



EASTER BONUS SESSIONS

KIDS WORSHIP GUIDE



the **GOSPEL**PROJECT.

EASTER BONUS SESSION 1

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

MATTHEW 21, MARK 11, LUKE 19, JOHN 12



CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus cried because He wanted the people in Jerusalem to know that He is the Messiah so that they would be saved. God wants all people to turn away from their sin, trust in Jesus, and accept the free gift of salvation and eternal life.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who came to earth to save us.

KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

EXPECTED RESPONSE: Worship



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

PLAN the Session

1. Read the Leader Bible Study and review the session plan.
2. Check out the session-by-session training available on Ministry Grid.
3. Pray for yourself, your group, and the other leaders and kids in your ministry.

LEADER Bible Study

This week we will explore the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. He came as a conquering King, but not necessarily in ways the people expected. The crowds welcomed Him with joy and celebration shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Matthew 21:9). But just days later, many of these same voices would call for His crucifixion. This moment challenges us to consider the depth of our own worship—do we truly honor Jesus as King in our daily lives, or only when it's easy? Prepare your heart to teach by meditating on the following main points.

Jesus is the true King, worthy of all our praise. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, people celebrated and praised Him, but their understanding of His purpose was limited. They expected an earthly king to overthrow their enemies, but Jesus came to bring a far greater victory: the salvation of our souls. Jesus' Kingship is not about power, but about love, sacrifice, and offering eternal life to all who believe in Him.

Worship is rooted in a deep relationship with Jesus. The crowds who welcomed Jesus on Palm Sunday were quick to shout "Hosanna," but when Jesus didn't meet their earthly expectations, many turned away. Worship isn't just about following the crowd or celebrating on special days—it's about having a personal, ongoing relationship with Jesus. It's about knowing Him deeply, recognizing His sacrifice for us, and responding with a heart of praise every day, not just in the moments when it's easy or convenient.

Praise should be a lifelong response. While the crowds cheered for Jesus, many of them were silent or even angry when things didn't go as they planned. True worship is not based on circumstances or temporary feelings; it's a lifelong response to Jesus' love and grace. Praise isn't only for when life is good—it's for every moment, even in the hard times, because Jesus is always worthy of our praise. Worshiping Jesus involves choosing to praise Him with our lives, actions, and words, not just in the joyful moments, but in all things.

As you teach this lesson, invite kids to respond to Jesus with praise and worship—not just for a moment, but as a way of life. Help them see that Jesus is the true King who deserves our full devotion and joy. Encourage them to worship through kindness, gratitude, and using their talents for His glory. Remind them that worship is an ongoing response to Jesus' love, not just in church but in their everyday actions and attitudes.



Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



LEARN

20–30 MINUTES

Teach kids how and why we worship



LOVE

25–30 MINUTES

Lead kids to love God by worshipping Him



LIVE

10 MINUTES

Lead kids to live worshipful lives for God



PREPARE

FOR THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Allergy Alert, Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



LEARN

Countdown

- ☐ countdown video

Worship through music

- ☐ “Flipped (I Am Forgiven),” “No Limit (I Am Loved),” or other high-energy worship songs of your choosing

Introduction and big picture question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ “Jesus’ Triumphant Entry” video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Group demonstration

- ☐ rocks, branches, leaves, other natural items



LOVE

Group activity

- ☐ pool noodle, 1 per team
- ☐ cones
- ☐ paper crown, 1 per team

Respond in worship

- ☐ “Pass It On (I Am Here to Share Jesus),” “You Are My Life,” or other slower worship songs of your choosing
- ☐ offering basket or collection box (optional)



LIVE

Key passage

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ “Eternal Life (John 3:16)” song

Additional activity

- ☐ smooth rock, 1 per child
- ☐ paint pens or permanent markers



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN through Worship

1 COUNTDOWN

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive and set it to end as worship time begins.

2 WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC (5–10 min.)

Choose a few high-energy worship songs—such as “Flipped (I Am Forgiven)” or “No Limit (I Am Loved)” —to sing with your group. Lead motions enthusiastically and encourage kids to join you. Between songs, help the kids think through what it means to worship God and why we often use music to help us do so. Talk through lyrics that may be challenging or confusing.

3 INTRODUCTION AND BIG PICTURE QUESTION (3 min.)

SAY “Hello friends, it’s great to see you all today! If you could ride to school on any animal what would you pick? [Allow responses.] You might choose to fly in on a dragon or crawl in on a turtle. Would you ever consider riding to school on a donkey? Today we’re going to hear a special story about Jesus riding into Jerusalem as a King. Typically, kings would enter their city on a strong powerful war horse. They would come as a conquering victorious king! It might surprise you to hear that Jesus chose to ride on a humble donkey. Jesus came to show what kind of King He is. Most kings expected their subjects to serve them. Jesus came to serve His people to the point of dying on the cross to save us from our sin.

We have been working on answering our big picture question, **Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who came to earth to save us.** In our story we’ll hear that **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS TO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING.** They praised Jesus and worshiped Him. It’s right for us to respond to Jesus with praise as well. He is worthy of our worship because He truly is our Rescuer.

Today is a special day! Palm Sunday is the day we remember Jesus entering Jerusalem the week before He was crucified. If we want to read a story about Jesus’ life and ministry on earth, we would turn to one of the four Gospels. The Gospels are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Let’s turn to Luke and get ready to learn together.”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

4 TELL THE BIBLE STORY (10 min.)

Open your Bible to Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 12. Tell the Bible story using the script provided, or expound upon the “Kids Sermon Outline” in the margin to teach a more in-depth message. You may choose to play the Bible story video “Jesus’ Triumphal Entry.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS’ TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

“Many people had gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Jesus was coming to Jerusalem to celebrate too. He sent two of His disciples ahead of him, saying, “Go into the village near Jerusalem, and you will find a young donkey tied there. Untie it and bring it to me.”

The disciples found the donkey, just as Jesus had said. They laid some of their clothes on the donkey, and Jesus sat down on them. Then He rode into Jerusalem. This fulfilled what was written by the prophet Zechariah many years ago:

“Tell the people of God,
See, your King is coming to you,
gentle, and mounted on a colt,
the foal of a donkey.”

When the crowd heard that Jesus was coming, they took palm branches and went out to meet Him. They spread the branches and some of their clothes on the ground ahead of Jesus. They kept praising God joyfully and shouting, over and over:

“Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

Some of the Pharisees from the crowd called out to Jesus: “Teacher, tell your disciples to be quiet!” They thought the people shouldn’t be calling Jesus the King of Israel.

Jesus replied, “I tell you, if they were to keep silent the stones themselves would cry out!”

As Jesus approached the city, he wept for the city. He said, “If you only knew who I am and what is about to happen! But it is hidden from your eyes. You are unable to see that God is visiting you.””

KIDS SERMON OUTLINE

Jesus is the true King, worthy of all our praise (Matt. 21:6-11): The people joyfully praised Jesus with their voices and actions.

Worship is rooted in a deep relationship with Jesus (John 12:44-46): Jesus came so that we can have a restored relationship with God.

Praise should be a lifelong response (Luke 19:40): Everything and everyone exists to praise God.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “What did you hear in the story? What kind of animal did Jesus ask for? (Read Luke 19:30.) The disciples brought the colt to Jesus and laid their cloaks on its back to make a saddle. Then Jesus rode the rest of the way to Jerusalem on the colt. Does that surprise you? Usually we think of kings riding big strong war horses, but Jesus came to be a different kind of king. Jesus is a humble king who laid down His life to save His people. As Jesus rode to Jerusalem many people recognized him. What did the people do as Jesus rode by on the donkey? (Read John 12:12-13.) They laid their coats on the road and waved palm branches shouting words of praise! When He reached Jerusalem Jesus cried because He saw their unbelief, eventual rejection of Him, and the coming judgment.

The Pharisees watched Jesus ride by and were angry that Jesus allowed people to worship Him as if He were God. (Read Luke 19:39.) Jesus said that even if the people didn't worship Him, all of creation would! It was through Jesus and by Jesus that all things were made, so everything in the universe owes its existence to Jesus. Trees, rocks, animals, and everything in between praises God by the very fact that they exist. It's good for us to praise Him too! God wants all people to turn away from their sin, trust in Jesus, and accept the free gift of salvation and eternal life. ”

6 GROUP DEMONSTRATION (5 min.)

Display the rock, sticks, leaves, and other items at the front of the room. Ask the kids to tell you where they may have come from. Point out details that show God's handiwork in creating these things.

SAY “I brought this rock, sticks, and leaves from outside. Just regular things you might see in your backyard. Does this rock have a mouth? Eyes? Can it talk? No! Rocks can't speak—but Jesus said that if people were silent and didn't praise Him, even the rocks would cry out! Jesus was showing how important it is that He gets the praise He deserves. The Bible tells us that all things were made by and for Jesus! (Read Colossians 1:15-17.) Have you ever seen a beautiful sunset and it seemed like even the sky was praising God? That's exactly what's happening! (Read Psalm 19:1.) Have you ever seen tree branches sway in the wind and it's like they're dancing in worship? Or maybe you've listening to the sound of water in a creek or river, and it sounded almost like it was singing praises to God. All of creation worships the Lord because everything that has been made owes its very existence to Him!

If the rocks and sky and all creation praise Jesus, don't you think we should too? Absolutely! When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the people waved palm branches, shouted joyfully, and laid down their coats. They knew something BIG was happening. **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS TO JERUSALEM AS THEIR KING.** Jesus is not just any king—He's our Savior King! He is worthy of our worship—not just on Palm Sunday, but every day! Let's be louder than the rocks. Let's give Jesus the praise He deserves! ”



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE with Worship

1 DISCUSSION (10 min.)

Consider forming smaller groups to discuss the following questions to encourage open communication. Prepare leaders for sensitive conversations that may require follow-up.

1. **What did we discover about God in this passage?** Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to show that He is a humble king Who came to serve His people. He didn't stop the people from praising Him, because He is the Son of God, and He deserved the worship He received. He knew that even if the people were silent, all of creation would continue to praise Him.
2. **It is right for us to praise Jesus, because He is our Savior King! You may also feel confused about why Jesus rode on a donkey instead of a war horse. You may feel sad to think that Jesus cried when He looked out over Jerusalem. Not matter how we think or feel about something in God's Word, we can be honest with Him. God already knows what's in our hearts and minds, and He loves us no matter what. What are some other feelings or thoughts you have?** Provide a safe place for kids to discuss their emotions. Explain that God already knows how we feel and wants us to be honest with Him about what is on our minds as we look to follow His direction for our lives.
3. **What are some ways a person might praise Jesus?** Praising Jesus can include singing, dancing, praying, and reading God's Word. We can also praise Him by serving others and showing them how much God loves them. We praise God when we look at creation and recognize that He made everything that we see. We can praise Him through our own creativity, by writing, drawing, or making up a play or dance to show His love!
4. **Can we still praise Jesus even when we're having a hard day? How?** We can praise Jesus even when things are tough! In fact, sometimes praising Jesus when we're sad, scared, or frustrated helps remind us that He is still with us and still good. We can talk to Him honestly in prayer, sing a song that helps us feel close to Him, or read a Bible verse about His love. Praising Jesus doesn't always mean we have to be loud and excited—it can also be quiet and calm. When we praise Him in hard times, it shows that we trust Him no matter what.

After the kids have had time to discuss, direct their attention back to the leader for the group activity. If you formed smaller groups, you may choose to regather as a larger group depending on your ministry context.

2 RESPOND THROUGH PRAYER (3 min.)

Read Psalm 100:1-5 aloud.

SAY “God, You are so good. You made us, You love us, and You are always faithful. Help us to praise You with joyful hearts—not just with songs, but with our whole lives. Thank You for sending Jesus, our King, who came in humility and love. We praise You because You are worthy. Amen.”



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

3 GROUP ACTIVITY: DONKEY DASH RELAY (5–10 min.)

SAY “We’ve learned so much today from our Bible story! Let’s play a fun game to help us remember an important truth from God’s Word.”

Place the cones on the far end of the play area, one for each team. Form two teams and instruct them to line up on the opposite side of the room from the cones. The first person will put the crown on their head and “ride” the pool noodle donkey to the cone and back before the next person’s turn. The first team to get all their players across the finish line wins.

SAY “This game was a fun way to get our energy out and work together, but it also reminds us of something important from today’s story. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people were so excited to see Him—they couldn’t help but shout and praise Him. They laid down their coats and shouted, ‘Hosanna!’ Jesus wasn’t just a good teacher—He was the promised King, the one God had sent to rescue His people. The word ‘Hosanna’ means ‘save now.’ The people knew that Jesus had come to save them.

When we play games, sing songs, laugh, or even just spend time with friends, we have a chance to use those moments to praise Jesus. Praising Him isn’t only about singing at church—it’s about our hearts and how we respond to Him every day. Whether we’re being silly, quiet, creative, or loud, we can use our words and actions to say, ‘Jesus, You’re amazing!’

So just like the people in Jerusalem couldn’t hold back their joy, we can find all kinds of ways to praise Jesus because He’s worth it—on Sunday, during the week, when we’re happy, or even when life is hard. Jesus is always worthy of our praise!”

4 RESPOND IN WORSHIP (3 min.)

Choose slower worship songs—such as “Pass It On (I Am Here to Share Jesus)” or “You Are My Life”—that will help your kids reflect on the concepts they have learned about during this session. Encourage kids to respond however they feel God leading them, whether in prayer, quiet thought, or song.

SAY “Today we learned that Jesus is a different kind of King—humble, loving, and full of compassion. When He rode into Jerusalem, the people celebrated and praised Him because they knew He was special. We praise Jesus because He is the Son of God who came to rescue us. Even if the people had stayed silent, creation itself would have cried out! Jesus is worthy of our praise, not just today but every day. Let’s take a few minutes now to worship Him through music.”

As you continue playing music, allow the kids a few minutes to pass an offering basket, bring offerings to a collections box, or collect offerings in another way.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE in Worship

1 KEY PASSAGE (5 min.)

SAY “John 3:16 reminds us how much God loves us. He gave His only Son, Jesus, so we could be saved and live forever with Him. When we believe in Jesus, we are rescued from sin and given eternal life. God’s love is the greatest gift we could ever receive.”

Read John 3:16 and encourage the kids to read along. Display the Key Passage Poster for kids to read. You may also sing the key passage song, “Eternal Life (John 3:16).”

2 APPLICATION (2 min.)

Spend some time following up with the kids to see if they were able to complete the application challenges from the previous session. Encourage each kid for his or her efforts, and remind kids to keep seeking ways to worship God each day.

SAY “We have learned so much during our time together. We can continue to praise Jesus throughout the week, whether we’re with family, friends, in a big group, or by ourselves. Jesus is always worthy of our worship. Let’s try this idea to challenge ourselves this week to keep praising Him.

Make a short playlist of your favorite worship songs and sing along at home or in the car. Use music to remind you that Jesus is worthy of your praise! Share your playlist with a family member or friend and try to learn some of the songs together. Consider making up a dance to go with the song or drawing a picture of how the song makes you feel.”

3 PRAYER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (2 min.)

SAY “Jesus, You are our King and Savior. Thank You for loving us and coming to rescue us. Help us praise You with our words, actions, and hearts this week. We love You and want to follow You always. Amen.”

Make any announcements from your kids ministry before dismissing. If there’s significant time between dismissal and pickup, consider using the additional activity to keep the kids engaged.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

THE ROCKS WILL PRAISE HIM!

Give each kid a clean, smooth rock and some paint pens. Encourage them to write “Jesus is worthy of our praise!” on the rock. Let them decorate their rocks and encourage them to place them where they’ll see it throughout the week to remind them to praise Jesus!

SAY “ Today we learned that Jesus is the true King, worthy of all our praise. When He rode into Jerusalem, people shouted, “Hosanna!” Jesus said that even if people were silent, the rocks would cry out in praise. That’s how worthy He is—creation can’t stay quiet about Him! When we painted our rocks today, we created reminders that we were made to praise Jesus too. Whether through singing, serving, or creating, we can honor Him every day. Let your rock remind you to praise Jesus this week with your words, actions, and heart. ”

EASTER BONUS SESSION 2

JESUS SAVES US TO FOLLOW HIM

MATTHEW 27-28; MARK 15-16; LUKE 23-24; JOHN 19-20



CHRIST CONNECTION: While the people were crucifying Jesus, He asked His Father to forgive them. Even though Jesus never sinned, He went to the cross for our sin. Jesus forgives everyone who repents and believes He died and rose again.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who came to earth to save us.

KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

EXPECTED RESPONSE: Gratitude



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

PLAN the Session

1. Read the Leader Bible Study and review the session plan.
2. Check out the session-by-session training available on Ministry Grid.
3. Pray for yourself, your group, and the other leaders and kids in your ministry.

LEADER Bible Study

This week we celebrate our risen Savior! As you prepare to teach this lesson, reflect on the depth of Jesus' sacrifice and the power of His resurrection. Jesus willingly endured the cross to pay for our sins, and His victory over death gives us the greatest reason for gratitude and the surest foundation for hope. Ask yourself: How does Jesus' death and resurrection shape my daily life? Does my gratitude overflow into worship and my hope into joyful confidence?

The cross of Jesus inspires deep gratitude. The cross stands as the ultimate symbol of selfless love. Jesus endured immense suffering to take on our sins and offer forgiveness. His willingness to sacrifice Himself should stir deep gratitude in our hearts, reminding us we are loved beyond measure. Reflecting on His sacrifice moves us to humility and thankfulness for His grace.

The resurrection of Jesus fills us with hope. The resurrection is the foundation of our hope. Jesus' victory over death assures us that no trial we face is permanent. His resurrection promises that we, too, can experience new life—both now and eternally. For Christians, Jesus is out living hope that empowers us to live confidently in a world full of uncertainty. Because Jesus is alive, we know that death no longer has the final word.

Jesus' victory calls us to follow Him. His victory over sin and death isn't just a historical event; it's a call to action. In light of His sacrifice, we are invited to follow Him with our whole lives. His victory frees us from sin's power and empowers us to live with purpose and intentionality. As followers of Jesus, we are called to share His love, embody His teachings, and live out His mission in a broken world.

As you teach, help kids see that Jesus' death and resurrection are the foundation of our faith. Encourage them to respond with gratitude for what He has done and hope in the victory He has won. Let this truth sink deeply into your heart: Because He lives, we have nothing to fear and everything to celebrate!



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



LEARN

20–30 MINUTES

Teach kids how and why we worship



LOVE

25–30 MINUTES

Lead kids to love God by worshiping Him



LIVE

10 MINUTES

Lead kids to live worshipful lives for God



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FOR THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



LEARN

Countdown

- ☐ countdown video

Worship through music

- ☐ "No Limit (I Am Loved)," "The Savior We Need," or other high-energy worship songs of your choosing

Introduction and big picture question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Jesus Saves Us to Follow Him" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Group demonstration

- ☐ suitcase
- ☐ clothing items
- ☐ toiletries
- ☐ travel items



LOVE

Respond in worship

- ☐ "You Are My Life," "Jesus Is the Messiah," or other slower worship songs of your choosing
- ☐ offering basket or collection box (optional)



LIVE

Key passage

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "Eternal Life (John 3:16)" song



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN through Worship

1 COUNTDOWN

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive and set it to end as worship time begins.

2 WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC (5–10 min.)

Choose a few high-energy worship songs—such as “No Limit (I Am Loved)” or “The Savior We Need”—to sing with your group. Lead motions enthusiastically and encourage kids to join you. Between songs, help the kids think through what it means to worship God and why we often use music to help us do so. Talk through lyrics that may be challenging or confusing.

3 INTRODUCTION AND BIG PICTURE QUESTION (3 min.)

SAY “Hello everyone! I’m so excited to worship together on Easter Sunday! Have you ever been given a present that was wrapped nicely, and you couldn’t wait to open it? [Allow responses.] But what if you opened it and found that the box was...empty? That would be so disappointing! Or imagine getting to school and reaching in your backpack to turn in your homework, but there was nothing in the bag! You might be in trouble for forgetting your homework. Sometimes when something is empty, we’re disappointed or frustrated. But today we’ll hear the story of some friends who were surprised and amazed to find something empty. **JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND ROSE AGAIN TO DEFEAT SIN AND DEATH.** Though He was crucified and buried in a tomb, three days later that tomb was empty!

The story of Jesus’ resurrection is cause for celebration and gratitude. Jesus loves us so much He was willing to give up His life for us on the cross. He took on the pain of death so we could be restored to a right relationship with God. What an amazing gift it is to celebrate Easter together. **Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who came to earth to save us.** Jesus is alive, and that truth gives hope to everyone who calls Jesus their Savior.

To read a story about Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection we turn to the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Today we’ll read from the Gospel of Matthew. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

4 TELL THE BIBLE STORY (10 min.)

Open your Bible to Matthew 27–28; Mark 15–16; Luke 23–24; John 19–20. Tell the Bible story using the script provided, or expound upon the “Kids Sermon Outline” in the margin to teach a more in-depth message. You may choose to play the Bible story video “Jesus Saves Us to Follow Him.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS SAVES US TO FOLLOW HIM

“**The religious leaders in Jerusalem did not like what Jesus was doing and saying. They **did not believe He was the Son of God**, and did not want people to follow Him instead of them. **They made a plan to have Him arrested and killed.****

First, **they dressed him in a scarlet robe, made a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and knelt before Him, saying, “Hail, king of the Jews!”** They did not really believe He was king. **They were mocking Him.** Then they led Him away to the cross.

Jesus was nailed to the cross between two criminals. All the people said, “If Jesus was really the Son of God, then God would help him! He would come down from the cross. He saved others, but he can’t save himself!”

These people didn’t know that by dying for sin and rising again, Jesus was saving God’s people. Staying on the cross was exactly what God had planned for Jesus.

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing.”

Then darkness covered the whole land, even though it was the middle of the day. **Jesus gave a loud cry, and then He died. The curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The ground shook.** One of the guards saw all that was happening and said, “Truly, this Jesus was the Son of God!”

On Friday night, a man named **Joseph from Arimathea took the body of Jesus down off the cross and placed it in a new tomb cut into rock. Then Joseph rolled a great stone over the entrance.**

The leaders of God’s people remembered that Jesus said He would rise from the dead in three days. So, they placed a guard at the tomb of Jesus so that no one could break in, take His body, and pretend like Jesus had risen from the dead.

On Sunday morning, two women, both named Mary, went to the tomb. There was an earthquake, and an angel of the Lord came down. He rolled away the stone of the tomb and sat down on it. He said, “Don’t be afraid! Jesus is not here. He is risen, just as he said! Go and tell his disciples!”

On the way to tell the disciples, the women saw Jesus! They fell at His feet and worshiped Him, the Savior who died and rose again.”

KIDS SERMON OUTLINE

The cross of Jesus inspires deep gratitude (Matt. 27:54): Jesus’ loving action of staying on the cross led people to follow Him.

The resurrection of Jesus fills us with hope (Luke 24:1-12): The hope of Jesus’ disciples and followers was restored when He came back to life.

Jesus’ victory calls us to follow Him (Luke 24:36-49): Jesus is our risen King who is worthy of our devotion.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “What did you hear in the story? [Allow responses.] Today is a celebration! But, to get to the joy of Easter we have to remember the sadness of Jesus’ death on the cross. The religious leaders didn’t like that Jesus claimed to be God, so they had him beaten, mocked, and crucified. (Read John 19:17.) Everyone who walked past insulted Him saying things like, ‘If you are really the Son of God save yourself’ and, ‘Come down from the cross and we’ll believe that you really are the Son of God!’

While the people were crucifying Jesus, He asked His Father to forgive them. Even though they were hurting Him and making fun of Him, Jesus still loved them.

Even though Jesus never sinned, He went to the cross for our sin. Jesus forgives everyone who repents and believes He died and rose again. Jesus offers you and me an invitation to know Him and be set free from the guilt and shame of our sin. We can respond to this invitation with faith, trusting that Jesus’ death on the cross pays the price of our sin and restores us to God. We can be grateful to Jesus for His perfect life, sacrificial death, and incredible resurrection that brings us new life! ”

6 GROUP DEMONSTRATION (5 min.)

Display the suitcase. Pack up the folded clothing, toiletries, and other small items for a quick trip. Discuss the items as you pack them.

SAY “When you go on a trip, you probably pack a suitcase. Maybe you even take your pillow with you. You might stay in a hotel, but that hotel room isn’t your home forever. You’re just staying there for your trip. In a much greater way, when Jesus died and was buried, He never planned to stay long in that tomb. The grave wasn’t His home. Heaven is! Who went to the tomb three days later? (Mary and some other women) When they arrived they saw something unexpected. The large stone in front of the tomb had been rolled away, and an angel was sitting on it. (Read Matthew 28:5.)

Unbelievable! As they ran back to tell the disciples, Jesus Himself met them. They had seen Him die on the cross, yet here He was, standing in front of them; not a ghost, but with a fully healed, resurrected body. How would you feel if you saw Jesus alive? [Allow responses.]

This is an amazing story, but does it matter for us today? Of course! Because Jesus is alive we know that Jesus is truly God. If He weren’t God, His death on the cross wouldn’t be good enough to save us from sin and He would have stayed dead. Because Jesus is alive, we know that our sins can be forgiven. Jesus paid the price for our sin, and when we are joined to Him in faith, He sets us free! Because Jesus is alive we also know that God can give us new life too. Romans 6:4 says, ‘Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.’ This means that God gives us new life when we trust in Jesus. We get to be part of God’s family now and forever, and when Jesus returns we will experience perfect peace and joy, free from pain and suffering forever! ”



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE with Worship

1 DISCUSSION (10 min.)

Consider forming smaller groups to discuss the following questions to encourage open communication. Prepare leaders for sensitive conversations that may require follow-up.

1. **What did we discover about God in this passage?** Jesus' resurrection shows us that He is really God. He never sinned, so He didn't deserve to die. But God raised Him back to life! Jesus beat sin and death, and now He's alive forever!
2. **We can have gratitude for the resurrection of Jesus, because it means we can have new life with God too! But there may be other thoughts or feelings you have as you think about the truth that Jesus is alive. You may feel excited, confused, or even overwhelmed. Let's be honest about our responses to God's Word, because, after all, God already knows what's in our hearts and minds! What are some other feelings or thoughts you have?** Provide a safe place for kids to discuss their emotions. Explain that God already knows how we feel and wants us to be honest with Him about what is on our minds as we look to follow His direction for our lives.
3. **What are some ways a person might show their gratitude?** Someone who is grateful for the work of Jesus on the cross says, "thank you" to Him in prayer. They worship Him with singing, being creative, and studying His Word. They show their gratitude by serving others so that people can experience God's love for them.
4. **How do you feel when someone does something kind for you? How can you show Jesus you feel the same way about His love for you?** When someone shows us kindness, it makes us feel special and loved, doesn't it? Well, Jesus showed us the greatest kindness ever—He died for us and came back to life! To say "thank you" to Jesus, we can show His love to others, pray, worship, and live the way He taught us. Just like we show appreciation when someone is kind to us, we can show Jesus our gratitude by living with love and joy every day!

After the kids have had time to discuss, direct their attention back to the leader for the group activity. If you formed smaller groups, you may choose to regather as a larger group depending on your ministry context.

2 RESPOND THROUGH PRAYER (3 min.)

Guide kids to find a partner and give each kid an index card and pencil. Encourage them to write their name at the top and one prayer request they have this week. Give options such as a test, a difficult relationship with a sibling, an argument with a friend, sickness, etc. Give them a few minutes to write their request, then share with their partner. Guide kids to spend a minute or so praying for each other. Encourage them to think about ways they can show their gratitude for what Jesus has done for them.



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

3 GROUP ACTIVITY: RESURRECTION TAG (5-10 MIN.)

SAY “We’ve learned so much today from our Bible story! Let’s play a fun game to help us remember an important truth from God’s Word.”

Choose one child to be the tagger. The other kids will run around the play area while the tagger tries to tag them. When a child is tagged, they must freeze. To “come back to life” another player must touch the frozen child and say, “Jesus is alive!” The frozen child can then join the game again. Keep playing until everyone has been tagged. The last child left can become the new tagger.

SAY “Great job, everyone! In this game, we acted out how Jesus defeated sin and death by coming back to life after He died on the cross. Just like in the game, when you were frozen and someone helped you come back to life, Jesus offers new life to anyone who trusts in Him. Jesus died on the cross and rose again to defeat sin and death. That’s why we celebrate Easter with so much joy! Jesus didn’t stay dead; He conquered death so that we can have eternal life with Him. **Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, who came to earth to save us.**

Jesus’ resurrection shows us His power over death and proves that He is truly God. When we trust in Him, we get to share in the new life He gives. (Read Romans 6:9.) Just like we celebrated how Jesus rose in this game, we can celebrate that He is alive forever, offering us new life and the promise of being with Him forever. Let’s continue to thank Jesus for His incredible gift of life and share this good news with others so they can experience His love too!”

4 RESPOND IN WORSHIP (3 min.)

Choose slower worship songs—such as “You Are My Life” or “Jesus Is the Messiah”—that will help your kids reflect on the concepts they have learned about during this session. Encourage kids to respond however they feel God leading them, whether in prayer, quiet thought, or song.

SAY “Today, we learned that Jesus died on the cross and rose again to defeat sin and death. This amazing truth is what makes Easter so special! Jesus’ resurrection shows His power over death and proves He is the Son of God. Because He is alive, we can have new life in Him and know that our sins are forgiven. Jesus’ victory gives us hope and joy, and we can celebrate this good news! Now, let’s take some time to worship Him with our hearts, voices, and lives, thanking Him for His love, sacrifice, and the new life He offers.”

As you continue playing music, allow the kids a few minutes to pass an offering basket, bring offerings to a collections box, or collect offerings in another way.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE in Worship

1 KEY PASSAGE (5 min.)

SAY “ The story of Jesus’ death and resurrection shows God’s incredible love for us. John 3:16 tells us that God gave His Son so we could have eternal life. Through Jesus’ sacrifice and victory over death, we can believe in Him and receive the gift of life forever with God. ”

Read John 3:16 and encourage the kids to read along. Display the Key Passage Poster for kids to read. You may also sing the key passage song, “Eternal Life (John 3:16).”

2 APPLICATION (2 min.)

Spend some time following up with the kids to see if they were able to complete the application challenges from the previous session. Encourage each kid for his or her efforts, and remind kids to keep seeking ways to worship God each day.

SAY “ We can put our faith into practice during the week because following Jesus isn’t just something we do on Sundays—it’s a part of our everyday lives. By living out our faith, we grow closer to God, show His love to others, and remind ourselves of His grace, power, and what He’s done for us. Today we’ve talked about being grateful for what Jesus has done for us. Let’s try this application challenge until we see each other again.

This week, you can show your gratitude toward Jesus by being kind and serving others. Look for small ways to help at home, at school, or with your friends. When you do something kind, remember how Jesus gave His life for you, and share His love with everyone around you! ”

3 PRAYER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (2 min.)

SAY “ Jesus, thank You for the incredible gift of Your love. Thank You for dying on the cross and rising again to defeat sin and death. We are so grateful for the new life You offer us. Please help us live each day with hearts full of gratitude, sharing Your love and kindness with everyone around us. May our actions show others how great You are. In Your name, Amen. ”

Make any announcements from your kids ministry before dismissing. If there’s significant time between dismissal and pickup, consider using the additional activity to keep the kids engaged.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

JESUS SAYS

This is a twist on the classic “Simon Says” game. Give instructions like, “Jesus says, ‘Jump like you’re celebrating Jesus’ victory,’” or “Jesus says, ‘Pretend you’re rolling the stone away from the tomb.’” If you don’t say “Jesus says,” and they do the action anyway, they’re out!

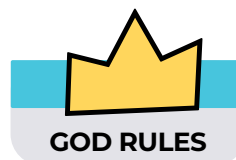
SAY “In this game, we practiced listening and obeying instructions, just like how Jesus wants us to follow Him. Every time you obeyed, you showed respect and trust, just like how we should trust and obey Jesus in our daily lives. Jesus calls us to listen to His words and live in a way that honors Him. Remember, Jesus showed His love by dying on the cross and rising again. We can show our gratitude by obeying Him. This week, think about how you can obey Jesus—whether it’s being kind, helping others, or sharing His love.”



THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR US

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use these prompts to share the gospel with your kids.



Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.