

EASTER BONUS SESSION 2

JESUS SAVES US TO FOLLOW HIM

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



CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! When we trust in Jesus, we become part of His family and follow Him.

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

KEY PASSAGE: God loved the world and gave his one and only Son to all who believe in him. John 3:16

STORY POINT: Jesus rose from the dead and is alive.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The resurrection reveals the astounding nature of God's mercy and grace: that sinners like us can receive forgiveness through faith in His Son—forgiveness that leads to new life. The torment Jesus endured on the cross was not the end of the story. On the third day after His crucifixion, Jesus rose to make the way for fallen people to be reunited to God by faith.

In Luke 23:34, Jesus prays some of His last words before His death: "Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing." Though the scoffers and mockers were in control of their hateful words and actions, they did not know the one and only Son of God was hanging on the cross on their behalf.

Jesus, who is fully God and fully man, knew the depths of the people's sins and the lengths He needed to endure to satisfy the wrath of God their sin deserved. Only Jesus has the power to forgive His transgressors, and only Jesus would take to the cross on our behalf for the joy set before Him (Hebrews 12:2). The evil that the people planned against Jesus would be used by God to bring about our eternal good: the salvation of all who would believe in Him by faith.

This gift of salvation is for anyone who repents of their sin and turns toward Christ in faith. Lead boys and girls to see that there is not a single person in this story, or in all the Scriptures, or anywhere in the world who is too far lost to receive God's grace. Lead them to understand the lengths Christ was willing to endure so that they might be saved. May we continually find ourselves in awe of the gracious forgiveness God extends to His followers through faith in His Son.



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



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tip scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Guess the object

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ large paper bag
- ☐ small cross



LEARN

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Jesus Saves Us to Follow Him" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Decorate a card

- ☐ washable markers
- ☐ stickers

Build a tomb

- ☐ interlocking blocks



LIVE

Create a crayon rubbing

- ☐ heavyweight paper

Snack and transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Circle Bible Story Pictures" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Spell Jesus

- ☐ magnetic letters J, E, S, U, S
- ☐ plastic container
- ☐ shredded paper
- ☐ metal cookie sheet

Color with orange, yellow, and pink

- ☐ orange, yellow, and pink crayons, markers, and colored pencils



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, story point, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the classroom. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

GUESS THE OBJECT

Post the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the classroom. Tape the Bible Story Picture Poster to the outside of a large paper bag. Place a small cross in the bag. Greet children as they come to the classroom and point out the Big Picture Question Poster. Encourage children to feel what is inside the bag and guess what it is. Show the Bible Story Picture Poster as you talk about what is inside.

SAY “ I am so glad you are at church today. There is something in this bag that reminds me of our story. Feel what is inside. Can you guess what it is? It is a cross. Soldiers put Jesus on a cross. Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners, but Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Our big picture question asks, ‘Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Son of God who came to earth to save us.’ **JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND IS ALIVE!** ”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 BUILD A CROSS



Invite each child to bring a block to the group-time area. Work as a team to shape the blocks into a cross.

SAY “We used the blocks to build a cross. Soldiers put Jesus on a cross. Jesus stayed on the cross because that was how He was going to save people from sin. This was part of God’s plan.”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Matthew 27–28, Mark 15–16, Luke 23–24, and John 19–20. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

JESUS SAVES US FROM OUR ENEMIES

SAY “People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King, but some people were not happy about Jesus. The religious leaders did not like that Jesus said He is the Son of God. They did not want people to listen to Jesus instead of them. So, they made a plan to stop Jesus.

Jesus was arrested and taken away to be killed on a cross. The soldiers made a crown out of thorns and put it on Jesus’ head. They put a scarlet robe on Him. They didn’t believe He is a King. They were making fun of Him.

The soldiers put Jesus on a cross. Two criminals were on crosses next to Him. The people said, “If Jesus were God’s Son, He would save himself and come down.”

But Jesus stayed on the cross because that was how He was going to save people from sin. This was part of God’s plan.

The sky got dark. Jesus cried out, and then He died. The temple curtain tore, and the ground shook. One of the guards said, “This really was the Son of God!”

Jesus’ body was put in a special cave called a tomb. A big stone was rolled in front of the tomb, and soldiers came to guard it.

On the third day, some women went to the tomb. The stone was rolled away! An angel there said, “Don’t be afraid! Jesus is alive!”

The women were so happy! They ran to tell Jesus’ friends the good news.

Christ Connection: Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! When we trust in Jesus, we become part of His family and follow Him.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Display the Bible Story Picture Poster. Ask children how they think the people in the story felt. Invite kids to make each expression with their faces as they answer. Highlight different parts of the story such as the religious leaders when Jesus said He is God's Son, the soldiers when they made fun of Jesus, the people when the sky got dark and the ground shook, and the women who went to the tomb.

SAY “ The religious leaders made a plan to stop Jesus. The soldiers put Jesus on a cross. Jesus died. But Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. **JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND IS ALIVE!** When we trust in Jesus, we become part of His family and follow Him. ”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow”:

God loved the world and gave His Son.
God loved the world and gave His Son.
God loved the world and gave His Son.
To everyone who believes.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at John 3:16. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Encourage children to say the phrase with you multiple times. Each time you say the phrase, leave out a word, leading kids to say the missing word. “God loved the world and gave his one and only Son to everyone who believes in ____.” “God loved the world and gave his one and only ____ to everyone who believes in him.” “God loved the ____ and gave his one and only Son to everyone who believes in him.” “ ____ loved the world and gave his one and only Son to everyone who believes in him.”

SAY “ God loved the world and gave His one and only Son, Jesus. Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. **JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND IS ALIVE!** You are part of the world, and God loves each and every one of you. ”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God that because of His great love for us, Jesus is alive!

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 MAKE GROUPS OF THREE



Challenge children to collect groups of three items that are the same in the classroom. Items can include three blocks, three crayons, or three baby dolls. Count the items to make sure you have a complete set of each item. Older children may like the challenge of finding items in categories such as three items that are a certain color or shape or that start with a certain letter.

SAY 🗨️ You found so many groups of three in our classroom. Three is an important number in our story today. Something very special happened on the third day. The soldiers had put Jesus on a cross. The sky got dark. Jesus cried out, and then He died. Jesus' body was put in a special cave called a tomb. On the third day some women went to the tomb, but Jesus was not there. **JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND IS ALIVE.** Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! When we trust in Jesus, we become part of His family and follow Him. 🗨️

2 DECORATE A CARD

Fold several pieces of construction paper in half to make cards. Write Jesus is Alive! on the front of each card. Place the cards, washable markers, and stickers on the table. Invite kids to decorate the cards.

SAY 🗨️ I love the card you made. It says, 'Jesus is Alive!' Who will you give your card to? We can tell everyone that Jesus is alive. Some women went to the tomb after Jesus died. An angel told them that Jesus is alive. The women were so happy! They ran to tell Jesus' friends the good news. Who will you tell that **JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND IS ALIVE?** 🗨️

3 BUILD A TOMB

Place interlocking blocks on the table or floor for kids to explore. Encourage children to work together to build a small tomb-shaped structure. Demonstrate how to cover the opening with additional blocks to resemble a stone.

SAY 🗨️ You built a tomb. Jesus' body was put in a special cave called a tomb. A big stone was rolled in front of the tomb, and soldiers came to guard it. On the third day, some women went to the tomb. The stone was rolled away! An angel there said, 'Don't be afraid! Jesus is alive!' Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. **JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND IS ALIVE!** When we trust in Jesus, we become part of His family and follow Him. 🗨️

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 CREATE A CRAYON RUBBING

Before the session cut a cross shape out of heavyweight paper and remove the wrappers from several crayons. Tape the cross to the table. Demonstrate how to place a piece of copy paper over the cross and rub the side of a crayon over the paper to reveal the cross underneath. Younger children may want to tape the copy paper to the table to assist in keeping the paper steady. Write the key passage phrase on the completed artwork.

SAY “ You found a cross when you rubbed the crayon over your paper. Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. Our key passage phrase tells us that God loved the world and gave His one and only Son, Jesus, to everyone who believes in Him. ”

2 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “ Jesus loves us so much that He died for our sins and came back to life. If we believe in Him, we can be forgiven and live with Him forever. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session or something they learned and enjoyed doing. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 COUNT TO THREE

Invite children to count to three with you several times as you gather for group time. Tell children that on the third day after Jesus died, some women went to the tomb to see Jesus, but He was not there. Jesus is alive!

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Matthew 27–28; Mark 15–16; Luke 23–24; and John 19–20. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story.

JESUS SAVES US TO FOLLOW HIM

- Jesus never did anything wrong, but people wanted to hurt Him. They arrested Jesus and put Him on a wooden cross.
- Soldiers made fun of Jesus and put a crown of thorns on His head. It got dark, and Jesus cried out. Then He died.
- Jesus' body was put in a special cave called a tomb. A big rock was rolled in front, and soldiers stood guard.
- On the third day, some women went to see Jesus. The stone was rolled away! An angel said, "Don't be afraid! Jesus is alive!" The women ran to tell Jesus' friends the good news.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow":

God loved the world and gave His Son.
God loved the world and gave His Son
God loved the world and gave His Son
To everyone who believes.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at John 3:16. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Tell children that Jesus is God's Son and He is alive! Say the key passage phrase several times alternating between a high- and low-pitched voice.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for sending His Son to provide a way for us to be with Him forever.



BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 PLAY WITH PLAY DOUGH



Invite kids to join you in creating items from the story with play dough. As you talk about the story, demonstrate how to roll the play dough into a ball that looks like a tomb or the stone that was rolled away. Encourage children to make a tomb and a stone as they retell the story.

SAY “ Let’s play a game to remember the Bible story. I am holding a beanbag. I remember that some people loved Jesus but other people did not like Him. I will toss the beanbag to [child’s name], and he can tell us one thing he remembers from the story. Ready? **[Toss the beanbag and prompt as needed to help the child share something from the story.]** Good! Now [child’s name] will toss the beanbag to someone else. ”

7 SPELL JESUS

Fill a plastic container with shredded paper. Hide the magnetic letters that spell JESUS in the container. Attach a piece of paper that says JESUS to the cookie sheet to serve as a model. Invite preschoolers to dig through the shredded paper to find the magnetic letters and place them on the cookie sheet to spell Jesus. Encourage preschoolers to hide the letters again for another friend.

SAY “ You spelled the name ‘Jesus.’ **JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD AND IS ALIVE.** People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King, but some people were not happy about Jesus. The soldiers put Jesus on a cross, and He died. Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! When we trust in Jesus, we become part of His family and follow Him. ”

8 COLOR WITH ORANGE, YELLOW, AND PINK

Place orange, yellow, and pink crayons, markers, and colored pencils on the table along with copy paper. Invite kids to draw with the specific colors available. If preschoolers have a difficult time deciding what they would like to draw, suggest they draw a cross shape or a circle to represent the stone that was rolled away.

SAY “ The colors you used in your artwork remind me of a sunrise. Women went to the tomb early in the morning on the third day, but Jesus was not there. He is alive! An angel told the women, ‘Don’t be afraid! Jesus is alive!’ Jesus died on the cross to rescue sinners. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! When we trust in Jesus, we become part of His family and follow Him. ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.