

Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26:36–28:10; John 18:1–20:18

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

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 6:9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.

2

**TEACH
THE STORY**
(15–20 MINUTES)
PAGE 72



**EXPERIENCE
THE STORY**
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 74



**REVIEW
THE STORY**
(10+ MINUTES)
PAGE 76



Leader BIBLE STUDY

God's law for the people was plain. Read Deuteronomy 6:5. But God's people, and all people, have broken the law. We have loved other things more than we love God. That is sin.

Jesus' purpose for coming to earth was to save us from our sin. (Matt. 1:21) Why did Jesus have to die? Why couldn't He just say, "You are forgiven"? God is just and requires due payment for sin. To simply forgive sin without requiring a payment would be unjust. According to God's Word, the

payment of sin is death. (Rom. 6:23) But not only is God just, He is also loving. That is why Jesus was willing to die in our place.

Jesus came to live and die to show God's love to us (Rom. 5:7-8) so that whoever believes in Him might not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16) Jesus came to die so that we would be forgiven. (Eph. 1:7) Jesus came to die to bring us to God. (1 Pet. 3:18)

Jesus died on the cross to satisfy the wrath of God toward sin. Jesus' resurrection proved that God was satisfied with Jesus' sacrifice, and forgiveness and life are found in Him. (See 1 Cor. 15:17.) If Jesus had died but not been raised up, He would have been like military leaders who died without a throne. (Acts 5:33-37) But Jesus conquered death, just as He said He would. (John 2:19-21)

Jesus' resurrection gives us hope for our resurrection. (Rom. 6:5) Romans 8:11 says that the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead will raise our bodies to life.

Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection are not the end of the story, but the center of it. Everything that was written about Jesus in the Old Testament and spoken by the prophets was coming true. As you teach preschoolers this Bible story, emphasize the gospel: the good news of who Jesus is and what He has done.



Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit <http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/the-gospel-project>.

2

The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Draw it:** While you tell the Bible story, invite a second leader to draw the following pictures at the appropriate moment in the Bible story:
 - hands praying for Jesus in the garden
 - lips when Judas kisses Jesus
 - crown of thorns when leaving Pilate
 - cross when Jesus is crucified
 - tomb with stone when Jesus is buried
 - tomb with stone rolled away when the women find the tomb empty
- **Shape it:** Allow preschoolers to work with play dough as you tell the story. Encourage children to flatten play dough and make a cross shape with the cookie cutters. Next, guide preschoolers to make flat, round pieces of dough to resemble the tomb and stone.

Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection

Matthew 26:36–28:10; John 18:1–20:18

Jesus and His friends went to a garden. Jesus was very sad. He prayed to God: “My Father! If it is possible, let Me save Your people another way. But if this is Your plan, I will do it!” While Jesus prayed, His friends fell asleep. “Get up,” Jesus said. “It is time.”

Then Judas, one of Jesus’ disciples, came with a large crowd. Judas kissed Jesus to show the crowd which person was Jesus. The men in the crowd arrested Jesus. Peter tried to stop the men, but Jesus told Peter not to fight them. Jesus knew this was all a part of God’s plan.

Jesus’ followers ran away, but Peter stayed nearby and watched. Three times, people saw Peter and said, “Aren’t you friends with Jesus?” Peter said, “No!” each time.

Jesus was taken to the high priest. “Are You really the Messiah, the Son of God?” the high priest asked.

“Yes,” Jesus said.

“He has spoken against God! He deserves to die!” the men said. They did not believe Jesus was God’s Son.

When morning came, the men took Jesus to see Pilate (PIGH luht), the governor. “Are You the King of the Jews?” Pilate asked.

“Yes,” Jesus said.

“What should I do with Jesus?” Pilate asked the people.

“Kill Him on a cross!” the people replied. “Crucify Him!”

Pilate’s **soldiers** made a crown of thorns and put it on Jesus’ head. They put a purple robe around Him and pretended to bow down to Him. Then they **led Jesus away**.
Jesus was nailed to a cross. They put a sign above

Jesus' head that said: THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Two criminals were crucified next to Jesus.

Darkness covered the land. In the afternoon, Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" **Jesus died and was buried in a tomb. A large stone was rolled in front of the tomb, and Pilate's soldiers guarded the tomb so that no one would steal Jesus' body.**

On the third day, two of Jesus' friends, both named Mary, went to the tomb. They were very sad. Suddenly there was a big earthquake as an angel came down from heaven. The angel rolled away the stone and sat on it. The guards fainted.

The angel spoke to the women, "Do not be afraid! Jesus is not here! He has been raised from the dead, just as He said He would."

The women were so happy! Jesus was alive! Just then, Jesus met them. He said, "Good morning!" The women worshiped Him. Jesus said, "Do not be afraid anymore. Go and tell My friends to go to Galilee. I will meet them there."

Christ Connection: The most important thing that ever happened is that Jesus died and was raised from the dead. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we sinned. God forgives us for sin because Jesus died for us. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything.

Teach THE STORY

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Welcome and worship with song

- “Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)” song
- “Jesus, Thank You” song

Greet preschoolers with a smile. As preschoolers arrive, sing an action song such as “Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)” to engage them and help them feel welcomed. Begin worship by leading preschoolers in “Jesus, Thank You.”

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Bible
- “Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection” video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

SAY • Happy Easter! Today is the day we celebrate that God made Jesus alive again after He died on the cross for our sin. But our Bible story actually starts a few days before Jesus rose from the dead on a day called Good Friday. Hmm. I wonder why it is called that. Let’s listen to today’s Bible story and find out!

Open your Bible to John 18. Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling helps. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

Practice the key passage and a Bible skill

- Bible
- Key Passage Poster
- gray construction paper
- scissors
- “We Know” song

Place a gray circle cutout at Romans 6:9 to represent the stone that rolled away. Invite a few volunteers to come up one at a time and open your Bible to the key passage.

Create simple motions for the key passage. Use the

motions from the key passage song video “We Know” as inspiration. Teach the motions to preschoolers as you repeat the passage several times.

SAY • Jesus died on the cross and, on the third day, He rose again. Jesus will never die again! Jesus is alive, and He is our King forever!

Sing the key passage song together.

Learn the big picture question and answer

SAY • We are sinners. Our sin separates us from God, but God had a plan to rescue us. He sent Jesus. Jesus died on the cross and, on the third day, He rose from the grave. Jesus died to save us from our sins! *Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.*

• Big Picture Question Poster

Respond through song and prayer

SAY • The most important thing that ever happened is that Jesus died and was raised from the dead. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we sinned. God forgives us for sin because Jesus died for us. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive!**

Sing “Jesus, Thank You” and “Resurrected” as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing “God’s Love.” You may also collect an offering.

SAY • God, thank You for sending Jesus to save us from our sin. Thank You for raising Jesus from the grave so that He will never die again! We love You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

• Main Point Poster
• “Jesus, Thank You” song
• “Resurrected” song
• “God’s Love” song
• offering basket

Transition to experience the story

• countdown video (optional)

Experience THE STORY

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LOW PREP

- blocks
- brown or gray construction paper

Build a tomb with blocks

Explain to preschoolers that Jesus' tomb was like a cave. Encourage boys and girls to build a tomb with blocks. Show them how to wad a sheet of construction paper to form a stone to roll in front of the entrance to the tomb.

SAY • The tomb is empty! **Jesus died on the cross and is alive!** Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we sinned. God forgives us for sin because Jesus died for us. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything.

- heavyweight paper
- colorful tissue paper
- glue
- markers

Make a tissue paper cross

Before class, draw a cross outline on white heavyweight paper for each child. Distribute colorful tissue paper and glue to the children. Encourage the preschoolers to tear the tissue paper and glue the pieces onto the cross.

SAY • The cross reminds us of what Jesus did to rescue us from sin. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.**

- paper plates, 1 per child
- markers
- craft stick
- glue or tape

Make face puppets

Provide a paper plate for each preschooler. Invite preschoolers to draw a happy face on one side of the plate and a sad face on the other. Glue a craft stick to the bottom of the plate.

SAY • Jesus' friends were sad when He died, but they were happy when they learned He was alive. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** The most important thing that ever happened is that Jesus died and was raised from the dead.

Find items that are empty

Gather an assortment of containers that are full, half-full, or empty. Examples include cereal boxes, plastic food storage containers, plastic drink bottles, tin cans, cups, and bowls. Invite preschoolers to examine each container and determine if the container is full, half-full, or empty.

Provide materials for preschoolers to fill the containers such as pom-poms, cotton balls, or dried pasta. Invite a preschooler to fill a container and then dump its contents.

SAY • Jesus' tomb was empty. Jesus was not inside because God raised Jesus from the dead. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** God will forgive us for sin because Jesus died for us.

- various full, half-full, and empty containers
- filler material

Drop stones

Set out bottles on a table or the floor. Guide children to drop stones into the bottles from varying heights. They may also sort the stones into muffin pans. Challenge boys and girls to use tongs to drop and move the stones.

SAY • Moving these stones is easy. The stone in front of Jesus' tomb was big and heavy. An angel came down from heaven and rolled away the stone. The tomb was empty! **Jesus died on the cross and is alive!**

- small assorted stones
- empty plastic bottles with various sizes of openings
- tongs
- muffin pans

Transition to review the story

- countdown video (optional)

Review THE STORY

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Review

Point to the giant timeline or big story circle as you review today's Bible story. Ask the following review questions:

1. How was Jesus feeling when He prayed in the garden? (*sad*)
2. What did Jesus' friends do while Jesus prayed? (*slept*)
3. How did Jesus die? (*on a cross*)
4. Why was Jesus punished? (*Jesus died to rescue us from sin. Jesus never did anything wrong!*)
5. When the women went to the tomb, what did they see? (*The stone was rolled away.*)
6. ***Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.***

SAY • **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** God made a way to save us from our sins through Jesus. ***Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.***

Sing the unit theme song or key passage song.

Pray

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have.

SAY • God, thank You for sending Jesus to save us from our sin. Give us hearts to believe Jesus died on the cross

and is alive. Help us to follow and obey Him. We love You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Missions story

If your preschool ministry is planning a missions activity, discuss the activity, the reasons for it, and your group's progress. If you are not participating in a missions activity, talk about how Jesus dying on the cross and being raised from the dead is the most important thing that has ever happened. Everyone needs to hear this good news of how Jesus gave His life to rescue people from sin. You may also show the "Learning to Pray" video.

- "Learning to Pray" video
- "Missions Prayer Cards" printables, 1 per child

SAY • We can talk to God through prayer anytime and anywhere, isn't that amazing? We can talk to God because **Jesus died on the cross and is alive**. Let's pray for the people in the video who think they have to go to a special place or pray in a special way for God to hear them. Let's ask God to show them the truth about Jesus.

Sing "Down in My Heart"

Lead preschoolers in singing and performing the actions for "Down in My Heart (I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy)." If you are unfamiliar with the song, check it out online before class. When you finish singing, invite the preschoolers to clap and shout, "Jesus is alive!"

SAY • **Jesus died on the cross and is alive**. Because of what Jesus did, we can be saved from our sin. That is a reason to have joy! We can be with God forever when we trust in Jesus! *Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.*