

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 10:9

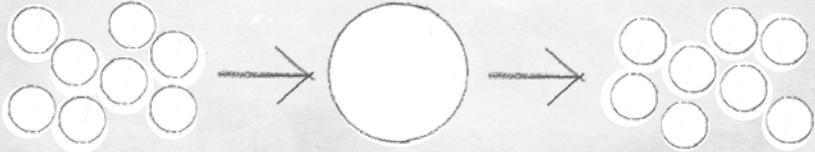
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from our sin.

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



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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 a controlled yet energetic tone when telling of His resurrection.

Jesus came with His disciples to 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 grabbed Jesus and arrested Him.** 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. “No! I'm not!” Peter said.

Jesus was led to the high priest. The religious leaders were trying to find a reason to kill Jesus, but they could not. **The high priest asked, “Are You the Messiah, the Son of God?” Jesus replied, “Yes, that's right.”**

The high priest said, “Ah ha! He has spoken against God. He deserves to die!” The religious leaders did not want to believe Jesus was 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.

“What should I do with Jesus?” Pilate asked the crowd. “Crucify Him!” they answered. 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.**

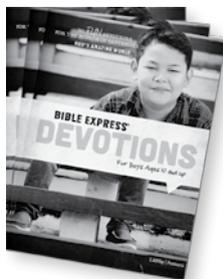
The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross. They put a sign above His head that said THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. **Two criminals were crucified next to Him.** Darkness covered the land. Then **Jesus cried out, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”** Jesus shouted again with a loud voice 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 guards were so afraid that they fainted. **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. “Good morning!” He said. The women worshiped Him. **“Don’t be afraid,” Jesus 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
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week’s devotionals to discover that the women who went to the tomb thought Jesus’ story was over, but they were wrong. The angel confirmed: Jesus is not dead; He is alive! (Matt. 28:6) 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 to save people from sin, and He is alive.

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 10:9

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

Ask kids to share what event has been the most important in their life so far.

SAY • Are there future events you think will be even more important? Why or why not?

Today we are going to hear about the most important event to ever happen. It happened more than two thousand years ago!

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Death and Resurrection Scramble” on the activity page. Kids should unscramble each word to discover the main point of today’s Bible story. (Answer: **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive** today!)

SAY • The Bible story we are going to hear today is about the greatest event to ever happen in history. All of the Old Testament leads up to this point, and it changes everything!

- “Death and Resurrection Scramble” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Who saves?

Write the following words on separate index cards: *lifeguard*, *firefighter*, *doctor*, *Jesus*. Choose four volunteers to stand at the front of the room. Give each volunteer a card. Instruct them not to show their cards to the group.

Explain that the volunteers each have a card. Kids should ask yes-or-no questions to figure out who is holding which card. For example, “Would you help me if I felt sick?” or “Does your job involve water?” When kids think they know who has which card, invite them to guess.

SAY • Each of these cards describe someone who has the ability to rescue someone who needs help. Today we are going to hear a Bible story that answers the question, *Who saves us from our sin?*

OPTION 2: Not here!

Form groups of up to six kids. Give each group a set of playing cards. Instruct them to play a game like “Go Fish.” Give each player five cards. Stack the remaining cards facedown at the center of the table.

The goal is collect four cards of the same kind. The first player will ask another player for a certain card. (“Do you have any 2s?”) If the player has any of that card, he must surrender them to the first player. If not, the player should reply, “Not here!” The first player will take a card from the facedown pile. Play passes to the left.

SAY • In today’s Bible story, some women went to Jesus’ tomb. An angel told them something amazing. The angel said, “He is not here!”



- index cards
- marker

- playing cards, 1 set per group

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

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Countdown

• countdown video

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

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

• Bible

[Large Group Leader enters carrying a Bible.]

LEADER • Hello, everyone! I am so glad you joined me today. This is such a special day because we are celebrating a great event. It happened long ago, but it changed everything! Does anyone know what event that is? *[Allow kids to respond.]* We are remembering Jesus' crucifixion—when He died on the cross for our sin—and His resurrection. Three days after Jesus died, He rose from the dead! Jesus is alive! I won't tell you the whole story just yet. Let's get started.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Do you remember our big picture question? We heard it last week: ***Who saves us from our sin?*** The answer is, ***Only Jesus saves us from our sin.*** Sin separates us from God because God is holy. But God loves us, and He sent His Son, Jesus, to save us from

our sin. Think about that when we hear the Bible story today.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle. Point to the section labeled “Jesus Saves.”

• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

LEADER • Our last Bible story was called “Jesus’ Triumphal Entry.” Toward the end of Jesus’ ministry on earth, Jesus rode into the city of Jerusalem on a donkey.

People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

That happened at the beginning of the week. By the end of the week, people’s feelings about Jesus had changed. Today’s Bible story is about what happened at the end of the week.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 26–28; John 18–20. 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.”

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

LEADER • The religious leaders decided that they wanted to get rid of Jesus. They didn’t like that people were praising Jesus and following Him. So they made a plan and paid Judas, one of Jesus’ disciples, to betray Him. They did not accept who Jesus is.

When Jesus said that He is the Son of God, they didn’t believe Him. They said He was guilty of blasphemy. *Blasphemy* is an attitude of disrespect for God. Jesus did not do anything wrong, but the leaders believed He had committed a crime by claiming to be God.

Is Jesus the Son of God? Yes! He is fully God

and fully man. But the religious leaders convinced the crowd in Jerusalem that Jesus should die. The people who welcomed Jesus and praised Him at the beginning of the week when He rode into the city on a donkey now hated Him.

Jesus knew it was time for Him to do God's plan to save people from sin. God sent His Son into the world to be the Savior. The Bible says that sin requires a payment, a blood sacrifice. So Jesus was going to die to pay the price for our sin.

Three days after Jesus died on the cross, God raised Him from the dead. Jesus' resurrection shows us that God accepted Jesus' payment for our sin. Jesus rose from the dead, and He is still alive today. At Easter, we remember Jesus' death for us and celebrate His resurrection. **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.** Because of His sacrifice, we can have forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Let's say our big picture question and answer: ***Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from our sin.***

Christ connection

LEADER • The Bible says that we have all sinned, and the fair punishment for sin is death. Our sin separates us from God, and nothing we do could make up for our sin. That is some very bad news.

But the gospel is good news! God loved us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to rescue us from sin. Jesus did this by living the perfect life we cannot live. He died the guilty death we deserve. Jesus died in our place!

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.

We can receive Jesus' gift of forgiveness and salvation by trusting in Him as Lord and Savior.

God was pleased with Jesus' sacrifice for our sin, and He raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus is the King over all creation. We are forgiven only through Him.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Romans 10:9.

LEADER • Our key passage reminds us of the answer to our big picture question, *Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from our sin.* We are saved when we confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead. Let's sing.

Lead boys and girls to sing "You Will Be Saved."

- Key Passage Poster
- "You Will Be Saved" song

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • Think about a rule you have broken. What was the consequence? Are there any rules you try really hard not to break because the consequences are too great? Let's watch this video.

Show the "Unit 20, Session 2" discussion starter video.

Guide kids to discuss the consequences of playing ball in the house. How do you think Nell felt? How do you feel when you have done something wrong?

LEADER • Imagine Nell's mom was upset that Nell broke the vase and that it would cost a lot of money to replace it. What if Nell's mom offered to pay for it herself? How would Nell feel? [*Allow discussion.*]

We are like that; the penalty for our sin is death. That's a price we do not want to pay. But God loved us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the

- "Unit 20, Session 2" discussion starter video

cross for our sins. Jesus did all the work to rescue us from sin.

When Jesus rose from the dead, God showed He was satisfied with Jesus' sacrifice. The payment was accepted. We cannot save ourselves; we are saved by trusting in Jesus and receiving His gift of salvation.

Sing (4 minutes)

• "Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)" song

LEADER • Our song today is about what Jesus did for us—**Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.** The punishment for our sin is too great for us, but Jesus paid it all. Let's sing. Sing together "Jesus Paid It All (Whiter Than Snow)."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

LEADER • Dear God, thank You for the gift of Your Son, Jesus. As we celebrate Easter, we remember that Jesus' death on the cross was for us. He died the death we deserve for our sin. We also celebrate because Jesus is alive! Though our bodies may die, we have hope that we too will live forever with You. We love You. Amen.

Dismiss to small groups

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.

Small Group LEADER

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- construction paper strips
- marker

Before small group, write words or phrases of Romans 10:9 on strips of construction paper. Place the strips around the room. Challenge kids to find the pieces. As they find them, they should gather at the front of the room and arrange the strips in the proper order. Lead kids to read the verse aloud.

SAY • When a person is saved, what does he confess? (*Jesus is Lord.*) What does that person believe? (*that God raised Him from the dead*)

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- chalkboard or dry erase board
- chalk or marker

Form two teams of kids. Explain that you will read a question and give three possible answers. Kids should quickly discuss the answer and then send one player to write the answer (*A, B, or C*) on the board. Players should cover the answer with their hands.

When each team has answered, say, “Answers, please!” Kids should uncover their answers. Award a point for each correct answer. The team with the most points wins.

1. Today’s Bible story comes from Matthew and John. These books are found in what division of the Bible?
A. New Testament Letters; B. Gospels; C. Major

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

Prophets (*B. Gospels*)

2. Which of Jesus' disciples helped the crowd arrest Jesus? A. Judas; B. John; C. Peter (*A. Judas*)
3. What did the crowd want to do to Jesus?
A. put Him in prison; B. crucify Him; C. free Him (*B. Crucify Him*)
4. Why did the crowd want to kill Jesus?
A. He was a criminal; B. He claimed to be God's Son; C. They didn't want to kill Him. (*B. He claimed to be God's Son*)
5. What happened when Jesus died? A. The curtain in the temple sanctuary split in two; B. there was an earthquake; C. both A and B (*C. both A and B*)
6. Who rolled away the stone in front of Jesus' tomb?
A. an angel of the Lord; B. a gardener; C. Mary Magdalene (*A. an angel of the Lord*)
7. What did the angel say about Jesus? A. His body has been stolen; B. He has been resurrected; C. He is still in the tomb. (*B. He has been resurrected*)
8. **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is** what? A. still dead; B. sleeping; C. alive (*C. alive*)

SAY • We remember and celebrate Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection every year at Easter. Jesus is alive! That changes everything. We do not worship someone who is dead. Jesus' resurrection showed that God accepted Jesus' payment for our sin.

Jesus was the perfect sacrifice. He lived the perfect life we fail to live and died the guilty death we don't want to die. When we trust in Him, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.

**LOW PREP**

- Gospel Plan Poster
- paper
- markers
- tape

Tip: Refer to “The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me” guide in the large group time.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: The Gospel: God’s Plan for Us

Copy each symbol from the gospel poster onto a separate sheet of paper: crown, X, cross, gift, hands. Post four of the papers in separate corners of the room. Position the fifth paper on the floor at the center of the room.

Using the download as a reference, review the five parts of the gospel plan. Guide kids to move between the corresponding pictures. Then instruct kids to scatter around the room. Call out a heading and challenge kids to run to the correct picture. Repeat as time allows.

SAY • The gospel tells us the good news about Jesus. God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.** We can respond to the gospel by trusting in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

OPTION 2: Nail crosses

Demonstrate how to make a cross with masonry nails:

1. Lay two nails side by side in opposite directions.
2. Use a dot of glue to secure the nails together.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 with another pair of nails.
4. Form the two pairs into a cross. Secure them together with a dot of glue.
5. Position the middle of the twine at the center of the cross. Wrap the twine twice around the nails in an X pattern. When you finish, tie a knot on the back.
6. Use a dot of glue to secure the twine to the top of the cross.

- cut masonry nails, 4 per kid
- twine or thin cord, 24-inch length per kid
- glue

7. Tie the ends of the twine in a knot so kids can hang their crosses.

SAY • *Who saves us from our sin? Only Jesus saves us from our sin.* Hang your cross somewhere you will see it often as a reminder that **Jesus died on the cross to save people from sin, and He is alive.**

Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection—rising from the dead—is good news for sinners. 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. [*See Acts 4:12.*]

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils.

SAY • Jesus honored the Father and showed us love when we could never pay Him back. Think of a way you can show love to someone this week without expecting anything back. You could leave a bouquet of wildflowers on the neighbor's front porch, clean your brother's room to surprise him, or do something kind for a stranger who will never see you again.

Encourage kids to write in their journals one or two ideas of things they could do to show love for someone. Then lead the kids in prayer, thanking God for showing us His love by sending Jesus to save people from sin.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "The Gospel: God's Plan for Me" on the activity page. Challenge them to match each part of the gospel plan to its description.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "The Gospel: God's Plan for Me" activity 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.