



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

Scrambled Eggs

What You Need: 5 paper bags, 75 eggs (need at least 15 different colored or patterned eggs per group)

What You Do:

- This is a partner game that uses a paper bag and plastic Easter eggs.
- Prior to playing, ask a volunteer to prepare your paper bags.
- You'll need one paper bag filled with mixed-up eggs for each pair of children.
- On "GO," the partners have to work together to take the mixed-up, or scrambled, eggs out of their paper bag and fix them by putting matching tops and bottoms back together.
- The catch? They can each only use one of their hands during this minute... the hand they DON'T write with.
- They have to keep their writing-hand behind their back during the game, working together to take the eggs out, pull them apart, and snap them back together correctly.
- At the end of one minute, the pair with the greatest number of matching eggs is the winner.

What You Say "Way to go teams. Did you think that was going to be easy? In our Bible stories the next few weeks we are going to hear some hard things about Jesus and how people treated Him. The Jewish leaders did not believe He was God. All along though God is working things out in the perfect way to make a way for us to have a relationship with Him. Let's get ready to hear about it now.

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: Free the Captives

What You Need: cookies, juices boxes

What You Do:

- Form two teams of kids.
- Choose two kids—one from each team—to face off in a game of “Rock, Paper, Scissors.”
- The winner stays in the game while the other kid goes to his team’s “prison”; the player should sit against a wall at the front of the room.
- If the two players tie, the first kid to call out, “It is finished!” frees any of her teammates from prison.
- The team that sends all of the other team’s players to prison wins.
- The winners serve cookies and juice to the losers.

What You Say **Jesus was crucified on the cross.** His 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.

Activity: Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: Memory Verse Poster, strips of paper (1” wide, 30 per group), tape or stapler, pencils

What You Do:

- Pass out strips of paper and instruct children to work together to write two or three words of the memory verse on each strip, using the memory verse poster as a guide.
- Then take the poster away and lead children to make a chain out of the strips of paper by making loops out of each strip and connecting them to each other in the correct order using tape.
- When finished, invite kids to say the memory verse together.

What You Say ” Our Memory Verse is a good reminder of why Jesus died the way He did, when He did and who it was for. Did you ever think about it being out of love? God says, “This is real love!” Real love helped the perfect lamb be lead to slaughter and then rise in 3 days to show that He is God and always was. He was the one God would send to make us “right with Him.”

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.**