

## 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.

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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 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.



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# The BIBLE STORY

## Bible Storytelling Tips

## Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection

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

- **Draw it:** While you tell the Bible story, invite a second leader to draw the following pictures at the appropriate moment in the story:
  - hands praying for Jesus in the garden
  - lips when Judas kisses Jesus
  - crown of thorns when taken away from 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. Gather cross-shaped cookie cutters. 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 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.*



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# Introduce THE STORY

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

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## Welcome time

- “Jesus, Thank You” 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

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

Guide preschoolers to color each space the appropriate color based on the number.

**SAY** • Look at your beautiful stained glass window! What is the shape in the middle of the window? Yes, a cross. The cross reminds us of the most important thing that ever happened. We will hear more about that in today's Bible story.

## Play out morning routines



Ask preschoolers to tell what happens at their house in the morning. Invite preschoolers to play out morning routines such as waking up, eating breakfast, brushing their teeth, brushing their hair, getting dressed, and so forth. Lead preschoolers to play out the daily routines multiple times, varying the speed and tasks.

**SAY** • In our Bible story today, we will hear about how Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a tomb. The two Marys went to visit Jesus' tomb early in the morning on the third day. They were very sad, but when they got to the tomb, they heard the happiest news ever. Listen to our Bible story to hear what the two women discovered at Jesus' tomb.

## Examine items from a garden

Gather an assortment of flora from your yard, a garden, or a wooded area. Set out the items on a table and provide magnifying glasses for preschoolers to examine the items.

**SAY** • In today's Bible story, Jesus and His friends went to a garden. Jesus was very sad. Jesus went into the garden to pray to God about why He was sad. Listen to our Bible story to learn why Jesus was sad and what He prayed in the garden.

- Allergy Alert download
- assorted flora
- magnifying glasses, 1 per child

## Transition to teach the story

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 complete an action three times before they move to Bible study. Actions may include jumping, patting their head, clapping their hands, stomping their feet, touching their toes, and so forth.

- countdown video (optional)

# Teach THE STORY

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## Introduce the Bible story

- box with lid
- “Jesus, Thank You” song

Pass an empty box as music plays. Ask children to guess the contents of the box. Open the box to reveal that it is empty.

**SAY** • In today’s Bible story, two women discovered something that was empty. Listen to hear what was empty and why this was the best news ever!

## Watch or tell the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- “Jesus’ Crucifixion and Resurrection” video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Place a bookmark at Matthew 26 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

**SAY** • God’s words are in the Bible. That makes the Bible the most important book there ever was or will ever be. Everything in the Bible is true: today’s story from the Bible happened in real life.

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling helps. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

## Talk about the Bible story

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

**SAY** • The most important thing that ever happened is that Jesus died and was raised from the dead. God sent Jesus to earth for this reason. It was very hard, but Jesus wanted to do God’s plan no matter what. **Jesus**

**died on the cross and is alive.** Because Jesus died and came back to life, we can be rescued from sin.

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

1. The sign above Jesus' head said He was King of the Jews. Was that true or not true? (*true*)
2. Who guarded Jesus' tomb so no one could steal His body? (*soldiers*)
3. What happened three days after Jesus' body was put in the tomb? (*Jesus rose from the dead.*)
4. Who discovered the empty tomb? (*the two Marys*)
5. Whom did the women see after the angel told them Jesus was alive? (*Jesus*)

## Learn the big picture question

**SAY** • Remember our big picture question? ***Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.*** 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.

• Big Picture Question Poster

## Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Romans 6:9. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, “We Know.”

• Key Passage Poster  
• “We Know” song

**SAY** • Our key passage reminds us about what we heard in our Bible story—Jesus is alive! **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** Jesus did everything needed to rescue people from sin. He will never die again!

## Transition to experience the story



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• blocks

## Build a block tomb

Invite preschoolers to build a tomb with blocks. Review the Bible story and invite preschoolers to play out the scene.

**SAY** • The two Marys were sad as they went to Jesus' tomb, but the tomb was empty! The angel told the two women, "Jesus is not here! He has been raised from the dead, just as He said He would." **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything.

## Roll the stone

• large exercise ball

Guide preschoolers to stand in a large circle. Roll an exercise ball to a preschooler and encourage him to roll it to another preschooler in the circle. Sing the following lyrics to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" as preschoolers roll the ball. Make sure each child gets a chance to roll the ball.

"Jesus died, but He's alive, He's alive, He's alive!"

Jesus died, but He's alive! The stone was rolled away!"

**SAY** • A big earthquake came as the two Marys were at Jesus' tomb. An angel came down from heaven and rolled away the stone that sat in front of Jesus' tomb. **Jesus died on the cross and is alive.** Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we

sinned. When we put our trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin because Jesus died for us.

## Make an empty tomb diorama

Before the session, cut wooden skewers and use hot glue to make a 3-inch cross for each child. Provide an empty shoe box for each preschooler. If shoe boxes are unavailable, use a foam plate instead. Give each preschooler a ball of air dry clay and half a plastic egg. Help preschoolers arrange the clay around the half egg, leaving the opening exposed. Press the clay covered egg into the base of the box so the egg opening is on its side.

Invite preschoolers to use a small amount of clay to stand up a cross in another area of the base of the box. Then preschoolers may glue green Easter grass to fill in around the empty tomb and the cross.

**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.

- wooden skewers
- scissors (adult-use)
- hot glue (adult-use)
- hot glue gun (adult-use)
- shoe boxes or foam plates, 1 per child
- air dry clay
- plastic eggs
- green Easter grass
- glue stick

## Sort stones

Set out a collection of stones. Invite a preschooler to put the stones in order by size, smallest to largest. Preschoolers may also sort the stones according to color, shape, or weight. You may also encourage children to make a pattern with the stones.

**SAY •** A large stone was rolled in front of Jesus' tomb, and soldiers guarded the tomb so that no one would steal

- various stones
- sorting bins (optional)

Jesus' body. How big would the stone have to be to cover the opening to the tomb? Do you think you would be able to move a stone that big? That stone would be way too big for anyone to move. **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. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything.

### Look at books in a cave

- sheet
- Bibles
- books about Jesus
- flashlights

Drape a sheet over a table to make a “cave.” Encourage preschoolers to climb inside and look at Bibles and other books about Jesus. Review the Bible story as preschoolers shine flashlights on the books. Comment that tombs were sort of like caves; they were cut into the side of hills.

**SAY** • Jesus was not in the tomb because God raised Jesus from the dead. **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.

## 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 pretzel sticks for snack. Encourage preschoolers to arrange two pretzel sticks to form a cross shape. Talk about how Jesus dying on the cross and rising from the dead is the most important thing that ever happened. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we sinned. God forgives us for sin because Jesus died for us. ***Who saves us from our sin? Jesus saves us from sin.***

- 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 the empty tomb. Remind preschooler that **Jesus died on the cross and is alive**. God raised Jesus from the dead to be King over everything. Pray for the children.

**SAY** • God, thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your one and only Son to rescue us from sin. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished because we sinned. Thank You for forgiving our sin because Jesus died for us. Help us to turn from our sin and follow Him. 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 Preschoolers*