

LESSON 39

The Resurrection

MATTHEW 27:62–28:16



BIBLE TRUTH

EVEN THOUGH JESUS TRULY ROSE FROM THE DEAD, NOT EVERYONE BELIEVES

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Matthew 27:62—28:16 from the Scriptures or read story 117, “The Resurrection,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 20 MIN

Act Out the Resurrection

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ costumes as desired—a white sheet for Jesus and various towels, sheets, walking sticks, and fake beards

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

United with Christ

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a drinking glass
- ✓ twenty quarters
- ✓ a hard table
- ✓ bite-sized chocolate candies (enough for at least two chocolates per person)

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Angel of the Lord

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

LESSON SNAPSHOT

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

A Little Magic

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ gather materials for the magic trick of your choice (An easy trick is to recruit an accomplice beforehand and tell them you are going to ask them to pick a card out of a deck and put it back again. Then no matter what card you call out they should agree and act amazed that you guessed correctly. If you do this three times without the class seeing the card, they will get suspicious quickly.)

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The Pharisees tried to stop him—Even though the disciples did not understand what Jesus meant when he said that he would rise again on the third day, some of the Pharisees seemed to understand. They asked Pilate to order the tomb guarded and sealed until the third day (Matthew 27:64).

Consider that around the time of Jesus' death, the sky grew dark. Also, at the moment of his death the earth shook and rocks were split (Matthew 27:51). In addition, many holy people who had died were raised to life and appeared throughout Jerusalem. It would be hard to keep quiet when a family member whom you buried months ago suddenly appeared and shared the account and time of their resurrection. Given that many were raised, these reports likely reached the ears of the religious rulers as well.

Jesus rose with great power—A wax seal and a Roman guard could not stop Jesus from rising from the dead. In fact, if the whole Roman army had been present, Jesus would have risen just the same. Imagine the soldiers' shock as the earth began to shake and an angel bright as lightning rolled the stone away and sat upon it (Matthew 28:2). What a glorious moment—death was defeated! The guards were so afraid that they shook and fell to the ground (Matthew 28:4). The angel spoke to the women, telling them that Jesus had risen from the dead just as he said! The angel sent them to report back to the disciples.

John 20:15 tells us that Mary Magdalene saw Jesus but mistook him for the gardener. But when Jesus called her by name, she instantly believed. Matthew 28:9 records that Jesus met the two women on their way to tell the disciples. The women fell down, grasped his feet and worshiped him. The response of these two women demonstrates their faith. Jesus commissioned them in the same way he commissions all believers: “go and tell” (Matthew 28:10).

Only those who believe will be set free—Some of the guards returned to the chief priests and reported to them everything that had happened. They told the chief priests about the earthquake, the angel, the bright light, the rising of Christ, and the visit of the two women who met and conversed with the Lord. The soldiers heard all of this and the chief priests heard their report and yet neither the soldiers nor the chief priests believed. Instead the chief priests hatched a scheme to keep the guards quiet. They spread the very rumor they were trying to stop, that the disciples had stolen the body. The soldiers accepted the money and agreed to lie (Matthew 28:12–15). This shows us that you can know the facts of the gospel and still not

really believe. Today people read the story of Jesus rising from the dead, but like the religious rulers and soldiers, they refuse to believe.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Raised with Christ

The resurrection has great significance to the believer. The Bible says that we are “in Christ.” Jesus is our representative. In Adam we all sinned, so through Christ we rise to new life. When Adam sinned, all of his seed sinned. When Christ obeyed in righteousness, his seed through faith became righteous. Being in Christ we have his blessings. Consider the following verses:

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:5)

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. (Romans 8:11)

For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:21–23)

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1)

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

Jesus is no longer in the tomb! This is one of the most critical parts of the gospel. Paul said it like this: “If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain....If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins” (1 Corinthians 15:13–14, 17).

Paul goes on to say in 1 Corinthians 15:20–23 that Christ is the “firstfruits” (the first to be raised) and that we will also be raised. If Jesus had died but not risen again, we would all be lost. The resurrection is not an add-on to the cross. It is an integral part of the gospel message without which the gospel would have no power!

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Matthew 27:62—28:16 from the Scriptures or read story 117, “The Resurrection,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 20 MIN

Act Out the Resurrection

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ costumes as desired—a white sheet for Jesus and various towels, sheets, walking sticks, and fake beards

Do a three-act play. Divide the class into three groups and have each group act out a different part of the story. The first act reenacts the guarding of the tomb (Matthew 27:62–66); the second act, the resurrection (Matthew 28:1–10); and the final act, the guards’ report (Matthew 28:11–15).

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

United with Christ

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a drinking glass
- ✓ twenty quarters
- ✓ a hard table
- ✓ bite-sized chocolate candies (enough for at least two chocolates per person)

Before class practice bouncing a quarter on the table so that you can get it into the glass.

The object of this exercise is to illustrate what it means for one person to represent the whole team. This will help the children understand how Jesus is our representative. His victory is our victory.

Divide the class into two teams. Demonstrate bouncing the quarter into the glass. Then have each team choose a person to be their “representative.” Explain to the class that each time their representative gets the quarter in the glass, their team will be awarded ten chocolates. Each time their person misses, they lose five. Start each team with ten chocolates. Play until all the chocolates are awarded.

Explain to the class that because the person represents them, they get to share in the reward. Talk to the class about how Jesus is our representative. Talk about what we receive from being represented by Christ.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Angel of the Lord

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Draw a picture of the angel of the Lord rolling the stone away.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

A Little Magic

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ gather materials for the magic trick of your choice (An easy trick is to recruit an accomplice beforehand and tell them you are going to ask them to pick a card out of a deck and put it back again. Then no matter what card you call out they should agree and act amazed that you guessed correctly. If you do this three times without the class seeing the card, they will get suspicious quickly.)

The object of this lesson is to demonstrate the difference between seeing what happened and believing.

Although all the class will see you do the trick, they are not likely to believe that you actually have special powers. For instance, if you do a trick that identifies a card that they pick out, they will believe that you told them the identity of the correct card. They would not believe you did it by special powers. So, on the one hand they believe because they see, but on the other hand they deny your power.

This is similar to the resurrection. The soldiers and the chief priests may have believed that Jesus rose from the tomb, but they did not believe he actually rose by almighty power. Even Peter in Luke 24:12 was trying to figure out what happened.

Jesus' resurrection is reality, not a sleight of hand or an illusion, but not everyone believed.