

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: Luke 24:6

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

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SMALL GROUP OPENING (15–20 MINUTES) **LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY** (10–15 MINUTES) **SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES** (20–25 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.



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The BIBLE STORY

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.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
MORE!**

Invite preschoolers to check out this week's devotionals to discover that Jesus died on the cross and He was raised on the third day. The disciples saw Jesus and rejoiced when they saw the scars in His hands and side. (John 20:20) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: 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: Luke 24:6

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

Welcome time

- “Alive Forever” song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert download
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- “Jesus Saves Sinners” activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Encourage preschoolers to identify the pictures of people doing wrong things and circle them.

SAY • Every picture had someone making a wrong choice.

These wrong choices are sin. Every single person who ever lived has sinned except for One. Do you know who that is? Yes, Jesus! Jesus never sinned, but He died to pay for our sin. Our story today is about how Jesus died on the cross and rose again to save us from our sin. God forgives people for sin when we trust in Him because Jesus died for us.

Draw happy and sad faces

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. Share several scenarios and ask preschoolers to display the happy face if it's a happy situation or a sad face if it is a sad situation.



- paper plates
- markers or crayons

Examples include:

- You win a prize.
- Your puppy gets sick.
- You fall off the swing.
- Your best friend comes to your house to play.
- It's your birthday.
- You break your favorite toy.
- Someone gives you ice cream.

SAY • Have you ever been really sad and then really happy? In today's Bible story, something happened that was very sad, but then something amazing happened that was very happy. Let's find out what it was that happened.

Dress up like a king

Gather "royal" dress-up clothes such as crowns, toy jewels, jewel-toned fabrics, velvet fabric, and so forth. Invite preschoolers to take turns dressing up as a king or queen. The other children will say, "All hail the king [*queen*]!" and to pretend to bow and curtsy.

• dress-up clothes

SAY • In today's Bible story, some soldiers dressed Jesus up like a king, but they didn't do it because they believed Jesus is a king. They dressed up Jesus to make fun of Him. Let's find out what happened.

Transition to Bible study

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite preschoolers to move to Bible study while making sad faces.

• countdown video
(optional)

Large Group LEADER

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Introduce the Bible story

SAY • Every story in the Bible shows us about Jesus. Today's Bible story is the most important Bible story of all. Jesus came to earth to save sinners. In today's story, Jesus saves sinners by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. It starts out as the saddest story ever [*make a sad face*], but it ends with being the happiest story ever [*make a happy face*].

Watch or tell the Bible story

Open your Bible to Matthew 26 or John 18.

SAY • The Bible is God's words. Everything in the Bible is true! The Bible tells us about Jesus and what He has done for us.

Show the Bible story video "Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection" or tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided. Use the bolded version for younger preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

SAY • Jesus' friends were sad that Jesus died because they thought He was the King whom God had promised. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything!

- Bible
- "Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or big story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. What did Jesus' followers do when He was arrested? (*ran away*)
2. What was the crown made of that the soldiers put on Jesus' head? (*thorns*)
3. What did the angel tell the two women? (*Jesus had been raised from the dead like He said He would be.*)
4. What did Jesus tell the two women to do? (*tell His friends to meet Him in Galilee*)

Learn the big picture question

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

Jesus never did anything wrong. He did not deserve to die. We do wrong things all the time. We deserve to die, but Jesus died in our place. Jesus pays for our sin when we trust in Him. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.**

- Big Picture Question Poster
- Main Point Poster

Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Luke 24:6. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, "Resurrected."

SAY • Our key passage is part of today's Bible story. The angel said these words to the two women who came to visit Jesus' grave. They thought Jesus was still dead, but the angel told them the good news. Jesus was not in the tomb because He had risen from the dead. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive!**

- Key Passage Poster
- "Resurrected" song

Transition to small groups

Small Group ACTIVITIES

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Work Jesus puzzles



• puzzles depicting Jesus

Gather a variety of puzzles depicting Jesus' life. If puzzles are unavailable, make your own by printing and cutting apart pictures of Jesus or past Bible story pictures.

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. That is why Jesus came to earth. He lived a sinless life and died on the cross. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything.

Perform actions

• "Action Cards" printable
• basket or bag

Place the "Action Cards" in a basket or bag. Invite a preschooler to select a card and lead the group in the action listed on the card. After a few rounds, rather than a preschooler leading the group to do the action, ask only one preschooler (not the one who drew the card) to perform the action for the other children. When preschoolers become perplexed with what is going on, explain the "say" dialogue.

SAY • [*Child's name*] performed all the actions in our place. This reminds us of Jesus. Jesus died in our place. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we sinned. **Jesus died on the cross**

and is alive. God forgives us for sin when we trust in Him because Jesus died for us. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything.

Play out talking on the phone

Gather a collection of toy phones or non-working phones for preschoolers to play with. Guide preschoolers to play out telling someone on the phone that **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** Explain to preschoolers that the most important thing they can do is tell someone about Jesus. Consider using the video function on your mobile phone to film preschoolers saying the main point. Send the videos to parents according to your church's security procedures.

SAY • The most important thing that ever happened is that Jesus died and was raised from the dead. Everyone needs to know that **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** When we put our trust in Jesus, God forgives us for sin because Jesus died for us. It's the best news ever! Let's tell everyone we know!

• old phones or toy phones

Tip: Do not film children without parents' permission. Follow your church's security procedures regarding filming or photographing children.

Move through an obstacle course

Set up a simple and safe obstacle course in your classroom. Use existing furniture as well as items such as pop-up tunnels, pillows or cushions, rope, plastic cones, and hula hoops. Enlist an adult leader to hold up a hula hoop for preschoolers to walk through as the last obstacle of the course. Invite preschoolers to say, "He is not here! He has been raised!" as they pass through.

SAY • How happy the women were to discover that Jesus is alive! The saddest day turned into the happiest day! **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** Our sin makes us sad, but when we say we are sorry for our sin and

• furniture, such as pop-up tunnels, pillows, rope, plastic cones, hula hoops

trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin because Jesus died for us. That is the happiest news of all! We can be forgiven and live forever with God because of Jesus!

Make an empty tomb

- construction paper
- scissors
- glue stick
- brad
- markers

Note: Remind parents to use The Gospel: God's Plan for Preschoolers to explain the gospel to preschoolers.

Make a tomb shape out of gray or brown construction paper by cutting the center out of a half circle. Cut a full circle out of the same color construction paper to serve as the stone in front of the tomb. Invite preschoolers to glue their tomb to a sheet of construction paper. Assist preschoolers in using a brad to attach the stone to the entrance of the tomb in such a way that it can be slid away. Write the main point or big picture answer at the top of each preschooler's art work.

SAY • The empty tomb reminds us that Jesus is not dead anymore. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** The most important thing that ever happened is that Jesus died and God raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we sinned. God forgives us for sin when we trust in Jesus because Jesus died for us. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything.

Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve each preschooler a halved donut and a donut hole for snack. Show preschoolers how standing the halved donut forms a tomb and the donut hole serves as the stone in front of the tomb. As preschoolers roll the “stone” away, remind them how an angel rolled away the stone from Jesus’ tomb to show the women He was not there. Jesus is still alive today!

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Transition

When a child finishes her snack, guide her to throw away any trash. She may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of a cross. Remind preschoolers that **Jesus died on the cross and is alive. *Jesus saves us from sin.***

SAY • God, thank You that, even though we are sinful and make wrong choices every day, You never stop loving us. Thank You that You showed how much You love us by sending Your Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for our sin. We do not deserve Your love, but You love us so amazingly. Amen.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- books
- puzzles
- play dough
- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- *Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschool*