time God gave details to Isaiah and Micah about the coming Messiah.

A baby born to a virgin—now that's something even harder for most to believe! And the debate rages about whether the word in Isaiah 7:14 really refers to a virgin or just to a young woman. In its original context, it likely refers to a young woman like Isaiah's wife (see Isaiah 8:3). But in Matthew 1:23, Matthew connects this passage with the birth of Jesus to Mary, and quotes the passage using the Greek word for "virgin." He leaves little question that this was to be seen as a clearly miraculous birth, in ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Isaiah 9:6-7 are probably the Old Testament verses most often quoted during the Christmas season. And there's no question that these verses refer to Jesus. Only he could fill the incredible roles ascribed to him here. And only he is God's Son, whose coming was predicted to us so long ago!

Prayer

- Read Matthew 1:18-25.
- As you consider your relationship with Jesus, what aspects of the prophecies about Jesus' birth are most meaningful to you?
- Pray: Lord, thank you for coming to earth as a human baby. Help me to express my belief in you by…

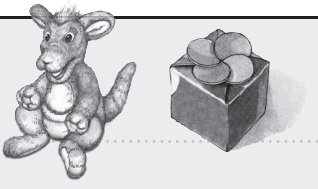
teacher tips

It's important to say the Bible Point just as it's written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point again and again will help the children remember it and apply it to their lives.

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use. Refer to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies columns to determine what you'll need.
- Make photocopies of the "Today I Learned…" handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	**Welcome!**—Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	"Perfect Present Name Tags" (p. 22), markers, safety pins or tape	
Let's Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	**Option 1: Promised Presents**—Make colorful Christmas rubbings.	Poster board, letter-sized envelopes, scissors, crayons, newspaper	
	Option 2: Present Pins—Create sparkly Christmas pins to wear.	Gift tags, sequins, glue sticks, small bows, safety pins, crayons, pencils	
	Option 3: Dig Those Gifts!—Dig in the sand for buried treasure.	Bucket or large dishpan, newspaper, clean sand, "treasures" such as small plastic figures and toy cars	
	Pick Up Our Toys—Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	**Setting the Stage**—Explore God's promises with the help of real gifts.	Bible, individually wrapped candies, small paper bag, gift bow, tape	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time—Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story—Talk about God's promise to send a Messiah, given in Isaiah 7:14; 9:2; and Micah 5:2.	Bible, gift wrap, transparent tape, bow, box	
	Do the Bible Story—Stamp a calendar with different symbols as they review the Bible story.	Blank December calendar page	
Closing	**Pockets' Promise**—Teach Pockets that God keeps his promises.		
	Promise Presents—Affirm each other and pray.	Gift bag from "Setting the Stage"	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: *"Perfect Present Name Tags" (p. 22), markers, safety pins or tape*

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- Say: **Today we're going to learn that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.***
- Give each child a photocopy of a "Perfect Present Name Tag." Help children write their names on their name tags and pin or tape them to their clothing. You may want to laminate the name tags or cover them with clear adhesive paper so they'll last for the entire quarter.
- Direct the children to the Let's Get Started activities you've set up.

◄**BIBLE POINT**

teacher tips

Five- and six-year-olds love familiar adults, so use your welcoming presence to affirm each child. You can help strengthen developing friendships by encouraging children to welcome each other as well.

Let's Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and to direct their conversation toward today's lesson. Ask questions such as "What was one of your favorite gifts?" or "What's a promise that you've made?"

Option 1: Promised Presents

SUPPLIES: *poster board, letter-sized envelopes, scissors, crayons, newspaper*

Before class, cut shapes from poster board, such as stars, hearts, bells, and candy canes. Seal each cutout in a letter-sized envelope. Make one envelope for each child plus a few extras for visitors.

Cover a table with newspaper. Scatter the sealed envelopes around the table. Let each child choose an envelope. Tell the children that you promise there's a surprise inside each envelope. Encourage children to guess what the surprises may be. Have children rub over their envelopes with the sides of crayons. As different shapes emerge, point out that each rubbing is like a gift that's been unwrapped.

Show children how to gently shake the envelope so the pieces move around inside. Children may make many designs on the outside of each envelope. Remind children that you kept your promise of a surprise in each envelope. Point out that Jesus was a promise, too—a promise from God!

Option 2: Present Pins

SUPPLIES: *gift tags, sequins, glue sticks, small bows, safety pins, crayons or markers, pencils or pens*

Let each child choose a gift tag and print his or her name on the front. If the tag has "to" and "from" spaces, help each child write his or her name beside "to." Beside the word "from," write "God, with love."

Encourage children to use glue sticks, sequins, and crayons or markers to decorate their tags. Allow each child to attach a tiny bow or bit of ribbon to the card. As

children work, make comments such as "Your gift tags are so pretty" and "Did you know Jesus is our gift from God?"

When the cards are dry, safety pin them to the children's clothing. (Allow them to take these name tags home today; they'll leave the other name tags with you.) Remind children that they're God's gifts and that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.*

BIBLE POINT►

■ Option 3: Dig Those Gifts!

SUPPLIES: *bucket or large dishpan, newspaper, clean sand or rice, "treasures" such as small plastic figures and toy cars*

Before this activity, spread newspaper on the floor in a corner. Fill a bucket with sand or rice, and bury small "treasures" in the sand. Hide items such as small plastic animals or cars and colorful erasers. Let children take turns digging for buried treasure. As they dig, tell them that sometimes God's promises are hard for us to see, but we know that God always keeps his promises. Remind them that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.* When all the items have been found, let the children bury them again.

teacher tips

Be sure to supervise children so they don't put any of the objects into their mouths.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

X•TRA IMPACT

For added fun and excitement, bury individually wrapped candies or small erasers as treasures the children can take home. If you choose this option, be sure to allow each child in the class a chance to dig for treasure.

■ Pick Up Our Toys

SUPPLIES: *CD player*

track 2

Lead children in singing "Pick Up Our Toys" (track 2) with the *CD* to the tune of "Skip to My Lou." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

You'll be using this song each week to alert children to start picking up. At first they may need a little encouragement. But after a few weeks, picking up and singing along will become a familiar routine.

If you want to include the names of all the children in the class, sing the song without the *CD*, and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the *CD*, vary the names you use each week.

SING

We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys,
And put them all away.

There's [name] **picking up toys.**
There's [name] **picking up toys.**
There's [name] **picking up toys,**
Putting them all away.

(Repeat.)

Bible Story Time

■ Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: *Bible, individually wrapped candies, small paper bag, gift bow, tape*

Before this activity, place individually wrapped candies inside a small bag. Be sure you have enough candy for each child to have a piece. Tape the bag closed, and attach a gift bow at the top.

ALLERGY ALERT!

See page 5.

Tell the children you'll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, the children are to stop what they're doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Have children sit on the floor in a circle. Pass around the gift bag, and let children hold it, shake it, and turn it upside down. Encourage kids to guess what might be inside. As children are passing and shaking the bag, say: **I promise you'll soon find out what's inside the gift bag. And I promise there's something inside for each of you.**

When everyone's had a turn to shake the gift bag, set it in the center of the circle.

Ask: • **What promises did I make about the gift bag?** (That we could open it later; that there was something for each of us inside it.)

• **What's a promise?** (Something you say you'll do; something to give to people.)

• **What is it like when someone makes a promise to you?** (I feel excited; I'm happy and anxious; I wonder if they'll keep it.)

Hold up the Bible. Say: **God makes promises, too. Let's read what the Bible says about God's promises.** Read aloud **Hebrews 10:23b** from an easy-to-understand Bible version.

Ask: • **What does it mean to be trusted?** (It means you will keep your promises; it means you're a good friend who isn't mean.)

• **Why is it important to know that we can trust God?** (Because we want to believe in someone who keeps promises; because we need to know that God will always be with us.)

• **What are some things God has promised us?** (To love us; to help us; to protect us.)

• **What does it feel like to know we can trust God to keep his promises?** (I feel happy; I don't have to worry.)

Say: **Today we're going to learn that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.* We'll learn that God always keeps his promises. And I'll keep my promise about opening our gift a little later. Do you think you can wait to see what the gift is?** Pause for responses. **Sometimes it's hard to wait for an exciting promise to be kept. Let's find out about God's most special promise and about how hard it was to wait for the promise to be kept.**

◄BIBLE POINT

teacher tips

Your 5- and 6-year-olds can understand and follow rules. Help them understand that they're following the classroom rules when they pay attention to the clapping signal and focus on you.

■ *Bible Song and Prayer Time*

SUPPLIES: *Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box*

Before class, make surprise cards for this activity by cutting construction paper into 2x6-inch slips. Prepare a surprise card for each child, plus a few extras for visitors. Fold the cards in half, and then stamp the *gift stamp* inside one of the surprise cards. Bookmark **Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7**; and **Micah 5:2** in the Bible you'll be using.

teacher tips

If the *ink pad* is dry, moisten it with three to five drops of water.

Have the children sit in a circle. Say: **Each week when we come to our circle for our Bible story, I'll choose someone to be the Bible person. The Bible person will bring me the Bible marked with our Bible story for that week. Each of you will get a chance to be the Bible person. Before I choose today's**

Bible person, let's learn our Bible song. As we sing, I'll hand out surprise cards. Don't look inside your surprise card until the song is over.

Lead children in singing "Read God's Book" (track 3) with the *CD* to the tune of "The Muffin Man." As you sing, hand out the folded surprise cards.

Now it's time to read God's book,
Read God's book, read God's book.
Now it's time to read God's book.
Let's hear a Bible story.
(Repeat 3x.)

Choose children to be the surprise-card collector, the Bible replacer (to put the Bible away), and the cheerleader. Just be sure to keep track of who fills your roles each week so each child gets a chance to feel special.

After the song, say: **You may look inside your surprise cards. The person with the gift stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible person for today.**

Identify the Bible person. Ask the Bible person to bring you the Bible. Lead the class in clapping for the Bible person, cheering, and making fun applause sound effects by slapping your thighs with your palms. Help the Bible person open the Bible to the marked place, and show children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible person sit down.

Say: [Name] **was our special Bible person today. Each week we'll have only one special Bible person, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we're all learning that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.***

Let's say a special prayer now and ask God to help us learn that Jesus is God's promise to us and that God always keeps his promises. I'll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, "God, please help me trust in your promises."

Let a child pass around the basket or box. When your helper has collected everyone's surprise card, set the basket aside, and pick up the Bible. Lead children in this prayer: **God, thank you for the Bible and for all the stories in it. Teach us today that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.* Amen.**

■ *Hear and Tell the Bible Story*

SUPPLIES: *Bible, gift wrap, transparent tape, bow, box*

Choose a Bible you'll use for this section of the lesson each week. Some of the children in your class may be reading, so provide Bibles for them to look at. If children can understand the words in the Bible, they'll have more interest in reading it—and they'll learn more from it. A great option for children is the *Hands-On Bible*®. You can learn more at group.com.

Before class, punch out the *Jesus' birth story figures* and stands, and insert the figures into the stands. Then place them in a gift-wrapped box, and top the package with a bright bow.

Set the wrapped package in the center of the circle. Say: **This is a very special gift for us. We'll use it to help tell our Bible story.** Show children the Bible pages. **Every time I say the words give or given or gave, hand the box to another person.** Hand the box to a child, and begin the story.

From the beginning of time, God gave the world promises. God gave Noah a promise not to flood the whole world again. God promised Moses he'd help the people God loved. God promised Abraham he'd have a son. And God kept every promise that he gave.

Ask: • **Why is it important to keep your promises?** (So people trust you; to show someone you love him or her.)

• **Why does God keep his promises?** (Because he's God and can do anything; because God loves us; because he wants us to trust him.)

Say: **God keeps his promises. And God made the most special promise of all—God promised to give the world someone who would love us and bring peace and forgiveness. God said, "I will give you a sign; a young woman will give birth to a baby boy. She will give birth to the baby in a town called Bethlehem. The baby will be given the name Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.' And the baby will give joy and light to the world." That baby was Jesus, and our Bible verse tells us in 1 Timothy 1:15 that ►"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."** Show children the verse in your Bible. **That means that Jesus came to help each one of us!**

◄BIBLE VERSE

Ask: • **Would it be easy to believe such a promise? Why or why not?** (Yes, because God made the promise; no, because how can someone save the world?)

• **How do you think the people felt when they heard the promise?** (Excited; anxious; happy; they couldn't wait.)

Say: **God's people were excited about his promise. They wanted God to give them a Savior. For hundreds of years, the people were ruled by cruel kings. The kings made God's people slaves. They made war against God's people. They wouldn't let God's people worship or pray. The people tried hard to remember God's promise. They waited for God to give them a Savior and a King to bring peace.**

Ask: • **How would it feel to wait hundreds of years for a promise to be kept?** (I would give up on believing in the promise; I'd think the promise wouldn't be kept.)

• **Why did the people still wait for the Savior?** (Because God keeps his promises; because they wanted a Savior so much.)

Say: **God's people kept praying and asking God to give them a Savior. And they waited and watched. But the people thought God would give them a king born in a rich palace. They never thought the Savior would be born in a stable! ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised* to give us.**

◄BIBLE POINT

Ask the child holding the box to set it in the center of the circle. Say: **People waited many years for God to keep his promise. Sometimes it's hard to wait for promises to come true.**

Ask: • **Who can tell about a promise you waited for? Was it hard to wait?** (Yes, I had to wait until I turned 5 for a bike; I waited for my baby sister to be born.)

The JESUS CONNECTION

Point to the wrapped package. Say: **This gift is for all of us, just like Jesus is a gift for all of us. God promised that Jesus would come so that we could have a friendship with him. Let's thank God for keeping his promise to send Jesus.**

Pray: **Dear Lord, thank you that you kept your promise to send Jesus. Thank you that we can ask Jesus to be our friend. Amen.**

Say: **Just like God keeps his promises, I promise we'll open this gift next week. Until then, you can remember that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.***

◄BIBLE POINT

Return the wrapped package to the Learning Lab for next week's use.

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: *blank December calendar page*

Display the blank calendar page where children can easily see and reach it. Set the *arrow stamp*, the *praying hands stamp,* and the *gift stamp* as well as the *ink pad* from the Learning Lab beside the calendar page.

Say: **I'm so happy that Christmas is coming! I can hardly wait.**

Ask: • **How are you feeling about Christmas coming?** (Happy; like it's too far away; I just can't wait.)

• **What does your family do to count days until Christmas?** (We open windows on a calendar; we decorate; we read Christmas stories together.)

Say: **Some families mark days off a calendar as they count the days until Christmas.**

Show children the calendar page and point out December 25. Then point to today's date. Have children count out loud with you the days left until Christmas.

Say: **When the prophets told God's people that God promised to send them a Savior, they were really excited!** Hold up the *arrow stamp*. **The people didn't know exactly when the promised Savior would come, but they looked forward to it.** Hold up the *praying hands stamp*. **Because the people didn't know exactly when the Savior would come, they had to wait patiently and pray.** Hold up the *gift stamp*. **God's people knew that the promised Savior would be God's great gift to them. Let's use these special stamps to help us remember our Bible story.**

Have children line up in front of the calendar. Say: **I'm going to read to you from our Bible story. Everyone gets a turn to use a stamp. When it's your turn, choose the picture on the stamp that you think goes best with what I read and stamp the picture on one of the calendar days.**

Read the following statements. Let children choose from the *arrow stamp*, the *praying hands stamp*, or the *gift stamp*. Have children tell why they choose the stamps they do. If you have more than 15 children, have them form pairs to choose stamps. If you have more than 15 days until Christmas, start the list again.

• **From the beginning of time, God has made promises to people.**

• **God keeps every promise he makes.**

• **God's most special promise ever was to send a Savior to love us and save us from our sins.**

• **God promised that a young woman would give birth to a baby boy.**

• **The baby would bring joy and light to the world.**

• **The baby would save people from their sins.**

• **God's people were excited about his promise.**

• **Although cruel kings made slaves of God's people, they patiently waited and prayed for the Savior to come.**

• **When the kings wouldn't let God's people worship or pray, the people still believed that God would keep his promise and send a Savior.**

• **For a long, long time, the people continued to remember God's promise.**

• **For a long, long time, the people waited and prayed for God to send their Savior.**

- **After a long, long time, God kept his promise to the people.**
- **Baby Jesus was born in a stable.**
- ►***Jesus is the Savior God promised.*** ◄**BIBLE POINT**
- **Jesus is God's gift to us all.**

When each child has had a turn using one of the stamps, hold up the decorated calendar page and say: **What a pretty calendar page you've made!**

Ask: • **Who is the Savior God promised?** (Jesus; God's Son.)

• **Why is Jesus the best gift ever from God?** (Jesus is our Savior; Jesus came to help us; Jesus came to love us.)

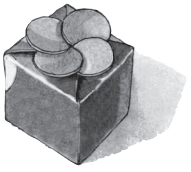
Say: ►***Jesus is the Savior God promised.*** **Jesus, the Savior, is the best gift ever from God!** ◄**BIBLE POINT**

Return the *arrow stamp*, the *praying hands stamp*, and the *gift stamp* as well as the *ink pad* to the Learning Lab for future lessons.

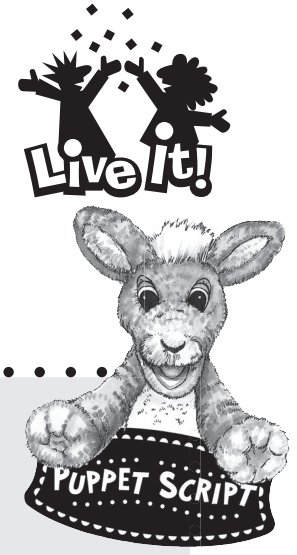
Closing

■ *Pockets' Promise*

SUPPLIES: *none*



Before class, assemble one of the *gift boxes* from the Learning Lab, and place it in Pockets' pouch. Bring out Pockets the Kangaroo, and go through the following puppet script. After you finish the script, put Pockets and the *gift box* out of sight.



Teacher: Hello, Pockets. What do you have?

Pockets: *(Motioning to the empty* gift box *and sounding irritated)* Well! A friend promised to give me a gift, and when I got the box, there was nothing in it!

Teacher: I can see you feel upset, Pockets. Promises are important, and it makes us feel bad when someone doesn't keep a promise.

Pockets: *(Huffing)* Well, I don't think it was very nice to break that promise! And I remember once when my mom and dad didn't keep their promise to buy me an ice-cream cone, either. *(Looking in the empty box)* I don't think anyone keeps promises!

Teacher: Pockets, that's not true. Children, can you tell Pockets who always keeps his promises? *(Lead children in responding, "God!")*

Pockets: You mean God never breaks his promises?

Teacher: That's right, Pockets. Never. *(Hold up the empty* gift box*, and then set it aside.)* And God's already given us the best gift of all!

Pockets: Really? What? What's the gift? Oh, I'm so excited!

Teacher: Let's tell Pockets the Bible Point, kids. ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised!* Who can tell Pockets why Jesus is a special gift from God? *(Give children time to share their ideas.)*

Pockets: Wow! Jesus really is a super-duper gift.

Teacher: And our Bible verse reminds us of why Jesus came.

Pockets: Why?

Teacher: The Bible says in 1 Timothy 1:15, ►"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." When we say that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised,* it means that Jesus saves us from our sins.

Pockets: I'm glad to know that Jesus can save me! And I'm glad to know that God always keeps his promises. I feel great now! 'Bye, friends—see you next week.

Permission to photocopy this script from Group's Hands-On Bible Curriculum® Pre-K & K granted for local church use. Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc., 1515 Cascade Avenue, Loveland, CO 80538. group.com

See page 5.

■ Promise Presents

SUPPLIES: *gift bag from "Setting the Stage"*

Help each child find a partner. Hold up the gift bag with the candies from "Setting the Stage."

Say: **We've been learning about God's promises and that he always keeps his promises. We've also learned that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.* Earlier I promised we'd open our gift bag. I also promised that there was a surprise for each of you.** Have children help you open the bag. **Reach in and pick a surprise. Then hand the surprise to your partner and say, "Jesus is your special gift."**

When all the children have been affirmed and have received a piece of wrapped candy, say: **Let's share a prayer thanking God for his promises.**

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for always keeping your promises. We thank you for the best gift of all—that ►*Jesus is the Savior you promised.* Amen.**

Collect name tags for next week's use, and remind children to take home any crafts they made today.

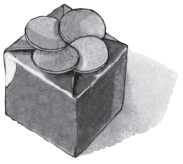
Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned…" handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.

For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

Lively Learning: You're a Promise



Remind children that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised* and that each of them is a promise from God, too. Place a chair facing the wall, and have the children sit on the floor a few feet behind the chair. Choose a child to sit on the chair. Set a *gift box* under the chair. Silently point to a child to sneak up, take the box, and return to his or her place. Then have the children say, "Guess who, guess who, guess who's a promise, too!"

The child sitting on the chair has three guesses to decide who has the *gift box*. After guessing, the child with the box has the next turn to sit in the chair, and the other child points to someone to take the box. Continue playing until each child has a turn to be a "promise."

Make to Take: Pinwheel Promises

Place crayons or markers, safety scissors, and a hole punch on a table. Give each child a paper fastener, a plastic drinking straw, and a photocopy of the "Pinwheel Promise" handout (p. 23). Have children color the squares on their handouts. Tell children they're going to make promise pinwheels to remind them that God kept his beautiful promise to send Jesus as our Savior.

Cut out the squares. Then cut along the dotted lines. Be sure to stop cutting at the circle. Then show children how to fold the outside corners to the center of the pinwheel. Push a paper fastener through the paper, making sure to catch all four corners. Then help each child push the fastener through a plastic straw, about one inch from the top of the straw.

Let the children have time to enjoy blowing their pinwheel promises.

Treat to Eat: Gift Gobblin'

Have children clean their hands with hand wipes or at a nearby sink. Set graham crackers, frosting, and plastic knives on the table. Fill a muffin tin with colorful candy sprinkles and raisins. Form an assembly line. Have one small group of kids break the graham crackers into squares, and have another group frost the crackers. Let the groups switch places after a few crackers have been made. Allow children to decorate their cracker "presents" as they wish.

See page 5.

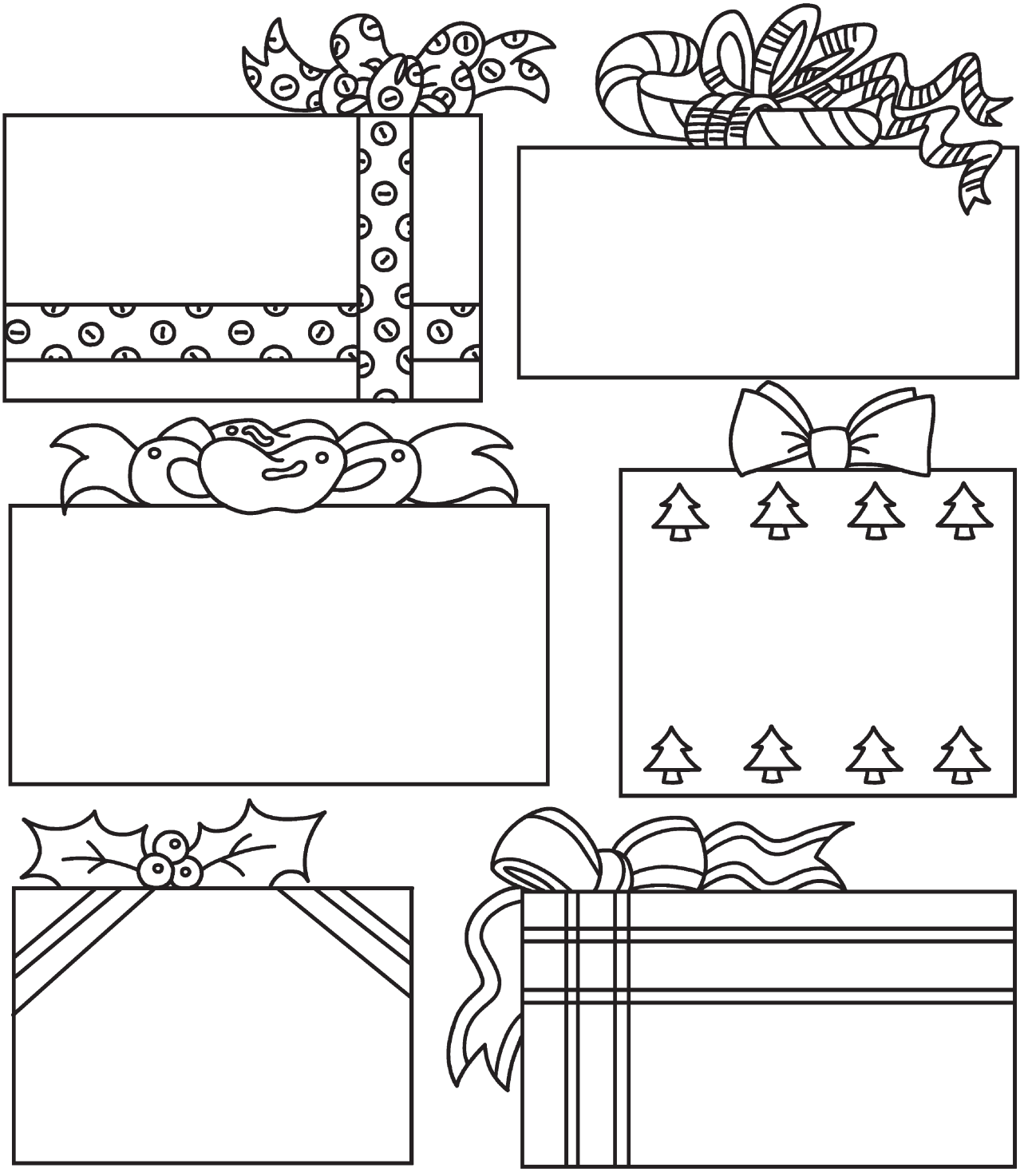
Story Picture: The Promised Gift

Before this activity, cut a 3x3-inch square of colorful gift wrap for each child.

Set out tape and the squares of gift wrap. Hand each child a photocopy of the "Today I Learned…" handout. Show children how to tape the top edge of a wrapping-paper square above the picture of baby Jesus to create a flap. The flap can then be lifted to reveal what's inside the "present"—baby Jesus! As the children work, remind them that ►*Jesus is the Savior God promised.*

Perfect Present Name Tags

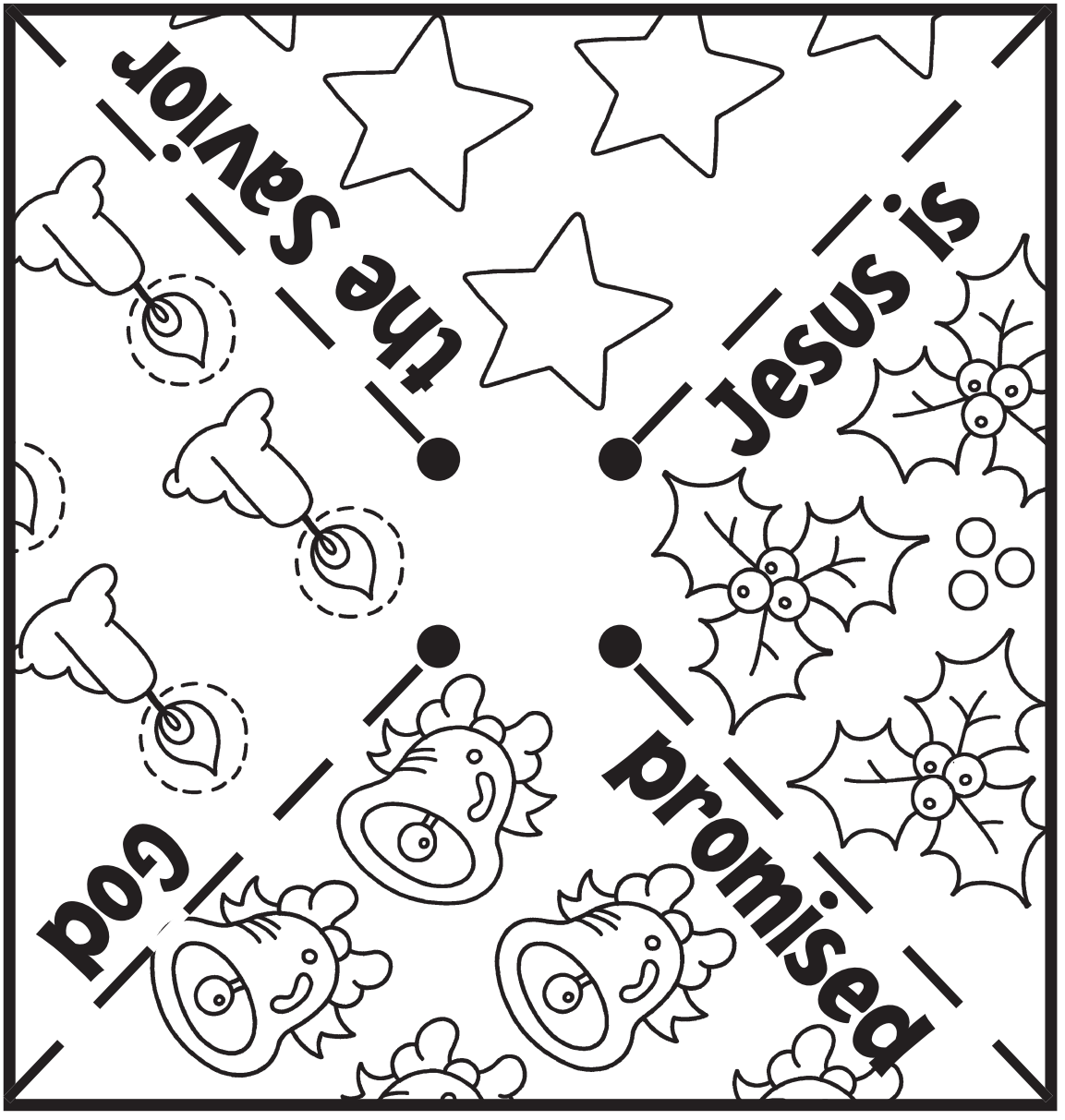
Photocopy this page and cut out the name tags. Have children decorate them and write their names on the gifts.



Permission to photocopy this handout from Group's Hands-On Bible Curriculum® Pre-K & K granted for local church use.
Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc., 1515 Cascade Avenue, Loveland, CO 80538. group.com

Pinwheel Promise

Photocopy this handout, and have children color the squares. Cut out each square, and then cut along the dotted lines, stopping at the dark circle. Fold every other corner to the center, leaving the corners with the words extended. Fasten the folded corners to a drinking straw with a paper fastener.



Permission to photocopy this handout from Group's Hands-On Bible Curriculum® Pre-K & K granted for local church use.
Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc., 1515 Cascade Avenue, Loveland, CO 80538. group.com

Today I learned...

Lesson 1

Jesus is the Savior God promised.

Today your child learned that Jesus is the Savior God promised. Children learned that God keeps his promises. They talked about the importance of keeping promises.

Verse to Learn

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15).

Ask Me...

- How is Jesus part of a promise?
- Why is it important to keep your promises to others?
- How can our family keep its promises?

Family Fun

- Make Promise Pockets for dessert. Let your child roll out refrigerator biscuits into 4-inch circles. Place five of them on a cookie sheet, and spoon apple pie filling in the center. Sprinkle the filling with a bit of cinnamon. Lay a circle of dough on top, and seal the edge with fork tines. As you work, point out that God's promises are sweet because he always keeps his promises. Bake the Promise Pockets at 350 degrees until they're golden brown. Cool, and serve them with ice cream for an extra treat.

Prophets Predict Jesus' Birth (Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7; Micah 5:2)

Permission to photocopy this handout from Group's Hands-On Bible Curriculum® Pre-K & K granted for local church use.
Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc., 1515 Cascade Avenue, Loveland, CO 80538. group.com

Teacher Guide

PRE-K & K (ages 5 & 6)

Winter

Teach as Jesus Taught!®

JESUS USED EVERYDAY OBJECTS—a mustard seed, a fig tree, a lost coin—to teach his disciples the truths that would change the world. With Hands-On Bible Curriculum, you can teach as Jesus taught, using fun surprises that children can touch, see, and smell to relate eternal truths they won't forget.

This quarter your Pre-K & K class will learn these important Bible lessons:

JESUS' BIRTH

Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7; Micah 5:2	Jesus is the Savior God promised.
Luke 2:1-7	Jesus is the Savior born in Bethlehem.
Luke 2:8-14	Jesus is the Savior the angels told about.
Luke 2:15-20	Jesus is the Savior the shepherds found.
Matthew 2:1-12	Jesus is the Savior the wise men worshipped.

JESUS' MIRACLES

John 2:1-11	Jesus can do anything.
Mark 4:35-41	Jesus can do anything.
John 6:1-15	Jesus can do anything.
Matthew 14:22-33	Jesus can do anything.

JESUS' PARABLES

Luke 8:4-15	We can help others follow Jesus.
Luke 15:11-32	We can help others by forgiving them.
Luke 10:25-37	We can help others who are hurt.
Luke 19:11-26	We can help others with what God gives us.

Also available:

MY FIRST HANDS-ON BIBLE™
FOR PRESCHOOLERS

God's Word comes alive with one-point lessons and interactive activities. It also coordinates with Hands-On Bible Curriculum!

Group

Copyright © 2016 Group Publishing, Inc.
Printed in the U.S.A.

THIS IS A SAMPLE

The number of pages is limited.

Purchase the item for the complete version.