Group

Teacher Guide

PRESCHOOL (ages 3 & 4)

Winter

Teach as Jesus Taught!®

Preschool (ages 3&4)

Teacher Guide • Winter

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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.

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.

Group®

Hands-On Bible Curriculum®, Preschool, Ages 3 & 4, Winter

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

Welcome to the Adventure!

So, you've signed up for the preschool class! These kids have a natural love for God, for you, and for everything that makes noise. They may have short attention spans, but they are still soaking up everything you show them and tell them. Whether you're a veteran or a novice, you are going to have a fun year! You can be the one who shows them the love of Jesus. What a blessing for you and for them!

Three- and four-year-olds think very concretely. They need to experience, see, touch, taste, and smell what they are learning about. They are experimenting with physical movements and making sounds. They accept much about the world that they are discovering. Jesus is as important to them as he is to you. 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 can touch firsthand!

Your children will learn best by experiencing new things. What they see and experience from you they will transfer to what Jesus is like. What they experience during activities will translate into what they know about the Bible story you are teaching them. You will change their lives as you help open 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 the children:

- **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 their 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 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 directly 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 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."

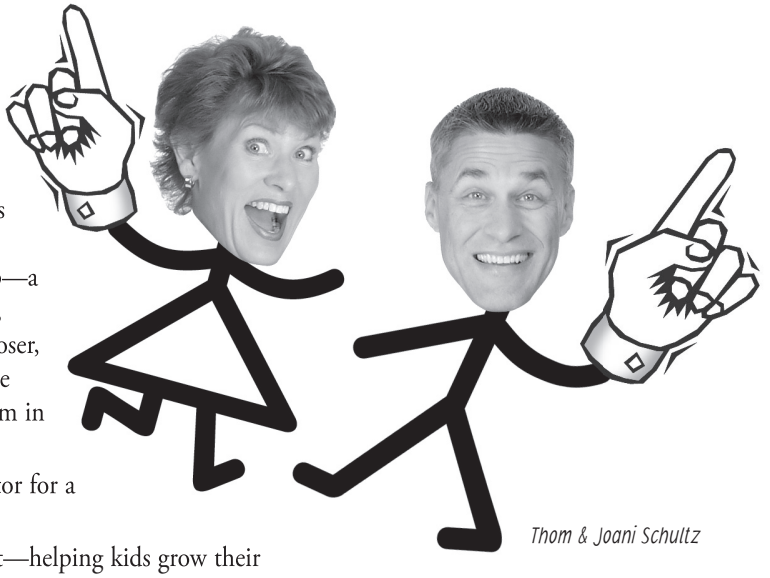
Martha was doing good work. In fact, she was serving the Lord. But Jesus made his priority for us clear. He wants to have a loving relationship with us even more than he wants us to serve him.

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.

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



Thom & Joani Schultz

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 3- and 4-Year-Olds

Physical Development

- Have lots of energy.
- Walk and run with confidence.
- Can draw recognizable shapes.
- Can work simple puzzles.

Emotional Development

- Are generally happy.
- Are influenced by the reactions of other children.
- Are sensitive to the moods and reactions of adults.

Social Development

- Boys usually play with boys, girls with girls.
- Prefer short group experiences.
- Use language in dramatic play.

Mental Development

- Can recall some facts and events.
- Can memorize stories, songs, or finger plays.
- Ask lots of questions.
- Have an attention span of no longer than 10 minutes.

Spiritual Development

- Hear and enjoy Bible stories.

Module 1

Jesus' Birth

Through the ages, people watched and waited for their Messiah to come. They'd heard from prophets like Isaiah that the Messiah would heal the sick, comfort the brokenhearted, and free the captives. Years, decades, even centuries passed. Then on one special night, God's Son entered human history. Rather than bursting onto the scene with royal fanfare, Jesus came quietly and humbly as a baby. But people took notice. Both nearby shepherds and faraway wise men recognized Jesus as God's Son. Together with Mary and Joseph, they celebrated the good news of Jesus' birth.

Three- and four-year-olds love to celebrate Jesus' birth. To them, Jesus' birth means presents and Christmas trees and special holiday treats. With all the glitter and wrapping society puts on Christmas, it's easy for little ones to lose sight of Jesus' birth. After all, children can see Santa Claus at the mall. It's not so easy to see Jesus. Use these five lessons to help preschoolers discover the true meaning of Christmas: Jesus is God's Son, and he wants to have a relationship with us.

Five Lessons on Jesus' Birth

Lesson	Bible Point	Page	Bible Basis
1	Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.	11	Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7; Micah 5:2
2	Jesus is God's Son.	27	Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38
3	Jesus is God's Son, born in a stable.	41	Luke 2:1-7
4	Angels announced that Jesus is God's Son.	55	Luke 2:8-20
5	The wise men knew that Jesus is God's Son.	67	Matthew 2:1-12

Bible Point ► Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.

Bible Verse

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

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will
- hear how Isaiah told of Jesus' birth,
- talk about things they can do as they wait for Christmas to come,
- teach Whiskers how to wait patiently, and
- thank God for sending Jesus.

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, God gave details to Isaiah and Micah about the coming Messiah to faithful people at about that time.

A baby born to a virgin—now that's something even harder to believe for most! 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, 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, the ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Isaiah 9:6-7 are probably the most-often quoted Old Testament verses 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.
- 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…

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- 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 as you teach 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.	"Shining Star Name Tags" (p. 23), scissors, marker, tape or safety pins	
Let's Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	**Option 1: Manger Hide-and-Seek—**Hunt for hidden pictures of mangers.	"Empty Mangers" handout (p. 24), scissors, crayons	
	Option 2: Gift Guess—Guess what might be inside gift boxes, and talk about waiting for Christmas.	Small boxes, wrapping and tissue paper, dried beans, rock, scissors, tape	
	Option 3: Peek-and-Seek—Make peek-and-seek cups with pictures of the manger.	"Peek-and-Seek" handout (p. 25), scissors, disposable cups, sharp pencil, crayons, glue sticks	
	Pick-Up Time—Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	**Setting the Stage—**Put hay in a manger to get ready for Jesus.	Red and green construction paper, scissors, glue, shoe box, chow mein noodles or frosted shredded wheat cereal	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time—Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story—Hear Isaiah 7:14 and 9:2-7, and learn that Isaiah told people about Jesus.	Bible	
	Do the Bible Story—Play a game and celebrate Jesus' birth.		
Closing	**Waiting for Daddy—**Teach Whiskers to wait patiently.		
	God's Son—Sing a song telling that Jesus is God's Son, and then close in prayer.	CD player	

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

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: *"Shining Star Name Tags" (p. 23), scissors, marker, 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 God's Son, promised long ago.* We're going to find out about a man named Isaiah, who lived a long time ago. Isaiah told the people to get ready for Jesus to come.**
- Give each child a photocopy of a shining star name tag. Write children's names on their name tags, and pin or tape the name tags to their clothing.
- Direct children to the Let's Get Started activities you've set up.

◄BIBLE POINT

teacher tips

You may want to laminate the name tags with clear adhesive plastic so they'll last through the module.

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 between activities to offer help as needed and to direct children's conversation toward the point of today's lesson. Ask questions such as "What do you like to do while you're waiting?" or "What are you doing to get ready for Christmas?"

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 children remember it and apply it to their lives.

Option 1: Manger Hide-and-Seek

SUPPLIES: *"Empty Mangers" handout (p. 24), scissors, crayons*

Before class, photocopy the "Empty Mangers" handout. Cut out the mangers, and hide them around the room. Let children search around the room for the mangers. Encourage them to say, "Get ready, Jesus is coming!" each time they find a manger.

After all the mangers have been found, have children count and color the mangers they've collected. As they work, ask them who will lie in the manger. Remind them that ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.*

◄BIBLE POINT

Option 2: Gift Guess

SUPPLIES: *small boxes, tissue paper, dried beans, rock, wrapping paper, scissors, tape*

Before class, wrap three different-sized small boxes to look like Christmas gifts. Put dried beans in one box, tissue paper in another, and a heavy rock in another.

Set out the boxes, and let children handle them and guess what might be inside. Encourage them to shake the boxes and compare their sizes and weights. Talk with children about what it's like to wait for Christmas to come. Remind them that Christmas is really Jesus' birthday and that ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.*

After children have all guessed, let them open the boxes and see the items inside. Be sure that children don't take the items with them.

teacher tips

If children finish this activity early, have them join the "Manger Hide-and-Seek" activity until you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time.

◄BIBLE POINT

Option 3: Peek-and-Seek

SUPPLIES: *"Peek-and-Seek" handout (p. 25), scissors, disposable cups, sharp pencil, crayons, glue sticks*

Before class, photocopy the "Peek-and-Seek" handout, and cut out the circles. Make enough copies so each child will have a manger scene. Using a sharpened pencil, poke a hole in the bottom of a disposable cup for each child.

Give children the cups and manger scenes from the "Peek-and-Seek" handout. Set out crayons and have children decorate their cups and color their mangers. Then help children spread glue along the dotted lines of their manger pictures. Show them how to set the tops of their cups firmly on top of their pictures.

Explain that they must be patient and wait for the glue to dry before they can pick up their cups and peek in the holes. Tell them that today's lesson is about a man who told people to wait patiently for Jesus to come. Remind them that ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.*

BIBLE POINT►

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

teacher tips

Three- and four-year-olds may still feel anxious about leaving their parents, so your welcoming presence is very important! If children see you smiling at the door each week, they'll soon trust you and look forward to coming to class.

Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: *CD player*

Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" (track 2) with the *CD* to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." 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.

SING

Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.
(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: *Red and green construction paper, scissors, glue, shoe box, chow mein noodles or frosted shredded wheat cereal*

See page 5.

Before class, prepare a stop-and-go sign by gluing a half-sheet of red construction paper and a half-sheet of green construction paper together back to back. You'll also need a shoe box to use as a manger. Cover the bottom of the shoe box with a layer of chow mein noodles.

Tell children you'll hold up the stop-and-go sign to get their

attention. Explain that when you show the red side, the children are to stop what they're doing and listen for your directions. When you show the green side, you'll stop talking and listen to them. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to our class today?** (Looked for mangers; guessed what was inside presents; made a picture cup.)

Say: **Some of you guessed what was inside presents, some of you made peek-and-seek cups, and some of you looked for mangers.** Show children the shoe-box manger you've brought.

Ask: • **What's missing from this manger?** (Baby Jesus; blankets; hay.)

Say: **Baby Jesus is missing from the manger. Baby ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.* Today we're going to learn about a man who told people that Jesus would come.**

People waited a long time for Jesus to come. They probably didn't expect that God's Son would sleep in a manger. A manger is a feed box where animals eat! Look here at an animal that might eat out of a manger, just like the manger Jesus slept in.

Hold up the *stuffed lamb* for everyone to see.

Ask: • **What is this animal?** (A sheep; a lamb.)

• **There might have been lambs in the stable where Jesus was born. What other animals might have been in the stable?** (Donkeys; cows; horses; mice.)

Say: **I'm sure the animals in the stable were glad to share their feed box with Jesus. Let's pretend we're the animals in the stable and we're getting ready for Jesus to come.**

Let's pretend we're sheep and say "baa." Have children respond. **Now let's pretend we're donkeys and say "heehaw."** Have children respond. **Let's eat some good hay.**

Pass the manger around, and let each child eat a few chow mein noodles. Say: **Yum, yum. This is really good hay. But don't eat all of it. We want to leave some in the manger for Jesus.**

Help children form pairs and stand in a line. Give each child a few chow mein noodles. Set the shoe-box manger across the room from the line. Say: **The animals in the stable were very nice to share their feed box and their hay with Jesus. Let's think of some nice things we can do while we're waiting for Jesus' birthday to come. Give your partner a big smile, a hug, or a pat on the back; then walk across the room and put your pieces of hay in the manger.**

Allow a few moments for children to do this. Then hold up the stop sign and wait for children to respond.

Ask: • **What does your family do to celebrate Jesus' birthday?** (We get presents; go to church; sing Christmas songs.)

• **What's it like to wait for Jesus' birthday to come?** (It's hard to wait for my presents; fun, because you get to see Santa Claus.)

Say: **Many families give Christmas presents to each other to celebrate Jesus' birthday. But we can give presents to Jesus, too—after all, it's his birthday! While we're waiting for Christmas to come, we can give Jesus presents by doing nice things and helping others. Let's bring out our Bible now and hear a story about how people waited for Jesus' birthday a long time ago.**

◄BIBLE POINT

teacher tips

An attention-getting signal will let children know when it's time to stop what they're doing and look at you. Each week remind the children about your signal and practice it together. Soon, regaining their attention will become a familiar classroom ritual.

teacher tips

If your church collects empty oatmeal boxes, you can make a neat manger by cutting a 5x7-inch rectangle out of the side of an oatmeal box. Glue the rectangle to the uncut side of the box to make a stand for the manger. If you have time, you may want to paint or wrap the box to cover the label.

Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: *Bible, CD player*

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 week one of you will get to be the Bible person. Before I choose today's Bible person, let's learn our Bible song. As we sing, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

teacher tips

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

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" (track 3) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.

SING

I'm so glad for the Bible.
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible.
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.

Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.

(Repeat first verse.)

teacher tips

Include more children each week by asking others to be 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.

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Lead the class in clapping for the Bible person, cheering, and making fun applause sound effects by slapping your thighs with your palms. Stamp the child's hand with the *manger stamp* and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *manger stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for** [name of child who brought the Bible]**, and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Each of you is a special part of our class! Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" (track 4) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."

SING

I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.

■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible

Before the lesson, cut around the solid lines of *Joseph's coat* from the Learning Lab (the outline and the hole for the child's head). Set aside until needed in the lesson.

Open the Bible to Isaiah 7, and show it to the children. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Isaiah in the Bible. Our *Bible Big Book* shows us pictures of our Bible story.**

Open the *Bible Big Book: Jesus' Birth* to page 1, and show children the picture of Isaiah telling the people that Jesus will come. Say: **This man's name is Isaiah. You can remember his name by saying "eye"** *(point to your eye)* **"say-a"** *(point to your mouth)***. Let's try that together.** Have children respond.

Isaiah was one of God's special messengers. A messenger is someone who tells important news. Isaiah lived a long time before Jesus was born, but he knew that Jesus is God's Son. He told people that Jesus was coming.

The people were expecting a grown-up to come and help them. But God sent Jesus as a baby, and the people had to wait for him to grow up. Waiting patiently is hard to do! Tell me about a time you had to wait a long time for something. (I had to wait for my big sister to get ready for church; I had to wait a long time until my birthday party.)

Let's see how hard it is for us to wait patiently.

Hold up *Joseph's coat*. Say: **Everyone will get a chance to wear this coat, but you'll have to wait your turn. While you're waiting, stand on one foot. When you're wearing the coat, you can stand on both feet.**

Have one child wear the coat and share what he or she wants for Christmas. Then pass the coat to the next child. After everyone has a turn, ask:

- **How did you feel when you were trying to stand on one foot?** (Tired; tipsy; it was too hard.)
- **Why was it hard to wait for your turn?** (I had to be patient; I wanted to wear the coat; I was falling over.)

Say: **It can be hard to wait when we are standing on one foot, even for just a few minutes. Isaiah told people that Jesus was coming, and they had to wait a really long time! But the people were willing to wait, because ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.***

Isaiah was telling the people to get ready for Jesus to come. Isaiah knew that Jesus is God's Son. He knew Jesus would be able to help the people.

One way Jesus helps us is by saving us. Our Bible verse is from 1 Timothy, and it tells us, ►"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." A sinner is anyone who does something wrong. So this means that Jesus came to save all of us! Let's do motions with this verse to help us remember it.

Lead children in doing the following motions as you say the verse together.

Christ Jesus *(point up)*
Came into the world *(make arms and hands into a large circle to represent the world)*
To save sinners. *(Hug arms around self.)*

Repeat several times to help children remember the verse and understand its meaning.

teacher tips

Using a special Bible for this section of the lesson each week will make Bible time memorable for the children. For example, you could use the *Hands-On Bible*® or a Bible with gold-edged pages.

teacher tips

Be sure to emphasize to children that the story comes from the Bible, God's Word.

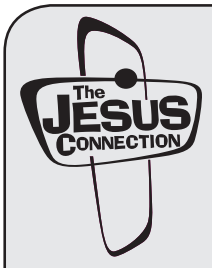
◄**BIBLE POINT**

◄**BIBLE VERSE**

Say: **We can tell people about Jesus, too, just as Isaiah did. Let's practice that now. I'll say a way Jesus helps people, and you tell me, "Get ready, Jesus is coming!"**

Read the following statements. Pause after each one, and let children respond by saying, "Get ready, Jesus is coming!"

- **Jesus keeps us safe.**
- **Jesus came to save us.**
- **Jesus teaches us.**
- **Jesus takes care of us.**
- **Jesus loves us.**



Say: **Everything I've said about Jesus is true. Jesus is our friend, and he loves us very much. I'm going to say these same things again, and this time, instead of saying, "Get ready, Jesus is coming!" let's say, "Jesus is our friend!"**

Read the previous statements. Pause after each one, and let children respond by saying, "Jesus is our friend!"

Then have children fold their hands and bow their heads to pray.

Pray: **Dear Jesus, thank you for being our friend and for helping us in so many ways. Amen.**

Say: ►***Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.*** **God sent messengers like Isaiah to tell people that Jesus was coming. We can tell people about Jesus, too, and remind them that Christmas is Jesus' birthday. Let's play a game about that now.**

■ *Do the Bible Story*

SUPPLIES: *none*

Have everyone stand up. Say: **Wiggle all over. Turn around once, and stretch your arms up to the sky. Now put your hands around your ears and listen to find out how to play our Baby's in the Manger game.**

I need one person to be the "Baby." Choose a child to be the Baby, and then continue: **The rest of us will stand in a circle and walk around** [name of child in center] **as we sing our "Baby's in the Manger" song.**

Walk around the child in the center as you sing the first and second verses of "The Baby's in the Manger" to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell." At the second verse, invite the child in the center to pick someone to join him or her as Isaiah. Repeat the game as time allows so that each child has a turn in the center. This song is not on the *CD*.

The baby's in the manger.
The baby's in the manger.
Hip-hip hooray, we're glad today
The baby's in the manger.

Isaiah told the people.
Isaiah told the people.
Hip-hip hooray, we're glad today
Isaiah told the people.

Jesus is God's Son.
Jesus is God's Son.
Hip-hip hooray, we're glad today
Jesus is God's Son.

teacher tips

You'll be amazed to discover how much your children have learned as they share the lesson with Whiskers. Even children who are shy around adults will open up to Whiskers.

You can purchase Whiskers in your local Christian bookstore or directly from Group Publishing by visiting group.com.

Closing

■ *Waiting for Daddy*

SUPPLIES: *none*

Have children sit in a circle. Say: **Let's see how patiently we can wait for Whiskers the Mouse to come visit us today.**

Let the children get comfortable, and wait until they're sitting quietly. Then bring out Whiskers the Mouse, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.

Whiskers: Hi, I'm glad to see all of you here today. I love to come and visit you. Sometimes it's hard for me to wait for our visits.

Teacher: Was it hard for you to wait today, Whiskers?

Whiskers: It sure was! My mommy told me to get ready to go, so I got all ready. Then when my daddy went out to start the car, it wouldn't go. We had to wait a long time while he tried to fix it.

Teacher: What was it like to wait for your dad to fix the car?

Whiskers: It was so hard. I started to whine and cry because I was ready to go, and I didn't want to wait any longer. *(To the children)* What do you do when you have to wait a long time? *(Children might respond that they draw pictures, tell stories, or hop up and down excitedly.)* I kept telling my daddy to hurry up and fix the car. He said he was trying to fix it, but it still didn't work. So I started screaming.

Teacher: Did screaming make the car get fixed any faster?

Whiskers: *(Shaking head sadly)* No. But it was so hard to wait because I really wanted to come visit my friends. I was afraid I'd miss our time together.

Teacher: Children, instead of screaming, what could Whiskers have done while he was waiting? *(Children might suggest that Whiskers could have looked at a book, played in his room, or offered to help his dad.)* Whiskers, we heard a story about some people who waited a very long time.

Whiskers: What were they waiting for?

Teacher: Why don't you ask your friends? *(Lead children in telling Whiskers how the people waited for Jesus to come and help them.)* ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.* People had to wait for years and years for him to come. Finally, he came. Christmas is the time we celebrate Jesus' birthday.

Whiskers: I'm excited for Christmas to come, but I'll try to wait patiently. Goodbye! I'll see you next week.

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God's Son

SUPPLIES: CD player

Lay the *garland* in a circle on the floor, and have children sit in a circle around it. Point to the *garland* and ask:

• **What do you use this for?** (To decorate our Christmas tree; to make our house look pretty; my mom puts it on presents.)

Say: **Most people use garlands to prepare their homes for Christmas. It helps us feel excited about Christmas. Let's shake this bright, shiny *garland* while we sing a new song. We can use the *garland* and our voices to show we're excited that ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.***

BIBLE POINT►

Lead children in singing "God's Son" (John 20:31) (track 5) with the *CD* to the tune of "London Bridge." Let children hold the *garland* and shake it as they sing.

SING

Jesus is the Son of God,
Son of God,
Son of God.
Jesus is the Son of God.
He is God's Son.

If you believe, then you'll have life,
You'll have life,
You'll have life.
If you believe, then you'll have life.
He is God's Son.

Put the *garland* away, and then say: **I'm glad we don't have to wait years and years for Jesus' birthday to come. Let's thank God for sending Jesus.** Pray: **Dear God, thanks for sending Jesus to help us. We're excited about his birthday. Help us wait patiently for Christmas to come. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Collect name tags for next week's use, and remind children to take home any crafts they made today. Save the stop-and-go sign for use throughout the quarter.

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 the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.

For Extra Time

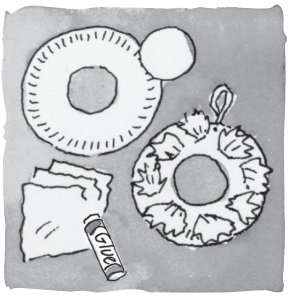
If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

Lively Learning: Wait Ball

Have children form two lines facing each other, as shown at left. Give the first child in one line a foam ball or other very soft ball. Have that child throw the ball to the first child in the other line and then go to the end of his or her line. Continue until each child has had a turn; then talk about what it was like to wait for a turn.

Repeat the game, but this time lead waiting children in a fun action or movement such as hopping, jumping, or running in place. After everyone has had a turn, talk with children about what it was like to do something while they were waiting. Talk about what it's like to wait for something good. Remind children that people had to wait a long time for Jesus to come.

Make to Take: Paper-Plate Wreaths



Before class, cut red and green tissue or crepe paper into 3-inch squares, and cut the centers out of paper plates. You'll need one paper plate, one piece of ribbon, and at least 20 tissue paper squares for each child.

Give children each a paper-plate rim, and help them punch a hole in it using a hole punch. Show each child how to thread a ribbon through the hole. Have a helper tie the ribbons to create loops to hang the finished wreaths.

Show children how to wad up the red and green tissue paper squares and glue them to their plates. Tell children they can hang up their wreaths as reminders that Christmas is coming. As they work, have them name things they'll do while they're waiting for Christmas.

Treat to Eat: Shredded Wheat Mangers

Give each child a paper or plastic bowl, several animal cookies, and a handful of shredded wheat squares. Show children how to break up the shredded wheat and place it in their bowls as hay. Have children line up their animal cookies around their "mangers." Explain that a manger is a feed box for animals. Talk about what it might have been like for baby Jesus to sleep in the manger. If children want to eat their mangers, pass out spoons and offer to pour milk on the shredded wheat. As they're eating, remind them that baby ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.*

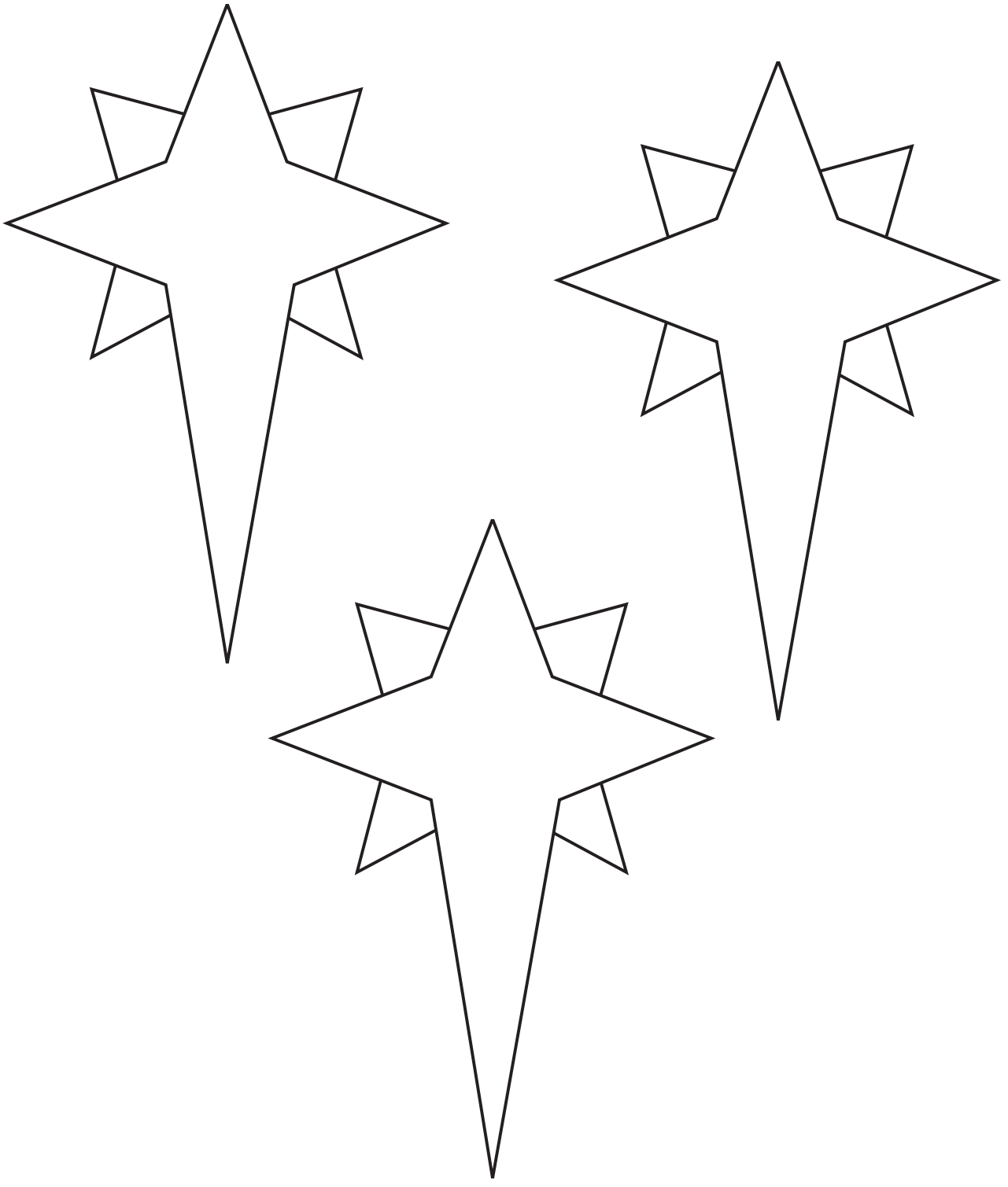
See page 5.

Story Picture: Isaiah Tells People That Jesus Is Coming

Give each child a copy of the "Today I Learned…" handout and several small adhesive bandages. Have children attach the bandages to people in their pictures who look sick or hurt. Then have children color their pictures. As they work, review the details of today's Bible story. Remind children that ►*Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.*

Shining Star Name Tags

Photocopy and cut out the name tags.



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Empty Mangers

Photocopy and cut out the mangers. You'll need at least two mangers for each child.

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Peek-and-Seek

Photocopy and cut out the manger scenes. You'll need one for each child.

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Today I learned...

Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.

Lesson 1

Today your child learned that **JESUS IS GOD'S SON, PROMISED LONG AGO.** Children heard how Isaiah told people that Jesus would come. They talked about what it's like to wait and practiced waiting patiently.

Help me learn this:

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

Ask me:

- Why did people want Jesus to come?
- How can you be patient while you wait for Christmas?
- How can our family get ready to celebrate Jesus' birthday?

Family Fun

- Have a family meeting. Ask each family member, "What's your favorite part about getting ready for Christmas?" Let each person choose one activity, and work together to do those things this week.
- Help fill the waiting time between now and Christmas by making Christmas cards for friends and family members. Make your own cards using craft supplies you have at home, or take a special shopping trip to pick out a few cards.

Isaiah Tells People That Jesus Is Coming (Isaiah 9:2-7)

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Teacher Guide

PRESCHOOL (ages 3 & 4)

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 Preschoolers will learn these important Bible lessons:

Jesus' Birth

Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7; Micah 5:2	Jesus is God's Son, promised long ago.
Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38	Jesus is God's Son.
Luke 2:1-7	Jesus is God's Son, born in a stable.
Luke 2:8-20	Angels announced that Jesus is God's Son.
Matthew 2:1-12	The wise men knew that Jesus is God's Son.

Jesus Cares

Luke 5:17-26	Jesus cares for people.
Luke 8:40-56	Jesus cares about families.
John 9:1-11, 35-38	Jesus cares about all kinds of people.
Luke 17:11-19	Jesus cares about people who are sick.

Jesus Loves Us

John 10:3-4, 14-15; Isaiah 43:1	Jesus loves us and knows our names.
Luke 15:1-7	Jesus loves us and keeps us safe.
Psalm 23	Jesus loves us and gives us what we need.
Psalm 23; Matthew 18:10-14	Jesus loves us and wants us to follow him.

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!

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