

Jesus was Crucified

Bible Passage: Matthew 27:11-66

Memory Verse: 10 This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. **1 John 4:10 (NLT)**

Bottom Line: I trust Jesus because He died for me.

Big Picture Question: Why did Jesus die on the cross? Jesus died on the cross to forgive us from our sins and came back to life to show that we are forgiven.

Christ Connection: *On this dark day, Jesus' followers probably thought all hope was lost. Jesus was crucified on the cross, and His body was laid in a tomb. But the story was not over. By dying on the cross, Jesus paid the penalty for our sin—all of it: past, present, and future. He was the blood sacrifice made once and for all for the forgiveness of sin.*

LEADERNOTES:

CONTEXT

Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection are the center of the gospel. Jesus accomplished the plan God had been working out throughout the Old Testament to bring salvation to sinners, and it happened in such an unlikely way.

In the Book of Acts, Peter testified to the Israelites about Jesus' death: "Though He was delivered up according to God's determined plan and foreknowledge, you used lawless people to nail Him to a cross and kill Him" (Acts 2:23). Crucifixion was a horrific way to die. As you teach kids, rather than focus on the graphic details of how Jesus died, emphasize why He died. Two primary reasons stand out: God is loving, and God is just.

First, God is loving. He sent His Son to be the Savior of the world because He loves us. (See John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:10.) Jesus submitted to the Father's will; He humbled Himself and came to earth as a man, and He laid down His life because He loves us. (Eph. 5:2)

Jesus lived the perfect life we failed to live and died the guilty death we don't want to die. Those who trust in Him receive forgiveness and eternal life.

Second, God is just. God's law for the people was plain. (See Deuteronomy 6:5.) But God's people, and all people, broke the law. We have loved other things more than we love God. That is sin. So why did Jesus have to die? Why couldn't He just say, "You are forgiven"? Because God is just, He requires due payment for sin. To simply forgive sin without requiring a payment would be unjust.

Jesus was our substitute, taking our place on the cross and absorbing God's wrath on our behalf so we can be forgiven and declared righteous. (See Rom. 3:25-26; Col. 2:13-15.)

Jesus died to release sinners from slavery to sin, and when we believe in Him for life, we are free indeed.

TEACHING FOCUS

When we talk about Jesus' crucifixion, we mean His death on the cross. Crucifixion was a terrible punishment, usually used for the worst criminals. Jesus never did anything wrong, but we know that His death was part of God's plan to save sinners.

Imagine how Jesus' disciples felt. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah. They thought He was going to overthrow the Romans and set up His kingdom and rescue them. Jesus was the Savior God promised—but how can someone who is dead save anyone?

Well, we know this is not the end of the story. When Jesus was arrested and nailed to a cross, the governor's soldiers made fun of Him. They put a crown of thorns on His head and a scarlet robe on Him. They mocked Him as the King of the Jews. But they did not understand that Jesus is a King, and this was God's plan all along.

Only Jesus could be the perfect substitute for sinners. He lived the perfect life we cannot live and died the guilty death we don't want to die.

TODAY'S TAKEAWAYS

- **We could never save ourselves so God sent Jesus to save us.**
- He did this because He loves us and wants a relationship with us.
- **BL: I trust Jesus because He died for me.**

Worship & Story Time

Gather children on a rug or in a specific area of the classroom to tell the story. Some kids (especially the younger ones) may wander. That's okay. They're still listening and learning!

Play the DVD of All Star Kids worship (choose 1 song for today)

What You Say: "Way to go! You are such amazing singers. Now let's sit down to learn from the Bible today."

What You Do: Introduce the story

"Jesus did not do anything wrong, but people took Jesus to jail. They took Jesus to the high priest's house. The high priest asked Jesus questions about His teaching. The high priest said that Jesus was lying about God, but Jesus always tells the truth. Jesus is God's Son! The people did not believe Jesus, so they took Him to the governor, Pilate. The leaders of the people asked Pilate to punish Jesus by putting Him on a cross. Jesus always obeyed God, but He died on the cross because He loves us. The leaders asked for a huge stone to go in front of Jesus' tomb. They said, "Jesus told His friends God would bring Him back to life in three days!"

PLAY BIBLE STORY VIDEO

Check diapers and serve snack.

Activities

Depending on the size of your group, you may lead each activity two or three times. Not every child may want to participate in the activities. That's okay.

1. Alleluia Sticker Page

What you Need: Sticker page and Easter Scene (1 set per kid), pencils

What You Do:

- Pass out the sticker page and Easter scene for each kid.
- They can put there stickers anywhere they want on the Easter Scene.
- As they are working talk about the story today and how everything happened just as God planned so Jesus could be the perfect sacrifice for our sins.
- Send the sticker pages home with each kid

What You Say: When Jesus was killed, there were three crosses because two criminals were crucified next to Jesus. Those two men were punished for wrong things they did. [*Hold up the Jesus figure or image.*] Jesus never did anything wrong, but He was punished like a criminal. **Jesus died on the cross.** We deserve to die because of our sin, but Jesus died in our place to rescue us from sin.

2. Practice signing the Memory Verse

What you need: Memory Verse Poster

What You Do:

- Show the poster to the kids
- As you say the words point to them on the poster
- Create simple hand motions to teach toddlers the memory verse. Sample hand motions include "**This is real love** (draw a heart)—**not that we loved God** (point to heaven), **but that he loved us** (point to each kid) **and sent his Son** (rock a baby)**as a sacrifice to take away our sins** (make a cross with your body). **1 John 4:10**

What You Say: Who loves you? (allow kids to answer) Who loves you most? (allow kids to answer). God loves us most. He sent Jesus to live a perfect life as God, die on the cross, and raise in 3 days so that we could know God. That is real love.

Pray and Dismiss:

What You need: no supplies needed

What You Do:

- Pray- " God, You showed us the greatest love of all when You sent Your Son to die on the cross for our sin. Thank You for making the way to rescue us. Help us to turn from our sin and trust in Jesus. Amen

What You Say: Tell parents something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Send home the sticker pages and tell families, we are talking about Jesus sacrifice for our sins and God's love for us in allowing Jesus to do and be that for us.