

Experience THE STORY

SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Crucifixion

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 27:11-66

MAIN POINT: Jesus died on the cross.

KEY PASSAGE: Ephesians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why did Jesus die on the cross? Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins, and He is alive today.



• blocks

Build a castle

Invite preschoolers to build a castle using blocks.

SAY • The sign above Jesus' head that said, THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS was correct. Usually a king lives in a castle, but Jesus did not live in a castle. Jesus lived in heaven, but He came to earth so He could die for our sin. Jesus is a King who loves His people. **Jesus died on the cross.** On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us life forever with Him.



Sing a song

Sing the lyrics below to the tune of "The Farmer and the Dell."

"Jesus came to save, Jesus came to save!
Jesus died on the cross,
oh, Jesus came to save!

Jesus is alive, Jesus is alive!
Jesus died and rose again,
oh, Jesus is alive!"

SAY • **Jesus died on the cross.** We deserve to die because

of our sin, but God loves us and kept His promise to send a Rescuer. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He died in our place. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us life forever with Him.

Work people puzzles

Set out an assortment of puzzles depicting people. As preschoolers work, talk about how all people are sinners, but Jesus died and rose again to save sinners.

• people puzzles

SAY • People are sinners. We deserve to die because of our sin, but God loves us and kept His promise to send a Rescuer. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He died in our place. **Jesus died on the cross.** On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us life forever with Him.

Play a cup game

Set the cups upside-down. Draw a cross on the side of each cup. Place a Jesus figure or image under one of the cups. Invite a preschooler to watch while you shuffle the cups around. Challenge a preschooler to identify which cup hides the figure. Allow preschoolers to take turns guessing. Consider allowing older preschoolers to take turns shuffling the cups.

• plastic cups, 3
• permanent marker
• Jesus figure or image

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.

Make a “stained glass” cross

- “Cross Template” printable
- heavyweight colored paper
- scissors
- tissue paper, multiple colors
- permanent marker
- masking tape
- clear contact plastic

Before the session, print a copy of the “Cross Template” on heavyweight colored paper for each preschooler and cut out the cross outline.

Set out different colors of tissue paper and invite preschoolers to tear the paper into small pieces. Use the outside edge of the “Cross Template” as a guide to draw a cross on a sheet of clear contact plastic for each preschooler. Use masking tape to tape each cross sticky-side-up on the table. Invite preschoolers to fill the cross shape with pieces of tissue paper. Encourage preschoolers to lay the tissue paper flat so light will shine through the finished product. When a preschooler finishes his cross, lay the cross outline you cut out earlier on top of the tissue paper and then add another sheet of clear contact plastic. Seal the plastic and trim the excess. Display artwork in a window.

SAY • Jesus died on the cross. We deserve to die because of our sin, but God loves us and kept His promise to send a Rescuer. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He died in our place. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us life forever with Him.

Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Give each preschooler half a donut and a donut hole for snack. Show a preschooler how to set up the donut on the cut ends to form a tomb. Encourage preschoolers to place the donut hole in front of the donut to serve as the large stone that was rolled in front of Jesus' tomb. Remind preschoolers that Pilate's soldiers guarded the tomb so that no one could steal Jesus' body. **Jesus died on the cross**, but on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. Nothing can stop God's plan!

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Transition

When a child finishes his snack, guide him to throw away any trash. He may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of a cross. Ask, *Why did Jesus die on the cross? Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins, and He is alive today.* Pray for the children.

SAY • 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.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- books
- puzzles
- play dough
- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers