

Jesus Was Arrested (Matthew 26)

PreK / Kindergarten Lesson (1st Service)

3/17/24

BIBLE VERSE:

"Jesus lived a perfect life." Hebrews 4:15

Question:

How is Jesus the perfect priest?

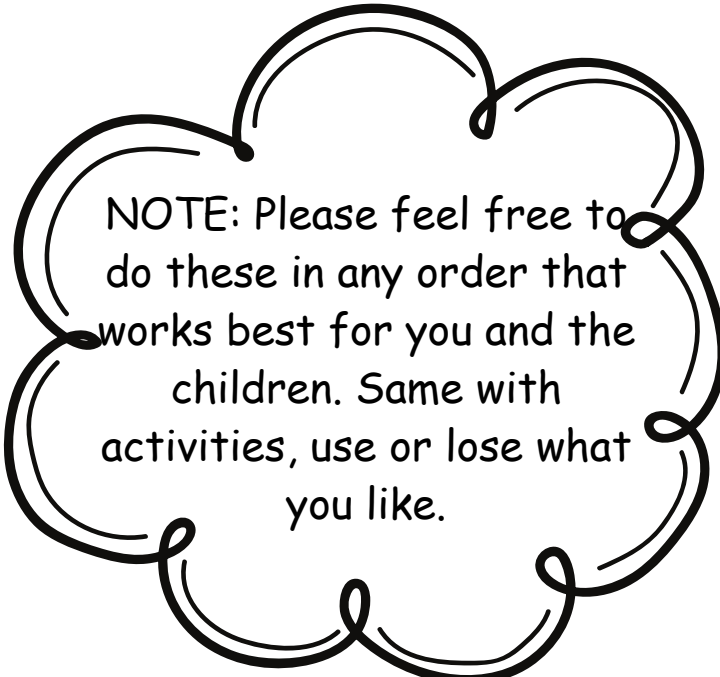
Answer:

Jesus gave His life for us.

Christ Connection

Jesus knew God's plan was for Him to die to rescue people from sin. Jesus' friends left Him and He was arrested, but Jesus did not fight back. He wanted to do His Father's plan no matter what.

- ☐ **Welcome**
- ☐ **Craft and Activity Page**
- ☐ **Circle Time**
- ☐ **Prayer**
- ☐ **Movement**
- ☐ **Music**
- ☐ **Bible Verse**
- ☐ **Activities / Snack**



NOTE: Please feel free to do these in any order that works best for you and the children. Same with activities, use or lose what you like.

Leader Bible Study

Christ's arrest and betrayal remain some of the darkest accounts we read in the Scriptures. The sinless Savior experienced rejection at the hands of His closest friends, knowing the darkness of death He would soon encounter in the hours that followed. The recurring theme that resurfaced throughout each unfolding event was that Christ foreknew all that would come next, yet He took to the cross for our salvation anyway.

The all-knowing Jesus recounted to His disciples the deceitfulness of not only the chief priests and elders, but also of His own follower, Judas, and of the other disciples who would likewise flee in fear of persecution. Each time the Lord shared the truths of the darkness to come, His followers failed to acknowledge the reality of their own faithlessness.

Christ foresaw the betrayals of them all yet forgave them of their sins and continued to walk toward the cross. With each new turn, the Savior remained faithfully in step with the Father's love. Amid the striking and scattering of His disciples—just as Zechariah 13:7 prophesied—Christ remained resolute, His trust in the Father unflinching.

We see His dedication to God through His time spent praying in the garden, as well as in His invitation to the disciples to join Him in prayer. While Jesus earnestly poured out His prayers to the Father, the disciples chose sleep over prayer. And yet, Christ remained steadfast in following His Father's plan; His eyes toward the suffering He would endure on the cross for sinners.

Explain to preschoolers that Jesus knows our greatest sin, struggles, and inconsistencies but still loves and pursues us despite it all, just as He did with His disciples. Our faith in Him as the Savior was never based on our ability to follow Him perfectly, but rather on Christ's abilities to obey the Father perfectly. In Him we place our faith as the One who knew our darkness and chose us anyway. Though we do not know what awaits us, we know who remains steadfast amidst the darkness and the unknown: Jesus alone.

Welcome

Welcome the children and check off the attendance board. You can ask the children to write their name on the chart paper to answer a simple question.

Craft

Praying Monkey Craft: Pass out two different monkey faces and have them color both. They will glue them back to back on the jumbo craft stick. Have each child wrap the jumbo stick with the brown pipe cleaner and add the hands at the end. (SEE ADDITIONAL HANDOUT WITH MORE TO SHARE ABOUT CRAFT AND LESSON.)

****Activity page is in the bin (Children may choose to color and complete at any time. Please send these home with them to allow their families to discuss the Bible story from the lesson. Thanks.)



Circle Time

Intro Activity: (You can choose to do this anytime.)

Garden Search and Find

Allow the children to have time to look through the bins that include different items from nature (some are artificial due to the time of year). There will be small crosses hidden in the bin. Ask the children to look through and see what they've found in their Garden.

Who can tell me what a garden is? What kinds of things do we find in gardens? You looked through a bin full of things we may find in a garden: leaves, grass, and flowers. But as you played with the items in the bin, what else did you find? Yes, crosses! Today in our Bible story, we will hear what happened to Jesus before He went to the cross.

Bible Story: Jesus Was Arrested

Introduce the Bible story: (show a pillow)

Who can tell me what this is? It's a pillow! A pillow is where we rest our heads when we sleep. Sleep is a wonderful gift from God. But there are times when we should sleep and there are times when we should stay awake. Can you think of a time when you should stay awake? [Allow responses.] In today's story we will hear about Jesus and His disciples and a time when Jesus asked His disciples to stay awake with Him. Let's see what was so important that Jesus asked His disciples not to fall asleep.

Learn about the Bible:

SAY I love the Bible because the Bible is God's Word. Every story in the Bible is true. Today's story is found in the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Tell the Bible Story: **Jesus Was Arrested**

At the Last Supper, Jesus told His followers that one of them—Judas—would turn against Him.

Then Jesus said the disciples would leave Him.

Peter spoke up, "I will never leave You!"

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth: Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you don't know Me."

Jesus and His disciples went to a garden to pray. Jesus told eight of His disciples to stay at the garden gate. Three of the disciples went into the garden with Jesus. He told them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

Jesus was very sad. He fell facedown and prayed. "Father! If it is possible, do not let this happen. But I want to do Your plan."

Jesus went back to His disciples, but they were sleeping. "Couldn't you stay awake with Me for one hour?" He asked Peter. Jesus left again to pray. He came back and His disciples were sleeping again. "Get up," Jesus said. "It is almost time." Jesus knew it was time for Him to do God's plan to rescue people from sin.

All of a sudden, another disciple—Judas—came into the garden. A large crowd was with him, and the people carried swords and clubs. Judas kissed Jesus so the crowd would know which man was Jesus. The people in the crowd grabbed Jesus to arrest Him. Peter pulled out his sword to fight the crowd, but Jesus told him to stop. Then Jesus said, "This is happening just like God said." Jesus' disciples all left, but Peter followed from a distance.

As Peter watched, a servant came up to him. "Aren't you one of Jesus' friends?" he asked. But Peter said, "No! I'm not!" Two more times, people asked Peter if he was Jesus' friend. Peter lied. "No!" he said. "I don't even know Him!"

Review the Bible

Where did Jesus and His disciples go to pray? (a garden) Jesus told three disciples to wait for Him while He went a short distance to pray. He asked God if there was any other way for this to happen, but He would still follow God's plan. Jesus went back to His disciples, but what were they doing? (sleeping) He told them to wake up and pray. Jesus went back to pray alone. He returned to His disciples again, but what were they doing? (sleeping) This time He told them to get up because it was time. Judas entered the garden with a crowd of people. The people took Jesus and His disciples ran away. As Peter waited for Jesus, others asked if he knew Jesus. Three times Peter lied and said he did not know Jesus.

Prayer

Father, thank You for sending Your Son to give His life to rescue us from sin. Thank You, Jesus, for Your obedience in doing God's plan. Amen.

Movement Activity

- *Sleeping Disciples Relay (GROUP GAME)*
 - *Divide the class into two teams*
 - *They will face the cones (that have a ball on each one)*
 - *The first one will go down and grab the ball and bring it back to the next person. Then the second person will take the ball down and place it on the cone. The third person will go down and grab the ball and bring it to the fourth person...continue this until all the children are done the relay.*
 - *NOTE: while they are walking to the cone and back they can act like they're sleeping/sleepy*

Music (on USB) Gospel Project and other items (vary)

Practice Bible Verse (Choose a game of your choice.)

"Jesus lived a perfect life." Hebrews 4:15

SEE BIBLE VERSE MEMORY GAMES List and games in envelope on the whiteboard. Also a heart to place stickers on for children as they memorize the Bible verse for the month. They can write their name on the sticker if they'd like.

Other Crafts and Games Can be used at anytime of your choice)

- Leaf Rubbings (Craft)
 - *Allow the children to use leaves and other garden items, make crayon rubbings by placing the leaf or stick under the paper and use the crayon to rub across it to see the texture*
- Wake Up (MOVEMENT GROUP GAME)
 - *Instruct the preschoolers to lie on the floor and pretend like they are sleeping. When you say "Wake up," the preschoolers should rise to their feet and perform whatever movement you say. After they complete the movement, say, "Go back to sleep," prompting preschoolers to lay back down on the floor. (Suggested movements: "Wake up and clap your hands"; "Wake up and hop three times"; "Wake up and moo like a cow"; "Wake up and pat your head")*
 - *SAY You laid on the floor and pretended to sleep. In our Bible story today, the disciples were sleeping too. But what did Jesus tell them they should be doing? (praying) Prayer is so important in our relationship with God. Even God's Son, Jesus, prayed to God all the time. Jesus knew God's plan was for Him to die to rescue people from sin. Jesus prayed to God before, and even while, He was on the cross.*

Snack

Have children sanitize their hands and enjoy their snack anytime that suits your schedule. During this time, you can connect with children and discuss questions regarding the lesson.

Some Questions to connect with the children:

- What was your favorite part of today's Bible story?*
- What did you learn about God in today's Bible story?*
- Which disciple betrayed Jesus?*
- How is Jesus the perfect Priest? Jesus gave His life as the perfect sacrifice for sin.*

Here are some preschool-friendly discussion questions about Jesus taking his disciples to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane:

- 1. Who were Jesus' friends who went with him to pray in the garden?**
 - Encourage children to name some of the disciples.*
- 2. Why do you think Jesus wanted to pray in the garden?**
 - Help children understand that Jesus went to pray because he needed to talk to God and ask for help.*
- 3. What did Jesus tell his friends to do while he prayed?**
 - Emphasize that Jesus asked his friends to stay awake and keep watch while he prayed.*
- 4. What happened while Jesus was praying?**
 - Simplify the story by explaining that Jesus felt very sad and talked to God about it.*
- 5. How did Jesus feel in the garden?**
 - Help children understand that Jesus felt very troubled and sad because he knew something difficult was going to happen.*
- 6. What did Jesus' friends do while he prayed?**
 - Explain that Jesus' friends fell asleep, even though Jesus asked them to stay awake.*
- 7. What did Jesus do when he finished praying?**
 - Explain that after Jesus finished praying, he went to find his friends, who were asleep.*
- 8. What do you think Jesus' friends felt when they woke up and saw Jesus?**
 - Guide children to understand that Jesus' friends might have felt surprised or embarrassed.*
- 9. Why do you think this story is important?**
 - Encourage children to think about how the story teaches us about praying to God and being a good friend.*
- 10. What can we learn from this story about being a good friend?**
 - Discuss how being a good friend means listening and helping each other, just like Jesus wanted his friends to do in the garden.*

Praying Monkey Craft

The Bible tells us that we should follow Jesus' example. We should do what he did. Of course, we can't see what he did because it already happened. But there are people who did see what he did and they wrote it all down for us. (Open your Bible to Ephesians 5:1 and read the verse.) "Follow God's example in everything you do, because you are his dear children," Ephesians 5:1, NIV (Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; KJV). So when it comes to following Jesus' example, we could say this verse means, "Monkey see, _____".

I'm going to read a verse in the book of Matthew to find out what Jesus did that we should copy. Listen carefully as I read and see if you can fill in the blank in this rhyme. Monkey see, Monkey do, Jesus _____ and so should you.

(Open your Bible and read Matthew 26:38-39. If you have older children help them find the verse in their Bibles.)

"Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Matthew 26:38-39

So we can say, "Monkey see, Monkey do, Jesus prayed and so should you."

What was Jesus praying about in this verse? Jesus was very sad because he knew that he would soon have to suffer and be hung on a cross. He was so sad that he fell down on the ground with his face down. He asked God, "If there is any way for me to not die and still save these people, please do that, but I don't want you to do what I want, but what you want."

Jesus wanted to obey even though he knew it would be very hard and painful. So he prayed to God to help him through it. Jesus is a good example for us to follow when we have to do something you are afraid of doing such as: going to a new school for the first time, having an operation, watching someone suffer that you care about, or seeing your mom and dad fighting, going to the dentist or doctor, or getting a shot, etc.

There are some people in our story that weren't very good examples. Before Jesus went off by himself to pray, he asked his disciples to sit and keep watch with him. But when he came back from praying, they were asleep. He woke them up and asked them again to watch and pray so that they wouldn't fall into temptation. That means he warned them to pray so that they would be strong and do the right thing if something bad happened. But they couldn't stay awake. He went off to pray again by himself. When he came back the third time he woke them up and told them that it was time to go.

They got up and met Judas, who was one of Jesus' disciples. Judas told the priests where Jesus would be so that they could come and arrest him. They arrested Jesus that very night. His disciples were scared and ran away.

Do you think his disciples would have been so scared if they had stayed up with Jesus and prayed like he asked them to do? (Let your children respond.)

(If you have older children put them in groups and have them look up the following verses to discover when Jesus prayed. Have each group share with the class what they have learned.)

Jesus gave us many other examples of how he prayed:

1. He prayed to God when he was baptized by John the Baptist. (Luke 3:21-22)
2. He went up to a mountain and prayed all night before he choose his twelve disciples. (Luke 6:11-13)
3. He got up early before sunrise and prayed. (Mark 1:35-37)
4. After he ministered to hundreds of people he went up into the mountains to be by himself and pray. (Matt. 14:23)
5. He prayed for children. (Matthew 19:13)
6. He prayed for Peter's faith. (Luke 22:31-31)
7. Jesus prays for us. (John 14:16)

We should pray because Jesus prayed.