

Apply the STORY

SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Crucifixion

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 27:11-66

MAIN POINT: Jesus was crucified on the cross.

KEY PASSAGE: Ephesians 2:8-9

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why did Jesus die on the cross? Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins and came back to life to show we are forgiven.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster

Show the key passage poster and read it aloud. Guide boys and girls to read it aloud together. Then read it again. Prompt the girls to echo you, one phrase at a time. Then read it again, prompting the boys to echo each phrase.

SAY • Some of the religious leaders thought that people could be accepted by God if they followed all of the law. In fact, some people still believe that. But Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us that we cannot save ourselves. We can't be "good enough" to earn God's favor. Everyone has sinned, or broken God's law. That's why Jesus came. Jesus was perfect for us. Jesus never sinned. Salvation is never earned; it is a gift from God that comes only through faith.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

• Bibles, 1 per kid
• Main Point Poster

Distribute Bibles and guide kids to the Gospel of Matthew. Ask kids to name the four Gospels. (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*) Challenge kids to explain in one sentence what the Gospels are about. (*The Gospels tell the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.*)

Encourage kids to find Matthew 27:11-66. Lead them to

refer to the passage as they answer these review questions:

1. The people could release one prisoner—Jesus or Barabbas (buh RAB uhs). Whom did they choose? (*Barabbas, Matt. 27:21*)
2. What did the people want to do with Jesus? (*Crucify Him, Matt. 27:22*)
3. Who was crucified next to Jesus? (*two criminals, Matt. 27:38*)
4. ***Why did Jesus die on the cross? Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins and came back to life to show we are forgiven.***

Now guide kids to discuss these 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*)

SAY • The Friday before Easter is known in the church as Good Friday. It is the day we remember how **Jesus was crucified on the cross**. This was a very sad day. Jesus suffered greatly. Why do you think we call this day "Good" Friday? [*Allow kids to respond.*]

Jesus' crucifixion is good news for sinners. We deserve to die for our sin, but Jesus willingly died the death we deserve so that we can have forgiveness and eternal life.

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



Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Free the captives

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.

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.

OPTION 2: Painted palm prints

Give the following instructions and assist kids as they make painted palm prints:

1. Use a foam brush to cover your palm and fingers with a thin layer of white paint.
2. Press your hand onto the top center of a piece of black construction paper. Then use a wipe to clean the excess paint from your hand.
3. Dip a fingertip in red paint and press it into the center of the palm print. Wipe your finger clean.
4. Use chalk or a white crayon to write *Jesus died for me* below the handprint.

SAY • Jesus was crucified on the cross. We deserve to die because of our sin, but God loves us and kept His promise to send a Savior. Jesus never sinned, but He

- black construction paper
- white washable paint
- red washable paint
- chalk or white crayon
- foam brushes
- wipes (for cleanup)

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

died in our place. He was the blood sacrifice made once and for all for the forgiveness of sin.

Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, and those who trust in Him have forgiveness and eternal life. Hang up this picture at home or keep it in your Bible as a reminder of the gospel: Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

While kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then lead kids in prayer.

SAY • Lord God, as we learn about Jesus' dying a death He didn't deserve, we realize that we deserve death for our sins. Thank You for sending Your Son to rescue us from sin and death. We want to remember Jesus' great sacrifice and live in a way that brings glory to our Savior. We love You, God. Amen.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Puzzle Pieces" on the activity page. Kids should match the puzzle shapes to their correct place and copy the words accordingly.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Puzzle Pieces" 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.