



EASTER BONUS SESSIONS

YOUNGER PRESCHOOL **LEADER GUIDE**



the **GOSPEL**PROJECT.

EASTER BONUS SESSION

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

MATTHEW 21; MARK 11; LUKE 19; JOHN 12



CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus is our special King and Savior. Trusting in Jesus means loving Him. If we love Him, He will forgive us and give us life with Him forever.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: If my people pray and turn from sin, I will forgive them. 2 Chronicles 7:14

STORY POINT: People welcomed Jesus as their King.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

All four Gospels offer a glimpse into the joy that overtook the crowds of Jerusalem as King Jesus made His way through the city gates. The events that would take place in the city just one week later would starkly contrast to the high-spirited festivities of Jesus' triumphal entry. In His sovereignty, Christ knew He would face crucifixion at the hands of His own people, yet He willingly approached the cross for our salvation.

What was the significance of the people's shouts for the King and His coming kingdom? What do we learn about Christ's heart for the lost?

Crowds poured into Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, and many of them participated in creating a grand entrance for Jesus. They waved palm branches, a symbol of pride for the Jews, and called out for their new King to usher in a new reign for God's people. They had heard reports of how He raised Lazarus from the dead and were eager to see His next miracle. Yet, they misunderstood the purpose of His entry into the holy city—it was not to overthrow their oppressors but to offer salvation to all who would turn to Him in faith. They sought a mighty conqueror in Jesus, not knowing that the Father would instead send a Suffering Servant to be sacrificed on their behalf. They wanted an earthly king to reign amid their difficult circumstances, not a Messiah who would be publicly humiliated on a cross. Despite what His people desired, God knew what His people needed and sent His Son to save them.

As Jesus approached the city, He wept for it—knowing the fate that would soon befall Him and the great price He would pay to establish peace between God and man. We later see His heart for the lost as He pleaded for the Father to forgive the people's sins. What God's people didn't know then is the story we get to proclaim now: Christ died for sinners! Lead boys and girls to see that Jesus is greater than our earthly rulers and worldly desires. He is the sovereign Savior and Lord who has already paid the price for our greatest need: salvation!



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-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Cut palm leaves

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ large sheet of green construction paper, 1 per child



LEARN

Examine rocks

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ large rock

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- ☐ palm leaves

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Build a city

- ☐ "City" printable, 1 copy
- ☐ people figures
- ☐ toy city items (trees, cars, animals, landmarks, street signs, etc.)

Wave streamers

- ☐ 2-3-foot lengths of green crepe paper, 1 per child
- ☐ worship music



LIVE

Look at pictures of Jesus

- ☐ picture Bibles
- ☐ Bible story books
- ☐ bell
- ☐ sticky notes

Snack and Transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Which One Is Different?" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Make a city

- ☐ construction paper (brown, tan, gray)
- ☐ heavyweight paper (white), 1 per child

Make leaf rubbings

- ☐ real or artificial leaves
- ☐ unwrapped crayons
- ☐ thin paper, 1 per child



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.

CUT PALM LEAVES

Before the session, place the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the classroom. Cut a large leaf shape from sheets of green construction paper for each child. Guide the children to make small cuts around the edge of the paper with blunt-tipped scissors. Each cut should be about 2 inches toward the center of the leaf. Most younger preschoolers have not used scissors often and will need help. Show them how to hold the scissors and demonstrate a short cut toward the center. You may need to hold the leaf for some children and turn it slightly after each cut. Comment that palm leaves are usually very big leaves. Place the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the classroom. Read the big picture question and answer as the children work.

SAY “Hi! I am so glad you came today. We are making palm leaves to wave during our Bible story. The people in the story put palm leaves on the road when Jesus rode by. They wanted to show that they loved Him. They shouted and sang, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.’ The **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. Jesus knew that the people didn’t really understand who He was. The people didn’t know yet that they could pray and turn from sin and Jesus would forgive them. Our big picture question and answer says, **What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.**”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 EXAMINE ROCKS

Before the session, find a large rock to display for the children. Display the Bible Story Picture Poster to reference as you discuss this week's session.

SAY “ I brought a rock today. Can you tell me about it? **[Allow responses.]** What can the rock do? **[Allow responses.]** You have some good ideas about this rock! We could paint it, put it in a garden, throw it in a lake to make a big splash, and do many more things with it. Hmm ... no one said that the rock could talk. Can it talk? **[Allow responses.]** Let's listen to our story and see what Jesus said about rocks. ”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, and John 12. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

SAY “ Jesus and His friends were walking to a big city called Jerusalem. Jesus asked two of His friends to go ahead to a village and find a special donkey. He said, “When you see the donkey, bring it to Me. If someone asks why, just say, ‘Jesus needs it.’”

The friends found the donkey, just like Jesus said. When the owners asked, they said, “Jesus needs it.” This happened because a long time ago, it was written that a special King would ride on a donkey.

They brought the donkey to Jesus. His friends put their clothes on its back to make it soft. Then, lots of people came and put their coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus. They said, “Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!”

But some people didn't like the cheering. They told Jesus to make everyone be quiet. Jesus said, “If they're quiet, even the rocks will talk!”

As Jesus got closer to the city, He felt sad. Jesus cried. He knew the people didn't understand who He really was. The religious leaders saw everyone loving Jesus, and they were worried they couldn't stop it.

Christ Connection: Jesus is our special King and Savior. Trusting in Jesus means loving Him. If we love Him, He will forgive us and give us life with Him forever.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Gather the palm leaves and large rock used in previous activities. Give each child one palm leaf. Retell the story briefly from an open Bible. Ask the children to wave their palm leaves each time Jesus is named.

SAY “ Listen to the story again and wave your palm leaves when I say, ‘Jesus.’ Jesus and His friends walked to Jerusalem. Jesus asked two friends to go ahead and get a donkey. The friends told the donkey’s owners, ‘Jesus needs the donkey.’ The friends brought the donkey to Jesus. They put clothes on the donkey’s back to make it soft for Jesus to sit on. Many people came and put coats and more palm branches on the road for Jesus. The people watched Jesus ride by. The **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. They cheered and sang, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!’ Some people told Jesus to make the people be quiet. Jesus said that if the people were quiet, even the rocks would talk. Jesus was sad when He got to the city because He knew the people didn’t understand who He really was. Jesus is our King and Savior. Good job waving your palm leaves each time I said Jesus. **[Hold up the rock.]** Did Jesus really mean that the rocks could talk? No, Jesus created the rocks and everything else we see, like the sun, water, and animals. The things Jesus made show us that He loves us! Jesus meant that the people should keep praising Him. ”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “London Bridge”:

Pray, and turn from your sin,
From your sin, from your sin.
Pray, and turn from your sin,
Jesus forgives you.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 2 Chronicles 7:14. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Lead children in learning the key passage phrase together while pretending to ride on a donkey.

SAY “ Jesus wanted the people to trust Him, love Him, and obey Him. Let’s pretend to ride a donkey like Jesus did as we say the key passage phrase together. ”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God that Jesus is our King and Savior.





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 NAME ANIMALS PEOPLE RIDE



Encourage the children to list animals that people can ride. Help them think of animals that may be unfamiliar to them such as camels, elephants, ostriches, donkeys, and even large tortoises. Review the responses one at a time and pretend you are riding that animal.

SAY “ You named several different animals! As I read the list, let’s pretend we are riding each one of these animals. Did you know that Jesus rode on a donkey? In the Old Testament, a prophet wrote that a special King would ride on a donkey. Jesus was the special King! ”

2 BUILD A CITY

Print one copy of the “City” printable. Cut it in half and place both pictures with blocks of your choice. Add people figures to the area as well. Add additional accessories such as street signs, trees, cars, and animals. Encourage the children to build a city with the blocks. As the children play, talk about the differences in the cities.

SAY “ Our Bible story today takes place in the city of Jerusalem. This is how Jerusalem may have looked many years ago when Jesus was on earth. Jerusalem is still a city, and many people still live there. Sometimes when we think of cities, we think of tall buildings and busy roads like this picture of New York City. Millions of people live there. Have you ever been to a big city? **[Allow responses.]** Jerusalem was the biggest city nearby. Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. Many people heard that He was coming, and they were very excited. They gathered in the streets to see Him. **PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING.** They welcomed Him by saying ‘Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ”

3 WAVE STREAMERS

Before the session, choose several familiar worship songs to sing together. Give the children streamers cut from green crepe paper to wave as they sing.

SAY “ The people in the Bible story were so excited to see Jesus coming into the city. They put coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus to ride across on His donkey. They sang and shouted, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!’ They were praising Jesus! We can sing praises to Jesus, too. Let’s sing these songs together. You can wave your streamer as we sing. We love Jesus, and singing these happy songs shows Him our love. ”

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 LOOK AT PICTURES OF JESUS

Gather Bibles and books with pictures of Jesus. Place sticky notes to mark pictures of Jesus. Get a bell for a stop signal. Guide the children to pass the books around the circle. When you ring the bell, children holding a book will choose a picture to share. Talk about what Jesus is doing in the picture, and say the key passage phrase together. Then, pass the books again.

SAY “ Let’s pass the books until I ring the bell. Ready, go. **[Ring the bell and talk about the pictures.]** Great! Jesus helped people in many ways. He helps us by forgiving us for our sins. Our key passage phrase says: *If my people pray and turn from sin, I will forgive them. We can pray and ask Him to forgive us, too!* ”

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 is our special King and Savior. Trusting in Jesus means loving Him. If we love Him, He will forgive us and give us life 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. 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 GREET OUR NEIGHBORS

Greet the children. Comment that you are glad they came to church today. Ask the children to stand and shake hands with three other children. Suggest that they say, 'I am glad you came to church today' to each child as they shake hands.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story.

JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

- Jesus and His friends were walking to Jerusalem. Jesus asked two of His friends to go ahead and find a donkey.
- The friends found the donkey. When the owners asked, they said, "Jesus needs it." This happened because a long time ago, it was written that a special King would ride on a donkey.
- They brought the donkey to Jesus and put their clothes on its back. Then, lots of people came and put their coats and palm branches on the road for Jesus. They said, "Hosanna!"
- Some people didn't like the cheering. They told Jesus to make everyone be quiet. Jesus said, "If they're quiet, even the rocks will cry out!"

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "London Bridge":

Pray, and turn from your sin,
From your sin, from your sin.
Pray, and turn from your sin,
Jesus forgives you.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 2 Chronicles 7:14. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Help children learn the key passage phrase. Comment that if we love Jesus, we can pray and ask Him to forgive us. Share that we can show our love for Jesus when we stop doing the things He tells us not to do. Remind the children that if we trust Jesus and turn from sin, He will forgive us, and we can live with Him forever. Say the key passage phrase together while holding out hands in a stop motion.

5 PRAY

Pray, asking God to help you obey His rules and love Jesus.



BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 TAP, CLAP, AND SHOUT



Guide children to sit in a circle on the floor. Lead children to begin patting their legs very softly. Instruct children to pat louder when you raise your hands and softer when you lower your hands. Raise and lower your hands several times. Lead children to try the activity by saying “Hosanna” as they clap. If time allows, lead children to try the activity with clapping and stomping or invite each child to have a turn leading the group.

SAY “ In today’s Bible story, **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. They were very happy and shouted ‘Hosanna’ loudly, just like we did in our game, but the religious leaders were angry and wanted the people to be quiet. ”

7 CREATE A CITY

Before the session, cut many squares and rectangles from brown, gray, and tan paper. Give each child a piece of heavyweight paper and encourage them to make a city by gluing the rectangles onto their papers. If time allows, encourage them to use crayons and markers to draw doors and small windows on their buildings. Comment that houses and buildings in Jerusalem were often made of rock or of bricks made of mud and straw.

SAY “ Jesus rode a donkey into the city of Jerusalem. Many people gathered to welcome Him to the city. **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**. Jesus was sad as He got close to the city because He knew the people did not understand that He was going to die for their sins. Jesus died on the cross so that we could be forgiven for our sins. The key passage phrase says: If my people pray and turn from sin, I will forgive them. Jesus will forgive us when we ask. ”

8 MAKE LEAF RUBBINGS

Tape several real or artificial leaves on the table. Guide the children to lay a thin piece of paper on top of the leaves and rub over them with the side of an unwrapped crayon.

SAY “ When **THE PEOPLE WELCOMED JESUS AS THEIR KING**, they put leaves and even coats on the road for His donkey to walk across. They didn’t want Jesus or his donkey’s hooves to touch the ground. The palms and coats were a way of showing respect and love for Jesus. The people loved Jesus and thought He would be their king. The people said, ‘Hosanna!’ Some people didn’t like the cheering and singing. They told Jesus to make the people be quiet. Jesus said that if the people were quiet, even the rocks would talk. ”

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

EASTER BONUS SESSION

JESUS SAVES US FROM OUR ENEMIES

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



CHRIST CONNECTION: 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.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: If my people pray and turn from sin, I will forgive them. 2 Chronicles 7:14

STORY POINT: Jesus died on the cross and is alive.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Amid the grief of Christ's death by crucifixion, we find the gospel's good news for sinners: "Don't be afraid, because I know you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. For he has risen, just as he said" (Matthew 28:5-6). The basis of Christian hope is found within these words as an angel of the Lord reminds us of Jesus' victory over sin and death. Jesus alone has saved us from our enemies: sin and death.

What was the significance of Christ's cries from the cross to the Father? How should the reality of the resurrection impact our lives as followers of Jesus?

All four Gospels recount the brutality of the crucifixion and how our sinless Savior was mercilessly mocked and killed by sinful men. In previous chapters, we read that Jesus' sweat was like drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane, as He knew the treacherous darkness He would face. Yet, Christ's obedience to His Father's will was motivated by the joy He would experience on the other side of the cross. Jesus cried out to the Father, "Why have you abandoned me?" He knew, however, that His sacrificial death was the only way for people to be saved. Jesus bore our sin and shame to set us free from sin and death, allowing those who trust in Him to be born again through the Spirit and welcomed into God's kingdom forever. Every believer has resurrection hope both now and for all eternity. Not only will we spend eternity in the presence of our Savior, but the life we now live, we live by faith in Jesus (Galatians 2:20).


Consider the simplicity of the gospel's good news: Jesus died for sinners so we could be set free from the tyranny of sin and death with the hope of eternal life. Those who were enemies of God can draw near to Him by faith in the Son who has paid our debts and given us new life. Lead boys and girls to see the power of the resurrection within our everyday lives as believers—no longer slaves to sin but children of God with good news to share!



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


30-40 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel



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-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Cut flowers

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ green construction paper
- ☐ brightly colored cupcake wrappers, 3 or 4 per child



LIVE

Snack and Transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Match the Opposites" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



LEARN

Pass heavy and light

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ large rock

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "Jesus Saves Us from Our Enemies" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- ☐ paper plates, 2

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker
- ☐ worship music

Make a doughnut tomb snack

- ☐ plastic spoons, 1 per child
- ☐ paper plates, 1 per child
- ☐ round donuts, ½ per child
- ☐ donut holes, 1 per child
- ☐ icing

Color over a cross

- ☐ heavyweight paper, 1 per child
- ☐ painter's tape



LOVE

Shine a light

- ☐ cardboard tubes
- ☐ plastic wrap
- ☐ permanent markers, several colors
- ☐ painter's tape or rubber bands

Follow the story path

- ☐ "Bible Story" printable, 1 copy
- ☐ painter's tape



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.

CUT FLOWERS

Before the session, cut green construction paper leaves (about 3 inches long) and stems (thin strips about 6 inches long). Gather several bright-colored cupcake wrappers and a sheet of copy paper for each child. Guide the children to fringe the edge of the cupcake papers with blunt-tipped scissors. Most younger preschoolers have not used scissors often. Show them how to hold the scissors and demonstrate a short cut toward the center. You may need to hold the cupcake paper for some children and turn it slightly after each cut. Comment that the cupcake wrappers remind you of flowers. Guide the children to glue the flowers, leaves, and stems on their papers. Place the Big Picture Question Poster nearby. Read the big picture question and answer as the children work.

SAY “Hi! I am so glad you came today. We see flowers at Easter time. At Easter, we remember that Jesus died on the cross and is alive. Some people wanted to hurt Jesus. They put Him on the cross. **JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND IS ALIVE.** We often celebrate Easter with beautiful flowers. You can give your flower picture to a friend and say that Jesus is alive. Our big picture question and answer says, **What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.** God will forgive us when we pray and turn from our sin.”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 PASS HEAVY AND LIGHT

Before the session, gather a large rock and several lighter items from the standing supply list, such as a Bible, baby doll, and beanbag. Display the Bible Story Picture Poster to reference as you discuss this week's session.

SAY “ Let’s pass these items around to see which is heavier. Now, let’s pass the rock. It is heavy, isn’t it? Let’s compare the rock to these other items. Which one is the heaviest? Yes, the rock! In our Bible story, there is a rock as big as this table. Do you think you could move a rock that big? Listen to hear about the big rock in the Bible story. ”

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 “ Some people loved Jesus, but others did not like Him. Jesus never did anything wrong, but the people wanted to hurt Him. One day, they took Jesus away to put Him on a big wooden cross.

Soldiers made fun of Jesus and put a crown of thorns on His head. But Jesus still loved them and asked God to forgive them.

It got dark, and Jesus felt sad. He said, “I trust You, God,” and then He died.

A man named Joseph put Jesus’ body in a special cave called a tomb. A big rock was rolled in front, and soldiers watched the tomb to make sure no one took Jesus away.

On the third day, some women went to see Jesus. The big rock had been moved! An angel said, “Don’t be afraid! Jesus is alive!” The women were so happy. They ran to tell everyone the good news.

Christ Connection: 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.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Draw a smiling face on one paper plate and a sad face on another one. Tape the plates on opposite sides of the room. Gather the children in the middle.

SAY “ Listen as I retell the Bible story. If something happy happens in the story, walk quietly toward the happy face. If something sad happens, walk quietly toward the sad face. Ready? Listen carefully to the story. Jesus always did the right thing. **[Children move.]** The people who did not like Jesus took Him away to put Him on a cross, and soldiers hurt Jesus. **[Children move.]** Jesus asked God to forgive them and said, ‘I trust You, God.’ **[Children move.]** Jesus died, His body was put into a tomb, and soldiers rolled a rock in front of it. **[Children move.]** Women went to see Jesus. The rock was moved, and an angel said that Jesus is alive. The women ran to tell everyone the good news. **[Children move.]** You listened well and moved to the sad and happy faces! Please come and sit down now. What happened to the rock? **[Allow responses.]** Yes, the soldiers put it in front of the tomb. When the women came, the heavy rock was moved! **JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND IS ALIVE.** Jesus came back to life so we could be forgiven and live with Him forever. ”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “London Bridge”:

Pray, and turn from your sin,
From your sin, from your sin.
Pray, and turn from your sin,
Jesus forgives you.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 2 Chronicles 7:14. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage phrase together.

SAY “ The key passage phrase tells us to pray and turn from sin. Turning from sin is called repentance. When we are tempted to do something wrong, turning and moving away from that thing can be helpful. Pretend that your mom just bought your favorite cookies, but she said, ‘No cookies until after supper.’ Should you stand and stare at the cookies? No! Looking at the cookies makes you want them more and more. You might be tempted to sneak one cookie. That would be disobeying your mom! If you turn away from the cookies to play a game or read a book, doing the right thing will be easier! Let’s say the key passage phrase while turning around to remind us to move away from sin. ”

6 PRAY

Pray, asking God to help you turn away from sin and obey Him.

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





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 MAKE A “JESUS IS ALIVE” POSTER



Prior to the sessions, write JESUS IS ALIVE in large letters on paper, one for each child. Provide crayons or washable markers for the children to use to decorate their posters. Encourage the children to put the papers on their refrigerators or in their bedrooms to help them remember **JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND IS ALIVE.**

SAY “We can decorate our posters with bright, happy colors. The women who went to the tomb to see Jesus were sad that Jesus died. Then, they saw that the big rock had been moved and Jesus was not there. The angel said, ‘Don’t be afraid! Jesus is alive!’ The women were happy and ran to tell everyone that Jesus is alive!”

2 SHINE A LIGHT

Before the session, cover one end of a cardboard tube with plastic wrap. Secure with painter’s tape or rubber bands. Gently draw a cross shape on the plastic wrap with a permanent marker. Prepare several tubes using different-colored permanent markers. Invite children to shine flashlights through the tube to make a cross appear on the wall. Guide preschoolers to notice how the cross gets smaller as you get closer to the wall and, as you move away, it gets bigger.

SAY “How do you think Jesus’ friends felt when He died on the cross? (sad, angry, afraid) How did Jesus’ friends feel when the angel told them that Jesus is alive? (surprised, happy) The cross makes me feel sad when I think about Jesus dying, but it also makes me feel happy because Jesus died to rescue people from sin, and God made Him alive again. **JESUS DIED ON A CROSS AND IS ALIVE.**”

3 FOLLOW THE STORY PATH

Make a painter’s tape path around the room. Tape the six pictures from the “Bible Story” printable along the path in this order: Jesus’ ministry, cross, crown of thorns, Jesus’ death, closed tomb, and the happy women. Encourage children to walk in pairs and retell each other the story as they come to each picture.

SAY “Let’s walk together along this path. Look at this picture. What is Jesus doing? The people loved Jesus. Look at the next picture. Why is there a cross? Some people didn’t like Jesus and they took Him away to put Him on a wooden cross. [Continue to encourage children to retell the story or ask questions to prompt them.] Our story tells us that **JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND IS ALIVE.**”

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 CHOOSE MOTIONS

Say the key passage phrase together. Choose motions for the words people, pray, turn, sin, and forgive. Talk about what each important word means. Practice saying the key passage phrase together while doing the motions.

SAY “ Our key passage phrase is important! Jesus died on the cross and came back to life so that He could forgive us for sins. Jesus loved us so much that He was willing to die for us. If we believe in Him, we can ask Him to forgive us for disobeying Him. He will forgive us. Jesus wants us to repent from our sin and live with Him forever in heaven. **What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.** Let’s say the key passage phrase while doing the motions we made up together. ”

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. 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 SPREAD GOOD NEWS

Gather the children for group time and tell them you are glad they are in church today. Comment that in our Bible story today, the women who loved Jesus told Jesus' helpers some good news. Invite the preschoolers to spread out around the room. Choose one girl and tell her the phrase, "Jesus is alive." Instruct her to pass the message by choosing one person to share the message with. Continue until everyone has heard the good news.

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 FROM OUR ENEMIES

- Jesus never did anything wrong, but people wanted to hurt Him. They put Jesus on a big wooden cross.
- Soldiers made fun of Jesus and put a crown of thorns on His head. It got dark, and Jesus felt sad. He said, "I trust You, God," and then He died.
- Jesus' body was put in a special cave called a tomb. A big rock was rolled in front.
- On the third day, some women went to see Jesus. The big rock had been moved! An angel said, "Don't be afraid! Jesus is alive!" The women ran to tell everyone the good news.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "London Bridge":

Pray, and turn from your sin,
From your sin, from your sin.
Pray, and turn from your sin,
Jesus forgives you.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at 2 Chronicles 7:14. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Repeat the key passage phrase. Comment that the key passage phrase reminds us to pray and ask God to forgive us when we do things that are wrong. Say that the things we do wrong are called sin. Play a song about Jesus and stop the music several times. Guide the children to stand up each time the music stops and say the key passage phrase together.

5 PRAY

Pray, praising God for His goodness and for making the way for us to be with Him forever.



BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 PLAY A BEANBAG GAME



Gather a beanbag before the session. Guide the preschoolers to sit in a circle. Toss the beanbag to a child and encourage him to name one thing he remembers from the story or one thing he knows about Jesus. Then, ask him to toss the beanbag to another child.

SAY “ Let’s play a game to remember the Bible story. I am holding the 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 MAKE A DOUGHNUT TOMB SNACK



Provide a small paper plate, a plastic spoon, half of a circle doughnut, a doughnut hole, and a small bit of icing for each child. Guide the children to use the spoon to put a small amount of icing on each cut edge of the doughnut and to stand it in the center of the plate. Lay the doughnut hole on the plate. Retell the story briefly using the doughnut hole for the rock in front of the tomb.

SAY “ When Jesus died on the cross, a kind man put Jesus’ body in a special cave called a tomb. Then, a big rock was rolled in front of the cave. Roll the round doughnut in front of the hole. Soldiers stood there and watched the tomb to be sure that no one took Jesus’ body away. Even though the soldiers were watching, the rock was rolled away on the third day, and Jesus was not in the tomb. Roll your round doughnut away. What happened next? The angel said that Jesus is alive, and the women were so happy they ran to tell everyone. ”

8 COLOR OVER A CROSS

Use painter’s tape to make a cross shape on heavyweight paper for each child. Invite children to use markers or crayons to color over the cross. Encourage them to color the entire paper, especially around the tape. Help children to remove the tape and reveal their cross pictures.

SAY “ I like how each cross is different, just like each of you is different. When you see your cross, it can remind you **JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND IS ALIVE**. Jesus died on the cross and rose again so that everyone who trusts in Him has forgiveness and life with God forever. That is the best news ever! ”

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

THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR PRESCHOOLERS

While preschoolers might not be ready to respond to the gospel, use this guide to help young minds begin to grasp big truths about Jesus and the kingdom of God.



Ask: "Who is in charge at home? Who is in charge over the whole world?" Explain that God made everything! He is King over everything, and He is in charge.



Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell preschoolers that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin makes God sad.



Explain that God must punish sin. He loves us, and He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus came to take away the punishment for sin.



Ask: "Do you like presents?" Explain that Jesus gives us the best present. He never did anything wrong, but He was punished in our place. Jesus wants to take away our sin because He loves us.

Pray that God will save your preschoolers. As you faithfully teach the Bible, you are planting gospel seeds in children's hearts. Ask God to grow the preschoolers into children who love and trust in Jesus.