



## 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.*

### 10 Minutes SOCIAL: SETTING THE TONE OF THE EXPERIENCE

Spoon the Eggs

**What You Need:** plastic spoon (1 per kid), 4 bowls or buckets, plastic Easter Eggs (50 per group), sticker for prizes

**What You Do:**

- This is a minute to win it game with 2 teams.
- Break your group into 2 teams.
- Each team will take turns (1 player at a time) scooping eggs with a spoon in their mouth to another bucket.
- Each player gets 30 seconds to scoop as many eggs as they can into the bucket.
- When their time is up the next person gets 30 seconds to scoop as many eggs as they can into the bucket.
- Keep playing until all the eggs have been moved or each person gets a turn, whichever comes first.
- Team with the most eggs moved wins.

**What You Say** "Way to work together to move those eggs. In our stories the next few weeks we will be looking at the last days of Jesus' life. Throughout the whole story we can see where God was working to make everything happen at just the right time to give us a way to have a relationship with Him. Let's get ready to hear about it."

### 10 Minutes Worship: CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING

SONGS, OFFERING AND PRAYER

### 15 Minutes LARGE GROUP: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS

#### TEACHING FOCUS (Matthew 27)

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.



## 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.

## 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.

Give kids a chance to believe in Jesus for the first time. Remind them that God loves them so much that He sent Jesus to earth to pay for their sins. Lead them to pray as you pray. Pray that believers will submit their lives to the Holy Spirit, follow Jesus, and tell others about Him.

## 25 Minutes SMALL GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

### Discussion Questions:

- Why can't we save ourselves? Why was Jesus' sacrifice enough to pay for our sins? (We are sinners. Jesus was our sinless substitute; see Rom.6:23)
- Why couldn't God have ignored our sins? Why did Jesus have to die? (God is holy and just. He is right to hold us responsible for our sin. The punishment for sin is death. Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sin; see Rom. 3:25-26.)
- How does Jesus' death on the cross show God's love to sinners? (God sent His Son to die so we can have forgiveness and eternal life; 1 John 4:10)

### Activity: Jesus Took Our Place

**What You Need:** cookies, juice boxes, hula hoop (2 per group)

#### What You Do:

- Divide the class into two teams and challenge each team to line up in order of birthday.



## All Star Kids

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Kinder – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

- Each team gets a hula hoop.
- Each team will hold hands. Their task is to pass the hula hoop down the line without letting go of each other's hand.
- The team to complete the task first wins.
- Explain that the losing team will have to serve the winning team a special snack.
- When it is time to serve snack, however, leaders will step in and serve instead of the losing team.

**What You Say** The losing team should have been responsible for serving snack today, but someone else took their place. In our story we learned that **Jesus was crucified on the cross**. Even though we deserved to die and be separated from God, Jesus took our place and died instead of us.

### Activity: Memory Verse Activity

**What You Need:** Memory Verse Poster, Memory Verse Word Cards (printed and cut apart- 1 set per group)

#### What You Do:

- Review the Memory Verse as a group together out loud a few times.
- Lay the Memory Verse Word Cards on the floor/table face down.
- Take turns picking up a card at a time and putting it in order.
- Keep going until all the words have been turned over.
- Read the verse together one more time.

**What You Say** "Who loves you? (allow kids to answer) Who loves you most? (allow kids to answer). God loves us the most. He proved by sending His Son to live a perfect life and be the blameless sacrifice for us to be made right with God because of our sins. That is true love."

### Pray and Dismiss:

**What You Need:** no supplies needed

#### What You Say:

"God, thank You for Your plan to rescue us from our sin by sending Jesus to die on the cross. Your love for us is such a gift, and we are so thankful to You for all that You have done for us. Help us to live in gratitude to You this week and love You with our whole hearts. Amen.

### 5 Minutes HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage your kids to tell their parents about Jesus' last Supper. What was God doing? **BL- : I trust Jesus because He died for me.**