

## 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 10:9

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

**LARGE GROUP  
WORSHIP**  
(15–20 MINUTES)  
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**SMALL GROUP  
ACTIVITIES**  
(25–30 MINUTES)  
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**LARGE GROUP  
CLOSING**  
(10+ MINUTES)  
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## 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 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) And 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](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit <http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject>.

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# The BIBLE STORY

## Bible Storytelling Tips

### • Dramatic conversation:

Tell the story as a one-person “dialogue” where you shift your body, use different voices, and so forth to role-play the people in the conversation.

### • Shout the big picture answer:

Invite children to shout the big picture answer, *Jesus saves us from sin*, when they hear parts of the Bible story where Jesus followed God’s plan.

## Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection

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

Jesus and His friends went to a garden to pray. 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’ friends, 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! I am not His friend!”

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

“Yes, you are right,” 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, you are right,” Jesus said.

“What should I do with Jesus?” Pilate asked. “Kill Him on a cross!” the people replied. “Crucify Him!”

Pilate’s **soldiers** made a crown of thorns and put it on Jesus’ head. “If You are a king, You need to dress like a king!” they said. They put a purple robe around Him and pretended to bow down to Him. Then they **led Jesus away** to kill Him.

**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. Jesus 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! You are looking for Jesus, who died. He is not here! He has been raised from the dead, just as He said He would. He is heading to Galilee, and you will see Him there."**

**The women were so happy! Jesus wasn't dead anymore—He was alive! Just then, Jesus met them. He said, "Good morning!" The women worshiped Him. Jesus told them, "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.*

# Large Group WORSHIP

**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection

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

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## Welcome and worship with song

- “Resurrected” song
- “Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)” song

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

## 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

Tell preschoolers about a time you were punished for doing something wrong. Invite preschoolers to tell you about a time they were punished for doing something wrong.

**SAY** • Being punished when we do wrong makes sense, but can you imagine being punished when you did not do anything wrong? That is what happened to Jesus in today’s Bible story. Jesus was punished because we sinned. Because of what Jesus did in today’s Bible story, we can be forgiven for the wrong things we do.

Open your Bible to Matthew 26 or 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.

- Bible
- construction paper
- scissors (adult use)
- Key Passage Poster
- “If You Confess” song

## Practice the key passage and a Bible skill

Cut out a cross shape from construction paper. Place the

cross cutout at Romans 10:9. Invite a volunteer to open your Bible to the key passage. Invite preschoolers to repeat after you as you say the key passage several times.

**SAY** • Our key passage reminds us that we cannot do anything to save ourselves. God will forgive our sin because Jesus died for us. Jesus is God the Son. All we have to do is believe that Jesus is the Boss of our life and that God raised Him from the dead to be saved—and God even helps us to do that!

Sing the key passage song “If You Confess” together.

## Learn the big picture question and answer

**SAY** • *Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.*

We are all sinners. We deserve to be punished for our sin, but Jesus was punished for us. We can be saved because of what Jesus did for us.

• Big Picture Question Poster

## Respond through song and prayer

**SAY** • **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. 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.

Sing “Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)” and “Hear the Good News” as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing “Alive Forever.” You may also collect an offering.

**SAY** • God, thank You for sending Jesus to save us from sin. Thank You for raising Jesus from the dead and making Him King over everything. Amen.

• Main Point Poster  
• “Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)” song  
• “Hear the Good News” song  
• “Alive Forever” song  
• offering basket

## Transition to small groups

• countdown video (optional)

# Small Group ACTIVITIES

**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection

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- balls, various sizes

## Roll away the stone

Pair up preschoolers and guide them to stand across the room from each other. Give each pair a ball. They must roll it back and forth without letting it get away from them. After a few minutes, tell the preschoolers to trade balls with another pair. Lead preschoolers to observe the differences in rolling the balls of different sizes.

**SAY** • The angel rolled away the stone in front of Jesus' tomb. Jesus was not inside! **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** The rescue was complete!

## Talk about how Jesus forgives sin

Draw and cut out two large crosses of the same size. Tape one cross to a wall or table. Talk about sins with which preschoolers may struggle. Write down the sins children name on the first cross. Then remove that cross, and present the second cross. Invite preschoolers to color the cross.

**SAY** • Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we sinned. God forgives our sin completely because Jesus died for us. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.**

## Simulate an earthquake

Guide preschoolers to use blocks to build a city on a table.

- blocks

Once the city is built, let preschoolers gently shake the table to simulate an earthquake. Play several rounds.

**SAY** • There was a big earthquake as an angel came down from heaven. The angel rolled away the stone in front of Jesus' tomb. He told the two Marys the good news. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** We can tell others that same good news!

## Make play dough tombs

Invite preschoolers to use play dough to make a cave and a stone to put in front of the cave. Review the Bible story and invite children to roll away their play dough stone when you mention the stone was rolled from Jesus' tomb.

**SAY** • A large stone was rolled in front of the tomb where Jesus' body was kept. Pilate's soldiers guarded the tomb, but nothing can stop God's plan from happening! God raised Jesus from the dead. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive!**

- play dough
- play dough utensils

## Make a paper plate tomb

Provide a preschooler with a paper plate cut in half. Guide her to color the back of each half gray. Use tape or staples to fasten the two halves together so the gray is on the outside. Cut an opening out of one side to serve as the tomb's entrance. Invite children to crumple up a sheet of gray paper to serve as the stone.

**SAY** • **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** God planned for Jesus to rise from the dead all along! Nothing could stop God's plan to rescue His people!

- paper plates, 1 per child
- scissors
- gray crayons or markers
- tape
- gray paper
- stapler (optional)
- staples (optional)

## Transition to large group closing

- countdown video (optional)



# Large Group CLOSING

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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 did Jesus die? (*on a cross*)
2. Where did they put Jesus' body? (*in a tomb*)
3. Who made Jesus alive again? (*God*)
4. We deserve to be punished because of our sin. How can God forgive us instead? (*Jesus died for us so we can be forgiven when we trust in Him.*)
5. ***Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.***

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

Sing the key passage song or unit theme song.

## Pray

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have.

**SAY •** God, thank You for sending Jesus to save us from our

- Bible
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle
- Main Point Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Key Passage Poster
- "If You Confess" song
- "Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)" song

sin. Thank You for raising Him from the dead and making Him King over everything. 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 died to save people from sin, including people who are different than us. You may also show the "'C' is for Cookie" video.

**SAY** •The Rager family moved to Indianapolis to tell people about Jesus. At first, the people were afraid to talk to the Ragers because they were strangers. The Ragers made cookies to share with their neighbors, and it helped their neighbors start to trust them. Now there is a church on Ruckle Street, and people are able to learn about how Jesus died to save them from their sins. Who in your neighborhood needs to know about Jesus? How can you show kindness to them?

- "'C' is for Cookie" missions video
- "Missions Prayer Cards" printable, 1 per child

## Sing "Low in the Grave He Lay"

Lead preschoolers in singing the first verse of the hymn, "Low in the Grave He Lay." Lead children to squat down while singing the first two lines.

"Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior,  
waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

[*Jump up*] Up from the grave He arose!"

Teach preschoolers the remainder of the hymn based on their age and ability. Remind preschoolers that **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.**

Tip: If you are unfamiliar with the lyrics or tune, look them up online before the session.