

Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection

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

MAIN POINT: Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 6:9

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

2

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 108



TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 110



APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 116



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 kids this Bible story, emphasize the gospel: the good news of who Jesus is and what He has done.



MINISTRY GRID
training made simple

Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection

Matthew 26:36–28:10; John 18:1–20:18

- **Sketch the story:** As you tell the story, sketch pictures to accompany key words. Examples include sleeping friends, a crowd of angry people, a crown of thorns, a cross, a tomb, and a stone.
- **Vary your tone:** Use a concerned, somber tone of voice when telling about Jesus' crucifixion. Use an energetic yet controlled tone when telling of His resurrection.

Jesus came with His disciples to a place called Gethsemane (geth SEM uh nih). He **prayed to God, "Father! If it is possible, take this suffering away from Me. But only if it is part of Your plan."** While Jesus prayed, the disciples fell asleep. Jesus said, "Get up. It is almost time."

Suddenly Judas arrived with a large crowd. Judas kissed Jesus so the crowd would know who Jesus was. **The crowd arrested Jesus.** Peter tried to stop the men, but Jesus told Peter not to. Jesus' followers ran away, but Peter stayed nearby. Three times, people asked Peter if he was a follower of Jesus. Peter said he was not.

The crowd took Jesus to the high priest. The high priest asked, "Are You the Messiah, the Son of God?" Jesus replied, "Yes, that's right."

The high priest said, "He has spoken against God. He deserves to die!" The religious leaders did not want to believe Jesus is God's Son.

When morning came, the religious leaders led Jesus to Pilate, the governor. "Are You the King of the Jews?" Pilate asked. "Yes, that's right," Jesus replied.

Pilate asked the crowd what he should do. "Crucify Him!" they said. Pilate did not think Jesus had done anything wrong, but he handed Jesus over and said, "Do whatever you want."

The governor's soldiers put a scarlet robe on Jesus. They made a crown of thorns and put it on His head. Then they mocked Him, "Here is the King of the Jews!" Then they **beat Him and led Him away to be killed.**

The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross. They put a sign above His head that said, THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. **Two criminals were crucified next to Him.**

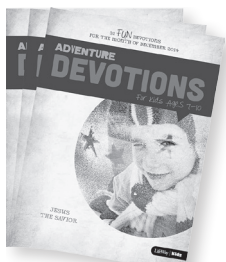
Darkness covered the land. Then **Jesus cried out**, “**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**” Jesus shouted again and then He **died**. Suddenly, the curtain in the temple sanctuary split in two, from top to bottom, and there was an earthquake. One of the men guarding Jesus’ body said, “This man really was God’s Son!”

Jesus was buried in a tomb. A stone was sealed in front of the tomb so that no one could steal Jesus’ body.

On the third day, Mary Magdalene (MAG duh leen) and the other Mary went to the tomb. Suddenly there was an earthquake. An angel of the Lord rolled back the stone and sat on it. The angel spoke to the women, “Don’t be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, but He is not here. He has been resurrected, just like He said He would.”

The women left the tomb quickly. They ran to tell the disciples the good news. Just then Jesus met them. The women worshiped Jesus. “**Don’t be afraid,**” He told them. “**Go tell My disciples to meet Me in Galilee.** They will see Me there.”

Christ Connection: The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus is the center of the gospel. We deserve to die because of our sin, but Jesus died in our place. He was the blood sacrifice made once and for all for the forgiveness of sin. God was pleased with Jesus’ sacrifice and raised Jesus from the dead to reign as King over all creation. We are forgiven only through Jesus. (Acts 4:12)



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD’S WORD?
GET
ADVENTURE!**

Invite kids to check out this week’s devotionals to discover how God’s Word can help them grow in the gospel. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Introduce the STORY

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 to save people from sin, and He is alive.

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 6:9

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

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, form two groups of kids. Guide the first group to shout “Christ is risen!” The other group will respond, “He is risen indeed!” Consider encouraging kids to use different voices to shout each part.

SAY • Happy Easter! Easter is the day we remember Jesus’ death on the cross and celebrate His resurrection on the third day. Because God raised Jesus to life again, we know that we can be forgiven of our sins when we trust in Him.

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Color by Number” activity page. Instruct kids to use the key provided to color each section according to its number label.

SAY • Today’s Bible story starts out very sad, but days later, it was one of the greatest moments ever! All along, God planned to send Jesus to take the punishment for our sin. Jesus’ death on the cross and His resurrection is what the gospel is all about!

- “Color by Number” activity page, 1 per kid
- crayons or markers

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Separating sin

Form teams of two kids. Give each team a ball and instruct the kids on each team to stand one or two paces apart.

The kids will toss the ball to their teammates. After each successful catch, the two will each take a step apart before trying to toss the ball back.

SAY • The Bible says that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. [*See Rom. 3:23.*] Our sin separates us from God because He is holy. When Jesus died, He took our sin upon Himself and took the punishment we deserve. **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.**

OPTION 2: Surprise!

Before class, place various prizes in paper bags and tape them closed. Choose one kid at a time to come forward, select a bag, and bring it back to her seat. Kids may feel and shake the bags, but they may not open the bags until you say so. After all the kids choose a bag, invite them to open the bags and check out their “surprise.” Kids can try to trade their surprise with someone else if they would like.

SAY • Jesus’ followers were very sad when Jesus died. Some of the women who followed Jesus went to His tomb on the third day, and they were very surprised! Jesus was not there! He was alive! **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.**



• balls

- brown lunch sacks
- small prizes or individually wrapped candies
- tape (optional)

Transition to teach the story

Teach the STORY

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 to save people from sin, and He is alive.

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 6:9

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

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

[Leader enters.]

LEADER • Hey! Welcome back, everyone. I'm so glad you are here today. You may already know, but today is a very special day. Can any of you tell me what makes today so special? *[Allow responses.]* That's exactly right.

Today is Easter Sunday! Christians all over the world celebrate Easter because we know that **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.** Easter is when everything changed for people. God made the way for us to be forgiven and live with Him forever. I want to tell you all about it.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Who can tell me our big picture question? *[Take responses.]* That's it, way to go. **Who saves us from our sin?** Now, who can tell me the answer? *[Take*

responses.] Right again. **Only Jesus saves us from sin.** Sin is anything we do or think that is against God’s law. God is holy and perfect, which means our sin must be punished. The Bible tells us that sinners—that’s you and me and everyone on earth—deserve death. Thankfully, God loves us and had a plan to save us from sin through Jesus.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle.

LEADER • Last week we talked about Palm Sunday and learned that **people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as King.** They did not fully understand the kind of King Jesus is, though. Within a week of worshipping Jesus, the people called for Jesus to be killed. That’s what our story is about today. It’s called “Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection.”

• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 26:36–28:10; John 18:1–20:18. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection.”

LEADER • The religious leaders were angry at the things Jesus did and said. Jesus said He was the Son of God. He said that He was King. Jesus said that no one, not even the religious leaders, could do enough good things to earn God’s love or forgiveness. The religious leaders were so angry that they hated Jesus and wanted to kill Him. So they made a plan.

The religious leaders paid Judas to lead a group of soldiers to arrest Jesus. The religious leaders accused

• Bibles
• “Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection” video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

Jesus of blasphemy. *Blasphemy* is saying disrespectful or untrue things about God. The religious leaders convinced the people that Jesus deserved to die, but Jesus was innocent. Everything Jesus said about God is true and right.

The Romans beat Jesus and mocked Him before leading Him outside of the city to be killed on a cross. Jesus did not fight back or try to escape. Jesus knew that His purpose was to die on the cross for our sin. That was God's plan all along, and it was time to fulfill it. That was the saddest moment in history. Jesus, the only Man to ever live a perfect life, died as if He were a criminal.

Thankfully, that is not the end of the story! In the morning on the third day after Jesus died, some of His followers went to Jesus' tomb only to find that it was empty! Jesus was gone; He had risen! That was the most joyful moment in history. **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.**

Christ connection

LEADER • You see, as I said earlier, we are all sinners. We are born that way and there is nothing we can do on our own to change it. We deserve death because of our sin, but God loves us and sent Jesus to make the way for us to have life. Jesus died in our place. He took the punishment we deserved. On the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead. This proved that Jesus' death did pay for sin. He had defeated sin and death. When we believe in Jesus, God forgives us and changes us into new people with new hearts so we can love and obey God!

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus is the center of the gospel. We deserve to die because of our sin, but Jesus died in our place. He was the blood sacrifice made once and for all for the forgiveness of sin. God was pleased with Jesus' sacrifice and raised Jesus from the dead to reign as King over all creation. We are forgiven only through Jesus. (Acts 4:12)

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Romans 6:9.

- Key Passage Poster
- "Romans 6:9" song

LEADER • Our key passage reminds us that after Jesus rose from the dead, He is alive forever. Jesus will never die again and sin and death have no power over Him. When we believe in Him, we receive His righteousness and that means that sin and death no longer have power over Christians either!

Lead boys and girls in singing "Romans 6:9."

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • When you hear about something amazing, do you tell other people, or keep it to yourself? Check this out.

- "Unit 32, Session 2" discussion starter video

Show the "Unit 32, Session 2" discussion starter video. Ask the kids what happens when we keep good news a secret. Discuss why Jesus' death and resurrection are good news for sinners. Why should we tell others about Jesus? How can we tell others about Jesus?

LEADER • **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.** That's what the gospel is all about. Each person who believes in Jesus is forgiven by God, and God gives him or her new life forever. We share

this news because it is too good to keep in. It fills us up and overflows our hearts.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “Wonderful” song

LEADER • Let’s worship God for His goodness and love. Sing together “Wonderful.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father, thank You for sending Your Son to rescue us. Thank You, Jesus, for taking the punishment we deserve for our sin. You are our only Savior. Give us a desire to spread Your glory. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Apply the STORY

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 to save people from sin, and He is alive.

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 6:9

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

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- sticky notes

Use sticky notes to cover a few words of the key passage. Invite kids to read the verse together, filling in the words as necessary. Cover more words and repeat the verse again. Continue until the verse is totally covered and kids can say the verse from memory.

SAY • Jesus' resurrection proves His power over death! When we trust in Jesus, we do not need to fear death. Our bodies may die someday, but we will live forever with God.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- paper
- crayons
- markers

Help kids open their Bibles to one of the Bible passages. Provide paper, crayons, and markers for the kids. Kids may also work in groups of three or four.

Invite kids to read the Bible story together in their groups, and then guide them to draw a picture of one part of the Bible story. You may want to assign parts of the Bible story so each part of the story has an illustration. When kids finish, invite them to retell the Bible story as they display their posters to the rest of the class.

Suggested scenes:

- Jesus' praying in the garden
- The disciples' sleeping
- Judas' betraying Jesus with a kiss
- The disciples' running away
- Jesus before the religious leaders
- Peter's denying Jesus
- Jesus with Pilate
- Jesus mocked and dressed in scarlet with a crown of thorns
- Jesus' carrying the cross
- Jesus on the cross
- Jesus' tomb
- The empty tomb

SAY • Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection prove that our God can turn something horrible and sad into something wonderful and joyful. **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.** That's what the gospel is all about. We did not get the punishment we deserve, and instead God gave us salvation we could never earn. This is why Christians celebrate Easter.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Free the captives

Form two teams of kids. Instruct the teams to line up on opposite sides of the room. One at a time, players from each team will come forward to play "Rock, Paper, Scissors." After each game, the winner will return to his team with the loser as a "prisoner." Prisoners should sit near the team that captured them.

Then the next players from each team will come forward



to play. Any time there is a tie, the first player to shout, “He is risen!” frees the captured members of her team from prison. They may return to their side of the room.

SAY • Jesus’ death and resurrection freed people from something much worse than prison. **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.** When we trust in Jesus, we are freed from the power of sin and receive eternal life with God.

OPTION 2: Beaded gospel bracelets

Give each kid a length of leather cord and colored pony beads. Show the kids how to thread one of each color of bead on the cord. As the kids work, explain what the different colors represent.

Suggested colors and meanings:

- Dark gray: We are dead in our sins apart from Christ. (Eph. 2:1)
- Red: Jesus redeemed us with His blood. (1 Pet. 1:18-19)
- White: Our sins are washed away when we repent and believe in Jesus. (1 John 1:7)
- Blue: We follow Jesus’ baptism to show the world of our new life with Christ. (Rom. 6:4)
- Green: The Holy Spirit lives in us to help us grow in our faith. (Eph. 4:15)
- Yellow: When Jesus returns to earth, we will live forever with Him in glory. (Rev. 21:3-4)

SAY • *Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from sin.* This bracelet will help us remember all that Jesus did for us on the cross. **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.** His death paid the punishment for our sins.

- leather cords
- colored pony beads

When we turn away from sin and trust in Him, Jesus forgives us of all our sins and gives us His righteousness. Can you think of someone who needs to hear this good news?

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child's journal. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure each child secures this week's sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- Journal Page
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's Big Picture Cards for Families to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.