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WINTER SUNDAY SCHOOL GRADES 3&4 TEACHER GUIDE



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FaithWeaver NOW® Bible Curriculum, Grades 3 & 4, Winter

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2017 edition

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* Due to the way Christmas falls, we recommend shifting lessons as needed so Lesson 3 lines up with Christmas.

The future of Sunday school + family ministry is NOW.



No doubt about it, the world is changing. Families used to go to church every week. Kids used to have longer attention spans. Teachers used to have more time to prepare. And didn't our budgets used to be bigger?

Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date. But there's one thing that's never changed: the need to grow families closer to Jesus.

That's why we created FaithWeaver NOW®, and it's different from anything you've ever seen before!

It combines Sunday school with family ministry. ■■■■

Sure, you've seen Sunday school aimed at families. But FaithWeaver NOW actually hits the target by having everyone in the family learning about the same Scripture each week.

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It's made for NOW. ■■■■

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- Families learn the same Bible point in age-appropriate ways.
- Kids don't just hear the Word. They experience it.
- Simple and easy lessons fit even the busiest lives.
- Kids see God in their everyday world.
- The Scope & Sequence covers the whole Bible in three years.
- You can customize it however you like, with both print and digital versions.



Create a vibrant family ministry that's new...that's wow...that's NOW. FaithWeaver NOW gives you a fresh strategy for being more successful than ever in bringing families closer to Jesus.

Thom Schultz Joani Schultz

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






John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus

Mark 1:1-8

Most third- and fourth-graders have helped their parents get ready for company. Usually this involves a lot of action. They might help move small furniture. They clean their rooms. Getting ready for Jesus involves similar preparation. It's easy for kids to see that getting ready for Jesus means taking action. Use this lesson to help kids also see that getting ready for Jesus doesn't necessarily involve doing good things, but involves a change of attitude.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Banana Anna <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Try to draw a surprise based on simple clues.	bananas (1 per person), paper, markers, antibacterial gel (optional)	Hide a banana where kids won't see it.
2 Bible Exploration	Reading the Clues <i>(about 25 min.)</i> Create pictures from clues given in the Bible about Jesus; then act in unusual ways—just like John did.	Bibles, CD player, paper, colored pencils or markers, construction paper, scissors, tape Teacher Pack: CD, "Clue" cards, Bible Timeline 	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.




► **Bible Point**
We prepare our hearts for Jesus.

Key Verse
"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will discover ways to get ready for Jesus.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Guess Who's Coming <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Analyze clues to figure out who is being depicted.	Bible Truth Sleuth, paper, pens	Tear out the Lesson 1 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	A Pure Heart <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Sing a song to learn the Key Verse.	Bible Truth Sleuth, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), CD player, pens Teacher Pack: CD	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Truth Sleuth	Tear out the letter to parents from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*

John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus

Mark 1:1-8

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Brings Good News

Mark saw Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection as the beginning of the gospel. The word *gospel*, derived from the Old English *godspel*, means "good news."

Prophets Foretold About Jesus

As Mark began his Gospel, he launched into a quotation from the Old Testament. By connecting what he was saying about Jesus with the words of the prophets, Mark built validity for his own message in the minds of his Jewish readers.

Some question why Mark said the quotation is from Isaiah when in reality the first part is from Malachi 3:1. Mark is mentioning together two quotations on the same topic, and crediting both to Isaiah would have been acceptable for Mark's audience.

By using the quotation from Isaiah in Mark 1:3, Mark emphasized the kingly nature of Jesus. In those days, a servant often traveled ahead of a king to alert people that the king was coming.

John the Baptist Comes Before Jesus

The last half of this passage shows that John the Baptist did what was prophesied in the Old Testament: He came to prepare the way—more specifically, the people—for Jesus’ coming. As people repented in response to John’s preaching and confessed their sins, their hearts were prepared to accept their coming King.

John the Baptist's choice of clothing was not accidental: He likely was identifying himself with the prophet Elijah, who dressed the same way (2 Kings 1:8). His was the clothing of the poor, and his food

was also that of the very poor. John was humbling himself, knowing how great the coming Jesus would be. In those days, it was the job of the lowest servant to untie a visitor's sandals and wash his feet. John let people know that as eloquent and persuasive as his preaching might be, he was the lowest of the low in comparison with the glory of the coming Savior, Jesus.

The Jesus Connection

At Christmas, we anticipate the birth of Jesus. His birth, death, and resurrection make our lives in heaven possible. There is always much to do before Christmas. But Jesus cares more about our hearts than about gifts and decorations. We can prepare our hearts by turning from actions and attitudes that distract us from Jesus. What do you need to turn from? You can write your prayer here.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Banana Anna Supplies

bananas (1 per person)
paper
markers
antibacterial gel
(optional)

! ALLERGY ■ ALERT

Banana Anna Easy Prep

Hide a banana where kids won't see it.

1

GETTING STARTED

Banana Anna

What You'll Do ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **I'm expecting a special surprise...but so far it hasn't arrived.** Give kids paper and markers.

A special surprise will arrive soon. In order to get ready for the arrival of this surprise, let's learn a little bit about it first. I'll describe the surprise, and I want you to draw a picture of it. There are a few rules, though. You must listen to the entire description before you draw. You'll have only the information I'll give you. You can't ask any questions, so listen closely. I'll tell you when you can start drawing, and you'll have only two minutes to draw. **Is everyone ready?** Pause. **Let's get started!**

The surprise comes from very far away. Pause. **It's thin and very rich.** Pause. **It's been on television and in at least one movie.** Pause. **It can disappear very quickly.**

Okay, you only have two minutes to draw your pictures, so you'll have to draw fast. Are you ready? Pause. **Go!** After two minutes, retrieve the banana from its hiding place but don't let kids see it yet.

I'm happy to say our special surprise has arrived! I'm pleased to introduce you to (pause and pull out the banana) **Banana Anna!**

Now let's take a look at how your pictures compare with Banana Anna. Our first description was that bananas come from very far away. Bananas come from tropical countries, so they have to be shipped here. The second clue was that bananas are thin. Well, if you look at Banana Anna, you will see that it is quite thin. Our third clue was that bananas are very rich. Bananas are rich in nutrients. The next clue was that the banana has been on television and in at least one movie. You can see bananas in TV commercials, and there have been funny movies made in which people slip on banana peels. Our last clue was that a banana could disappear very quickly. If you watch closely, you'll see that happen. Have kids clean their hands, and then give a banana to each child. Allow kids to peel and eat the bananas.

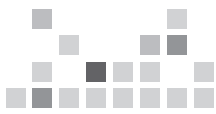
Talk With Kids ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How accurate were your sketches of the surprise? Explain.
- What would have helped you draw a more accurate sketch?





- Why do you or don't you think the description you were given helped you prepare for the surprise?

Say: Today we're going to learn about John the Baptist and what he did to try to help people get ready for the arrival of the Messiah—the person God promised to send to save humanity. Jesus is the Messiah, but because of John's description of Jesus people didn't recognize him when he finally came. As a result, they weren't ready for him. Today we'll explore the ways ► **WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS** and why that's important.

2**BIBLE
EXPLORATION**

Reading the Clues

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids sit in a circle. Show them the Bible Timeline, and invite kids to find and point to the "John Baptizes Jesus" picture.

Say: Today we're looking at the event at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. To get started, let's look in the Bible at the book of Mark.

Invite a willing child to read aloud Mark 1:1-4.

Say: John the Baptist was the messenger sent ahead of Jesus to tell people to get ready for Jesus' arrival.

Ask:

- John said that asking for forgiveness and turning away from sin—doing wrong—is part of preparing for Jesus. Why do you think those things are important?

Invite another willing child to read aloud Mark 1:5-8.

Say: Baptism is a way to show you're ready for Jesus. During a baptism people are dipped under water to show that they're being cleansed of their sins. Even though Jesus never sinned, Jesus wanted to be baptized, too.

Now let's look at a passage from the book of Isaiah that gives clues about Jesus. Invite a willing child to read aloud Isaiah 40:1-5.

Ask:

- What about the passage from Isaiah gives hints about Jesus?
- From the descriptions of Jesus we've read, why do or don't you think you'd be able to recognize Jesus if you saw him?



Reading the Clues Supplies

Bibles
CD player
paper
colored pencils or
markers
construction paper
scissors
tape
Teacher Pack
CD: "Circus Music"
(track 2)
"Clue" cards
Bible Timeline





Say: **When people heard John talking about Jesus, they were very excited. They thought that a mighty warrior or powerful king was coming to save them. Imagine their surprise when Jesus, their Messiah, was born in a stable! Jesus didn't come as the people expected him to.**

Maybe if they'd gathered clues before Jesus arrived they'd have recognized him more easily. Let's look at some Bible verses and create pictures with the clues about Jesus.

Have kids form three groups. Set out construction paper, colored pencils or markers, scissors, and tape. Give each group a Bible and a "Clue" card (title side up), and tell kids not to look at the cards yet.

Say: **Each group will read the Bible passage or verse on your card and discuss what the clue about Jesus was. After you've identified the clue, create a picture that shows what the clue is. You can draw a picture, cut out shapes from construction paper to tape to your picture, or come up with any creative way you can think of to make your picture. Any questions?** Answer any questions about the directions, and then allow kids five minutes to work.

Say: **John the Baptist really wanted people to be ready for Jesus.**

Ask:

- **Why do you think it was important for John to help people be ready to meet Jesus?**
- **After reading the clues about Jesus, why do you think people were excited to hear he was coming?**

Say: **Believing in Jesus is the most important thing we can do. And we can prepare our hearts for him. This was something very important to John. In fact, he devoted his whole life to telling people about Jesus. But here's the thing: John was a little different than most people. Read aloud Mark 1:6.**

Say: **I'm going to play some funny music. As it plays, act like someone who's a little different than most people. You might talk with your teeth clenched, walk backward, or flip your hair in front of your face. Play "Circus Music" (track 2 on the CD), and let kids act strangely. When the music stops, have kids sit down.**

Talk With Kids ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

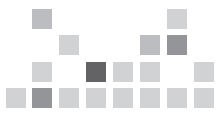
Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think John's unusual behavior showed about his message?**
- **After hearing John talk and seeing how he lived, what do you think was most important to him? Explain.**
- **What do you think it means to get ready for Jesus?**

Say: ► **WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS by having the right attitude and being willing to let Jesus clean up our lives. When our hearts are ready, we can**





have a relationship with Jesus and grow closer to God, just as John said. Jesus wants to have a relationship with us because he loves us. Let's play a game to explore what it might mean to us to prepare our hearts for a relationship with Jesus.

3**WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE**

Guess Who's Coming

What You'll Do

Have kids return to their three groups from the previous activity. Have each group select a leader who will report back to the entire group.

Say: **We've learned from the Bible that John gave clues to help people prepare for Jesus' coming. Pretend we have a very special guest coming for dinner. You don't know who the guest is, but you're going to figure that out with some clues.**

I'll give you three clues, one at a time. After each clue, your group will have 30 seconds to come up with ideas about who you think the guest might be. Then I'll ask each group's leader to report what the group has decided. After we figure out who the special guest is, your group will decide what special preparations you'd need to make for this person. The person could be real or fictional.

Have kids sit together in their groups, and give each group a piece of paper and a pen.

Play three rounds of the game, giving the following clues in each round. Pause for 30 seconds after each clue to give groups a chance to figure out who it is. After 30 seconds, ask each leader to report quietly in your ear who his or her group thought was coming, and then continue with the next clue. When a group guesses the correct answer based on the clues you give about the guest, congratulate that group.

Then have groups make a list of things they'd need to do to prepare for this person to arrive. For example, for President Abraham Lincoln they might set the table for a nice banquet; for Eve they might make a fruit salad; and for Batman they could bring fast food from a restaurant that's open late. It's okay if groups come up with the same preparations. Repeat the process for the second and third guests in the following list.

Round One clues: The person 1) is tall; 2) is bearded; 3) was an American president.

Answer: Abraham Lincoln

Round Two clues: The person 1) is a woman; 2) disobeyed; 3) talked with a serpent.

Answer: Eve

Round Three clues: The person 1) wears a mask and costume; 2) is a man; 3) fights criminals at night from the shadows. Answer: Batman



Guess Who's Coming Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
paper
pens

Guess Who's Coming Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 1
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.





When groups have come up with a list of preparations for the third guest, have them discuss these questions in their groups:

Ask:

- **Why do we prepare differently for different guests?**
- **What clues would help you to know that your guest was going to be Jesus?**

Distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Jesus Preparations" section. Say: **Work with your group now to list things you would do if you knew Jesus was coming to visit you. You can either write your list or draw a picture of what you would do.**

Give groups a few minutes to finish their lists or pictures, and then have the leader from each group share the group's ideas with everyone.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **When Jesus comes into our lives, what can we do to prepare for him?**
- **Why do you think Jesus is worthy of such special preparation?**

Say: **When ► WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS, we can examine the sin in our lives and decide we want to leave it behind and follow Jesus. In Psalm 51:10 David writes, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." We can ask God to do that in our lives. In fact, I have a song we can sing about it as a prayer to God.**

A Pure Heart

What You'll Do ■■■■

Have kids repeat the Key Verse, Psalm 51:10, with you a couple of times, **"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).**

Say: **Let's sing a song to help us remember this verse and make it a prayer to God.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) (track 3 on the CD). Lead children in singing.



**Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.**

(Repeat from the beginning.)

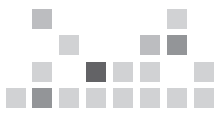
A Pure Heart Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
copies of the lyrics page
(at the end of this
lesson)

CD player
pens

Teacher Pack

CD: "Create in Me a
Pure Heart" (Psalm
51:10) (track 3)



So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.
Before you, Lord.
Clean before you, Lord.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God.

"Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Ask:

- What do you think it means to have a pure heart?

Have children find the "Pure Heart" section on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages.

Say: **Draw a picture of a heart, and then write one thing that helps make our hearts ready for Jesus.**

Again play "Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) (track 3 on the CD) while the kids work.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell about the things you drew or wrote in the hearts on your Bible Truth Sleuth pages that'll help you get ready for Jesus.
- What can you do with your heart drawing to help you remember the ways you can get ready for Jesus?

Say: John the Baptist told the truth when he said Jesus was coming to be with the people. And if you ask Jesus to be your Savior, he's with you, too. He's in your life when you're at home, at school, with your family and friends—everywhere. And by doing what we've learned today about preparing our hearts, ► **WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS.**

4

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: Let's think about ways that ► **WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS.** These challenges will be helpful reminders to us this week.



Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth





Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

Tear out the letter to parents from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Examine the sin in your life, and ask God to help you overcome the temptations to sin.**
- **Invite someone to church so he or she can experience a relationship with Jesus.**
- **Talk to your family about what it means to prepare your heart for Jesus as you begin preparing for Christmas.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **John the Baptist showed us that we get to have a relationship with Jesus when ► WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR JESUS. Following through on our Daily Challenges this week is a great way to start.**

Weaving Faith at Home

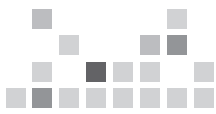
Send the letter to parents home with your kids or give it to parents when they pick up their children. This is a great way to show families they're important to your church and to support their role as spiritual leaders to their children.

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about getting ready for Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Say: **We're going to close our time with a prayer. I'll start the prayer, and then you'll find a partner and ask Jesus to help you turn away from sins this week. You can say a specific sin you'd like to turn from or just ask Jesus to help you change your heart. Then I'll end the prayer when partners have finished praying.**

Pray: **Dear Jesus, thank you for coming into our lives. We want to make our hearts ready for you and help others prepare for you.** Allow about a minute for kids to find partners and pray. Close with: **We bring these prayers to you in your name, amen.**



Lyrics

Create in Me a Pure Heart (Psalm 51:10)

Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

So I can be holy,
So I can be clean before you, Lord.
Before you, Lord.
Clean before you, Lord.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, O God.

"Create in Me a Pure Heart" (Psalm 51:10) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



 **OK**
TO COPY







God Dwells With Us

John 1:1-14

Third- and fourth-graders are beginning to grasp that people have depth. They can understand that the people they meet think, feel, and act on their own. It can be very easy to oversimplify who Jesus is. Fight the urge to oversimplify, and help kids understand that Jesus was a rational man who lived for a purpose. Use this lesson to help children grasp the fact that Jesus has thoughts and feelings, both as God and as a man.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Living Sculptures (about 15 min.) Form “living sculptures” by shaping clay kids into various things.	Bible, copy of the “Living Sculptures” handout (at the end of this lesson), scissors	Cut apart the slips from the “Living Sculptures” handout.
2 Bible Exploration	Act It Out (about 15 min.) Explore Isaiah’s prophecy about what the Messiah would do.	Bible, Bible Truth Sleuth, pens Teacher Pack: “Act It Out” cards 	Tear out the Lesson 2 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Dough for It! (about 15 min.) Create sculptures portraying a prophecy about Jesus, and then discuss their sculptures.	Bibles, clay for each child, pens, CD player, Bible Truth Sleuth, several pairs of scissors Teacher Pack: CD, Bible Timeline 	

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



► Bible Point

Jesus is God.


Key Verse

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will discover that Jesus is God in human form.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Star Power <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Listen to a drama, and then discuss how Jesus set aside his glory to be on earth.	Bibles, CD player, Bible Truth Sleuth Teacher Pack: CD	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.

God Dwells With Us

John 1:1-14

In the Beginning the Word Was With God

The first sentence of the book of John recalls Genesis 1:1. In this first section of his Gospel, John outlines the topic he explores throughout the entire book: The Word—Jesus—was human, was divine, and came to provide salvation for all who believe.

Even in the original Greek, the emphasis in the first sentence isn't on the subject, "the Word." Instead it's on "the beginning." John wanted to make it clear that Jesus himself was present in the beginning, before the creation of the world. The fact that John says Jesus was "with God" makes it clear that he is distinct from the Father, but John then says that Jesus "was God," also making it clear that he is fully divine.

“The Word” is a title given to Jesus in the Bible only by John. John sees Jesus as the ultimate revelation of God—the Word of God in human form.

Jesus Was Active in Creation

In emphasizing that Jesus is God, John points out in verse 3 that Jesus was active in Creation. Thus we have a picture of the Trinity at work in Creation: The Father spoke, and through the acting of the Word, his words were carried out as the Spirit moved upon the waters. Though Jesus, as God incarnate, was physically born at a point in time, the Word exists eternally as God. John leaves no doubt in his readers' minds that Jesus is fully divine.

In Jesus, God Became Flesh and Blood

In verse 14, John points out that the Word, God himself, didn't come to earth just to teach people or to live among people, but he came as flesh—a human being with all the struggles and temptations we face.

However, in becoming flesh, the Word did not cease to be God. Jesus was fully God and fully human. For the benefit of doubters, John essentially says “We know it’s true because we’ve seen him.” Jesus revealed the glory of God himself to people on earth. God has done it all for us. All we need to do is believe.

The Jesus Connection

Fully God and fully man, Jesus lived with people on this earth 2,000 years ago. He died, he came back to life, and he lives with us today. That's reason to celebrate!

God isn't far off from our concerns and our daily lives. Jesus Christ lives within us. Are you living with the full awareness of Jesus' presence in your life? Thank Jesus for being your friend, and seek ways you can be more fully aware of his companionship and counsel. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Living Sculptures Supplies

Bibles
copy of the “Living
Sculptures” handout
(at the end of this
lesson)
scissors

Living Sculptures Easy Prep

Cut apart the slips from
the “Living Sculptures”
handout.

1

GETTING STARTED

Living Sculptures

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

When everyone has arrived, have kids form trios and give each group one of the slips from the “Living Sculptures” handout. Tell the groups to keep what’s on their paper secret from other groups. If a group wants to choose a different option and you have extra slips, that’s fine.

Say: **With your groups you’ll make living sculptures. One person will be the “clay” and the other two will be the sculptors. The sculptors will form the clay into the object listed on your slip of paper. When you have finished making your sculptures, we’ll have the sculptors from the other groups try to guess what you’ve made. Ready? Pause. Go!**

After kids have created their sculptures and have taken turns guessing, have them alternate roles until each person has had a chance to be the clay.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **When you were the clay, what was it like to have someone move you around and make you be something else?**
- **When you were the sculptor, what was it like to make someone into something else?**

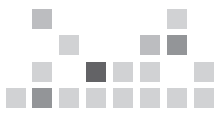
Make sure everyone has a Bible, and help kids find the Key Verse, John 1:14. Invite a willing child to read the verse aloud: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Say: **This verse calls Jesus “the Word,” and it says he “became flesh,” meaning he became human to live with us. Jesus took on the human form—sculpted by God—so he could be like us and live with us.**

Ask:

- **What about the sculpting game we played helps you understand how Jesus took on a different form so he could live like us and with us?**
- **Why do you think it was important for Jesus to be human in order to live with us?**





Say: ► **JESUS IS GOD** in human form, and his coming to earth to live among us shows us how much he loves us. Let's look further into the Bible to discover more!

.....

2**BIBLE
EXPLORATION**

Act It Out

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Jesus' human life started just like any of ours did. He was born a baby and grew up like anyone else in Bible times. ► JESUS IS GOD** in human form but he lived a very humble life as the son of a carpenter named Joseph. Jesus didn't grow up in a palace or in a rich family. Let's look at things people commonly do today to get an idea of what Jesus' life might have been like if he'd started his ministry during our lifetime.

Have kids form pairs, and give each pair one of the "Act It Out" cards. Instruct pairs not to let anyone else see what's written on their cards.

Say: **Watching what someone does for a living is one way we can tell who someone is. If the person is a barber, sooner or later he or she will cut someone's hair. If the person is a pizza delivery person, eventually he or she will deliver a pizza. If the person is a doctor, sooner or later he or she will take care of someone.**

In your pair, decide together how to silently act out the job that's written on your card. Then the rest of us will try to guess what job you're doing. For example, if you act out the job of a fisherman, one of you might pretend to fish and the other might pretend to be a fish.

Move to a part of the room where you can plan together without anyone hearing you. Be sure to keep what's written on your card a secret! You'll have 90 seconds to plan what to do. Go!

When 90 seconds have passed, gather everyone's attention. Have pairs take turns acting out the jobs on their cards while the other kids guess what job the pair has.

Say: **The prophet Isaiah described what the Messiah—the Savior—would do while he was here on the earth. The truths Isaiah spoke are called prophecies. They're predictions about what would happen in the years after they were written. This passage is Isaiah prophetically speaking for Jesus.**

Invite a willing child to read aloud Isaiah 61:1-4.

Say: **These verses tell us about the promises of what the Savior would do for humanity.**



Act It Out Supplies

.....

Bible
Bible Truth Sleuth
pens
Teacher Pack
"Act It Out" cards

Act It Out Easy Prep

.....

Tear out the Lesson 2
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.





Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What makes the description of what this person would do sound like someone who would come to save us?
- In our game, we looked for actions that demonstrated a role. What signs are there that Jesus was the Messiah—the Savior—that Isaiah wrote about?

Say: Jesus didn't want there to be any doubt that he was the Messiah, God's Son. So when Jesus first spoke in front of a large group of people, he made sure everyone understood who he was. Jesus read the same passage from Isaiah that we just read. Listen as I read Luke 4:16-19.

Read Luke 4:16-19 aloud.

Distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Say: **Find a partner, and together find the "Fulfilled Prophecy" section. Discuss the questions with your partner, and then write your answers.**

Allow children a few minutes to work, and then ask for some pairs to share highlights of their discussion.

Ask:

- Since God sent Jesus to save us, what does that tell us about God?

Say: Jesus tells us he's God's Son. Another way to put it is ► **JESUS IS GOD** in human form. During his ministry, Jesus proved he was God's Son by fulfilling Isaiah's prophecies, performing miracles, and even rising from the dead! Understanding that ► **JESUS IS GOD** is a difficult thing to understand. Even many adults struggle to understand it. Let's look at what John the Baptist said to people during Bible times to try to help them understand.

Dough for It!

What You'll Do

Show kids the picture of "John Baptizes Jesus" on the Bible Timeline.

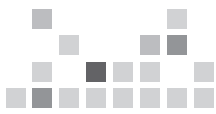
Say: **This is the John we're reading about. He baptized Jesus at the beginning of Jesus' ministry—as God wanted. As I read this Bible passage, close your eyes and just listen. When you first hear the word "light," I want you to keep listening, but slowly open your eyes as I continue. When I get to the end, open your eyes completely.**

Read John 1:1-14.

Dough for It! Supplies

Bibles
clay for each child
pens
CD player
Bible Truth Sleuth
several pairs of scissors
Teacher Pack
CD: "Into My Heart"
(track 4)
Bible Timeline





Ask:

- **Why is light so important when we're in darkness?**

Have kids form two groups, and give each group several Bibles and enough clay for each child to have a small chunk. Have available scissors and pens. Group One will create sculptures based on Isaiah 61:1-4, and Group Two will create sculptures based on John 1:1-14.

To Group One, say: **Many years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the prophet Isaiah predicted what Jesus would do while he was here on earth. You'll each have five minutes to create a small sculpture with clay that describes one thing Isaiah predicted Jesus would do. For example, you might create a heart and make a small dough bandage to put on it to show that Jesus binds up the brokenhearted. Look at the Bible verses for help. Help kids as needed to find Isaiah 61.**

To Group Two, say: **John talks about who Jesus is in this Bible passage. You'll each have five minutes to create a small sculpture with clay that shows one of the things John says about Jesus. For example, you might make a sun because Jesus is light shining in the darkness. Look at the Bible verses for help. Help kids as needed to find John 1.**

As kids work, softly play "Into My Heart" (track 4 on the CD). When kids are done sculpting, they can cut out and complete the "Art Notes" card on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages.

After kids have finished their sculptures, have them form pairs with a person from the other group.

Say: **Briefly explain to your partner what you've sculpted and why it shows something about Jesus.**

Talk With Kids ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What things did you learn about who Jesus is from your partner's sculpture?**
- **What did you want other people to know about who Jesus is through your sculpture?**

Say: ► **JESUS IS GOD, and he came to earth to live with us, to show us love, and to have a relationship with us. Jesus' birth, his life, and everything he continues to do for us is why we celebrate Christmas. Remember that this year as you're preparing to celebrate Christmas.**





Star Power Supplies

Bibles
CD player
Bible Truth Sleuth
Teacher Pack
CD: "Jack Jackson"
(track 5)

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Star Power

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **In order to help us understand a little bit better what Jesus did by coming to earth to live with us, we're going to listen to a conversation between two kids at school. Then we'll talk about it.** Play the "Jack Jackson" segment (track 5 on the CD).

Have kids form trios and take five minutes to imagine an end to the story of Jack Jackson. If kids need help getting their discussion started, use these questions.

- **What would happen if Jack Jackson really did show up and do an assembly, eat lunch, and then move into town to spend time with kids at the school?**
- **Do you think he'd have friends? Explain.**
- **Do you think kids would like him? Explain.**
- **What could happen to his job of making movies and TV shows?**

Have groups share the ideas they came up with.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Who's the most famous person you've met or seen?**
- **What makes a person famous?**
- **Why do you think it would be hard for a rich and powerful person to give up his or her money and power?**

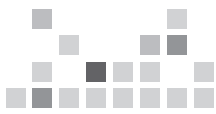
Invite a willing child to read the Key Verse, John 1:14, aloud: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Say: **This verse from today's Bible passage tells us that Jesus came to earth to live with us. ► JESUS IS GOD, and he gave up all the power and glory of being God in heaven to live with us on earth!**

Ask:

- **As you imagined what could happen to Jack Jackson, what about that story reminded you of Jesus?**
- **Why does knowing what Jesus gave up to live with us on earth help you appreciate more what Jesus has done?**





- What do you think is special about Jesus and made so many people excited to meet him?
- What can we do to help others know about Jesus and what he's done for the world?

Say: It's important that we know ► **JESUS IS GOD**, because he came to earth to have a relationship with us and to be our Savior. He died to take the punishment for our sins. That's incredibly important news for us to know and to tell others. Let's do that this week.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Let's think about how we can share the good news this week that ► **JESUS IS GOD**.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- Tell a friend or family member about the way Jesus fulfilled the predictions about the Savior.
- Ask some of your friends what they believe about Jesus, and share with them about your faith in him.
- Spend some time thinking through the idea that Jesus is also God. Make sure you write down any thoughts or questions you have as you think about this. Then talk to your parents or your leader about them.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: Remember that ► **JESUS IS GOD**, and we can ask him for help as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.



Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth





Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about why Jesus is God. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

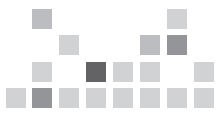
Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids.

Say: **Let’s close in prayer by telling Jesus who we think he is. I’ll start, and then anyone else who wants to pray can pray after me.**

Have kids close their eyes and begin. Pray: **Jesus**, [say what you believe about Jesus]. Give everyone an opportunity to add to the prayer. Close with: **In your name, amen.**





Living Sculptures

bear	tree	tiger	bike	cellphone
rock	flower	cat	star	moon
ocean wave	spider	guitar	pair of scissors	bell
stapler	paper clip	notebook	toaster	desk
chair	roller coaster	door	monkey	curtain
car	skateboard	puzzle piece	stoplight	McDonald's






Jesus Is Born

Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20

Children look forward to Christmas. Third- and fourth-graders are still young enough to get caught up in the joyful anticipation. Unfortunately, kids can sometimes worship the receiving of gifts instead of the true meaning of Christmas. Santa can seem more exciting to children than Jesus. Use this lesson to help kids gain a deeper understanding of the real meaning of Christmas. It'll show them that Jesus' birth—the real reason for Christmas— is *awesome*.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Great News! (about 10 min.) Discuss ways they learn of news and how they can help quickly spread good news.	paper, pens	
2 Bible Exploration	Station 1: Before Christmas (about 10 min.) Hear about the angel Gabriel's visit to Mary.	Bibles, CD player Teacher Pack: CD, Bible Timeline 	In one corner of your meeting space, set out Bibles and cue the CD to "The Angel Gabriel Visits Mary" (track 6).
	Station 2: The Birth of Jesus (about 10 min.) Read about Jesus' birth.	Bible, tape, copy of the "Barn" handout (at the end of this lesson)	In another corner of your meeting space, hang the copy of the "Barn" handout.
	Station 3: Shepherds and Angels (about 10 min.) Think about the shepherds' experience.	Bibles, black or dark blue construction paper, white or yellow crayons, tape	In a third corner of your meeting space, set out Bibles and art supplies.
	Station 4: The Special Child (about 10 min.) Work in pairs to discover Jesus' nicknames.	Bibles, pens, Bible Truth Sleuth	Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point

Jesus was born for us.


Key Verse

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will celebrate Jesus in their lives.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Christmas Ornament <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Decorate an ornament to remember the meaning of Christmas.	paper, several pairs of scissors, glitter glue, string or yarn, crayons or markers, hole punch	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	ornaments from the "Christmas Ornament" activity	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Jesus Is Born

Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20

Supernatural Birth

The meaning of the word translated *virgin* in Luke 1:27 has been contested by some scholars. Though it is possible to translate the word simply as *young woman*, it seems clear in the context and from other statements that *virgin* is what Luke intended. He was no doubt seeking to confirm in people's minds that this was a miraculous, supernatural birth.

An Angel Visits Mary

Zeroing in on this supernatural theme, Luke begins by describing the visit of an angel. The angel's announcement that Mary was favored by God no doubt caused the girl some confusion. She was an obscure person from an obscure family in Israel. In her culture, it was assumed that those in high positions were the ones favored by God.

The angel's description of her child must have confused Mary even more. How could any human—much less a young virgin peasant—give birth to the Son of God? However, Mary's response shows us her heart: As confusing and frightening as the angel's message must have been, Mary wanted to live out God's will for her life.

The Difficult Circumstances of Jesus' Birth

The census, which involved traveling to the hometown of Joseph's family, created more than just physical difficulties for the couple. In Jewish culture, if a woman was made pregnant by her pledged husband prior to the wedding, both were shamed by the dishonor. If the woman was made pregnant by someone else, she was to be divorced and then rejected by the entire culture. So Mary and Joseph faced possible serious rejection—perhaps even from family—as they traveled to this area where relatives of

each may still have been living. Yet the couple went willingly, following through on God's plan for them.

Jesus Is Born

Despite the lowly circumstances of the birth, it was boldly announced by a throng of angels. This announcement truly brought a reason to celebrate, for the one who was born would be

- Savior—who would deliver them from bondage,
- Christ—the anointed Messiah promised in the Old Testament, and
- Lord—the Hebrew name for God.

The Jesus Connection

Jesus was born for *us*. He came to this world as a baby and fully experienced life as a human just so he could be our friend and our Savior.

When we become adults, Christmas can simply be an additional stressor on an already full to-do list. We may lose our sense of wonder. What detracts from your sacred celebration of Jesus' birth? Pray about what Christ's presence on earth and in your heart means to you—and ask God to help you celebrate Jesus' birth with joy and wonder. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Great News! Supplies

paper
pens

1

GETTING STARTED

Great News!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Have kids form pairs and sit near you.

Say: **Tell your partner about the ways you learn about news, such as on TV, on the radio, on the Internet, or from a parent.** Allow time.

Now tell your partner why you think most of the news you hear is good or bad. Allow time.

Finally, tell your partner about any great news you've heard recently. Allow time.

We get news from all kinds of sources and it's no fun to hear bad news. But no news is as great as the news in our Key Verse. Good news is a joy to hear and share with others!

Invite a willing child to read aloud the Key Verse, Luke 2:10-11: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

Give each pair two pieces of paper and pens.

Say: **In the center of your piece of paper, draw a small circle and write your name in it.** Allow time. **Now draw three lines coming from the circle you just drew, and at the end of each line draw another circle.** Allow time. **In those three new circles, write the names of people that are close to you, such as a parent, a brother or sister, a best friend, or your teacher at school.** Allow time. **Finally, draw three lines from each of the new circles you drew and draw another circle at the end of each line.** Allow time. **In those new circles, think of three other people that are close to the person in the center circle and write their names. You can write things such as best friend, boss, co-worker, husband, wife, brother, or sister if you don't know everyone's name.** Allow time.

Hold up your papers. These are "Good News" maps. You can see that if you were to share good news with just three people and they were to share it with three other people, the good news will spread fast! You have the ability to help spread good news no matter how old you are, where you live, or what school you go to.





Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell about a time you got good news.
- Why do you think the birth of a Savior is good news?
- If this is such good news, why do some people reject it?

Say: This wonderful news that ► **JESUS WAS BORN FOR US** is the reason we celebrate Christmas, and a reason to celebrate all year long. Let's learn more about why Jesus' birth is the best news ever!

2

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Station 1: Before Christmas

What You'll Do

Say: Today we're learning about the events of Jesus' birth—the very first Christmas. Point to the "Jesus Is Born" picture on the Bible Timeline.

To learn about the first Christmas, we'll go through four different stations. We'll stay together in one group as you visit each station in order from 1 to 4. Work together to do as you're instructed at each station.

Guide the kids to Station 1, and help them find Luke 1:26-38 in the Bibles.

Say: We see angels throughout the Bible telling people various things. Share the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word *angel*.

Give kids a minute to share their thoughts on angels.

Say: This is the Bible passage we'll hear about on the CD. Play "The Angel Gabriel Visits Mary" (track 6 on the CD), and have kids follow along in their Bibles.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- That's some big news for Mary to find out! Being the mother of the Son of God is a big deal. What did you notice about Mary's response to the news?
- Tell about a time you got some exciting news. How did you respond?
- Mary was very willing to take on the important job that came with being Jesus' mother. Why do you or don't you think good things are worth hard work?



Station 1: Before Christmas Supplies

Bibles
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "The Angel Gabriel
Visits Mary" (track 6)
Bible Timeline

Station 1: Before Christmas Easy Prep

In one corner of your meeting space, set out Bibles and cue the CD to "The Angel Gabriel Visits Mary" (track 6).





Station 2: The Birth of Jesus Supplies

Bible
tape
copy of the “Barn”
handout (at the end of
this lesson)

Station 2: The Birth of Jesus Easy Prep

In another corner of
your meeting space,
hang the copy of the
“Barn” handout.

Say: **What a day Mary had! We don’t know exactly how Mary felt when the angel told her she would have God’s Son. But no matter what Mary felt, she told God that she was his servant. This meant she’d do whatever God wanted her to do to serve him because she knew ► JESUS WAS BORN FOR US. Let’s move on to the next station to find out how things went for Mary as she prepared for Jesus’ birth.**

Station 2: The Birth of Jesus

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Guide kids to Station 2, and have them sit in a circle near the picture of the inside of a barn.

Invite a willing child to read aloud Luke 2:1-7.

Say: **The Roman emperor had commanded everyone to go to his or her hometown to be counted. People were traveling in every direction. Just imagine what it would be like if every 10 years you had to go back to the town where you were born. Everyone would be traveling at the same time. It’d be very busy!**

Let’s see who came here today from the farthest distance. Everyone stand up, and if my statements are true of you, sit down.

Start making statements to determine who came the farthest distance. You might say, “I live fewer than two blocks away.” Some kids might sit down. “I live half a mile away.” More kids might sit down. Gradually move outward (this might mean you start using town landmarks or neighborhoods rather than distance). When you have one person still standing, find out how far he or she came, and then congratulate him or her for coming that far.

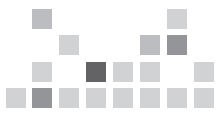
Say: **Imagine having to travel as far as you did on the back of a donkey or horse—and with lots of other people on the road going every which way.**

Ask:

- **Where would you need to go to be counted in a census like the one Mary and Joseph took part in?**
- **How far away is the town where you were born, and how do you think you’d travel there?**

Say: **When Mary and Joseph reached Bethlehem, many people were there. It was very crowded. All the places to sleep and rest were full. The only place Mary and Joseph found was the stable of an inn. That night baby Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him in soft cloths and laid him in a manger, which is a box animals eat from.**

This was the first Christmas. The word *Christmas* includes Jesus’ important title—Christ. That means he’s the Son of God and the Savior for all of us.



Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why do you think it's fair or unfair that after all that long travel, Mary and Joseph had to have baby Jesus in a stable?
- What are some of the conveniences we have when we travel that Mary and Joseph didn't have?

Say: Jesus came into the world in a very humble way. God showed us that he didn't give us a king to be born in a palace. ► **JESUS WAS BORN FOR US** to be a king who would serve and have a relationship with everyone in the world who believed in him. That's one of the reasons we celebrate and are happy at Christmastime. Let's find out what celebrating took place in the stable the night Jesus was born.

Station 3: Shepherds and Angels

What You'll Do ■■■■

Guide kids to Station 3, and distribute sheets of black or dark blue construction paper and crayons and have kids draw stars. After kids have finished, have them tape their papers up on the wall to simulate a starry sky. Make sure everyone has a Bible, and have kids find a comfortable place to sit. Invite a willing child to read aloud Luke 2:8-12.

Say: **Shepherds were watching their flocks that night near Bethlehem. Suddenly one of God's angels appeared to the shepherds, and they were very afraid.**

Ask:

- Why do you think seeing an angel appear would be surprising or even frightening?
- This angel had a message from God that was full of happiness. Why is that a reason to celebrate?

Say: **On the count of three, show me a joyful face or make a joyful noise to celebrate the good news the angel brought to the shepherds—one, two, three.** Allow time, and encourage loud, happy noise.

What wonderful news! The Savior they'd been waiting for was born! Let's read more to find out what the shepherds did next. Invite a willing child to read aloud Luke 2:13-20.

Say: **The shepherds were so excited they left their flocks and hurried to Bethlehem. When they got there, they found Mary, Joseph, and Jesus in a stable. On the way back to their flocks, the shepherds were so excited they told everyone they met about the angel's visit and the Savior's birth.**



Station 3: Shepherds and Angels Supplies

Bibles
black or dark blue
construction paper
white or yellow crayons
tape

Station 3: Shepherds and Angels Easy Prep

In another corner of your meeting space, hang the copy of the "Barn" handout.





Station 4: The Special Child Supplies

Bibles
pens
Bible Truth Sleuth

Station 4: The Special Child Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What about the shepherds' actions show they were excited about Jesus?
- What's fun about sharing good news with others such as the shepherds did?
- What can we do to share the good news about Jesus' birth?

Say: The shepherds celebrated that ► **JESUS WAS BORN FOR US**. When we celebrate Christmas, we join in the joy Jesus brought into the world the night he was born. That's exciting! Let's explore a little more why ► **JESUS WAS BORN FOR US** and what that means for our lives.

Station 4: The Special Child

What You'll Do

Guide kids to Station 4, and have kids form pairs. Distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and make sure each pair has a Bible.

Say: Find the "What's in a Name?" section on your Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Write down any nicknames you've had under "My nicknames." When you're done, trade pages with your partner and have him or her interview you as to what your nicknames mean and where they come from. Have your partner write the interview answers in the lines under your nicknames, and then return the pages to each other.

Give kids a few minutes.

Say: Now with your partner, find and read Isaiah 9:6-7. Help kids as needed. Write down the "nicknames" for Jesus under "Jesus' nicknames."

Give kids a minute or so to find and write the names.

Say: Now with your partner, talk about what Jesus' nicknames mean, and why he got them. You can write your observations in the lines by his nicknames.

Give kids a few minutes to explore Jesus' nicknames.

Say: This Bible passage tells us about a special child who would be born. That child would be the Savior, the one who would save us from our sin. *Sin* is when we do wrong things—and all people do wrong. Not one of us is perfect. Jesus was that special child who came to save us from the mess sin makes.



Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What do Jesus' different nicknames help you understand about why
► **JESUS WAS BORN FOR US?**
- What does it mean to you that Jesus saves us from our sin?
- What can you do this Christmas to thank Jesus for being born for us?

Say: **We celebrate Christmas because we know it's wonderful news that ► JESUS WAS BORN FOR US. It's the best news ever! There's no greater reason to celebrate Christmas than that. We're going to make something to help us remember to celebrate Jesus this Christmas and this week.**

.....

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Christmas Ornament

What You'll Do

Say: **Today's Key Verse is Luke 2:10-11: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). This Scripture tells us that when we celebrate Christmas, we celebrate the great news that ► JESUS WAS BORN FOR US. Let's make special ornaments to help us remember that.**

Give each child a sheet of paper, and have markers, scissors, and the craft supplies available. Say: **Draw an outline of an ornament on your paper. You can be as creative as you want in making different shapes or designs.** Allow time. When kids have finished drawing, have them cut out their ornaments. Allow time. Say: **Now you can decorate the ornaments with words or pictures that'll remind you of the true reason we celebrate Christmas. You could use the words *Savior, Jesus, or God loves me.* You could make stars, a shepherd, or a baby wrapped in cloths.** Allow time.

When kids have finished their ornaments, make a hole in the top of each ornament with a hole punch. Help kids put a piece of string or yarn through the hole and tie a knot.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What can you do with your ornament to help you remember the true reason we celebrate Christmas?
- What did you learn about Christmas today that you didn't know or hadn't thought about before?



Christmas Ornament Supplies

.....

paper
several pairs of scissors
glitter glue
string or yarn
crayons or markers
hole punch





Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Say: It can be easy for Jesus to be an afterthought when there's so much going on at Christmas and we're excited about getting and giving gifts. Let's use our ornaments to help us remember that ► **JESUS WAS BORN FOR US** and that's what we're celebrating at Christmas. When we do that, we join in the celebration that started with Mary, Joseph, some angels, and some shepherds on a night long, long ago.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Let's think about how we can celebrate that ► **JESUS WAS BORN FOR US.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- Read about Jesus' birth in Luke 2 with your family, and throw a party to celebrate Jesus together.
- Give someone an early Christmas gift, and tell him or her about Jesus—God's gift to us!
- Write a birthday card to Jesus, thanking him for coming into the world to bring hope and love.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

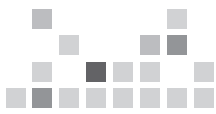
Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: Just as Mary and the shepherds did, let's celebrate and thank God that ► **JESUS WAS BORN FOR US** as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.



Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about the wonderful news that Jesus was born for us. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Take a couple of minutes to close in prayer with your kids.

Say: **Hold up the ornament you made, and share why you’re thankful that Jesus was born for us. Out thanks will be “thank you” prayers to God.** Invite a willing child to go first, and then allow everyone who would like to share say his or her thanks.

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Help us remember to celebrate Jesus this Christmas. In Jesus’ name, amen.**



Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

.....
ornaments from the
“Christmas Ornament”
activity



Barn



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OK
TO COPY

Winter Quarter

Lesson 3


Grades 3 & 4



Faithful People Thank God for Jesus

Luke 2:22-40

Third- and fourth-graders tend to be self-centered. Their world involves a small number of players: Mom and Dad, siblings, and a few friends. At this stage in their development, they're the center of their universe. A little joke at a family meal or a well-told story at a party can make them the center of attention. Moving them out of the center of their universe can be difficult. They might have a hard time understanding why Jesus deserves to be the center of attention. So before they can learn how to show thanks for Jesus, they need to understand the reasons we show thanks for Jesus. Use this lesson to help kids understand what thankfulness is and how they can express that thankfulness for Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Thank You (about 15 min.) Play a game in which they share ways to say thank you.	chairs	Place a chair for each person in a circle.
2 Bible Exploration	Meeting Simeon and Anna (about 15 min.) Explore what happened when Jesus and his parents visited the Temple.	Bibles, copy of the "Temple Visit" handout (at the end of this lesson), scissors	Cut apart the 3 sections of the "Temple Visit" handout.
	Psalms 148 (about 15 min.) Read about, look at, and act out how creation praises God.	Bibles Teacher Pack: "Psalm 148 Praise" poster	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point

We thank God for Jesus.

Key Verse

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name" (Psalm 100:4).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will learn ways to show thanks to God.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Thank-You Card <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Make a thank-you card for Jesus to present at the altar.	Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, crayons, markers, several pairs of scissors, pens Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 4 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Thanking Jesus! <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse and plan ways to show thanks to Jesus during the week.	CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Faithful People Thank God for Jesus

Luke 2:22-40

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Mary, Joseph, and Jesus Journey to Jerusalem

Joseph and Mary's trip to Jerusalem to have Jesus consecrated was in accordance with the Law as given in Exodus 13:2. The sacrifice offered was a symbolic remembrance, looking back to the Exodus, when the firstborn of Israel were spared as all the Egyptian firstborn were slain. The sacrifice symbolized the "buying back" of the firstborn son, who belonged to God.

Mary and Joseph Present Jesus at the Temple

Because this ceremony was required for all firstborn sons in Israel, there must have been many babies brought to the Temple every day. God's shepherding of these events is evident, as God brought Simeon to the Temple on this particular day to see this particular baby and to give his thanks and praise to God for what this child would do.

Simeon Foretells Jesus' Future

On this happy day, Simeon foretold several uncomfortable things that Jesus would cause:

- Through their choices about Jesus, some would fall and some would rise.
- People would be challenged as Jesus' life would be a sign, or a warning, against evil lifestyles.
- The condition of people's hearts would be revealed.
- Mary's heart would be pierced with anguish.

Despite the happy event, God wanted it known that Jesus would also cause division and pain among the Jews.

Anna Thanks God for Jesus

Anna, a prophetess, had been worshipping devoutly at the Temple for a long, long time. She must have seen thousands of babies being brought for consecration during those years. Yet when Mary and Joseph arrived with Jesus, Anna knew that this was the baby who would save Israel, and she gave thanks to God for him.

God blessed these two faithful followers, Simeon and Anna, by allowing them to see Jesus in their old age, and they responded with grateful praise.

The Jesus Connection

Simeon and Anna were very thankful to see Jesus. How thankful are you that God gave us Jesus? Being thankful isn't just something we do for God or others—it's good for us. Thankfulness gives us hope. Thankfulness helps us remember everything God has done for us in the past and thus to believe that God will be there for us—and those we care for and pray for—in the future. Make time this week to thank God for who he is and for everything he's done. You can begin your list and write a prayer here.

[illegible]



Thank You Supplies

.....
chairs

Thank You Easy Prep

.....
Place a chair for each
person in a circle.

1

GETTING STARTED

Thank You

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Have kids take a seat in the chair circle. Invite a willing child to stand in the center of the circle, and then remove his or her chair.

To the child in the middle, say: **Tell one way you've shown thanks to someone. For example, you could say, "I show thanks by helping my mom clean the kitchen after she cooks my dinner." Or "I say thanks when someone lets me play in a game at school."**

Say to everyone: **After the person in the middle says his or her thank-you statement, everyone must act that out as they move to a new chair that is at least two chairs away from your current seat. Since we're short one chair, the person left without a chair will go to the middle and we'll continue the game.**

After several kids have shared their thank-you ideas, replace the missing chair and have kids sit down.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

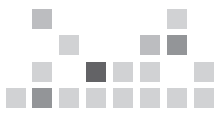
Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why do we show thanks in different ways for different things?
- Why is it disappointing or even hurtful when someone forgets to thank you?
- Why do you think it's important to thank others?

Say: **We can express our thanks to people in many ways. Today we'll learn about the different ways two people expressed their thanks for Jesus, and we'll explore how ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS.**





2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Meeting Simeon and Anna

What You'll Do ■■■■■

Say: **Jesus and his family are very special. Jesus is God's Son who came to live here on earth. His parents were named Mary and Joseph. Jesus' birth was an exciting time filled with good news, hope, and celebration. News about Jesus' birth traveled fast, and people were excited! Today we'll look at how two people responded when they met little Jesus face to face.**

Have kids form three groups, and give each group several Bibles and one of the sections of the "Temple Visit" handout.

Say: **Read the Bible passage listed on your paper, and then discuss and answer the question. You'll share with everyone what happened in the Bible passage you read and also the answer to your question.**

Allow kids five minutes to read and discuss their Bible passage. Then invite a willing child from each group to share, going in numerical order.

Say: **We've discovered that in one way or another, everyone in the Bible showed they were thankful for Jesus. Mary and Joseph showed their thanks by obeying God and presenting Jesus at the Temple. Simeon showed his thanks by taking Jesus in his arms and praising God. And Anna showed her thanks by telling other people about Jesus.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **After learning why Simeon and Anna were thankful for Jesus, what new thoughts do you have on why we can be thankful for Jesus?**
- **Simeon and Anna had a powerful experience meeting Jesus. Tell about an experience you've had that made you really thankful for Jesus.**

Say: ► **WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS by praising him and telling others about him the way Simeon and Anna did.**



Meeting Simeon and Anna Supplies

Bibles
copy of the "Temple Visit" handout (at the end of this lesson)
scissors

Meeting Simeon and Anna Easy Prep

Cut apart the 3 sections of the "Temple Visit" handout.





Psalm 148 Supplies

Bibles

Teacher Pack

“Psalm 148 Praise”
poster

Psalm 148

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Now let’s look at one other passage in the Bible that tells us about showing thanks to God. One way we show thanks to God is by praising him. Praise is the way we show honor and thanks to God through our worship, words, attitudes, and actions. In Psalm 148 we can read about all creation praising the Lord.**

Have kids sit in a circle, and make sure everyone has a Bible. Help them find Psalm 148 in their Bibles. Place the “Psalm 148 Praise” poster in the center of the circle. As you read it aloud, pause after a few verses and have children talk about the pictures shown on the poster that match with what you just read from the psalm. You can ask kids to say why they’re thankful for one of the items shown on the poster or other things from creation that the psalm talks about. Kids can also share thoughts about how those parts of creation can bring praise to God. Continue reading the psalm as above, pausing every few verses to discuss the words or pictures.

Say: **We can give thanks to God using words as we’ve done. Now let’s use our actions as I read this psalm again. Be creative as you think of ways to act out the praises you hear.**

Read Psalm 148 again, pausing to allow kids time to act out what they hear.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Tell about the things on the poster or anything else you’d like to praise God for.**
- **When you look at nature—things like water, the moon, trees, and birds—what do those amazing or beautiful things around do to give you reason to praise God?**
- **How are praise and thanks similar? different?**

Say: ► **WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS** through our praises, such as Simeon did. We can sing praises or praise him through prayer. We can tell others about Jesus, such as Anna did, or invite people to learn about him at church. Let’s praise God for Jesus right now!



3

WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE

Thank-You Card

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Have available crayons, markers, and scissors. Say: **Find the "Thank-You Card" section on your Bible Truth Sleuth pages. One way to show our thanks is to write a thank-you card. We use cards to thank people for gifts or for doing something nice for us. Just as Mary, Joseph, Simeon, and Anna showed thanks to God for Jesus, we can thank God for Jesus right now.**

To begin, cut out and then color or decorate the thank-you card. Allow time. Under the words "Thank you, God, for" on the inside of the card, you can write words or draw something that shows your thanks and praise to Jesus. You might include things such as your family, the freedom to go to church, or the freedom to celebrate Jesus' birth.

As kids work on the craft, play "Thankful" (track 7 on the CD).

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell about the things or people you thank God for.
- How can you use your thank-you card to guide your prayers and thanks to God?

Say: **We have many things in our lives we can be thankful for and show our thanks to God. The greatest gift God's ever given any of us is Jesus. Simeon and Anna knew Jesus was the greatest reason to give God thanks even when he was still only a young child. They'd heard the great news about who Jesus was. Today, ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS, too, because that good news is *still* good news! Let's show God thanks for Jesus in another way—by singing a song of praise.**

Thanking Jesus!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Today we saw how different people expressed their thanks for Jesus. ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS too, and we've thought of ways to do that today. One of the ways we can show our thanks for Jesus that we haven't done yet today is by singing a song to God. Let's do that now.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "His Love Endures Forever" (Psalm 100:4-5) (track 8 on the CD). Lead the kids in singing.



Thank-You Card Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
crayons
markers
several pairs of scissors
pens
Teacher Pack
CD: "Thankful" (track 7)

Thank-You Card Easy Prep

.....
Tear out the Lesson 4
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

Thanking Jesus! Supplies

.....
CD player
copies of the lyrics page
(at the end of this
lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: "His Love Endures
Forever" (Psalm
100:4-5) (track 8)





(Chorus)

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him and praise his name,
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever.**

(Repeat chorus.)

**His faithfulness continues
Through every generation.
He is faithful.
He is faithful,
And I will praise him
For as long as I live.
He is faithful;
He is faithful.**

(Sing chorus 2x.)

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him and praise his name,
For the Lord is good and his love endures.
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever.**

"His Love Endures Forever" (Psalm 100:4-5) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **The words to this song are also our Key Verse for the week.** Have kids form pairs.
Say: **Repeat our Key Verse, Psalm 100:4, with your partner: "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name" (Psalm 100:4).**

After kids have had a chance to say the Key Verse to each other, have them form two lines so kids in one line face their partner in the other line. Repeat the Key Verse as a group.

Say: **One at a time, each person will walk down the center of the two lines and say or show thanks. You can applaud or do some other action to show your thanks for Jesus. Ready? Pause. Go!** Do this until everyone's had a turn.

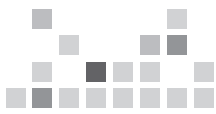
Talk With Kids ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Of all the different ways we've shown thanks today, what have been your favorite ways? Why?**
- **Think of something you enjoy doing. How can you use that talent or activity to thank God?**





Say: **Just as Simeon, Anna, Mary, and Joseph did, ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS in many ways. Let's choose one way to keep doing that this week.**



4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's decide this week on ways ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **When someone helps you or is kind to you this week, thank him or her and then tell about why you're also thankful for Jesus.**
- **Put your thank-you card where you'll see it every day and remember to thank God for sending Jesus.**
- **Every day this week, write or draw one reason you're glad God sent Jesus to be in your life.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **It'll make God very happy to hear our praise and thanks, just as he heard Simeon and Anna's. Let's remember that ► WE THANK GOD FOR JESUS as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about the different ways to thank God for Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth



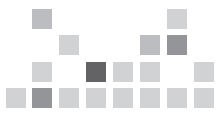


Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids.

Say: **Choose one way you'd like to thank God for Jesus right now—such as simply saying, “thank you, God,” singing, clapping, cheering, or anything you'd like to do. In a moment I'll start a prayer and then when I cue you, you can show your thanks to God in the way you've chosen. Let's see if we can make a big, happy noise for God.**

Pray: **Dear God, we thank you for your Son, Jesus, and we thank you now each in our own special way... Invite kids to make their thankful noise or action. That's a noise of praise and thanks to you, God. In Jesus' name, amen.**





Temple Visit



1. **Luke 2:22-24**—What about the things Mary and Joseph did showed they were thankful for Jesus?



2. **Luke 2:25-32**—What about the things Simeon said and did after seeing Jesus showed he thanked God for Jesus?



3. **Luke 2:36-40**—Anna told others how special Jesus was. Why do you think that shows she was thankful for Jesus?



 **OK
TO COPY**





Lyrics

His Love Endures Forever (Psalm 100:4-5)

(Chorus)

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him and praise his name,
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever.

(Repeat chorus.)

His faithfulness continues
Through every generation.
He is faithful.
He is faithful,
And I will praise him
For as long as I live.
He is faithful;
He is faithful.

(Sing chorus 2x.)

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him and praise his name,
For the Lord is good and his love endures.
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever.

"His Love Endures Forever" (Psalm 100:4-5) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Wise Men Find Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12

Children's minds are full of excitement and wonder. You can springboard from their natural enthusiasm to solidify the need for regular group and private worship. If they learn the importance of worshipping God at this age, they'll be better prepared for life as they reach young adulthood. Use this lesson to help kids understand why we worship Jesus, and create an atmosphere of excitement and plant an important memory of worship.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Giving and Getting <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Make facial expressions and gestures to show how they feel when they get or give a gift.		
2 Bible Exploration	What's Up, Wise Men? <i>(about 25 min.)</i> Develop questions to ask wise men, and do a talk show.	Bibles, CD player, index cards, pens Teacher Pack: CD	Set up the room to look like a talk-show setting with 3 chairs in the front facing the audience.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point

Jesus deserves our worship.


Key Verse

"For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations" (Psalm 100:5).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will worship Jesus with their talents and abilities.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	The Lord Is Good <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Explore this week's Key Verse.	Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), pens Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 5 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	My Gift for Jesus <i>(about 10 min.)</i> List their gifts and talents, and describe how they can be used for Jesus.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Wise Men Find Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

The Magi Journey to Worship Jesus

The wise men, or Magi, were likely religious leaders from Persia or Babylon. They were likely either astronomers or some type of astrologers. They apparently weren't followers of the Jewish religion and had little or no knowledge of God. Yet God somehow made it clear enough to them that a special king was being born—after all, the men were willing to travel hundreds of miles over dangerous desert wilderness to investigate and worship that new king. All nations had their own objects of worship and usually thought their own gods were better than others' gods. So the Magi's journey to worship Jesus in a lowly colony of the Roman Empire was very significant.

A Star Leads the Magi to Judea and to King Herod

Some suggest that the “star” was actually the result of the alignment of planets that happened sometime between 7 and 4 B.C. Others say it was a special, localized phenomenon provided by God specifically to guide the Magi to Jesus. Whatever it was, its timing and movement were used by God to let people outside Israel know about the miraculous birth of Jesus.

Herod's suspicious response was typical of this paranoid man who had put to death his own wife and sons. He not only intended to kill the baby Jesus, but also schemed to use the innocent Magi to lead him to the right baby.

The Magi Find Jesus in Bethlehem and Present Gifts

When the Magi arrived in Bethlehem, they found Jesus in a house. Though Christmas programs often depict the Magi visiting the stable on the night of

Jesus' birth, that time frame is quite likely wrong. It's more likely the Magi arrived some months after the birth.

Since the gifts were costly, they indicate the wealth and prominence of the visitors. But the fact that there were three gifts doesn't necessarily mean there were three gift-givers. And the Magi weren't kings as the song says—though they may have been representing a king.

The Jesus Connection

Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He is worthy of our worship and praise. And he's our best friend. How cool is that?

The Magi recognized the importance of Jesus when they saw the signs in the sky. Worshipping this young king was so important that they traveled for many days over many miles to find him. How important is worshipping Jesus to you? You don't need to travel anywhere; you can worship him anywhere and anytime. Tell Jesus why you worship him. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



1

GETTING
STARTED

Giving and Getting

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **To get started today I'm going to describe different types of experiences having to do with gifts. You'll each make a facial expression that best shows what feeling you associate with each experience.**

Have kids stand in a circle. Say: **Face the outside of the circle while I make each statement. Then on the count of three, you'll turn around and show everyone the expression you're making.**

Be sure to tell kids to face away from the circle before you make the next statement. You can use the following statements or make up your own.

- You were given a puppy for Christmas.
- You just opened a gift from your grandmother—underwear and itchy wool socks.
- Your parents just surprised you with a new bike.
- You gave a favorite picture of yourself to a friend.
- You gave your mom the night off and washed the dishes for her.
- You told your sister you'd do her chores for her and found out her chore was to clean the cat's litter box.

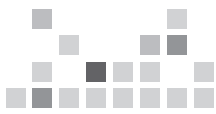
Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What do you like about receiving gifts you were hoping for?
- Why do you or don't you think you always deserve the gifts you get?
- What do you like about giving a gift to someone else?
- Why do you give gifts to others?

Say: **Today we'll learn about the wise men who gave gifts to Jesus. Let's get into the Bible to find out that ► JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP, how other people worshipped Jesus, and ways we can worship him, too!**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

What's Up, Wise Men?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Jesus' birth was a very happy and celebrated event. Many people celebrated Jesus' birth—his parents Mary and Joseph, shepherds from the nearby fields, and even angels from heaven! Wise men from far in the East also came to worship Jesus after his birth. Today we'll interview the wise men on the talk show "What's Up, Wise Men?" and discover that they knew ► JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP. Let's read Matthew 2:1-12 from the Bible.**

Make sure kids have Bibles, and invite a willing child to read the passage aloud. Then have kids form groups of four. Distribute pens and index cards, and have groups come up with several questions they'd like to ask the wise men about their journey to meet Jesus and why they brought gifts for Jesus. They can write their questions on index cards in preparation for conducting an interview in a talk-show setting. After groups create their questions, have each group decide on roles: they'll need three wise men and one talk-show host. The talk-show hosts will ask the questions and groups will take turns presenting their talk shows.

Say: **Now that we've read about the wise men and their time with Jesus, let's conduct our talk shows.** Have kids take their places in the audience or in their roles as wise men or the talk-show host.

Say: **We've all heard about the wise men who found baby Jesus and worshipped him. Now we want to find out why! We want to hear from the people who were there. Let's welcome the wise men!**

Lead kids in the audience in clapping and whistling as the first group members take their seats. Then say the following as you act like a talk-show host.

Say: **It appears that you're scientists who study the stars. We understand that you saw a star that caused you to believe that a new king had been born. You went to see King Herod, and he told you to look in Bethlehem. You found a baby, gave him gifts, and went home. Now let's discover more about why you chose to worship this baby.**

Have the talk show host from the first group ask the wise men the questions they prepared. Allow the wise men to respond. Each group will have a turn to present their talk show while the other kids sit in the audience.

After the last group presents, say: **Sounds like King Herod was mean and powerful. He would kill anyone who seemed to threaten his power and position. But we've**



What's Up, Wise Men? Supplies

Bibles
CD player
index cards
pens
Teacher Pack
CD: "King Herod's Call-In" (track 9)

What's Up, Wise Men? Easy Prep

Set up the room to look like a talk-show setting with 3 chairs in the front facing the audience.



got a surprise! King Herod's on the phone! Let's see what he has to say about the wise men and the king they were looking for. Play "King Herod's Call-In" (track 9 on the CD).

To close the show, say: **Thanks for tuning in to this episode of "What's Up, Wise Men?" Join us next time when we explore just what makes these men so wise.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- The wise men traveled a long way with only a star as their guide to find Jesus. What does that tell us about how important Jesus was to them?
- What are some things that would motivate you to travel that far?
- Why do we worship Jesus?

Say: **The wise men brought gifts to worship Jesus because ► JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP. Let's find out how we can worship Jesus in our own lives.**

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

The Lord Is Good

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: ► **JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP**, and one way to worship Jesus is by singing songs to or about him. Let's sing a song of worship to praise Jesus and to help us remember reasons we worship Jesus.

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "His Love Endures Forever" (Psalm 100:4-5) (track 8 on the CD), and sing the song with kids twice.



(Chorus)

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him and praise his name,
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever.**

(Repeat chorus.)

**His faithfulness continues
Through every generation.
He is faithful.
He is faithful,
And I will praise him
For as long as I live.**

The Lord Is Good Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
copies of the lyrics
page (at the end of the
lesson)

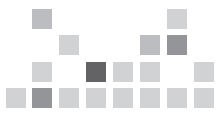
pens

Teacher Pack

CD: "His Love Endures
Forever" (Psalm
100:4-5) (track 8)

The Lord Is Good Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 5
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.



**He is faithful;
He is faithful.**

(Sing chorus 2x.)

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him and praise his name,
For the Lord is good and his love endures.
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever.**

"His Love Endures Forever" (Psalm 100:4-5) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **This song is our Key Verse for the week, Psalm 100:5: "For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations" (Psalm 100:5). The word *Lord* is a title that means something like a king or ruler—so when Jesus is called *Lord* it's to show great respect.**

Distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find "The Lord Is Good."

Say: **Our Key Verse talks about how the Lord is good to us, loves us, and is faithful to us. In each box, you can list some ways Jesus is these things to you.**

Have children find partners, and allow a few minutes for kids to talk about what they want to write on their lists. Encourage kids to think of at least three things for each list.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Tell about the things you wrote on your lists.**
- **What have you done to worship God for those things?**
- **Based on what you wrote and discussed, why do you think God deserves our worship?**

Say: **You listed ways God loves you, is faithful to you, and is good to you. Our Key Verse tells us reasons ► JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP. Just as there are so many reasons we can worship Jesus, there are lots of ways we can worship him. The wise men showed us one way and when we sang a song earlier, that was another way we can worship Jesus. It doesn't matter so much *how* you worship Jesus as long as you're showing him love and respect from your heart. Let's think of some other ways we can worship Jesus.**





My Gift for Jesus Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
pens

My Gift for Jesus

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: ► **JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP**, and we can worship him in many ways. One way is to use our gifts and talents to serve him.

Have kids find the “My Gift for Jesus” section on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages.

Say: List your gifts and talents on the left side of the gift. For example, you might write “I can sing,” or “I’m kind.” Allow time, and help kids as needed.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell about your talents and gifts.
- What can you do to use those talents and gifts to worship Jesus?
- Jesus loves every person very, very much. Because of that, serving or helping others with our talents is a great way to worship Jesus. Why do you think helping others shows respect and love for Jesus?

Say: The wise men used their talent of reading the stars to find Jesus and then shared what they had as they gave him gifts. Using our gifts and talents for Jesus is a great way to worship Jesus, too. We can use everything we have and everything we do to serve Jesus because ► **JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP**.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

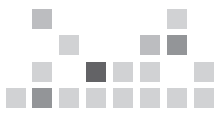
Say: Let's think this week about how we can show that we know ► **JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP**.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- Thank Jesus for the way he made you and others with special abilities. Then use those abilities to worship him!
- Ask your leader at church if you can use one of your talents to help at church.
- Ask God to help you know how he wants you to worship him with your gifts and abilities.

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth



Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **The wise men showed commitment to finding Jesus and worshipping him with gifts. Let's remember to speak and act from our hearts to show that ► JESUS DESERVES OUR WORSHIP as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about worshipping Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids.

Have kids stand in a circle and think of a word or phrase they'd like to use to describe what they think about Jesus such as *good*, *loving*, *Lord*, or *best friend*. Then have them lift up their hands like they're giving a gift to Jesus as they say their word or phrase out loud one at a time.

Pray: **Jesus, I pray that all of us here today will be thankful for you, the greatest gift to us. We offer our words to you as gifts of praise and love. Thank you, Jesus. In your name, amen.**



**Lyrics** ■■■■**His Love Endures Forever (Psalm 100:4-5)***(Chorus)*

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him and praise his name,
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever.**

(Repeat chorus.)

**His faithfulness continues
Through every generation.
He is faithful.
He is faithful,
And I will praise him
For as long as I live.
He is faithful;
He is faithful.**

(Sing chorus 2x.)

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving
And his courts with praise;
Give thanks to him and praise his name,
For the Lord is good and his love endures.
For the Lord is good and his love endures forever.**

"His Love Endures Forever" (Psalm 100:4-5) by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.







John Baptizes Jesus

Mark 1:4-11

Third- and fourth-graders have discovered that they can't please everyone all the time. And, as a result, some have decided that it's not worth trying to please anyone. Still, in their hearts, most children long to please others. You can use this lesson to help kids grasp that God sent Jesus to take the consequences of our sin, and they'll feel more comfortable trying to please God. Above all, help them understand that God loves each of us unconditionally.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	What's the Right Answer? <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Fill balloons, and determine whether to believe the contents.	1 uninflated balloon per child, strips of paper, permanent markers, pens	
2 Bible Exploration	Sin, Repent, Believe <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Come up with definitions for <i>sin</i> , <i>repent</i> , and <i>believe</i> .	Bible, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, tape, pens Teacher Pack: CD, "Sin, Repent, Believe" poster 	Hang the "Sin, Repent, Believe" poster where kids can easily see it. Tear the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	John Baptizes Jesus <i>(about 10 min.)</i> "Visit" the Jordan River where John baptized Jesus.	Bible, pens, paper Teacher Pack: Bible Timeline 	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point

God sent Jesus.

Key Verse

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will apply their belief in Jesus to their lives by growing closer to him and sharing their faith with others.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	God's Gift <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse, and draw a cartoon to help them remember it.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, colored pencils, tape Teacher Pack: CD	
	Salvation Bracelets <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Make bracelets that represent salvation.	scissors; red, white, and green yarn	Cut one 14-inch length of each color of yarn per child.
	Why Can I Believe in Jesus? <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Write or draw pictures of what they believe about Jesus, and why.	Bible Truth Sleuth, markers	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	bracelets from the "Salvation Bracelets" activity	

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*

John Baptizes Jesus

Mark 1:4-11

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Although Sinless, Jesus Requested John to Baptize Him

The baptism of Jesus did not represent cleansing from sin, because Jesus was without sin. Instead, it allowed Jesus to identify with the people he had come to save and signaled to everyone that he was different—that he had not sinned but instead had lived a life pleasing to God. This event signaled the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry.

The Trinity in the Baptism of Jesus

These verses depict the Trinity more clearly than almost any other passage in the Bible. We see all three members of the Trinity in action: Jesus being baptized, the Holy Spirit descending like a dove, and the Father speaking from heaven. As Jesus was beginning his ministry, God made it clear that Jesus was his Son and that Jesus was doing precisely what God wanted him to do.

The Holy Spirit Descends on Jesus Like a Dove

The symbolism of the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus like a dove is very intentional. A dove represented both purity and gentleness. Instead of coming to harshly preach repentance as the prophets—including John the Baptist—had done, Jesus came in purity and with a message of love. After all, Jesus is God’s ultimate demonstration of love, being sent to die for our sins “while we were still sinners” (Romans 5:8).

God didn't speak to the crowd as he announced his pleasure with Jesus. He spoke directly to Jesus, encouraging him to fulfill the difficult task that lay before him.

The Jesus Connection

From the very beginning, God planned to send Jesus to be our friend and to save us from the penalty of our sins. What a loving and gracious God!

Many agree that Jesus was a good man and a moral teacher, but Christians know Jesus to be God's Son, sent by God to redeem a fallen world. Jesus came to the world with all the authority, approval, and power of God. He came for us. He came for *you*. Praise God today for loving you enough to send his Son for you. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



What's the Right Answer? Supplies

1 uninflated balloon per child
strips of paper
permanent markers
pens

BALLOON **WARNING**

To avoid choking hazards, be sure to pick up pieces of any broken balloons promptly. Balloons may contain latex.

1

GETTING STARTED

What's the Right Answer?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Distribute strips of paper and pens.

Say: **Write one statement about yourself on one strip of paper. You can decide whether to write something true or false.** Allow time.

After kids have written their statements, give each a child a balloon and have them each fold their paper and put it inside the balloon. Have kids blow up the balloons, helping as needed, and tie them closed. Then have kids use permanent markers to write their name on the balloon.

Say: **Toss the balloons into the air to mix them up, and then everyone can take one balloon.** Allow time. **Now that you have a new balloon, read the name on it. Determine whether you think the statement inside the balloon is going to be true or false. If you think it's true, pop the balloon and read the strip of paper. Decide if you still think it's a true statement. If you think it's false, return the balloon to its owner.** Continue this until all the balloons have been opened or returned.

Say: **Sometimes it's easy to know what's true about someone and what's false. Other times we don't know what to believe. Sometimes we believe certain things but we don't know why we believe them.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did you decide whether to pop or return the balloon?
- After you popped or returned the balloon, did you have a reason to think you made the wrong choice? Explain.
- How can you tell if what someone says about him- or herself is true?

Say: **We decided whether to believe certain facts about our friends in this game. But when it comes to facts about Jesus, we can trust that if the Bible says it, it's true. One thing the Bible says is that ► GOD SENT JESUS. Let's explore some things about Jesus to see why we can believe that ► GOD SENT JESUS.**





2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Sin, Repent, Believe

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Play "River Sounds" (track 10 on the CD) while a willing child reads aloud Mark 1:4-8.

Say: **John left his home to preach in the desert. He told people to repent of their sins because he wanted the people to experience forgiveness. Let's find out what John meant when he talked about sinning, repenting, and believing.**

Have kids look at the poster and think about the words. Allow time.

Distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Say: **Find the "Sin, Repent, Believe" section on your Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and write a definition—what you think the word means—for each word.** Allow time. **After you've finished, find a partner and share your answers.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What do you think *sin* means?
- What kinds of sins do kids do?
- What do you think *repent* means?
- What can someone do to show they want to repent?
- What do you think it means to believe?

Say: **We all sin and disobey God. But he has made a way for us to repent and believe. ► GOD SENT JESUS to forgive those who believe in him. John the Baptist believed in Jesus and he tried to help others believe, too. Let's find out more about believing in Jesus and having a relationship with him.**

John Baptizes Jesus

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Now let's read the rest of the Bible passage to find out what happened when John baptized Jesus.** Show kids the Bible Timeline, and point to the "John Baptizes Jesus" picture.

Invite a willing child to read Mark 1:9-11.

Say: **It must have been incredible to be at the Jordan River that day! To see Jesus**

Sin, Repent, Believe
Supplies

Bible
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
tape
pens
Teacher Pack
CD: "River Sounds"
(track 10)
"Sin, Repent, Believe"
poster

Sin, Repent, Believe
Easy Prep

Hang the "Sin, Repent, Believe" poster where kids can easily see it.

Tear the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

John Baptizes Jesus
Supplies

Bible
pens
paper
Teacher Pack
Bible Timeline





baptized by John and to hear God's voice say, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." Let's pretend we were there for this exciting encounter. I'm going to read the passage again. I want you to imagine you were standing on the banks of the Jordan watching Jesus being baptized, seeing the heavens torn open and God's Spirit coming down like a dove, and hearing God's voice speaking to Jesus. Close your eyes as I read the passage again, and picture the scene.

Read aloud Mark 1:9-11 again, pausing between verses. Give kids time to imagine the scene. As they do, have them think about what God's power might have looked and sounded like.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like imagining that you were there? What kinds of things did you imagine?
- What events have you experienced that have taught you something about who Jesus is?
- What are other things that help you know that God sent Jesus?

Say: For many people, seeing God's Spirit come down from heaven there at the Jordan River was probably the first time they believed that ► **GOD SENT JESUS.** They believed because they saw God's Spirit and heard God's voice. It's easier to believe in things we can see or hear. Let's dig into reasons we can believe ► **GOD SENT JESUS** even if we never see or hear something like what happened in the Jordan River when John baptized Jesus.

.....

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

God's Gift

What You'll Do ■■■■

Have kids open their Bibles to the Key Verse, John 3:16, and invite a willing child to read it: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Say: **Find a partner, and repeat the Key Verse together: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."** Allow time, and then distribute colored pencils and have kids complete the "God's Gift" activity.

Play "God So Loved the World" (John 3:16) (track 11 on the CD) once or twice as kids work.

God's Gift Supplies

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Bibles

Bible Truth Sleuth

CD player

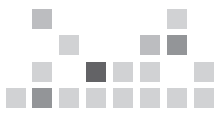
colored pencils

tape

Teacher Pack

CD: "God So Loved the World" (John 3:16) (track 11)





When kids have finished, invite willing children to share their cartoon strips with everyone.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What amazes you about God loving you so much that he was willing to give up his own Son, Jesus?
- What does “eternal life” mean to you?
- What do you imagine it will be like to spend forever with God?

Say: **John the Baptist knew that ► GOD SENT JESUS for a very special purpose. And God himself announced who Jesus was. God loves us and wants us to live with him forever. Our Key Verse tells us that when we believe in Jesus, we can have that friendship with him for eternity—forever!**

Salvation Bracelets

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Sometimes it's hard to explain why we believe in Jesus. So today we'll make something to help us remember why God sent Jesus.**

Give a set of three colors of yarn to each child. Show kids how to knot the three strands together about 3 inches from one end. Then show kids how to braid the long strands together, stopping about 3 inches from the end and making another knot. Have kids work on their braids as you explain what each color of yarn represents.

Say: **The colors of yarn you're braiding have different meanings: Red represents the blood of Jesus as he died on the cross for our sins so that when we repent, we're forgiven. White represents being clean and pure before God because we believe in Jesus. Green means new life and growth as a Christian.**

Allow kids time to finish braiding their bracelets. Say: **Find a partner to help tie the salvation bracelet on your wrist. As you help each other, tell about what each color stands for. Make sure you don't tie the bracelets too tight. You should be able to fit at least a finger between your wrist and the bracelet.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell which color means the most to you, and why.
- What can wearing this bracelet do to help you remember why ► **GOD SENT JESUS?**
- When you show others your bracelet, what will you tell them about why you're wearing it?



Salvation Bracelets Supplies

scissors
red, white, and green
yarn

Salvation Bracelets Easy Prep

Cut one 14-inch length
of each color of yarn
per child.





Why Can I Believe in Jesus? Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
markers

Say: Our bracelets are important reminders of the truths we've learned today. The truth that God announced about Jesus at his baptism— ► **GOD SENT JESUS**. The truth that Jesus saves us from our sins and when we ask for forgiveness, God will forgive us. And the truth that we can have a relationship with Jesus and continue to grow closer to him. Let's explore a little more why we can believe these truths about Jesus and God.

Why Can I Believe in Jesus?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Today we've talked about why we believe certain things and how we know the difference between things that are true and things that are false. We've discovered that God sent Jesus for us to believe in so we could have eternal life with him in heaven. Distribute markers, and have kids find the "Why I Believe in Jesus" activity on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages.

Say: Write or draw graffiti that shows the reasons you believe in Jesus. You can write or draw whatever things you want that show why you believe.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What are some true things you know about Jesus?
- Why do you know those things are true?
- Why can you believe in Jesus?
- What can we do to learn more about Jesus?

Say: All the truths we've learned about Jesus today we've learned from the Bible—God's Word. God never lies and his word is always true, so we can trust what we read in the Bible. We can believe that God's Spirit did come down from heaven when John baptized Jesus and that ► **GOD SENT JESUS** to save us from sin. That's amazing news that'll change our lives when we decide to begin a relationship with Jesus.

4

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

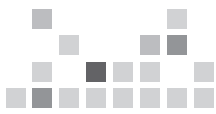
What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Let's think this week about how we can apply to our lives the truth that ► **GOD SENT JESUS**.

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth





Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Use your bracelet to tell a friend what it means to believe in Jesus and have a relationship with him.**
- **Spend time talking to Jesus to grow closer to him this week.**
- **If you have some questions about who Jesus is, ask a trusted Christian adult to help you find answers to those questions.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **At Jesus' baptism, God made it clear that Jesus was his Son. Let's celebrate and be happy that ► GOD SENT JESUS as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about God sending Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

To close, have kids use their bracelets as you guide a prayer about believing in Jesus and why God sent him.

Say: **Look at your bracelet again. Touch the red yarn and silently pray to thank God for sending Jesus to save us all from sin. Pause. Touch the white yarn and thank God for forgiving us and sending his Son, Jesus, to make God's forgiveness possible. Pause. Touch the green yarn and ask Jesus to help you grow closer to him. Pause.**

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for loving us so much that you sent your Son to forgive us. Help us to weave our faith in you into our lives this week. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

.....
bracelets from the
"Salvation Bracelets"
activity







Jesus Surprises Nathanael

John 1:43-51

Third- and fourth-graders have learned that their parents don't know everything and can't watch them all the time. They're also learning that with a little cunning and craftiness, they can hide their bad behavior from their parents. This lesson gets kids thinking about Jesus' ability to see everything we do. It can be a shocking experience to consider that Jesus knows everything about them—even the bad things they do. It can be even more powerful to realize that he loves them no matter what.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	And You Love Me (about 10 min.) Try to remember things about partners, and learn the Key Verse.	Bibles, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Bible Exploration	Surprise! Jesus Knows (about 15 min.) Brainstorm things Jesus knew about Nathanael.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, markers, pens, pads of sticky notes, tape Teacher Pack: "Jesus Knows Me!" poster, Bible Timeline 	Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. Hang the "Jesus Knows Me!" poster where kids can easily see it.
	Jesus Knows Me! (about 20 min.) Write as many things as they can think of about what Jesus knows about them.	Bibles, pens, pads of sticky notes Teacher Pack: "Jesus Knows Me!" poster 	

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



► Bible Point

Jesus knows all about us.

Key Verse

"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me"
(Psalm 139:1).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will spend time getting to know Jesus better.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Inside and Out <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Design a gingerbread person, and write things on it that Jesus knows about them.	Bible, CD player, pens, markers, 1 copy per child of the "Gingerbread Person" pattern (at the end of this lesson), paper clips, several pairs of scissors Teacher Pack: CD	Make 1 copy of the "Gingerbread Person" pattern. Cut on the lines where indicated. Then enlarge the pattern to 150 percent and copy onto card stock or colored paper. You'll need 1 copy per child.
	More Than a Name <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Review that Jesus knows more than just their names.	several containers of salt	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Truth Sleuth	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Jesus Surprises Nathanael

John 1:43-51

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Prepares to Depart for Galilee

The beginning of this passage finds Jesus ready to depart from Judea for Galilee. It's interesting that a huge portion of Jesus' ministry happened in the region of Galilee. This region was looked down on by most Jews. The Galilean Jews had a distinctive accent, and because of their proximity to other ethnic peoples and traditions, they were often viewed as "contaminated," backward, and inferior. The Judean Jews despised those Jews who couldn't speak correctly—they considered themselves superior and more pure. We don't know why Jesus chose his disciples from this area or why he ministered there so often, but perhaps it was because people there were more authentic and less biased than in Judea.

Jesus Calls Philip to Follow

Philip, when called to follow Jesus, responded as would anyone who realized he'd found the Son of God—he wanted to tell someone else about it! So he sought out Nathanael and told him the good news. Philip's description of Jesus as "the son of Joseph" didn't deny Jesus' divine origin. Philip simply described Jesus in terms of his earthly, legal family.

Philip Tells Doubtful Nathanael About Jesus

Nathanael responded negatively for a couple of reasons. First, Nazareth was considered a less-than-desirable city because a Roman outpost was located there and brought with it all sorts of false gods and evil-doing. Second, Nazareth was an obscure city, never mentioned in the Old Testament. Besides, everyone knew from the prophet Micah that the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem.

Philip Challenges Nathanael to See Jesus for Himself

However, Nathanael's negativism didn't stop Philip. He challenged Nathanael to see for himself. As Nathanael approached Jesus, Jesus knew not only where Nathanael had been and what he had been doing, but also that Nathanael was skeptical. So Jesus began his response by telling Nathanael something no stranger would know about him. After Nathanael's first dumbfounded response, Jesus continued with the facts about where Philip had found Nathanael. With that, Nathanael's doubts disappeared. He realized that Jesus was indeed who Philip had said he was: the Messiah, the Son of God.

The Jesus Connection

A friend who knows everything about you—the good and the bad—and still loves you passionately? That's the kind of friend Jesus is to us. Much of our lives among our earthly friends and acquaintances are spent “keeping up appearances.” We fear that if people knew the real us, they'd abandon us. With Jesus, that won't happen. He already knows it all, and his love is constant. In what ways are you trying to keep up appearances with Jesus? Tell Jesus today without worry or fear. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



And You Love Me Supplies

Bibles
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "And You Love Me"
(Psalm 139:1-3) (track
12)

1

GETTING STARTED

And You Love Me

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Have kids form pairs, and give each pair a Bible.

Say: **Look at your partner for a few seconds. Take note of what your partner is wearing, and study his or her face. Pause. Now stand back to back with your partner, and take turns trying to name as many things about each other as you can. For example, one person may say, "My partner has blue eyes, brown hair, and is wearing a red shirt."** Quietly play "And You Love Me" (Psalm 139:1-3) (track 12 on the CD) while kids play the game.

After kids have tried to name as many things as they could remember about their partners, have kids turn to face their partners again to see how many things they got correct.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

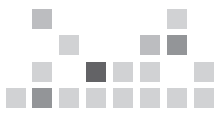
- Tell about the person you think knows the most about you. How did that person learn so much about you?
- What's it like when a friend knows you well?
- What do you do to try to get to know a new friend better?

Say: **No matter how hard we try, we can't list everything about someone. We're not able to remember everything on the outside of a person, and definitely not everything about them on the inside. But ► JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US—everything you could possibly know about yourself and more! Our Key Verse, Psalm 139:1, helps us remember that.**

Have kids find Psalm 139:1 and read it aloud together: "O Lord, you have searched me and you know me."

Say: **Jesus does a lot of amazing things, and one of the most special is that ► JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US and loves us no matter what. Today we'll explore the Bible to find out more about the way Jesus knows us and loves us.**





2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Surprise! Jesus Knows

What You'll Do ■■■■■

Distribute this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Self-Portrait" activity. Hand out markers or pens.

Say: **Draw a picture of yourself the way you think Jesus sees you. You could draw a picture of what you look like or a picture of what you're like on the inside. For example, if you think you are an honest person, you could draw a picture of something you think represents honesty, such as a judge. If you think you are someone who is always busy helping others, you could draw a picture of a busy bee.** Allow time.

When kids are finished, have them form groups of three and share their drawings. As kids share, distribute Bibles and pads of sticky notes to each group.

Say: **In the Bible today, we'll learn that ► JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US. Jesus proved this to a man named Nathanael not long after Jesus' disciples started following him.** Show kids the Bible Timeline, and point to the "Disciples Follow Jesus" picture.

In their groups, have kids read John 1:43-47.

After all groups have read, say: **Jesus knew where Nathanael came from before he said one word to Jesus!**

Ask:

- **What does that show you about the way Jesus gets to know people?**

Have kids read John 1:48-51.

Say: **Jesus told Nathanael he saw him sitting under the fig tree where Philip had talked to him. But Jesus wasn't anywhere near them to witness that.**

Ask:

- **If Jesus knew these things about Nathanael, what details might he know about you?**

Say: **Nathanael had never met Jesus before, so Jesus surprised Nathanael when he recognized him and showed that he knew him. Jesus recognized Nathanael by his looks and by his personality. In your groups, brainstorm some things Jesus might have known about Nathanael's personality and physical appearance and write them on your sticky notes.**



Surprise! Jesus Knows Supplies

.....
Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth markers
pens
pads of sticky notes
tape
Teacher Pack
"Jesus Knows Me!" poster
Bible Timeline

Surprise! Jesus Knows Easy Prep

.....
Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Hang the "Jesus Knows Me!" poster where kids can easily see it.





Even though they won't actually know anything about Nathanael, encourage kids to come up with and write specific characteristics such as hair color, favorite things, or personality traits. As groups brainstorm ideas, invite someone from each group to bring the sticky notes to the poster, one at a time, and stick them to the left side near the picture of Nathanael sitting under a tree. It's okay if groups come up with the same traits.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like trying to come up with characteristics about someone you haven't even met?
- We couldn't know much for sure about Nathanael. Why was Jesus able to know about him without meeting him?
- What's the difference between what we said about Nathanael and what Jesus knew about Nathanael?

Say: We really don't know anything about Nathanael, but Jesus knew *everything* about Nathanael. ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US**, too, because he loves us and wants to have a friendship with us. Let's read some verses in the Bible to explore what Jesus knows about us.

Jesus Knows Me!

What You'll Do ■■■■

Have kids remain in their groups and read Psalm 139:1-6.

Say: These verses tell us that ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US**. He knows what we do during the day, when we sleep, what we think, how we feel, how we act toward people, when we sin, when we're sorry for our sins, and when we worship him—everything!

In your groups, write on the sticky notes as many specific things as you can think of that Jesus knows about you, such as physical characteristics, your habits, and things that make you special. Allow time. Then have kids place the new sticky notes on the right side of the "Jesus Knows Me!" poster near the picture of kids playing.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How easy or hard was it to come up with things Jesus knows about you?
- What do you like or not like about Jesus knowing all these things about you?

Say: Look at all the things we came up with! Even though we wrote everything we could think of about ourselves, we couldn't possible have listed all of it. But

Jesus Knows Me! Supplies

Bibles
pens
pads of sticky notes
Teacher Pack
"Jesus Knows Me!"
poster





► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US!** If we were to write everything Jesus knows about us, there wouldn't be enough time or room on the poster to put up all the sticky notes! Let's look further into what Jesus knows about us and why he knows us so well—the way he knew Nathanael.

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Inside and Out

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's read another passage from the Bible to find out how well Jesus knows us.** Invite a willing child to read aloud Psalm 139:13-18.

Have kids find new partners and discuss the following questions in their pairs.

Ask:

- **What are some of the things Jesus did to make you special?**
- **Tell what makes it easy or difficult for you to believe that Jesus knows you *that* well.**



After kids have shared, give each child a “Gingerbread Person” pattern, two paper clips, and a pen. Set out markers and scissors, and have kids decorate the gingerbread person and then cut out the joined figures, being careful not to cut through the fold.

Say: **Write the things you believe Jesus knows about you on the inside of your gingerbread person. Write as many things as you can think of.** Allow time. **Now clip the two shapes together.** As kids work on their gingerbread figures, once again play “And You Love Me” (Psalm 139:1-3) (track 12 on the CD).



Inside and Out Supplies

Bible
CD player
pens
markers
1 copy per child of the
“Gingerbread Person”
pattern (at the end of
this lesson)
paper clips
several pairs of scissors
Teacher Pack
CD: “And You Love Me”
(Psalm 139:1-3)
(track 12)

Inside and Out Easy Prep

Make 1 copy of the
“Gingerbread Person”
pattern. Cut on the lines
where indicated. Then
enlarge the pattern
to 150 percent and
copy onto card stock
or colored paper. You'll
need 1 copy per child.





More Than a Name Supplies

.....
several containers of
salt

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How does your gingerbread person represent the way Jesus knows us inside and out?
- When we talk about Jesus knowing us inside, what do you think that means?
- What comfort do you feel in knowing Jesus has known you since before you were born?

Say: ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US.** He knows us inside and out. Jesus showed Nathanael he knew him and cared about him by knowing way more than his name. It's good to know that Jesus loves us that much, too.

More Than a Name

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids line up in alphabetical order according to their first names. After they make a line, give each child a small handful of salt.

Say: ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US.** Jesus knows your name, and he knows the number of hairs on your head. Jesus thinks so many great things about you! For every grain of salt in your hand, Jesus has a wonderful thought about you. Jesus loves you so much. Go ahead and count the grains of salt in your hand.

Pause as kids react to your request or try to count the grains of salt.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

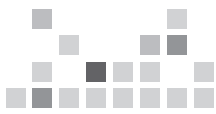
Ask:

- Why can't you count all the grains of salt?
- What's your reaction to knowing that Jesus has that many wonderful thoughts about you?

Say: ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US,** and he loves us. He loves you so much that he wants you to know all about him, too. Jesus wants to have a close friendship with you, just as he did with Nathanael. Let's explore some ways we can grow closer to Jesus this week.

Have kids throw away their handfuls of salt and sit in a circle.





4

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's think about ways we can get to know Jesus better this week since**

► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Spend time quietly listening to Jesus by focusing on him.**
- **Make a list of everything you know about Jesus. Then write down what else you'd like to know about him.**
- **Tell Jesus everything you love about him.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **Nathanael was amazed that Jesus knew all about him. We can find comfort and happiness in the fact that ► JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about Jesus' knowledge of them. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids. Have kids hold up the self-portraits they drew on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and say one thing Jesus knows about them.

Pray: **Dear Jesus, thank you for knowing us better than we know ourselves. Thank you for caring to know us so well and loving us no matter what. In your name, amen.**



Daily Challenges Supplies

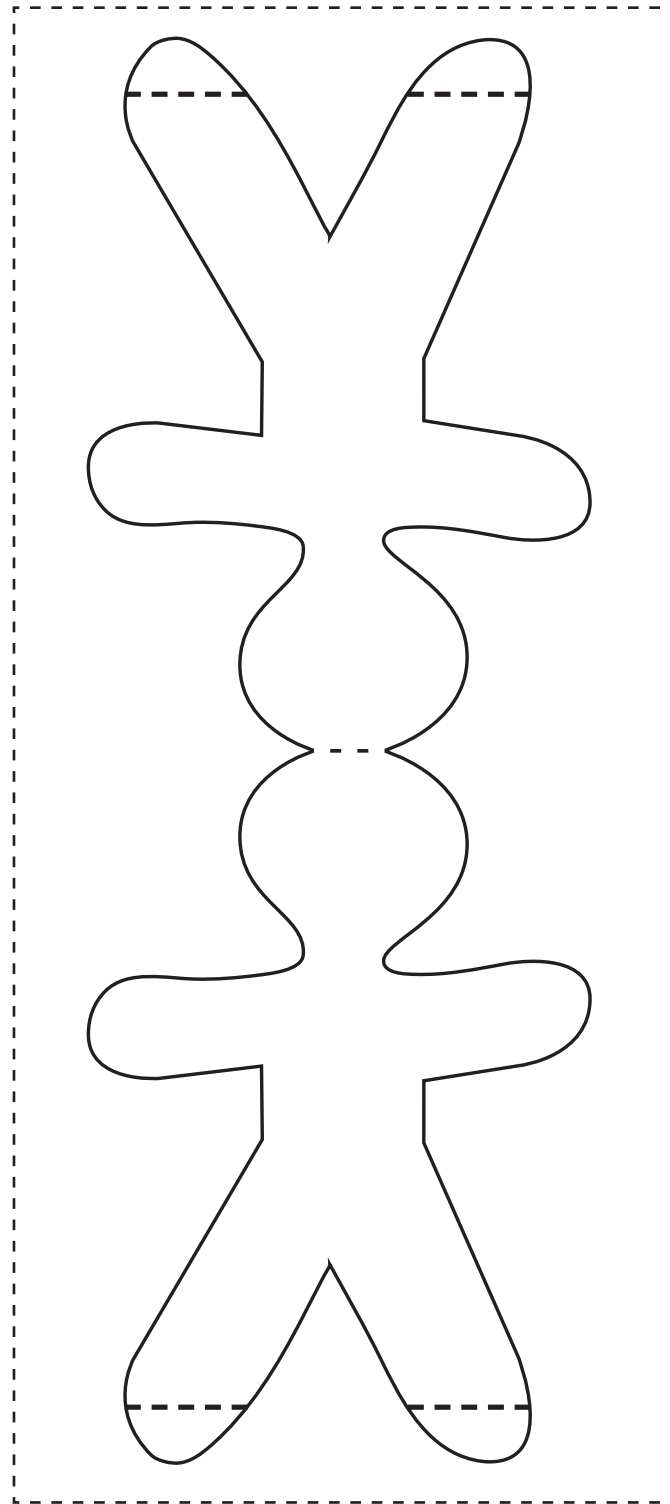
.....
Bible Truth Sleuth

Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth



Gingerbread Person



Cut out pattern along dashed lines. Enlarge the pattern to 150 percent and copy onto card stock or colored paper.



OK
TO COPY



Disciples Follow Jesus

Mark 1:14-20

Third- and fourth-graders long to be part of a group. Being part of a group brings acceptance and positive friendships. Use this lesson to teach children about following Jesus. You'll use strategies that make them feel part of the group. Include kids in discussion, and help them each feel part of a group of people who are following Jesus. Through this lesson you'll not only help kids connect with a deep understanding of how to follow Jesus, but also encourage them to rely on others who are trying to do the same.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	It's in the Cards (about 15 min.) Choose whether to give something up or follow an instruction to reach a goal.	masking tape, 5 pennies per child Teacher Pack: "Do It" cards 	Use masking tape to create a 10'x10' game board of squares on the floor (as pictured in the lesson). Separate the "Do It" cards, shuffle them, and set them facedown in a stack.
2 Bible Exploration	Following—What Does It Really Mean? (about 35 min.) Experience different aspects of following Jesus at three different learning stations.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, markers or crayons, pens, paper Teacher Pack: CD, Bible Timeline 	Tear out the Lesson 8 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. Then set up three learning stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Station 1: Bibles, markers or crayons, and pens• Station 2: paper and markers• Station 3: CD player and CD

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



► Bible Point

Follow Jesus.
.....


Key Verse

"'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men' " (Mark 1:17).
.....

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will make choices that show their devotion to Jesus.
.....

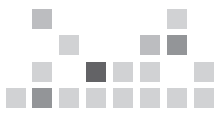




LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Reminder to Follow <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Review their stations, and create a craft reminder.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens Teacher Pack: Shoestring Ornament craft package	Set out the red, yellow, and blue plastic beads and the safety pins from the Shoestring Ornament craft package.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Disciples Follow Jesus

Mark 1:14-20

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

John the Baptist Is Imprisoned and Killed

At the beginning of this passage, we read that John the Baptist was put in prison. Mark doesn't tell us why, but we know from Luke 3:19-20 that Herod put John in prison for rebuking the ruler for various reasons. We also know from Matthew 14:6-11 that Herod eventually—likely in the midst of a drunken party—had John the Baptist beheaded.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

After John was imprisoned, Jesus began his ministry with focus and intention. Mark relates Jesus' message in a nutshell: "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news." For Jews, this would indeed have been good news. What they heard was that David's earthly kingdom would be restored! They'd be freed from Roman bondage! Though their interpretation was incorrect, Jesus' message certainly caught their attention.

Jesus Calls Disciples to Follow Him

At this point, Jesus began gathering around him the band of disciples who would be with him throughout his ministry. The first four were Simon, Andrew, James, and John. We tend to think of these men as simple, ordinary fishermen, and to some degree that perception is correct. They were in a rather lowly occupation and likely had no formal education.

However, John 1:35-42 indicates that two of the men, at least, had been disciples of John the Baptist and thus, to some degree, followers of Jesus already. It's possible that Andrew and James also had been disciples of John the Baptist. All four were spiritual men who were seeking to follow God as closely as

they knew how, so when Jesus asked them to follow him, they did so without hesitation.

Fishermen Respond to Jesus' Call

We needn't necessarily think that these men abandoned their nets and boats along the seashore. James and John left their fishing business in the care of their father and hired hands. Peter and Andrew's situation was probably much the same.

The decision to follow Jesus didn't mean that these disciples recklessly dropped their responsibilities, but it did mean that they were totally committed to Jesus. They had to make following Jesus the most important aspect of their lives.

The Jesus Connection

To follow Jesus, we don't just follow his example or his teachings, though that certainly is important. Nor do we tag along behind him unnoticed. When we follow him, we actually walk alongside him in community and in friendship. Are you aware of Christ's presence in your life? Are you intentional in following his guidance? What can you do to grow closer to Jesus and stay there? Your first step can be to ask for Jesus' help in that. You can write your prayer here.



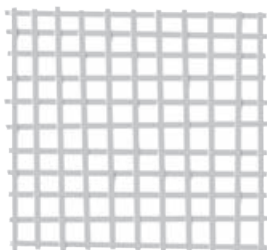


It's in the Cards Supplies

masking tape
5 pennies per child
Teacher Pack
"Do It" cards

It's in the Cards Easy Prep

Use masking tape to create a 10'x10' game board of squares on the floor (as pictured in the lesson). Separate the "Do It" cards, shuffle them, and set them facedown in a stack.



1

GETTING STARTED

It's in the Cards

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **We're going to play a game where you're the game pieces!** Give each child five pennies, and then have kids choose a spot on an outside row of the giant game board you created ahead of time.

Say: **The object of the game is for you to move from the row you're standing in right now to the row on the opposite side of the board. Here's how you'll move. I'll start by choosing one of you to go first, and then I'll have you draw a "Do It" card. Each card has a different instruction. When you draw a card, read the instruction and decide whether you want to follow the instruction and be allowed to move two spaces toward your goal, or whether you want to give me a penny and be allowed to move one space toward your goal. The choice is yours. It's okay if you're standing in the same space as someone else. Any questions?** Repeat or clarify the directions as needed.

Invite a willing child to go first, and have him or her draw a "Do It" card. Continue having kids draw cards and move across the board until one person reaches the other side. Then have kids sit in a circle inside the game board.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids form pairs to discuss the following questions.

Ask:

- **What made you decide if you'd rather give up a penny or follow the instruction?**
- **What did you like about having a choice to follow or not follow what the card said to do?**
- **In this game, one of your choices was to give something up in order to reach your goal. Tell about times in your own life when you had to give things up in order to reach a goal.**
- **Your other choice in this game was to obey an instruction in order to reach your goal. Tell about times in your own life when you obeyed instructions in order to reach a goal.**

Say: **In this game, you had to make a choice. Today we're going to be looking at following Jesus. When we ► FOLLOW JESUS, we have choices to make. Let's see what Jesus said about choosing to follow him.**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Following—What Does It Really Mean?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids form three groups, and have kids open their Bibles to Mark 1:14-20. Say: **We're going to learn about four men who made a choice to follow Jesus. These four men were named Simon, Andrew, James, and John.** Show kids the Bible Timeline, and point to the "Disciples Follow Jesus" picture. **As I read, concentrate on one of these four disciples. Choose in your group who you'll focus on.** Pause. Read Mark 1:14-20 aloud as kids follow along.

Now you're going to do some activities in your group at three stations I've set up. As you do your activities, keep the disciple you chose in mind. Try to complete the activities like you imagine he would.

Give the instructions for each station, and have each group start at a different station. Give groups no more than 10 minutes at a station before you indicate time to move to a different station. Monitor the stations in case kids need a refresher on what to do.

Station 1: What I Did to Follow Jesus

Distribute today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "What I Did to Follow Jesus" section.

Say: **Use the space on your Bible Truth Sleuth pages to write about what the disciple you chose did to follow Jesus when Jesus called. Be sure to work together in your group to be detailed and accurate. You can look in a Bible for help if you need to. If you'd rather draw a picture than write, use the markers or the crayons.** Allow kids time to work, and then cue them to move to their next station.

Station 2: Making a Sacrifice

Say: **At this station, you'll read aloud together our Key Verse, Mark 1:17. Then you'll think about what the disciple you chose might have had to give up or leave behind in order to follow Jesus. Consider their jobs and what life was like in those days. Together with your group, brainstorm things people today might be asked to give up so that they can follow Jesus. Then create a poster showing those things using paper and markers. Be sure to include the Key Verse on your poster as well.**

Station 3: The Joy of Following

Say: **At this station, you'll listen to a story on the CD. This story is about a boy who chose to give up something important to him in order to follow Jesus and to do what he believed Jesus wanted him to do. As you listen, think about what he got in return. Then talk with the others in your group about how this boy's story compares with what happened with Jesus' disciples. You might also share similar experiences you've had.**



Following—What Does It Really Mean? Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
markers or crayons
pens
paper

Teacher Pack

CD: "Following Jesus"
(track 13)
Bible Timeline

Following—What Does It Really Mean? Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 8 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. Then set up three learning stations:

- Station 1: Bibles, markers or crayons, and pens
- Station 2: paper and markers
- Station 3: CD player and CD



Play “Following Jesus” (track 13 on the CD). After the track ends, allow kids time to discuss what they just heard.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead pairs in this discussion.

Ask:

- What have you learned about what it takes to follow Jesus?
- Even when it might mean giving something up—such as the boy who gave up his new sleeping bag—what makes it worth it to follow Jesus?

Say: **Jesus loves us and wants us to follow him, but he doesn’t force us to do it. We’re given a choice, just as the disciples had a choice. The disciples knew that following Jesus wasn’t always easy, but the good things they got to witness and do for others with Jesus made their choice a reason to be happy. We can ► FOLLOW JESUS and discover the joy in it, too.**

.....

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Reminder to Follow

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Have kids sit in a circle.

Say: **You’ll each use a safety pin and some beads to create a shoestring ornament. Each bead color represents something different: the red beads represent giving something up to follow Jesus, the yellow beads represent the joy we can find by following Jesus, and the blue beads represent being fishers of men. Make sure you get at least one bead of each color on your safety pin. When you’ve finished, attach the safety pin to one of your shoes. Every time you see it on your shoe it will remind you to follow Jesus in all you do.**

After kids have finished making their shoestring ornaments, help them as needed to attach them to their shoes. Have kids find the “A Reminder to Follow” activity on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and write down what each color bead represents. Have them consider the meaning on a personal level, writing something they can give up to follow Jesus for the red bead, a way they’ve found joy by following Jesus for the yellow bead, and the name of someone they can tell about Jesus for the blue bead.

Reminder to Follow Supplies

.....

Bible Truth Sleuth
pens

Teacher Pack

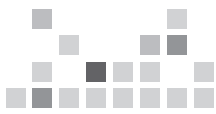
Shoestring Ornament
craft package

Reminder to Follow Easy Prep

.....

Set out the red, yellow,
and blue plastic beads
and the safety pins
from the Shoestring
Ornament craft
package.



**Talk With Kids** ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What about following Jesus excites you?
- What about following Jesus seems difficult or even scary?
- What will it mean for you to follow Jesus this week?

Say: **As the disciples discovered, following Jesus might mean leaving some things behind. But they asked Jesus for help when they struggled and we can, too. No matter where we are or what we're doing we can always ask for help to ► FOLLOW JESUS in our decisions, actions, and what we say. Let's look at ways we can do that this week.**

.....

4 LASTING
IMPRESSIONS**Daily Challenges****What You'll Do** ■■■■

Say: **Let's think this week about how we can ► FOLLOW JESUS.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Ask Jesus to help you show others how wonderful it is to know and follow him.**
- **Use your shoelace pin as a reminder to follow Jesus this week.**
- **Give up something, such as your place in line, to show that you follow Jesus.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **The disciples left their fishing nets so they could follow Jesus. Let's remember to ► FOLLOW JESUS as we do our Daily Challenges this week.**

**Daily Challenges
Supplies**

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth





Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about following Jesus. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids.

Say: **Find a partner, and pray for each other that God will help you ► FOLLOW JESUS this week.**

Pray: **Dear God, please help us ► FOLLOW JESUS in all we do, say, and think this week. In Jesus’ name, amen.**






Jesus Demonstrates His Authority

Mark 1:21-28

Children love to imagine that they have superhuman powers. They attempt to identify with heroes and grapple with some of life’s tough questions, such as “Who should I look up to?” and “Who defeats the monsters I’m afraid of?” Jesus wants kids to understand that his power conquers their fears, doubts, and concerns about their world. Use this lesson to help kids understand that Jesus’ power is larger and more powerful than anything they’ve ever imagined.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Who Has Authority? <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Play a game about authority.		
2 Bible Exploration	When Jesus Talks, People Listen <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Pair up, and discuss fears and how Jesus has power over them.	Bible, Bible Truth Sleuth, colored pencils Teacher Pack: Bible Timeline 	Tear out the Lesson 9 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Nothing Separates Us <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Read the Key Verse, and consider what can’t separate us from God’s love.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), pens Teacher Pack: CD	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point

Jesus is all-powerful.


Key Verse

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will praise Jesus for his power in their lives.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Mix Amazement <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Perform an experiment about Jesus' power, and apply it to their lives.	1 cup of water per child, empty cups, red and blue food coloring	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	pads of sticky notes, pens	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Jesus Demonstrates His Authority

Mark 1:21-28

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Preaches With Authority

Mark begins this passage with a demonstration of Jesus' authority. Jesus was different from those who usually spoke in the synagogue. When Jesus interpreted the passage he read, he did so with authority—so much authority that the people noticed how different he was from the normal teachers of the Law.

Demons Take Notice of Jesus' Authority

Jesus apparently was making such an impression that the demon possessing a man felt the need to create a distraction. The demon referred to himself in the plural. Apparently more than one demon—perhaps many of them—were controlling this man.

Demons and demon possession are not often discussed in the church today. In Jesus' day, it seems that demon possession was commonly known. Perhaps it was more apparent because the demons opposed Jesus' ministry.

Jesus Demonstrates Power Over Demons

The demons in this story clearly knew who Jesus was. “The Holy One of God” is a name for the promised Messiah. So why would a demon make himself known to Jesus? The demons may have been attempting to deceive people listening to Jesus that he was in league with them. However, Jesus cut short the demons’ dialogue. Notice that there was no protest when Jesus spoke to the demons. They knew they had to obey and did so immediately.

People Spread the Word About Jesus

The people present were amazed at Jesus' authority just from hearing him teach. But when demons obeyed his commands, those watching saw that Jesus had the power to back up his authority. He was the all-powerful Son of God. And when people left the synagogue that day, they began telling everyone in the whole region who Jesus was. After this event, Jesus could no longer go anywhere in the region of Galilee without being recognized and surrounded by people wanting to be healed by his miraculous power.

The Jesus Connection

Jesus' power goes far beyond what we can comprehend. Yet we can begin to understand the worth of Jesus' love for us.

We may not understand the demon possession that's described in this passage, but we can stand amazed at Jesus' power. Do you comprehend the magnitude of Jesus' power? What do you believe Jesus' power can do in your life? Go to Jesus with your needs, your hopes, your fears, and let his power comfort and guide you. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



When Jesus Talks,
People Listen
Supplies

.....
Bible
Bible Truth Sleuth
colored pencils
Teacher Pack
Bible Timeline

When Jesus Talks,
People Listen
Easy Prep

.....
Tear out the Lesson 9
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

1

GETTING STARTED

Who Has Authority?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

When everyone has arrived, have kids form two groups. Designate one group as the "Authority" team and the other group as the "Obey" team.

Say: **The Authority team will give orders to the Obey team. Make sure the orders aren't dangerous or mean, but you can decide what the Obey team should do. The Authority team could direct the Obey team to do things like moving all the chairs from one side of the room to the other and then back again, or marching around the room while singing a song. Ready? Pause. Go!** Allow time.

After the Authority team has given several orders, say to the Obey team: **Now you're the "Jesus" team and you can tell the Authority team what to do.** Allow the Jesus team to give some orders to the Authority team, again being careful that the orders aren't dangerous or demeaning. Let the Jesus team give several orders, then have kids sit down.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like having authority to give directions to someone?
- What was it like having to do what others were telling you to do?
- When the Obey team became the Jesus team, they had the ultimate authority. What do you think that tells us about Jesus?

Say: Today we'll discover that we can trust Jesus' direction and authority, because
▶ **JESUS IS ALL-POWERFUL.** Let's look in the Bible to learn about Jesus' amazing power.
.....

2

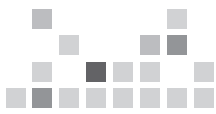
BIBLE EXPLORATION

When Jesus Talks, People Listen

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **There are some actions you'll do as I read today's Bible passage. Cup your**





hands behind your ears each time you hear a word having to do with teaching, such as *teach, teaching, teacher, or taught*. Demonstrate the action for kids. Each time you hear the word *amazed or amazing*, open your mouths and put your palms to your cheeks as you would if you were very surprised by something. Demonstrate the action for kids. Then, whenever you hear the name *Jesus*, make a muscle with your arm. Demonstrate the action for kids.

Our Bible passage today is from Mark 1:21-28, during Jesus' ministry with his disciples. Show kids the Bible Timeline, and point to the "Disciples Follow Jesus" picture. Listen as I read about something amazing that happened during Jesus' ministry, and don't forget to do the actions!

"Jesus and some of his disciples went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus (make a muscle) went into the synagogue—which is a kind of church—and began to teach (cup hands behind ears). The people were amazed (look surprised) at his teaching (cup hands behind ears), because he taught (cup hands behind ears) them as one who had authority, not as the teachers (cup hands behind ears) of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, 'What do you want with us, Jesus (make a muscle) of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!'

"'Be quiet!' said Jesus (make a muscle) sternly. 'Come out of him!' The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

"The people were all so amazed (look surprised) that they asked each other, 'What is this? A new teaching (cup hands behind ears)—and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him.' News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee."

Distribute today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Power Over Fears" activity. Set out colored pencils.

Say: Find a partner, and talk about three things you're afraid of that you want Jesus to help you with. Allow time. Now draw a picture of those things or something that represents those things in the three bottom boxes. Allow time.

Say: We all have things we're afraid of. It's okay to be afraid of those things. But ► JESUS IS ALL-POWERFUL, and he can help us deal with our fears, just as he helped the man with the evil spirit.

In the three top boxes on your Bible Truth Sleuth pages, draw ways Jesus can use his power over everything to help you with the fears you drew in the boxes below. Allow time, helping kids as needed. Then gather everyone in a circle.





Nothing Separates Us Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
copies of the lyrics page
(at the end of this
lesson)
pens
Teacher Pack
CD: "To God Be the
Glory" (track 14)

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's so amazing about the authority Jesus showed in this Bible passage?
- Why does the authority Jesus had over an evil spirit show that he's all-powerful?
- What are some bad things in the world today? How would you like to see Jesus show power over them?
- What comforts you about knowing Jesus has the power to help you not be afraid of those bad things?

Say: Jesus' power can do amazing things in our lives. Jesus will use his power to help us with our fears and to help us experience God's love. Keep watch for things going on around you that show you how ► **JESUS IS ALL-POWERFUL**. As Jesus helped the man with the evil spirit, Jesus helps and protects us today.

Nothing Separates Us

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: Today our **Key Verse** is found in **Romans 8:38-39**. Make sure kids have Bibles, and help them find the Key Verse. **Let's read it together: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).**

Have kids find the "Nothing Separates Us" activity on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and hand out pens.

Say: **We've read our Key Verse and learned from the Bible about Jesus' power. Now write your own list of things that can't ever separate you from God. Remember, there is absolutely nothing that can separate you from the love of God through Jesus. Jesus is more powerful than anything we're afraid of or that we think is too strong.**

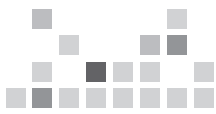
Have kids write on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages all the things that can't separate them from the love of God. After they've finished, pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "To God Be the Glory" (track 14 on the CD). Sing with kids, and allow them to jump and move around during the song.



Check it out now: to God be the glory.
(Repeat 3x.)

(Chorus)

**To God be the glory;
Great things he has done!**



So loved he the world,
That he gave us his Son,
Who yielded his life,
An atonement for sin,
And opened the life gate
That all may go in.

Check it out now: to God be the glory.

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father
Through Jesus, the Son,
And give him the glory;
Great things he has done!

Check it out now: to God be the glory.
Check it out now: to God be the glory.

(Repeat chorus.)

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!

O come to the Father
Through Jesus, the Son.
O come to the Father
Through Jesus, the Son.
O come to the Father
Through Jesus, the Son,
And give him the glory;
Great things he has done!

Check it out now: to God be the glory.
Check it out now: to God be the glory.

"To God Be the Glory" by Fanny Jan Crosby and William Howard Doane





Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What powerful things—even as powerful as they are—can’t separate us from God’s love? How do you know?
- In what ways can Jesus’ power help you face your fears?
- In the song, we sang “To God be the glory.” Why do you think it’s good to give credit and thanks to God for the ways he helps us?

Say: God—who’s all-powerful—sent his Son, Jesus, who’s also all-powerful to help us overcome fear and sin. *Sin* means doing wrong. When we believe in Jesus, he makes a way for us to not have to take the consequences of sin so we can be close to God. Because of Jesus’ power, nothing in the entire universe can separate us from God’s love. The man Jesus saved from the evil spirit found out it’s true that ► **JESUS IS ALL-POWERFUL**, and we can believe that, too.

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Mix Amazement

Mix Amazement Supplies

1 cup of water per child
empty cups
red and blue food
coloring

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Say: **To better understand Jesus’ power, let’s do an experiment.** Give each child a cup of water and an empty cup.

Say: **Think about some things that feel powerful in your life—so powerful it might seem like they could stop God from loving you.** As kids think, drip a drop or two of blue food coloring into each child’s cup. Say: **The blue food coloring represents those things.**

Say: **Now think of the things you know about God’s love. Go ahead and share some of your thoughts aloud.** As kids share, drip a drop or two of red food coloring into each child’s cup. Say: **The red food coloring represents God’s love. It mixed right in with all those other powerful things! Now comes the test—can you separate the blue water from the red water? You’ve got an empty cup to pour into as you try.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why weren’t you able to separate the blue and red water?
- In what ways did this experiment help you understand or get an idea of how Jesus’ power keeps us from being separated from God?





- What can you do when something in your life feels more powerful than God's love?

Say: Even though our fears and sadness and pain threaten to separate us from God, ► **JESUS IS ALL-POWERFUL** and he can keep us from being separated from God. Nothing in our lives can separate us from the love of God because of Jesus' power. Not even evil spirits living inside a man could separate that man from God's love. Jesus showed his power over evil! Let's choose ways we can explore Jesus' power this week and know for ourselves that ► **JESUS IS ALL-POWERFUL**.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Let's decide on a way we can learn more about or show thanks this week that ► **JESUS IS ALL-POWERFUL**.

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- Create a piece of artwork, like a painting or sculpture, that shows how Jesus demonstrates his power in your life—such as helping you face fears.
- Write a poem or song to worship Jesus for his power.
- Ask a trusted Christian adult to tell you about ways he or she has seen Jesus' power in his or her life.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: Let's remember what Jesus did for the man with the evil spirit and that ► **JESUS IS ALL-POWERFUL** as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.



Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth





Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

.....
pads of sticky notes
pens

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about Jesus' power. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

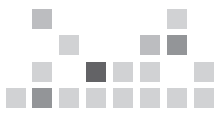
Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids.

Give kids each a sticky note and a pen. Have them each write their biggest fear.

Then, pray: **Dear Jesus, we know you're all-powerful and we ask for your help in facing these fears and trusting they can't separate us from God's love.** Have kids tear up the papers with their fears and throw the pieces behind them. **Thank you for being so strong and showing us that with you, we don't have to be afraid. In your name, amen.**





Lyrics ■■■■

To God Be the Glory

Check it out now: to God be the glory.
(Repeat 3x.)

(Chorus)
**To God be the glory;
Great things he has done!
So loved he the world,
That he gave us his Son,
Who yielded his life,
An atonement for sin,
And opened the life gate
That all may go in.**

Check it out now: to God be the glory.

**Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father
Through Jesus, the Son,
And give him the glory;
Great things he has done!**

**Check it out now: to God be the glory.
Check it out now: to God be the glory.**

(Repeat chorus.)

**Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!**

**O come to the Father
Through Jesus, the Son.
O come to the Father
Through Jesus, the Son.
O come to the Father
Through Jesus, the Son,
And give him the glory;
Great things he has done!**

**Check it out now: to God be the glory.
Check it out now: to God be the glory.**

"To God Be the Glory" by Fanny Jan Crosby and William Howard Doane



**OK
TO COPY**





Jesus Heals, Prays, and Preaches

Mark 1:29-39

“**M**ommy, can you help me...” “Daddy, I need you to...” These are common phrases heard from 8- and 9-year-olds. They’d love to do things on their own, but they realize some of their inability and quickly run to their parents for help. Children with positive parental role models will quickly grasp the concept of their loving Savior caring for them. But if you lead kids who don’t have positive parental role models, you might need to spend a little more time helping them understand this concept. Use this lesson to help kids see that God loves caring for them.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Mule Pack <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Carry a backpack full of “burdens.”	backpack filled with several heavy books	
2 Bible Exploration	Jesus Shows He Cares <i>(about 20 min.)</i> In groups, come up with a way to present how Jesus showed he cared for people in the Bible passage.	Bible, paper, markers	
	Give Me Rest <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discuss the meanings of <i>weary</i> and <i>burdened</i> , and sing the Key Verse song.	Bibles, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), CD player Teacher Pack: CD	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point

Jesus cares for us.


Key Verse

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will turn their everyday worries over to Jesus.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Soar With Eagles <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Share in pairs about Isaiah 40:28-31, and commit to giving their burdens to Jesus.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, pens, paper, tape Teacher Pack: CD, "Soar With Eagles" poster 	Tear out the Lesson 10 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book. Hang the "Soar With Eagles" poster where kids can easily see it.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*

Jesus Heals, Prays, and Preaches

Mark 1:29-39

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law

We learn from the beginning of this passage that Peter (called Simon in this passage) was married, because it tells us he had a mother-in-law. Luke tells us that she was ill with a high fever (Luke 4:38). The fact that she was able to get up and start serving her guests immediately after being healed by Jesus demonstrated the completeness of her healing.

Jesus Heals People and Casts Out Demons

Not a single day had passed since Jesus healed the demon-possessed man in the synagogue, yet at nightfall people from all over town brought their sick to him for healing. It's interesting to note that in that culture, without electric lights, all outdoor activity generally ceased when darkness came. But not that night—when the sun set, the Sabbath was over. At that point, the work involved in bringing these people to Jesus was permissible. Jesus met the needs of those who came to him, healing diseases and casting out more demons.

Jesus Tells the Demons to Be Silent

Why did Jesus silence the demons that knew who he was? Perhaps because he didn't want his identity to be made known by demons but rather by his own words and actions. After a strenuous day and evening, Jesus apparently stayed at Peter's house that night. Jesus got up before dawn to be alone and pray. As he was praying, Peter and the others found him and presented him with more requests. However, Jesus wasn't interested in building his popularity. Instead, he was ready to move on to where he could minister to people who didn't already know him.

Jesus knew his mission. He knew that people in other parts of the region had physical needs he could meet. He also knew that those people needed to know who he was. So he continued on, sharing his message of the coming kingdom, demonstrating his power, and freeing people from the bondage of evil.

The Jesus Connection

What do you need right now? Whatever it is, Jesus cares, and he can help. All the resources of heaven and earth belong to him, and he's ready to help you today.

Lots of people care about what happens to us, but nobody cares like Jesus. He has the power, the wisdom, and the love to know what's best for us. Jesus tirelessly cares for us and our needs. What cares can you leave in Jesus' capable hands today? What can you learn about caring for others from Jesus' example? You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Mule Pack Supplies

backpack filled with
several heavy books

Jesus Shows He Cares Supplies

Bible
paper
markers

1

GETTING STARTED

Mule Pack

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

When everyone has arrived, invite a willing child to place the backpack on his or her back. Then have the child skip around the room, do several jumping jacks, or try to do some push-ups.

Say: **That looks really heavy! How does it feel? Here, let me help you.**

Take the backpack off the child, and place it on another willing child. Do this until everyone that would like to has had an opportunity to briefly wear the backpack and try various activities.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like to wear the backpack?
- What was good about having the backpack taken from you?
- Tell about things you have to do that make you feel weighed down as if you're carrying around a heavy backpack.
- What do you do to find relief when you feel weighed down?

Say: **We all carry worries around with us, sometimes more than others, but worries can leave us feeling weighed down. Jesus cares for all of our needs and worries. Today we'll learn that Jesus wants us to give him our burdens. Let's explore how**
► **JESUS CARES FOR US.**

2

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Jesus Shows He Cares

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Jesus taught people about himself and about God. He also helped people with their troubles and cared for many in need. Let's look at what he did to help a woman who was very sick.**





Read Mark 1:29-34 aloud.

Ask:

- **Why do you think what Jesus did for this woman showed he cared about her?**
- **Tell about ways people have shown they care when you've been sick.**

Read Mark 1:35-39 aloud. Set out paper and markers, and then have kids form four groups. Assign one of the following to each group: 1) James and John, 2) Simon and Andrew, 3) Simon's mother-in-law, and 4) the townspeople who were sick and demon-possessed.

Have each group discuss how Jesus showed he cared for the people in the Bible, and have group members come up with a way to present how they believe Jesus showed he cared for the people they talked about in their group. They could either act it out, draw pictures on paper, or talk to everyone.

After each group has presented, gather kids in a circle.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Based on how Jesus showed care to people in the Bible, what does that show you about ways he can care for people today?**
- **What does it tell you about Jesus that he was willing to help so many people?**
- **In what ways have you personally experienced Jesus' care?**

Say: **Jesus showed incredible kindness and love for the sick woman when he healed her and for the many other people he helped. ► JESUS CARES FOR US with that much love, too. Let's look at the reminder of Jesus' love for us in today's Key Verse.**

Give Me Rest

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Our Key Verse today is an example of how ► JESUS CARES FOR US. It's found in Matthew 11:28, and it contains Jesus' words.**

Make sure kids have Bibles, and invite a willing child to read the Key Verse aloud: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Say: **We're going to sing a song that'll help us remember our Key Verse. It'll also remind us that we can give our burdens to Jesus and he can help us rest.**



Give Me Rest Supplies

Bibles
copies of the lyrics page
(at the end of this
lesson)
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "I Will Give You
Rest" (Matthew 11:28)
(track 15)





Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play “I Will Give You Rest” (Matthew 11:28) (track 15 on the CD). Have kids listen to the song once and pick out the parts of the Key Verse in the song. Then play the track again, and sing along with the kids.



**If you are tired,
If you are worn,
If you're feeling burdened,
You can come to me for sure.
If you are sad,
If you feel bad,
If you're feeling weary,
I will always make you glad.**

(Chorus)

**Come, come, come to me,
All of you who are weary and burdened,
And I will give, give, give you rest.
Come, come, come to me,
All of you who are weary and burdened,
And I will give, give you rest.**

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

“I Will Give You Rest” (Matthew 11:28) by Ben Glover. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What do you think it means to be weary and burdened?
- What kinds of burdens do you have that make you feel weary?
- Why do you think Jesus wants us to rest?
- What can you do to give your burdens to Jesus so you can rest?

Say: **When we're tired, worried, or afraid we can be very distracted by those burdens. ► JESUS CARES FOR US and wants to take those burdens and distractions away so we can enjoy our relationship with him as well as the other good things in our lives. He helped Simon's mother-in-law and many others get rid of their burdens. Jesus wants us to soar like eagles—not be weighed down with worry. Let's explore that further.**





3

WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE

Soar With Eagles

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's look at a Bible passage that shows us how ► JESUS CARES FOR US. It's found in Isaiah 40:28-31.** Pause and help kids find Isaiah 40:28.

Invite a willing child to read the passage, and then have kids form pairs. Distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Jesus Cares" activity.

Say: **On your Bible Truth Sleuth pages, you'll see pictures of four different situations that are also on our poster.** Point to the "Soar With Eagles" poster. **Talk with your partner, and write ways you think Jesus can show he cares about the person in each situation. You can choose whichever person in the pictures you want, or if you want to write how Jesus can help all the people, you can do that, too.**

While kids work, quietly play "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 16 on the CD). Allow time for kids to write their thoughts. Have kids discuss the following questions with their partners.

Ask:

- **Tell about times you've been in a situation like one of these shown on the poster.**
- **What about the things going on in these situations might make the people feel tired, worried, or even scared?**
- **Why do you sometimes need help when you're in a situation like any of these?**
- **What do you think it means that Jesus wants us to soar on wings like eagles? Why do you or don't you think it means Jesus wants us to literally fly?**

Say: **In Matthew 11:28, Jesus said he would give us strength when we're tired and weak. That verse says: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." He promises to take our burdens. So when we put our hope in Jesus and trust him, he'll renew our strength.**

I'm going to give each of you a piece of paper. On that piece of paper, write the burdens you have that you want to give to Jesus. Don't write your name on the paper, just your burdens. I'll give you a few minutes to write. Keep in mind that someone may see what you wrote.

After a few minutes, have kids stop writing.

Say: **Now make a paper airplane from your piece of paper.** Allow time.



Soar With Eagles Supplies

.....
Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
pens
paper
tape

Teacher Pack

CD: "Jesus Loves Me
Rock" (track 16)
"Soar With Eagles"
poster

Soar With Eagles Easy Prep

.....
Tear out the Lesson 10
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

Hang the "Soar With
Eagles" poster where
kids can easily see it.





After each child has made his or her airplane, say: **Now take your airplane and fly it across the room. As the airplanes fly across the room, try to catch one, and then throw that one across the room. Do that one more time, and then keep the airplane you catch. Once you have an airplane, open it up and read what's written inside.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What about this activity reminds you of the way Jesus wants to take our burdens away and bring us rest?**

Say: **Earlier when we read Isaiah 40:28-31, we talked about soaring on wings like eagles.**

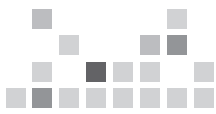
Ask:

- **How did throwing your paper airplanes with your burdens written on them remind you of soaring on wings like eagles?**
- **What would need to change about your life this week so you could “fly” like an eagle?**
- **How can you trust Jesus to care for you this week?**

Say: **In the Bible, Jesus took a lot of burdens away from people. He helped people like Simon's mother-in-law to soar like eagles. He can do the same for us, because ► JESUS CARES FOR US. Let's pray to ask Jesus to take our burdens. I'll start a prayer, and then you can either pray silently or aloud for the burdens on the piece of paper you're holding. After everyone who would like to pray out loud has had a chance, I'll close the prayer.**

Pray: **Dear Jesus, thank you so much for caring for us. Thank you that you want to give us rest by taking away our burdens. We want to give them to you today. Pause and allow an opportunity for any of the children who want to pray, and then close the prayer. Jesus, thank you for hearing our prayers and giving us rest. Please help us remember to give you our burdens this week. In your name, amen.**





4

LASTING
IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■

Say: **Let's think about how we can remember this week that ► JESUS CARES FOR US.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Ask a family member about a time they've worried and how Jesus helped them during that time.**
- **Record the things you worry about on pieces of paper, and then fold them into airplanes and hang them in your room to remind you that Jesus makes our worries light when we go to him for rest.**
- **Go outside (with a jacket on if it's cold) to relax and look at the peacefulness of God's creation and let Jesus take your worries.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **When you're carrying worries and burdens this week, think about how Jesus healed the sick woman. Let's discover how ► JESUS CARES FOR US, too, as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about Jesus' care. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close with prayer. Pray: **God, thank you for hearing all the burdens we talked about or even just thought of today. Thank you that you care for us and want to help us with those burdens. Help us see ways you care for us this week. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Daily Challenges Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth



**Lyrics** **I Will Give You Rest (Matthew 11:28)**

If you are tired,
If you are worn,
If you're feeling burdened,
You can come to me for sure.
If you are sad,
If you feel bad,
If you're feeling weary,
I will always make you glad.

(Chorus)

Come, come, come to me,
All of you who are weary and burdened,
And I will give, give, give you rest.
Come, come, come to me,
All of you who are weary and burdened,
And I will give, give you rest.

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

"I Will Give You Rest" (Matthew 11:28) by Ben Glover. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.






Jesus Calms a Storm

Mark 4:35-41

As third- and fourth-graders are moving out of young childhood into middle childhood, fear for their personal safety begins to decline. At this age, they're becoming more aware of the social structures around them, and the fear of not fitting in increases. They're afraid that no one will like them. God's love and acceptance can feel miles away for some kids. Use this lesson to help children discover the peace God provides for the fears they're facing.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Fear and Comfort <i>(about 20 min.)</i> List things that frighten or comfort them, and then think about their fears.	Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, pens Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
2 Bible Exploration	Making Waves <i>(about 30 min.)</i> Make a craft of waves, and experience what it was like on a boat before Jesus calmed a storm.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, several pairs of scissors Teacher Pack: CD, Bible Timeline 	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point

We turn to Jesus when we're afraid.


Key Verse

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will go to Jesus with things they're afraid of.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Cast Your Fears <i>(about 10 min.)</i> “Carry” their fears, and stick them to a cross.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pads of sticky notes, pens, tape Teacher Pack: “Cross” poster 	Hang the “Cross” poster where kids can see and reach it.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.

Jesus Calms a Storm

Mark 4:35-41

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Tells the Disciples to Sail Across the Sea of Galilee

Jesus' suggestion to go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee sounds to us like a simple procedure. However, several factors made such a journey difficult. First, it's unlikely that many Jews from the west side of the lake ever ventured to this area of the east side, inhabited mostly by Gentiles. Second, the boats were small fishing boats not intended for crossing the lake. And finally, the geography surrounding the lake made it vulnerable to sudden storms that could turn this calm lake into a violent sea. Such a storm arose, and though many of the disciples were experienced sailors, they woke Jesus for help.

Jesus Calms the Chaotic Storm

When Jesus awoke, he immediately demonstrated his power and control. There was no hint of worry or concern in his words. He simply said, “Quiet!” He then said, “Be still,” a term which literally means “muzzle yourself and continue to be silent.”

We have the benefit of knowing the end of the story. But imagine the disciples' amazement when the raging waves instantly became calm. Even today, with our advanced technology, we don't have any control over the weather and can't even forecast it very accurately. In the instant the storm ceased, the disciples began to realize more fully who Jesus was. He'd demonstrated his power in healing people, but never before had he done anything of this magnitude.

Jesus Uses the Storm to Teach the Disciples About Trust

Jesus seemed surprised that the disciples' faith was so weak. After all they'd seen, they still hadn't fully grasped who Jesus was or what he was capable of. But now they'd seen something so powerful, so

awesome, that they were terrified to think of who Jesus really was.

The disciples' terrified response is understandable when we consider God's power and purity in light of our own weakness and imperfection. But the disciples came to learn that no matter how bad a situation seemed, the first thing they needed to do was turn to Jesus.

The Jesus Connection

Who or what do you trust when life gets scary? So often we seek security in money, possessions, position, or human relationships. But all these things can fail. It's far better to invest in a relationship with the Son of God. We have the comfort of having the all-powerful Jesus as our best friend. What can you do today to put your trust more fully in Jesus? You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Fear and Comfort Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

CD player

pens

Teacher Pack

CD: "He Cares For You"

(1 Peter 5:7) (track 20)

Fear and Comfort Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

1

GETTING STARTED

Fear and Comfort

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **To get started today, we're going to find things that represent a fear some people have or things that represent something that comforts people when they're afraid. For example, a sink could remind you that some people are afraid of swimming. Be creative. Any questions?**

Repeat or clarify the directions as needed. Begin by having kids look for things in your room. Then, if your setting allows for it, walk with kids in public areas and have them look for reminders of fears or comforts. Kids will share their findings later, so encourage kids to be quiet and keep their ideas to themselves at this point.

After about 12 minutes, gather kids together in your room. Distribute pens and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Have kids find the "I'm So Afraid!" section and make a list of everything they observed. As kids write, quietly play "He Cares for You" (1 Peter 5:7) (track 20 on the CD). Then have kids each read one thing off their list, going around several times until no one has any new items to add.

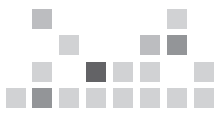
Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Look at your list. Which do you have more of, fears or comforts? Why do you think that is?
- Do you tend to focus more on things that scare you or things that comfort you? Explain.
- What do you do when you experience fears?
- What can we do to find comfort or help when we're afraid?

Say: **Sometimes fears can seem a lot stronger than the things that comfort us. But ► WE TURN TO JESUS WHEN WE'RE AFRAID. He doesn't want us to feel afraid; instead, he wants us to give our fears to him so he can help us face our fears and grow stronger. To understand this better, let's look at how Jesus helped his disciples when they were afraid.**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Making Waves

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **When Jesus helped his disciples get over their fears, they were all in a boat crossing the Sea of Galilee.** Show kids the Bible Timeline, and invite them to find and point to the “Jesus Calms a Storm” picture. **To help us imagine the disciples’ experience, we’re going to make some waves.**

Distribute scissors and this week’s Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the “Making Waves” activity.

Say: **Cut out Jesus and the boat at the left, and be careful to include the tab at the boat’s bottom.** Allow time. **Next, cut out the rectangle of waves.** Allow time. **Fold the paper accordion-style along the dotted lines.** Help kids as needed. **Carefully cut a horizontal slit below the waves where you see the short, solid black line.** Allow time. **To finish, insert the boat’s tab into the slit you just cut below the waves.**

When kids have finished making their crafts, have kids sit in a tight oval shape as if they were sitting inside a boat. Have kids fold their wave crafts so only the smallest section of the water is folded up against the boat, simulating a smooth sea. Invite a willing child to read aloud Mark 4:35-36. Play “Gentle Sea” (track 17 on the CD).

Say: **Imagine that you’re bobbing along in a boat and watching the stars appear in an evening sky.** Pause. **When have you enjoyed a calm night like that?** Pause for answers. **What was it like?** Pause.

Play “Storm Starting” (track 18 on the CD). Have kids fold up the craft so the smaller waves show up behind the boat. Then have kids bob the boat up and down.

Say: **Imagine that you’re in the middle of a large sea with a storm about to hit.** Pause. **When have you prepared for a storm that was about to come?** Pause. **What did you do to prepare?** Pause.

Have kids fold up the craft so the largest wave shows and imagine that the storm has gotten a lot worse. Allow the next track, “Furious Squall,” (track 19 on the CD) to play, and turn the volume up so it’s comfortably loud.

Say: **Link arms, and rock back and forth together as if your boat is being rocked by big waves.** Pause. **What have you felt and thought as you endured a really bad storm? Have you ever been afraid for your life in a storm? Talk about that.** Pause. **Now unlink arms, and jump up and down as if the boat is being tossed by giant waves.** As kids jump, flash the lights on and off to simulate lightning. Stop the CD when the track ends.



Making Waves Supplies

.....
Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
several pairs of scissors
Teacher Pack
CD: “Gentle Sea” (track 17); “Storm Starting” (track 18); “Furious Squall” (track 19)
Bible Timeline





Talk With Kids ■■■■

Invite a willing child to read aloud Mark 4:37-38.

Say: **We just experienced something similar to the storm on the Sea of Galilee—but not nearly as dangerous.**

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How can you tell that the disciples were scared?**
- **Why is it scary when you're not sure what's going to happen and there's a chance you could get hurt?**
- **Tell about a time you've been afraid like that. What did you do about your fear?**

Say: **Let's discover what the disciples did about their fear.**

Invite a willing child to read aloud Mark 4:38-41. Again play "Gentle Sea" (track 17 on the CD). As they listen, have kids fold the waves of their crafts so that only the smallest wave shows.

Ask:

- **Jesus slept through the storm. What does that show us about how we can trust Jesus with our fears?**
- **When the disciples went to Jesus with their fears, they said, "Don't you care if we drown?" How is that similar to or different from your prayers when you're afraid?**
- **Jesus took control of the raging storm and sea and calmed them—and the disciples' fears. What does that show you that Jesus can do with your fears?**

Say: **The disciples and other people in the boats were in awe of Jesus. They were amazed at what he'd done, and they asked, "Who is this?" Let's read a Bible passage that answers this question.**

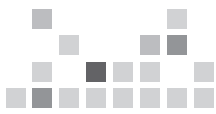
Invite a willing child to read aloud Job 38:1-11.

Ask:

- **In this Bible passage, God is telling a man named Job about himself. What do the things God said tell us about God?**
- **Based on the Job passage, why do you think Jesus was able to stop that storm?**
- **Why do you or don't you think Jesus will be able to help you with your fears?**
- **What will you do the next time you're afraid?**

Say: **Jesus is God's Son and he's powerful. He cares about each of us and everything that goes on in our lives—including the things we fear. The disciples turned to Jesus when they were afraid, and they experienced Jesus' power to help them. Jesus encouraged his disciples to have faith, and we can have faith, too, when ► WE TURN TO JESUS WHEN WE'RE AFRAID.**





3

WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE

Cast Your Fears

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Distribute pads of sticky notes, and make sure everyone has a pen. Say: **Write on your sticky notes every fear you can think of that you've felt, one per sticky note. No fear is too small—you can write *anything* that's made you afraid. Every person has fears—even the bravest grown-ups.** Tell kids some of the things you're afraid of to encourage them to share.

After kids finish writing, say: **Stick the notes all over your faces, hands, and arms. Pause. Now walk around the room acting as if you're very afraid and anxious. You could tiptoe, repeatedly look over your shoulders, or make scared faces.** As kids walk, have them repeat the Bible Point, which is ► **WE TURN TO JESUS WHEN WE'RE AFRAID**, to at least three different people.

Say: **Our Key Verse, 1 Peter 5:7, says: "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." Let's do that now.**

Direct kids' attention to the "Cross" poster.

Say: **Practice casting your fears on Jesus by removing your sticky notes and repeating the Bible Point as you stick the "fears" to the cross.** Allow several kids to cast their fears at the same time.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's it like to walk around with so much fear and anxiety?
- What was it like to hand those fears over to Jesus?
- What about this activity reminds you of living with fear in life—at home, at school, anywhere?
- What difference do you think it can make in your life when you cast your fears on Jesus?
- What can you do to get help from Jesus when you're afraid?

Say: **When we have a relationship with Jesus, he gives us strength and comfort. Just as you stuck your sticky-note fears to the cross, ► WE TURN TO JESUS WHEN WE'RE AFRAID. He's powerful enough to calm storms, and he loves you enough to calm your fears—just as he calmed the disciples' fears.**



Cast Your Fears Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
pads of sticky notes
pens
tape

Teacher Pack
"Cross" poster

Cast Your Fears Easy Prep

Hang the "Cross" poster
where kids can see and
reach it.



Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **No matter what fears we face, this week let's remember that ► WE TURN TO JESUS WHEN WE'RE AFRAID.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **When you're afraid, write your fear on a sticky note. Then pray to ask for Jesus' help with your fear. After you pray, tear the sticky note into pieces to show Jesus is helping you be strong.**
- **Write down why Jesus comforts you each time you're afraid.**
- **Help a family member give a fear to Jesus this week.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

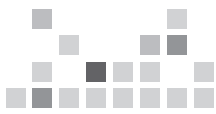
Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **Jesus didn't leave the disciples to face their fears alone. Jesus will be there for you, too, whenever you need him. Following through on our Daily Challenges this week will help us remember that ► WE TURN TO JESUS WHEN WE'RE AFRAID.**





Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about turning to Jesus with fears. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids.

Have kids stand in a circle, then say: **Think of a fear or worry you’ll face this week—at school, at home, or anywhere else.** Pause. **Keep that fear or worry in mind as we pray and give it to Jesus.**

Pray: **Dear God, life is scary for us sometimes. Please help us trust you with these fears.** Invite kids to silently pray about their fears. **Thank you, God, for loving us so much that you’ll carry our fears for us. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

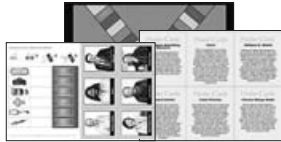




Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man

Mark 2:1-12

How many third- and fourth-graders believe that they've done wrong only after they've been caught? Otherwise, they don't regard their wrong behavior as sin. Before you can help children discover how they can be forgiven, you must help them understand their need for forgiveness. Use this lesson to guide kids' understanding of sin and that everyone needs God's forgiveness.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Too Much to Handle <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Carry things in a relay, discuss sin and forgiveness, and clean up the room after the messy relay.	Bible, CD player, books and various items from around the room, large plastic trash bag Teacher Pack: CD	Place piles of books and other small items that can be carried at one end of the room. Piles should include enough items that a child can't carry it all at one time.
2 Bible Exploration	Faith and Forgiveness <i>(about 25 min.)</i> Experience the events of Mark 2:1-12 through physical action, listening, and discussion.	Bibles, CD player, masking tape, pennies Teacher Pack: CD	
	Jesus Can <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Compare what Jesus can do with what doctors can do.	Teacher Pack: "Jesus Can" game board and game pieces, "Healer" cards 	Punch out the "Jesus Can" game pieces, and fold them into triangles according to the instructions on the sheet.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point


Jesus forgives us.

Key Verse

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will forgive others in their lives and ask Jesus to forgive them for their sins.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Forgive Me (about 10 min.) Create heart indicators, and pray for forgiveness.	Bible Truth Sleuth, several pairs of scissors, paper fasteners	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges (about 5 min.) Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home (about 2 min.) Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*

Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man

Mark 2:1-12

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Makes Capernaum His Home Base

From this passage and others, it's apparent that Capernaum was Jesus' home base for much of his ministry.

Jesus was now drawing a crowd everywhere he went, and Capernaum was no exception. Even though Jesus had just arrived, no one was turned away and everyone was welcomed until the house was filled and people were standing outside the door!

Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man Get to Jesus

The persistence the four friends showed in getting the paralytic before Jesus demonstrated their faith that Jesus could heal him. Some suggest that it was their faith alone that prompted Jesus to heal the man and forgive his sins. However, that seems inconsistent with the rest of Scripture, which consistently emphasizes personal repentance and faith. Instead, it's likely the paralytic's faith was similar to that of his friends and that his faith simply wasn't mentioned here—his friends probably wouldn't have done what they had without their paralyzed friend's consent. And it's possible that the paralyzed man was unable to speak clearly enough to express his own faith.

Jesus' Healings Amaze and Shock His Critics

Everyone in the house (and on the roof!) was likely shocked when Jesus first forgave the paralytic's sins. The skeptical teachers of the Law who were present didn't have to say anything for Jesus to know what they were thinking. He clearly intended to force them to face head-on who he really was. Evidence that sins were forgiven was not immediately visible, but healing the man's paralysis was. When Jesus healed the man,

he demonstrated that he had the power to do both. And by the order he chose, he also demonstrated that in his priorities the forgiveness of sins is more important than physical healing.

This passage says the people were amazed. In Matthew's and Luke's accounts of this incident (Matthew 9:2-8; Luke 5:17-26), we see that people also were filled with awe, the Greek word for which can also be translated as *fear*. They went away praising God, knowing that forgiveness is available in Jesus.

The Jesus Connection

A relationship with Jesus satisfies all our needs. Jesus provides help, comfort, healing, and forgiveness. Because of his five friends, this man found healing and forgiveness! Praise God for the forgiveness you've received, and thank God for the people who helped you find friendship with Jesus and his forgiveness. Praise God for these good things today. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Too Much to Handle Supplies

Bible
CD player
books and various items
from around the room
large plastic trash bag
Teacher Pack
CD: “Thankful” (track
7); “If We Confess”
(1 John 1:9) (track 21)

Too Much to Handle Easy Prep

Place piles of books and
other small items that
can be carried at one
end of the room. Piles
should include enough
items that a child can’t
carry it all at one time.

1

GETTING STARTED

Too Much to Handle

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

As kids arrive, have them form teams of five or six. When everyone’s arrived, have teams line up in single file at the end of the room opposite the piles of books and other items.

Say: **The first person in line will walk to the other end of the room, pick up an item, and carry it back to the next person in line. Then that person will walk to the other end of the room, pick up a second item, and carry both items back to the next person in line, and so on. If someone drops any items, the team will need to pick the items up together, pile them up again, and start the relay over.** Be sure kids understand that they must carry the items in their hands—not in their shirts. When kids understand how to play, begin the relay by playing “Thankful” (track 7 on the CD).

Have kids play until the song has finished or until all the teams have dropped the items at least once.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead all the kids in this discussion.

Ask:

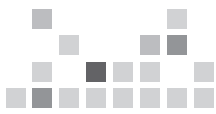
- What was it like to try to carry all those things back and forth?
- What would have made it easier to do the relay?
- Tell why it was frustrating or not when you dropped things and had to start over.
- Tell about a time you had to start something over because you did something wrong at home or at school.
- In life, what kinds of wrong things can get us into trouble?

Say: **The wrong things we do in life are called sins. We may think we can deal with the trouble sin brings all on our own, but we can’t. Much like trying to carry all the objects in our relay, our sin is too much for us to handle. We need forgiveness—which means the sin has been cleaned away—so we can put the sin behind us and try again. Our Key Verse today, 1 John 1:9, teaches us that ► JESUS FORGIVES US.**

Have a willing child read 1 John 1:9 aloud. Then hold an item from one of the piles.

Say: **During the relay, these items were like sin. They got us into trouble, and it was very difficult to manage it all on our own. But today we’re going to learn about Jesus’ forgiveness. So let’s clean up this “sin”—the mess of things in the room.**





Have kids form an assembly line from the piles to a large plastic trash bag at the opposite end of the room. Play “If We Confess” (1 John 1:9) (track 21 on the CD) as they pass one thing at a time from one end of the line to the other until everything is in the bag.

Ask:

- What about cleaning up the room is like being forgiven and getting clean of sin?
- Tell about a time someone forgave you and what the experience was like.

Say: **Today we’ll explore a Bible passage about four friends helping a paralyzed man. Jesus forgave the man’s sins and made him well again. We’ll learn that ► JESUS FORGIVES US, and we can have another chance after we’ve sinned.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Faith and Forgiveness

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Make sure everyone has a Bible, and have kids turn to Mark 2:1-3. Invite a willing child to read aloud the verses, and then have kids form new groups of five. Invite the smallest child in each group to be “paralyzed.”

Say: **The Bible says four men carried their paralyzed friend all the way to see Jesus. I’d like four members of each group to carry their “paralyzed” group member once around the room to see what that was like. Move carefully and if you think you’re about to lose your grip, let your group know so everyone can set your paralyzed person down gently to give your muscles a rest.**

When groups have circled the room once, have group members sit down together. Say: **Paralyzed group members, you still can’t move. But you can share answers!** Have groups discuss the following questions.

Ask:

- What was it like to carry someone around the room?
- Based on what you just experienced, what struggles do you think the men carrying their paralyzed friend to Jesus might’ve faced along the way?

Invite a willing child to read aloud Mark 2:4.

Say: **Not only did the man’s friends have to carry him to Jesus, but when they got there they had to climb up on the roof of a house and then dig through it to get the man to Jesus. There was a large crowd gathered around Jesus, and this was the best way the friends could think of to get the paralyzed man near Jesus. Let’s try digging to get to something now.** Give each group a penny, and set out masking



Faith and Forgiveness Supplies

Bibles
CD player
masking tape
pennies
Teacher Pack
CD: “Forgiven and Healed” (track 22)





tape to share. Say: **In the next minute, try to hide your penny the best you can in a big wad of masking tape. After one minute, you'll trade and another group will try to dig out the penny. And remember, your paralyzed person still can't move.** Allow a minute for kids to prepare their wads. Then have groups trade and try to dig out the penny as quickly as possible. Have groups discuss these questions.

Ask:

- **What was difficult about digging through the thick tape to find your penny?**
- **What do the lengths these friends were willing to go to in getting their friend near Jesus show about them?**

Say: **Let's find out what happened to the paralyzed man when his friends lowered him down through the roof.**

Play "Forgiven and Healed" (track 22 on the CD).

Invite a willing child to read aloud Mark 2:9-12. Have the paralyzed group members get up and lead their other group members in a few exercises, such as running in place and jumping for joy. Then have everyone sit in a circle.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead all the kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Paralyzed group members, what was it like to be able to move again?**
- **What makes Jesus' healing of the paralyzed man amazing?**
- **Which do you think means more, being forgiven or being healed? Explain.**
- **Why do you think the man's faith in Jesus was important?**
- **Jesus forgave the man before healing him. Why do you think that was fair or not?**

Say: **The paralyzed man went through a lot to see Jesus. Clearly, he and his friends knew that Jesus was special. Jesus saw their faith, and he forgave the man. Since people couldn't prove that the man had been forgiven, some didn't believe Jesus. To show the people he could forgive sins, Jesus performed the miracle of healing the man. We can show our faith by telling Jesus about our sins. When we do,**
► JESUS FORGIVES US.

Jesus Can

What You'll Do ■■■■

Have kids form six groups. Distribute the "Jesus Can" game pieces to each group. Then assign each group a different healer by handing out the "Healer" cards, being sure to assign the Jesus card to the group with the cross game piece. Set out the "Jesus Can" game board, and have each group put its game piece at the bottom of one spoke.

Jesus Can Supplies

Teacher Pack

"Jesus Can" game
board and game
pieces
"Healer" cards

Jesus Can Easy Prep

Punch out the "Jesus Can" game pieces, and fold them into triangles according to the instructions on the sheet.



Say: **To play this game, you'll read in your groups about your healers on the back of your cards. Go ahead and do that now. Allow time. Now groups will take turns naming amazing things their healers have done. For each amazing thing that your healers have done, you'll get to move one space.**

Find out who has the next birthday, and have that person's group start and then move clockwise around the game board.

When groups have moved their pieces as far as they can, say: **Now we'll see who are the most amazing healers of all. You can move your game piece to the middle of the board if your healer can also forgive people of their sins and make them right before God.**

Only the Jesus group can move.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead all the kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why is it that only the Jesus group got to move into the center?**
- **What's different about what Jesus can do compared with these other incredible healers?**

Say: **People can do amazing things. They can heal people, though in a different way from how Jesus healed people. But no matter what amazing things people can do, only Jesus can forgive us of our sins. Jesus did both for the paralyzed man. When we ask for forgiveness ► JESUS FORGIVES US, too.**

.....

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Forgive Me

What You'll Do ■■■■

Distribute this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, scissors, and paper fasteners. Have kids sit in a circle and find the "Heart Indicator" activity. Show kids how to cut out the two heart indicator pieces, being careful to not cut the center hole of the partial circle. Help kids poke holes in the centers of both pieces with their paper fasteners and attach them together.

Ask:

- **What does the heart indicator look like it's meant to do?**



Forgive Me Supplies

.....

Bible Truth Sleuth
several pairs of scissors
paper fasteners





Say: Think for a moment about times you've done something wrong. Remember, we're all human and that means we've *all* done wrong. Every one of us. When you've thought of something you've done wrong, turn your heart indicator so the sin heart shows. Allow time.

Ask:

- What can we do when we know we've done something wrong?

Say: When we believe that God sent Jesus to save us from our sins and we have a relationship with him, ► **JESUS FORGIVES US**. All we need to do is tell Jesus we're sorry for the wrong things we've done. I'll begin a prayer, and as part of the prayer we can silently tell Jesus about our sins.

Pray: Dear God, thank you for promising to forgive us when we confess our sins to you. We'd like to tell you we're sorry for these things. Pause for silent prayer. Thank you for loving us so much that you clean our sins away. We love you, too. In Jesus' name, amen.

Have kids turn their heart indicators to the forgiveness heart and cheer to celebrate Jesus' forgiveness.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's it like to be forgiven—to have a heart that Jesus has cleaned?
- What difference can it make in your life when Jesus forgives you?
- What difference does it make in your life when other people forgive you?
- When you forgive someone else, why do you or don't you think it helps you, too?

Say: When we sin, it makes Jesus sad. But every time we ask him to, ► **JESUS FORGIVES US**. So when others do things that make you sad, you can remember to forgive them again and again as Jesus forgives you again and again. Forgiveness makes our lives better, the way it did for the paralyzed man when Jesus forgave him.

.....

4

LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

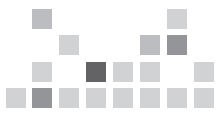
What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: It's a relief to know that ► **JESUS FORGIVES US**. Let's think about ways we can remember and respond to that this week.

Daily Challenges
Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth





Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Write a letter to a friend who hurt you. Tell your friend that you forgive him or her.**
- **Pray to ask Jesus to forgive you for hurting him with sin.**
- **After you've been forgiven for doing something wrong, don't do the wrong thing again.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **Jesus' forgiveness and love does amazing things. It changed the paralyzed man's life forever, and it can change our lives, too. Let's celebrate the fact that**
► **JESUS FORGIVES US** as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about Jesus' forgiveness. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close with prayer. Have kids lie very still as if they are paralyzed. Pray: **Dear God, sometimes sin makes us feel paralyzed and far away from you. Thank you for your forgiveness. Help us to make good choices, and help us to remember that your forgiveness is stronger than our sin. In Jesus' name, amen.** Have kids jump up and down.





Jesus Heals the Blind Man

Mark 10:46-52

Third- and fourth-graders are learning how to empathize with the feelings of others. They can understand the pain and longing the blind man felt in this week's Bible passage, and they can relate to the joy he expressed after being healed. Today you can help kids discover that Jesus cares for them every bit as much as he cared for the blind man. Use this lesson to show kids they can cry out in faith, just as the blind man did, and that Jesus is able to come through for them in the way they need most.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Barrier Busters <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Try to blindly find a way through a barrier.		
2 Bible Exploration	I'm Bart <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Interact with the Bible passage by imagining blind Bartimaeus' experience with Jesus.	Bible, CD player, paper, crayons or markers Teacher Pack: CD	
	The Meaning of Mercy <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Hear the definition of mercy, and share examples of mercy.	Bibles	

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*




► Bible Point
We have faith in Jesus.
.....

Key Verse
"He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).
.....

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will learn they can have faith in Jesus to meet their needs with his mercy.
.....





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	The Mercy You Need <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Choose a word that best describes the mercy they need from Jesus.	Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), several pairs of scissors, pens, glue sticks, 1 index card per child Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 13 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	index cards from "The Mercy You Need" activity	

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*



Jesus Heals the Blind Man

Mark 10:46-52

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Blind Bartimaeus Cries Out to Jesus for Healing

Leaving Jericho on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus had gathered a crowd. Bartimaeus' blindness didn't prevent him from hearing the ruckus of the approaching crowd and from asking who was creating all the fuss. When he found out, his cries of "Son of David" in addressing Jesus were not just a way of identifying Jesus' lineage. Since the term "Son of David" is clearly a reference to the Messiah, Bartimaeus was shouting both to the crowd and to Jesus that he believed Jesus was the promised Messiah.

Although Jesus was surrounded by a crowd and was set on reaching his destination, his ears and heart were attuned to the cry of one calling out for mercy. Bartimaeus needed Jesus' mercy, and Jesus heard his cry.

Bartimaeus Hails Jesus as the Son of David

In acknowledging Bartimaeus' identification of him as the Son of David, Jesus was also making a statement. Earlier in his ministry, he'd avoided being identified as the Messiah. But now, as he was making his last trip to Jerusalem, where he would be crucified, he was ready for his identity to be known.

Bartimaeus' Faith Initiates the Healing

Notice that Bartimaeus' faith in Jesus initiated his healing. Jesus didn't say, "Because you've lived a good life in spite of your hardship, I'll heal you." He didn't say, "Because your parents were so faithful to me, I'll give you your sight." Jesus responded to Bartimaeus' faith. Things haven't changed. Jesus responds to our needs on the basis of our faith, not

because of anything good we've done or any specific set of words we repeat. Jesus shows us he cares for us by taking care of our needs as we acknowledge our dependence on him and trust in him to meet those needs. And what Jesus asks in return is that we do as Bartimaeus did and follow Jesus along the roads of our lives, no matter how old or young we may be.

The Jesus Connection

Do you have a good friend who you usually talk to about your problems? Jesus is the ultimate friend. As Bartimaeus learned, we can cry out in faith when we need Jesus' help! And we can have faith in Jesus to meet our needs in one way or another.

Pray honestly about your needs, and then focus on the reasons you have faith in Jesus to help you, heal you, or simply hear you. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



1

GETTING
STARTED

Barrier Busters

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. When everyone has arrived, have kids form groups of four.

Say: **Today we're starting with a game of Barrier Busters. Here's how it works.**

With your groups, stand in separate parts of the room—you'll need some space.

Allow time. **In your groups, choose a Director, a Mover, and two Barriers.** Allow kids time to choose roles. **The Mover will be "blind" by keeping both eyes closed tight during the game. The two Barriers will form a human wall that the Mover will try to get through. The Barriers must leave some kind of opening between them and cannot move once they've formed it. The Director can only use words to tell the Mover how to get through the opening between the Barriers. We'll play a few times so you can have a chance to play any of the roles. Any questions? Repeat or clarify rules and roles as needed.**

When kids understand the directions, begin play. After a few minutes, let group members switch roles and play again.

After another few minutes, have group members switch roles. In this round, the Director may use both words and touch to guide the Mover through the Barriers. Have kids switch roles one more time and play the final round. Then have kids sit in a circle.

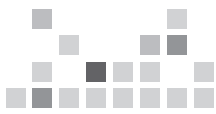
Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like trying to get through the Barriers?
- What was it like trying to direct the Mover through the Barriers?
- Why do you or don't you think the Director helped the Mover's ability to get through the Barriers?
- Tell about times you've had to count on others' help to reach a goal or complete a challenge.
- When those people helped you, what made you believe you could trust their help or advice?

Say: **You each got to experience a small part of what it's like to be blind. Today's Bible passage is about a blind man named Bartimaeus. We'll call him Bart for short. He had faith that Jesus would care for him and his problem. When you believe in someone or trust them, that can also be called faith. As we explore what happened between Bart and Jesus, watch for the amazing things Jesus did. You'll discover some of the reasons ► WE HAVE FAITH IN JESUS, too.**



2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

I'm Bart

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to Mark 10:46-52, and show children the passage.

Say: **Bart met Jesus in the city of Jericho during Jesus' ministry. Jesus had been preaching and teaching to large crowds wherever he went, and he'd taught in Jericho, too. A very large crowd of people swarmed around Jesus and his disciples as they left the city. Let's see what happened.**

Invite a willing child to read aloud Mark 10:46. Say: **Let's use our imaginations to experience what Bart did.** Have kids sit in a line on one side of the room, as if they're sitting by the side of the road.

You'll hear on the CD what happened to Bart. Every time you hear something Bart did or said, you can act out Bart's actions and call out the same words he used. But to try to understand what Bart experienced, you'll do everything with your eyes closed tightly. Bart was blind, so we'll do our best to understand what that's like.

Play "Blind Bart" (track 23 on the CD), encouraging kids to act out what they've heard as the track plays. Stop the CD when instructed, and distribute paper and crayons or markers.

Say: **As far as we know, Bartimaeus was blind for his whole life—until he met Jesus. Imagine—he'd never seen anything and the first time he can see, Jesus is standing in front of him. Draw a picture of how you imagine the scene as Bartimaeus first saw it.** Allow several minutes for drawing.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was the hardest part of acting like Bart?**
- **What would you miss most if you couldn't see?**
- **Bart didn't give up, and he kept shouting for Jesus. What does that tell us about Bart's faith?**
- **Sometimes having faith can be like being blind—we can't see what God is doing. What's an area where you feel blind to what God is doing?**

Say: **Bart probably had lived a very difficult life being blind, but he had faith that Jesus could heal him. Jesus told Bart his faith had saved him and then gave him sight—that's amazing! Jesus showed Bart mercy because of his faith. We see Jesus' mercy, too, when ► WE HAVE FAITH IN JESUS. Let's explore the meaning of mercy.**

I'm Bart
Supplies

.....
Bible
CD player
paper
crayons or markers
Teacher Pack
CD: "Blind Bart" (track 23)





The Meaning of Mercy Supplies

Bibles

The Meaning of Mercy

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: To better understand the amazing thing Jesus did for Bart, let's look a little closer at what *mercy* really means.

Have kids form groups of four, and give each group a Bible. Say: **The website dictionary.com defines *mercy* as "an act of kindness, compassion, or favor."** Have kids discuss the following questions in their groups.

Ask:

- What are some other words that mean the same thing as mercy?
- Tell about a time you've seen someone show mercy to another person.
- What did those acts of mercy do for the person who needed help?

Say: **Mercy can be shown in many ways. Let's take a look at another example of mercy.**

Have kids find the Key Verse, Titus 3:5, and ask someone from each group to read it aloud: "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit." Have kids discuss in their groups what they think the Key Verse means. Allow time, and then gather everyone to sit in a circle.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How do Jesus' actions toward Bart fit within the definition of mercy?
- In what ways does Jesus' mercy for Bart show us Jesus cared very much about Bart?
- Tell about a time you were shown mercy.
- When someone shows you mercy, why does or doesn't that help you trust them and have faith in them?

Say: **To have mercy means to be kind, understanding, and forgiving. That's the kind of mercy Bart asked Jesus for. He showed faith that Jesus could heal him when he asked for Jesus' mercy. And Jesus healed him! Jesus' mercy and power to help us is an important reason ► WE HAVE FAITH IN JESUS. Let's think of ways Jesus can show us mercy in our lives.**



3

WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE

The Mercy You Need

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids form pairs. Distribute pens, index cards, and this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Set out scissors and glue sticks to share.

Say: **Jesus shows us his mercy in many ways. When we put our faith in Jesus and get to know him by talking to him, coming to church, and reading the Bible, we'll see that he meets our needs in the way we need it most.**

Have kids find the section entitled "The Mercy You Need" on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages.

Say: **On the big hearts there are words that describe ways to show mercy. Take a minute to read all of them, and think about which of those words best describes what you need from Jesus.** Allow time.

Tell your partner which word you picked, and why. Allow time.

Cut out the heart with the word you chose, and glue it to your index card. Allow time. **Now turn your index card over, and write your name on the back so you'll know it's yours.** Allow time.

Cut out the heart with the word your partner chose, and glue it next to yours. If you picked the same word, draw a heart next to yours and write the word in it. Allow time.

Write your partner's name next to the heart with his or her word. Then take a couple of minutes praying to ask Jesus to show your partner the mercy he or she needs. You can pray aloud or silently.

As kids pray, quietly play "His Mercy" (Titus 3:5a) (track 24 on the CD).

After kids have prayed, pass out copies of the lyrics page, and play "His Mercy" (Titus 3:5a) (track 24 on the CD) again. Lead the kids in singing, and every time the words "he saved us" are sung, have kids jump and point up.



**He saved us,
Not because of the righteous things we have done,
But because of his mercy. Right on!
He saved us,
Not because of the righteous things we have done,
But because of his mercy. Right on!**



The Mercy You Need Supplies

.....
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
copies of the lyrics page
(at the end of this
lesson)
several pairs of scissors
pens
glue sticks
1 index card per child
Teacher Pack
CD: "His Mercy" (Titus
3:5a) (track 24)

The Mercy You Need Easy Prep

.....
Tear out the Lesson 13
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.





He saved us,
And it's not because of what we've done.
He saved us
When the love of God came through his Son.
He saved us,
And it's no reward for what we give.
He saved us,
And because of his mercy we will live.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

"His Mercy" (Titus 3:5a) by Dean-o. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What did you like about helping someone else ask Jesus for mercy when you prayed for your partner?
- What helps you have faith that Jesus will show you and your partner the mercy you need?
- What can you do with your card to remind you to keep praying for mercy for yourself and for your partner?

Say: Jesus knew the greatest mercy Bart needed was healing from his blindness. Jesus knows our greatest needs, too, even better than we do. When ► **WE HAVE FAITH IN JESUS**, we show him that we trust him to meet our needs with his mercy. Let's look at ways we can have faith or grow our faith in Jesus this week.

.....

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■

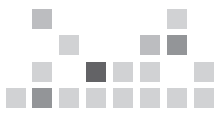
Say: Let's think this week about the reasons ► **WE HAVE FAITH IN JESUS**. If you're learning about Jesus for the first time, you have some exciting discoveries ahead of you about believing in Jesus!

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth





- Write down ways you think Jesus met someone's needs this week. Then thank Jesus for having mercy in those ways.
- Pray for yourself and your partner based on the hearts you put on your index card. Pray with faith that Jesus can hear and answer your prayers.
- Ask your church leader to tell you about why he or she has faith in Jesus.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: **Let's remember to keep watch for Jesus' mercy in our lives and the lives of people close to us. His mercy is as real today as it was for Bart. We'll discover some of the amazing reasons ► WE HAVE FAITH IN JESUS as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about faith. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

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

Close in prayer. Have kids hold their cards from "The Mercy You Need" activity between praying hands as you close in prayer.

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to meet our needs with his mercy. Help us remember to have faith in your mercy. Help us recognize your help after we pray so our faith in you can grow. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

.....
index cards from "The
Mercy You Need"
activity





Lyrics ■■■■

His Mercy (Titus 3:5a)

He saved us,
Not because of the righteous things we have done,
But because of his mercy. Right on!
He saved us,
Not because of the righteous things we have done,
But because of his mercy. Right on!

He saved us,
And it's not because of what we've done.
He saved us
When the love of God came through his Son.
He saved us,
And it's no reward for what we give.
He saved us,
And because of his mercy we will live.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

"His Mercy" (Titus 3:5a) by Dean-o. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

