

Jesus's Triumphal Entry

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.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE: Romans 10:9

“If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (CSB)

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

1st – 3rd Grade Small Group

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.

INTRODUCE THE STORY

Welcome

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. As kids arrive, ask them if they can remember the best day of their life, so far. Can they remember the worst day of their life?

SAY Today we will be talking about the saddest day in history as well as the happiest day in history. What do you think happened on either day? Who do you think was involved?

Activity page

Invite kids to complete the “Resurrection Inspection” activity page. Kids should complete the activity by circling all the key words hidden in the picture: *resurrection, tomb, death, burial, Savior, Jesus, cross, Easter, and alive.*

SAY We celebrate Easter because Jesus did something wonderful for us. He died the death we deserve and then rose again on the third day. Today we will talk about how and why that happened and learn that it was God’s plan all along.

Guess the item in the bag

Pass around one bag and let the children feel inside the bag without looking. (Bags contain: blunt-tipped nail, toy crown, cross, rock, purple fabric, nothing). After everyone has had a turn to touch the item, let children guess what is inside. Continue with each bag. Finally, pass around an empty bag.

SAY • The items in these bags are things we will hear about in today’s Bible story. Why do you think the last bag was empty? [Allow kids to guess.] Listen to find out what else was empty in today’s Bible story.

TRANSITION TO LARGE GROUP

Walk across hall and sit as a group on risers.

EXPERIENCE THE STORY

Place “sins” on a cross

Use painter’s tape to form a large cross on your classroom wall at preschoolers’ height. Invite kids to tell you sins or wrong choices people make. Make it personal by asking kids what they do wrong. If they point out what friends or siblings do wrong, gently redirect them to themselves.

Write the sins down on colored sticky notes and guide the preschoolers to stick them to the cross. Tell kids sins you committed this past week too, and write them down on the sticky notes as well. When the cross is covered with “sin” notes, take each note down, and replace each with a white sticky note labeled JESUS. Make a show of wadding up the “sin” notes and throwing them away.

SAY • God forgives our sin because Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for sin. Jesus died on the cross and is alive. I made sure we removed all of the sins we wrote down because when we turn from our sin and trust in Jesus, He takes away all of our sin and gives us His holiness.

Pray

Take prayer requests. Pray, thanking God for all He has done for us. Ask Him to help your group trust in Jesus for salvation.

JOIN WORSHIP IN SANCTUARY

When prompted wrap up and line up in to get ready to enter the sanctuary.