

Jesus' Resurrection

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 28:1-15; John 20:1-18

MAIN POINT: Jesus was resurrected on the third day.

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.

2

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 92



TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 94



APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 100



Leader BIBLE STUDY

The time between Friday afternoon and Sunday morning must have been dark hours for Jesus' disciples. Fear, doubt, and confusion certainly overwhelmed their thoughts. Jesus, their Lord, was dead. He had been unjustly arrested, falsely accused, and severely beaten. Even worse, He had been killed in a horrible manner: by crucifixion.

The story doesn't end there. Jesus' body was laid in a tomb. The tomb was sealed and guards watched over it. The Jews remembered Jesus' claim that He would rise from the dead (John 2:19-21), and they made sure no one could steal His body and insist He had risen. Imagine their surprise when Jesus did rise from the dead!

John and Peter saw the empty tomb. Jesus appeared to Mary. The disciples believed Jesus had risen from the dead. Even though the guards at the tomb were bribed to lie about what happened (they said the disciples stole Jesus' body), the truth spread. The disciples wouldn't have dedicated their lives and died for something they knew was a lie.

If Christ had remained dead, His death would have meant nothing more than yours or mine. Humanity would still be dead in sin. But God gives us victory over sin and death through His Son, Jesus. The resurrection gives us hope that we too will one day be raised and changed. (See Rom. 6:5; 8:11.)

Paul addressed in 1 Corinthians 15:7 just how essential Jesus' resurrection is to the gospel: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins." The resurrection is proof that God was satisfied with Jesus' sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins and that God's new covenant had begun.

Emphasize to the kids you teach that Jesus is alive! We believe this by faith. Today, Jesus is seated at the right hand of God and reigns as King over all of creation. (Phil. 2:9-10)



Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use facial expressions:** Ask kids to listen carefully and think about the emotions Jesus' friends experienced. Pause in the story at points of strong emotion and invite kids to express that emotion.
- **Act it out:** Invite kids to actively participate in the Bible story by pantomiming the actions in the story, such as running in place, standing, and turning around. Practice each action prior to telling the story.

Jesus' Resurrection

Matthew 28:1-15; John 20:1-18

On the third day after Jesus' death, Mary Magdalene (MAG duh leen) went to Jesus' tomb. It was still dark, and she saw that the large stone at the entrance had been moved away.

Mary ran to Simon Peter and John. "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put Him!" she said.

Peter and John ran to the tomb. John looked inside and saw the linen cloths lying there. Then Peter went into the tomb and saw the linen cloths too. The cloth that had been around Jesus' head was folded up. John believed that Jesus was alive. Then Peter and John went back home.

Mary stood outside the tomb and cried. When she looked inside, she saw two angels sitting there. They said to her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"Because they've taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they've put Him," she said. Then Mary turned around. Jesus stood in front of her, but she did not recognize Him.

Jesus said, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

Mary thought Jesus might be the gardener. She replied, "Sir, if you have taken Jesus away, tell me where you've put Him and I will go get Him."

Jesus said, "Mary."

Mary turned around and said, "Teacher!"

Jesus sent Mary to tell the other disciples that He was going back to the Father. Mary did what Jesus said, and

she told the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!”

Meanwhile, some of the guards from Jesus’ tomb went into the city and told the religious leaders everything that had happened. The leaders got together and made a plan. They gave the soldiers a lot of money and told them to lie about what they saw.

“Say that Jesus’ disciples came in the night and stole His body while you were sleeping,” they said. So the guards took the money and lied about Jesus’ resurrection.

Christ Connection: Jesus died on the cross for our sins, but He didn’t stay dead. God was pleased with Jesus’ sacrifice and raised Jesus from the dead to reign as King over all creation. Jesus provides salvation from sin and the promise of eternal life.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD’S WORD?
GET
ADVENTURE!**

Invite kids to check out this week’s devotionals to discover how God’s Word can help them grow in the gospel. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Introduce THE STORY

SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Resurrection

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 28:1-15; John 20:1-18

MAIN POINT: Jesus was resurrected on the third day.

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.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, ask them if they have ever had to wait a long time for something. How did they feel having to wait?

SAY • Today we're going to hear an incredible story about what happened three days after Jesus' death on the cross. His disciples and friends had to wait, but then **Jesus was resurrected on the third day** like He had promised!

Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Spot the Differences" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Spot the Differences" activity page. Kids should circle the ways the bottom picture differs from the top picture.

SAY • Does anyone know what a tomb is for? A tomb is where people were buried in Bible times. Back in Jesus' day, tombs were often cut into rocky hills. There was something special about the tomb where Jesus was buried: three days after He was buried there, the tomb was empty!

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Resurrection acrostic

Write the word *RESURRECTION* vertically on a dry erase board or a large sheet of paper. Invite the kids to take turns coming up to the board and writing words that remind them of the resurrection story that begin with each letter.

Help kids spell words as needed.

SAY • These are all great ideas! The true story of Jesus' death and resurrection is one of the most exciting stories in all of Scripture. God's plan to rescue the world from sin had finally come to pass, and Jesus had defeated death. Let's get ready to hear more!

OPTION 2: Where's the power?

Before the session, hide flashlight batteries in the room.

Show the kids a flashlight without batteries. Try turning it on and show them how it doesn't work. Invite the kids to search the room to find a source of power for the flashlight. Put the batteries in and turn on the light.

SAY • This flashlight needs batteries for power, otherwise it won't work. Today we'll hear how Jesus was resurrected on the third day by God's power. Apart from God, nothing works. God showed His mighty power by raising Jesus to life, defeating death!



- dry erase board or large sheet of paper
- markers

- flashlight
- batteries

Tip: Hide enough batteries for each kid to find one, even if you only need a few for the flashlight.

Transition to teach the story

Teach THE STORY

SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Resurrection

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 28:1-15; John 20:1-18

MAIN POINT: Jesus was resurrected on the third day.

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.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

[Leader enters wearing khaki shorts, a bright orange shirt, and a helmet.]

LEADER • Hey, everyone! Welcome back! Last week was my first day on the wildness rescue team. What an experience it's been so far! Late one night our team got a call that a woman was trapped inside a cave. A rock had fallen and broken her leg so she couldn't move. Our team gathered our gear and were able to pull her out of the cave. It was incredible that she made it out alive, and we all thanked God that she was safe!

The story of that woman's rescue is nothing compared to the story of how God has rescued us. We haven't broken our legs inside a dark cave, but we are separated from God because of our sin. We need a rescuer, and God sent us a Savior! Today we'll hear more about God's great rescue plan when He raised

Jesus from the dead on the third day.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Our big picture question is, *Why did Jesus die on the cross?* Does anyone remember the answer? [Invite responses.] *Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins and came back to life to show we are forgiven.* Jesus' death on the cross was all part of God's great rescue to save the world from our sin.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle.

LEADER • Last week we learned that Jesus had been arrested, beaten, mocked, and then crucified. His disciples and friends were confused because they had thought Jesus had come to rescue Israel. They were expecting Jesus to be their leader, so when He died on a cross they didn't know what to think anymore. They were confused and afraid. Jesus had told His disciples many times, however, that He would be raised on the third day. In fact, that was why the Pharisees and religious leaders decided to put soldiers in front of Jesus' tomb. They thought the disciples would steal Jesus' body and pretend He was alive. Let's listen to what really happened in our Bible story!

• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 28:1-15; John 20:1-18. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus' Resurrection."

• Bibles
• "Jesus' Resurrection" video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

LEADER • Can you imagine how the disciples must have felt when Jesus appeared to them? Just when Jesus' disciples thought all hope was lost, **Jesus was resurrected on the third day**. Mary saw the empty tomb, and she ran to get Peter and John. The Bible says Peter was confused, but John believed Jesus was alive. Then Mary saw Jesus! Mary told the disciples that she had seen Jesus—alive!

Remember those guards who had been ordered to guard the tomb? What did they do when they discovered Jesus wasn't in the tomb anymore? They hurried back and told the religious leaders what had happened. The religious leaders made a plan and they even paid the guards to lie and say that the disciples stole Jesus' body. Some people believed their lie—and some people still believe that lie today—but that did not stop the truth from spreading. Jesus is alive!

Why is it so important that **Jesus was resurrected on the third day**? Think about it: What if Jesus had stayed dead? [*Invite kids to respond.*] Jesus rose from the dead because God was satisfied with His sacrifice. Jesus' death was enough to defeat sin and death. His resurrection shows His power over death and it helps us remember that one day, those who trust in Jesus will live forever with Him.

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus died on the cross for our sins, but He didn't stay dead. God was pleased with Jesus' sacrifice and raised Jesus from the dead to reign as King over all creation. Jesus provides salvation from sin and the promise of eternal life. Jesus is God's rescue plan!

When we put our faith in Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven, and we can be close to God again!

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Ephesians 2:8-9. Teach the following hand motions to go along with each phrase. Adapt the hand motions to the translation of your choice.

- Key Passage Poster
- “Saved by Grace” song

You are saved—lift both arms upwards

by grace through faith—bring both arms down in front of you, palms facing inward

and this not from yourselves—wag your finger and shake your head

it is God’s gift—hold hands out as if giving a gift

not from works—wipe sweat off your brow

so that no one can boast—wag finger then put hand on hip and point to self

LEADER • God’s grace is what saves us. *Grace* is when we are given something we don’t deserve. Imagine if your parents told you that you could only have dessert if you finished your dinner, but then gave you dessert even though you still had veggies on your plate! Your parents are showing you grace by giving you something you don’t deserve. God shows us grace by forgiving our sins even though we haven’t done anything to deserve His forgiveness!

Lead boys and girls in singing “Saved by Grace.”

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • When was the last time your family had a big celebration? Did you get a good grade on a test or have a birthday party? Think about that as we check

- “Unit 26, Session 2” discussion starter video

out this video.

Show the “Unit 26, Session 2” discussion starter video.

Guide kids to discuss these questions:

- Why did the people shout and celebrate at the end of the game?
- How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus died? How do you think they felt when they found out He is alive?
- Why do we celebrate Jesus’ resurrection?

LEADER • **Jesus was resurrected on the third day.** He was dead, but now He is alive! Death could not hold Jesus. Jesus has victory over sin and death, and those who trust in Him have forgiveness and eternal life. We do not have to fear death because Jesus has power over it. This good news changes everything.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “This Is the Moment”
song

LEADER • Let’s worship God together now as we praise Him and thank Him for His amazing grace!

Sing together “This Is the Moment.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • God, thank You so much for rescuing us from our sin through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. What amazing grace You have shown us, even though we don’t deserve it. We praise You because You have defeated death by Your awesome power. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Apply THE STORY

SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Resurrection

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 28:1-15; John 20:1-18

MAIN POINT: Jesus was resurrected on the third day.

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 kids the key passage poster and read it together one time. Then invite the kids to line up and crouch down. The first kid in line will pop up as he shouts the first word in the key passage. Continue this way down the line until the kids have said the whole passage. Repeat, starting with the last kid in line.

SAY • Did you know that the word *boast* means to brag? Have you ever bragged about something? Why do you think this passage tells us that we cannot boast about saving ourselves? [*Invite responses.*] God teaches us through His Word that we can do nothing to save ourselves from our sin. We rely completely on God for our salvation! We can't boast or brag about something that we aren't able to do ourselves. But we can thank God for His good gift of saving us through Jesus Christ!

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

• Bibles, 1 per kid
• Main Point Poster

Pass out Bibles to all the kids and instruct half of them to find Matthew 28:1-15 and the other half to turn to John 20:1-18. Show them the table of contents and how

to use it to find today's passages if they are having trouble. Encourage kids to help their neighbors if needed. Read the following review questions. Explain that if a kid knows the answer, she should jump out of her chair. Call on whoever stands up first to answer.

Questions:

1. Who went to the tomb early in the morning? (*Mary; Matt. 28:1; John 20:1*)
2. What was strange about the tomb? (*The stone was rolled away, and the tomb was empty; John 20:1*)
3. Whom did Mary run to get when she found the empty tomb? (*Peter and John, John 20:3*)
4. What did Peter see inside the tomb? (*the burial cloths, John 20:6-7*)
5. Who did Mary think Jesus was at first? (*the gardener, John 20:15*)
6. What did the religious leaders do when they found out Jesus' tomb was empty? (*They bribed the guards to say the disciples stole Jesus' body, Matt. 28:12-13*)
7. ***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.***

SAY • Great job! You all remembered a lot from our story today. The story of Jesus' resurrection is an amazing reminder of God's incredible power and love.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Newscast

Invite the kids to work in groups of three or four to create a newscast informing everyone about the events of the story, including interviews with people in the story. Encourage kids to be creative as they present their newscast to the rest

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

LOW PREP

• craft supplies (optional)

of the class.

SAY • Can you imagine what it would have been like to be there when **Jesus was resurrected on the third day**? How do you think you would have responded? [*Invite responses.*]

OPTION 2: Make an empty tomb

- gray construction paper
- scissors
- crayons and markers
- white tissue paper
- brad fasteners

Pass out a variety of craft supplies to the kids. Invite them to create a scene of the empty tomb. Kids may cut a half-circle of gray construction paper then draw a doorway with marker. They may also glue white tissue paper onto the doorway to represent the burial linens. Kids may cut a circle from the gray construction paper to represent the stone in front of a tomb. Help the kids use a brad fastener to attach the stone to the tomb. The kids will then be able to “roll” the stone away, showing the empty tomb.

SAY • The fact that Jesus’ tomb was empty is really good news for us! Jesus is alive, which means He has defeated death and sin! God showed His power when **Jesus was resurrected on the third day**. When we trust in Jesus, His power defeats the sin in our lives too.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child's journal. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure each child secures this week's sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- Journal Page
- Bible Story Coloring 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.