

Unit 26: To the Cross

Unit Description:

As people began to turn against Jesus, He journeyed toward Jerusalem where He knew He would be arrested and crucified. Jesus continued to tell people that they needed to repent, and He prepared His true followers for His death. Soon after Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, He was betrayed, arrested, tried, and crucified.

Key Passage:

Philippians 2:8

Big Picture Question:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Session 1:

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

*Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19;
John 12*

Story Point: People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

Session 2:

Jesus Was Questioned

Matthew 22; Mark 12; Luke 20

Story Point: Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.

Session 3:

The Last Supper

*Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22;
John 13*

Story Point: Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.

Session 4:

Jesus Was Arrested

Matthew 26–27

Story Point: Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.

Session 5:

Jesus' Crucifixion

Matthew 26–27; John 18–19

Story Point: Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.



Jesus' Triumphal Entry

People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

Jesus Was Questioned

Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.



The Last Supper

Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.

Jesus Was Arrested

Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.



Jesus' Crucifixion

Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.

Use Week of: **October 4**

Unit 26 • Session 1

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 21; Mark 11;
Luke 19; John 12

STORY POINT:

People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

KEY PASSAGE:

Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

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LEADER Bible Study

Leading into the last week of Jesus' ministry before His death and resurrection, Jesus entered Jerusalem as the King of kings. Many of God's people traveled to Jerusalem for Passover. Jesus and His disciples traveled to Jerusalem as well. Near Bethphage (BETH fayj) and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples ahead into a village.

Jesus told them, "You will find a young donkey tied there. No one has ever sat on it. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says to you 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'" Jesus would fulfill Zechariah's prophecy: "Look, your King is coming to you ... humble and riding on a donkey" (Zech. 9:9).

Jesus made a spectacular entrance into the city. He rode a donkey, and people laid branches and their robes on the ground in front of Him. The people welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem believed He was the promised Messiah, but they expected Him to overthrow Roman oppression and set up an earthly throne. Jesus sent a different message.

The next day, Jesus entered the temple and turned over the tables of the money changers and those selling doves. Jesus referred to Isaiah 56:7, declaring that His kingship would not just be over the Jews but over all people. While Jesus was in the temple, He healed the blind and the lame. Jesus' actions declared, "I am not just your King; I am also your God." (See Isa. 35:4-6.)

Finally, the priests and the scribes heard the children in the temple worshiping Jesus as their King. "Do You hear what these children are saying?" they asked. Jesus replied, quoting Psalm 8:2. Jesus gladly received their praise because He was worthy of their praise. Jesus is the Son of God who came to overthrow sin and set up an eternal throne. Help kids connect the dots between God's promises of a Messiah and Jesus' coming. Help them understand why Jesus came: to save the world from sin!

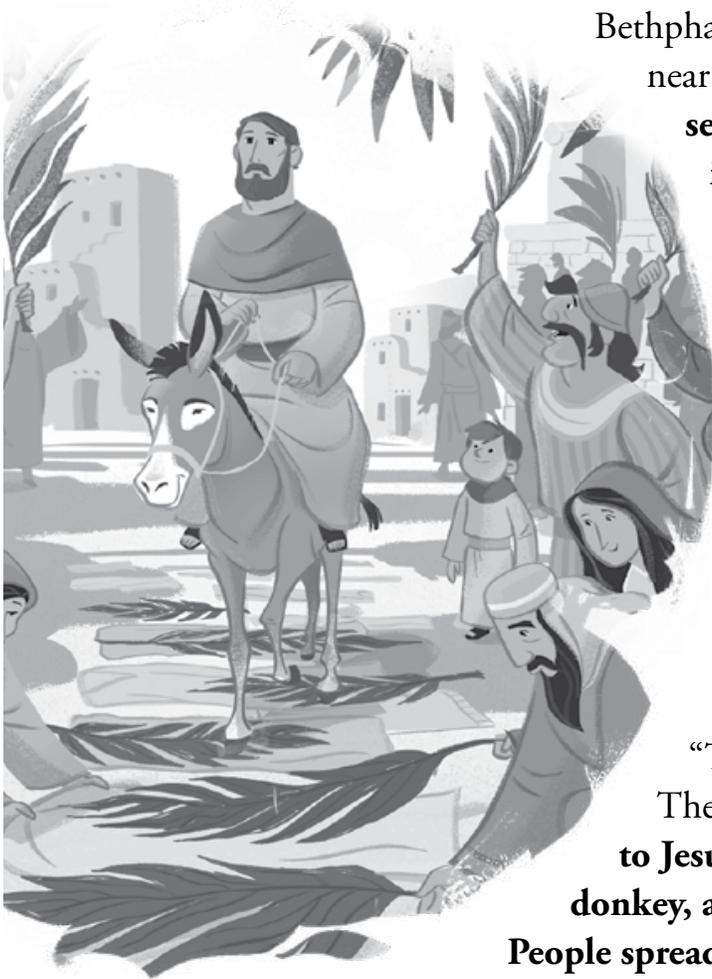
The BIBLE Story

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12

It was time to celebrate Passover, a special time to remember how God had freed His people from slavery in Egypt. Many Israelites had traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate God's amazing rescue.

Jesus and His disciples were among the people who **traveled to Jerusalem**. When they neared Bethphage (BETH fayj) and Bethany near the Mount of Olives, **Jesus sent two of His disciples ahead into a village**. "As soon as you enter the village," Jesus told them, "you will find a young donkey tied there. No one has ever sat on it. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone says to you 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'"



The disciples did as Jesus asked. As they untied the donkey, its owners asked why. "The Lord needs it," they said.

Then they brought the donkey to Jesus, threw their robes onto the donkey, and helped Jesus get onto it.

People spread their robes along the road for Jesus, and others spread palm branches cut from the fields.

The whole crowd praised God with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen. "Hosanna!" they said. "Blessed is He who comes in

the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

The word *hosanna* means “save now.” The people welcomed Jesus as their promised King. They hoped He would save them from the Romans.

Some religious leaders asked Jesus to tell His disciples to be quiet. Jesus answered, “If they did not praise Me, the rocks would praise Me!”

While Jesus was in the temple complex, people who were blind and people who were lame came to Him. Jesus healed them. The blind and lame would not have been allowed to worship in the temple.

Other religious leaders saw Jesus’ miracles and heard the children saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” They were very angry and asked Jesus, “Do You hear what these children are saying?” They were saying Jesus is the king.

“Yes,” Jesus told them. The writer of the Psalms had said, “You have prepared praise from the mouths of children and nursing infants.”

Jesus left them and went to the town of Bethany to spend the night.

Christ Connection: During Jesus’ triumphal entry, the people welcomed Him as King. Jesus was the Messiah spoken about by the prophet Zechariah: “Look, your King is coming to you; he is righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9). One day, Jesus will return to earth on a white horse as King over everything.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Assign roles:**

Assign volunteers roles of disciples, Jesus, and members of the crowd. Encourage kids to act out the story as you tell it.

- **Set the scene:**

Search online or in biblical resources for pictures of ancient and modern-day Jerusalem. Show drawings of Jerusalem during Jesus’ time and explain where Jesus might have entered the city. Then show pictures of Jerusalem today.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Triumphal Entry

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12

STORY POINT: People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

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. Prompt kids to tell about a time they won a competition or learned a difficult skill. How did they feel in those moments?

SAY • *Triumph* is a word that means to succeed, win, or overcome. Today's story is about a time Jesus traveled into Jerusalem. His arrival caused people to celebrate and sing praises. It's known as the triumphal entry because the people of Israel thought it was proof Jesus had come to triumph over His enemies.

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the "Silly Pictures" activity page. Encourage the kids to find and circle at least seven items that do not belong in the Bible story picture.

SAY • A lot of items were added to that picture that you wouldn't expect to see. In a way, Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem was unexpected too. We will learn more today about what happened when Jesus entered Jerusalem.

- "Silly Pictures" activity page,
- 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Throw a parade

Instruct your group to line up and march around the room or through the halls of your church's meeting place. If appropriate, consider providing noisemakers so the parade feels more like a celebration.

SAY • Watching a parade is fun. Walking in a parade can be even more fun! Today we will learn about a time Jesus entered into Jerusalem. It was a lot like a victory parade. We'll learn more soon.

LOW PREP

- noisemakers (optional)

OPTION 2: Crown toss

Help the kids make paper crowns from yellow construction paper by cutting a zig-zag pattern down the length of the sheet and then taping it into a loop. Crowns do not need to be large enough for kids to wear. Set a traffic cone at one end of the room. Challenge the kids to toss their crowns to see if they can land them on the cone.

SAY • Crowns are often used as a symbol of royalty, like a king or a queen. Today, we will learn about a time Jesus was treated like a king as He entered Jerusalem. He didn't wear a golden crown, but He did have a big parade celebrating His arrival.

- yellow construction paper
- scissors
- tape
- traffic cone

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Triumphal Entry

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12

STORY POINT: People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

- room decorations
- Theme Background Slide (optional)

Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Decorate your space to look like a courtroom. Paint foam board to look like wood panels. Hang the panels around the room and cover a high desk to look like a judge's bench. Hang a picture of an unofficial city seal on the back wall. Position a smaller desk or a chair on one side of the "judge's bench."

Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire
- gavel

[Leader enters wearing a long black robe and carrying a gavel.]

LEADER • Hey there. I'm [*your name*], and I'm a judge. My job is to hear cases in court and make legal decisions. If someone is suspected of breaking the law, he or she might be arrested and brought to my court. Here, two lawyers will try to show that person's side of the story, to prove if the suspect is guilty. After that, a group of regular people known as the jury will decide if the suspect is guilty or not. If the suspect is determined to be guilty, then I will decide how to bring about justice. Sometimes that means paying a

fine, serving the community, or perhaps even some time spent in jail.

In my job, every case I have to hear is different, but most of them all have some things in common. One thing that every case has in common is that in my courtroom, I am in charge. If things get out of hand, I can tell people to settle down. If someone refuses to settle, I can have him removed from the room. But along with the authority I have in my courtroom comes a lot of responsibility. I have to pay close attention to make sure every person is treated fairly and given a fair trial to determine if he is guilty or not.

In some ways, being a judge is similar to being a king or a ruler—not of a whole kingdom, but of a court case. You know, that makes me think of a Bible story in which Jesus was welcomed as a King.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • To help us think about the story, it's important to ask the right question. For the next few weeks, we will be studying the answer to this big picture question: *What did Jesus do to save us?* You may already know the answer. Let's pay close attention each week to learn more about the answer.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

·Giant Timeline

LEADER • In the very beginning of time, God created the earth, everything on earth, and the whole universe. God created people in His image and loved them

more than the rest of His creation. Sadly, Adam and Eve, the first humans, chose to disobey God. Their sin brought sadness, pain, and death into the world. However, God had a plan all along. He sent His Son. Jesus was born as a human baby and grew into a man. He never sinned and traveled around Israel teaching about God and God's kingdom. Jesus performed miracles and even raised people from the dead! As Jesus grew more popular with the regular people living in Israel, He grew more hated by the religious leaders. They wanted to kill Him! That's where our story picks up.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus' Triumphal Entry."

- Bibles
- "Jesus' Triumphal Entry" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

LEADER • Most of the people living in Israel during Jesus' life would have been pretty familiar with the prophecies contained in the Scriptures. When Jesus came in on a young donkey, the **people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King**—the one God had promised years before. The problem was they only understood part of the truth. They expected Jesus to be an earthly king, setting up an earthly kingdom.

The Roman Empire had conquered the area that included the land of Israel. The people were living under Roman rulers who did not love God or honor Him. The people who worshiped Jesus and said "Hosanna" thought Jesus would defeat the Romans, kick them back to Rome, and give the promised land

back to God’s people. But Jesus came to be an even better kind of King.

Jesus’ kingdom is a heavenly kingdom, and He is our heavenly King. *What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.* Sin and death were defeated. Everyone who has faith in Jesus is forgiven and made new. When Jesus returns, He will set up His eternal kingdom where we will live forever with God.

Christ connection

LEADER • During Jesus’ triumphal entry, the people welcomed Him as King. Jesus was the Messiah spoken about by the prophet Zechariah: “Look, your King is coming to you; He is righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9). One day, Jesus will return to earth on a white horse as King over everything.

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 26, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about what it means to show hospitality. Guide them to discuss ways they can make others feel welcome—at home, school, or church.

• “Unit 26, Session 1”
Questions from Kids
video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Play the “Eric Liddell’s Gift” missions video and then ask if anyone had ever heard about Eric Liddell.

LEADER • Running fast might not seem like something useful for a missionary to do, but Eric Liddell used his talent for running to glorify God. No matter

• “Eric Liddell’s Gift”
missions video

what gifts or talents God has given you, those gifts can help you live on mission for God's kingdom. Living on mission means sharing the gospel with people we meet and showing God's love to everyone around us.

Key passage (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster
• "He Humbled Himself
(Philippians 2:8)"
song

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Philippians 2:8. Then sing the key passage song.

LEADER • Jesus loved God and loved us. He obeyed God even though it meant a painful death. He knew that His death and resurrection was the best way to glorify God and the only way to give us life.

Sing (4 minutes)

• "Jesus Saves" song

LEADER • Let's worship God together.
Sing together "Jesus Saves."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father, thank You for sending Jesus to be our King. Help us love You with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. Give us the wisdom and courage to obey Jesus as our King. 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' Triumphal Entry

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12

STORY POINT: People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster

Assign each kid a word from the key passage. Encourage the kids to say their words in the correct order. Challenge them to see how quickly they can say the whole key passage.

SAY • People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

Jesus was not the earthly king they expected; He is the King of heaven and earth. Jesus is God the Son, yet He became a human and obeyed God's plan to die on the cross. Jesus is the perfect picture of humility and love. He gave up His rightful place in heaven to be treated like a criminal so we could live with God forever. *What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.*

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

• Bibles, 1 per kid
• Story Point Poster
• Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Matthew 21.

Ask which Bible division Matthew is in. (*the Gospels*)

Remind kids that Bible divisions are ways people have organized the Bible to help us study God's Word more easily. Consider showing Jerusalem on the New Testament Israel Map. (*H4*)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why did Jesus send His disciples to get a donkey for Him to ride? (*to fulfill prophecy, Matt. 21:4-5*)
2. What word did the people and the children say in praise of Jesus? (*Hosanna, Matt. 21:9,15*)
3. Where did Jesus go to spend the night? (*Bethany, Matt. 21:17*)
4. Why do you think they people welcomed Jesus with such excitement? *Remind the kids that the people in Jesus' day were looking for an earthly king to conquer their enemies and give them back control of their land. They believed Jesus was the promised King but misunderstood what kind of king He'd be.*
5. When do you feel most excited to worship Jesus? *Guide kids to think through the various ways we worship God, like singing praise, obeying our leaders, and doing our best work in school or sports. Remind them that anything done for God's glory is worship.*
6. Why do you think some people reject Jesus? *Help kids connect this idea to the religious leaders in Jesus' day. They hated Jesus because they did not want to believe they needed help, and they feared losing control over the religious practices of the people. Today, it is much the same. People want to believe they are good on their own. They don't want to believe that their sin is so bad it required Jesus' death, and they don't want to surrender control of their lives to Him.*

SAY • People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.

When we have faith in Jesus, He is the King of our lives. Someday He will come back and set up His perfect kingdom on earth forever.

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

LOW PREP

- “Special Places” printable
- globe

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

- green construction paper
- markers
- scissors
- tape
- paint stirrers, 1 per kid

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Special places

Print and cut apart the “Special Places” printable. Invite volunteers to come help you point out each country on a globe while you read the three strips. You may select strong readers to read the strips for you.

SAY • Those were some places that were important in Eric Liddell’s life. In our lives, different places will end up being important. Think about where you live, go to school, or visit on vacation.

God wants everyone in every nation to hear about Him and believe. Jesus died on the cross to rescue everyone who trusts in Him. The places we go and the places we live are important to God because people everywhere need to hear about Jesus. **People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King,** and someday He will return to set up His eternal kingdom on earth. Everyone who trusts in Him will live in His kingdom forever.

OPTION 2: “Palm” branches

Provide each kid with green construction paper and a paint stirrer. Instruct kids to trace their hand onto their papers as many times as they can fit it. Help the kids cut out their handprints. Kids will need between six and eight handprint cutouts. Show them how to tape the handprints to the paint stirrer in an overlapping manner, with fingers pointed away from the stirrer. When they are finished, it will look like a palm branch.

SAY • **People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.** The people laid down their robes and palm branches to cover the ground in front of Jesus. They sang

songs and worshiped Him. But Jesus was not the earthly king they expected. Jesus had come to set up God's heavenly kingdom.

We can join God's heavenly kingdom by trusting in Jesus. When we have faith that He lived a perfect life for us and died the death we deserve, God forgives our sins and gives us eternal life. When we understand who Jesus is and what He has done for us, we will want to worship Him as King, too!

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. 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 to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

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
- paper
- 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.

Use Week of: **October 11**

Unit 26 • Session 2

Jesus Was Questioned

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 22; Mark 12; Luke 20

STORY POINT:

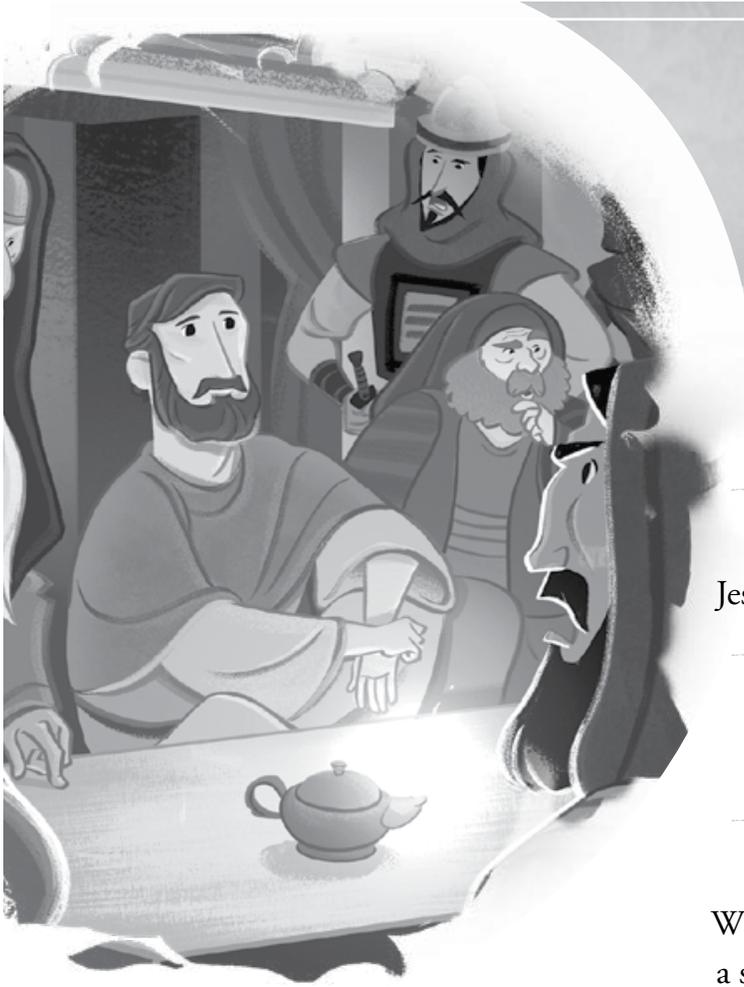
Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.

KEY PASSAGE:

Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.



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ministrygrid.com/gospelproject | gospelproject.com/podcasts

LEADER Bible Study

The religious leaders despised Jesus. He was a threat to their power, and they didn't believe He was the Messiah. The Jews decided to confront Jesus with questions. Perhaps He would misspeak, and they could trap Him with His words. The Pharisees' disciples asked Him, "Teacher, is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

As far as these men were concerned, Jesus could not give a satisfactory answer to this question. If Jesus said God's law required them to pay taxes to Caesar, they could get the Jewish people—who hated paying taxes to the Romans—to turn away from Jesus. If Jesus said God's law did not require them to pay taxes to Caesar, they could convince the Romans to arrest Jesus. But Jesus answered wisely: "Give ... to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). The men were speechless, and they left.

Then an expert in the law asked Jesus which command in God's law is most important. The Pharisees knew the law well and felt prepared to argue. Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5: "Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." Then He emphasized a second command: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). These commands summarize the rest of the law, and the Pharisees could not object.

Jesus turned the tables and asked the Pharisees about the Messiah: "Whose son is he?" The Pharisees recognized the Messiah as the son of David. Jesus referred to Psalm 110, in which David calls the Messiah "Lord." Why would he do that? The Pharisees had no answer. As fully man, Jesus is the son of David. But as fully God, He is greater than David; He is Lord. No one dared to question Jesus again.

When the religious leaders questioned Jesus, He answered with wisdom and power. Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. He has authority in heaven and on earth.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Was Questioned

Matthew 22; Mark 12; Luke 20

The religious leaders heard Jesus teaching in Jerusalem, and they decided to ask tricky questions to catch Him saying something wrong. They sent some men to Jesus. The men said, “Teacher, we know You tell the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”



Jesus knew what they were doing. “Why are you trying to trick Me?” He asked. “Show Me the coin you use to pay taxes.”

The men brought Him a denarius. Jesus asked, “Whose picture is on the coin? Whose name is on it?” “Caesar’s,” they answered.

Jesus said, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and give to God what belongs to God.”

The men were amazed at what Jesus said, and they went away.

Later, the religious leaders came to question Jesus again. “Teacher, which command in the law is the greatest?” they asked.

Jesus answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second most important command is like it: Love your neighbor

as yourself.”

A man said to Jesus, “That’s right. To love God and your neighbor as yourself is far more important than offerings and sacrifices.”

The man answered wisely, and Jesus said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.”

Then Jesus asked the religious leaders a question: “Whose son is the Messiah?”

“David’s,” they said.

“How can that be?” Jesus asked. “David called the Messiah ‘Lord.’ Why would he do that if the Messiah is his son?”

The religious leaders didn’t know what to say. Their plan had failed, and no one was brave enough to ask Him any more questions.

Christ Connection: When the religious leaders questioned Jesus, He answered with wisdom and power. Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. He is the Word of God, who came to show us exactly what God is like. Jesus has authority in heaven and on earth.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Vary your voice:**

Change your voice for different people in the story. Differentiate between Jesus’ dialogue and that of the religious leaders.

- **Show pictures:**

Draw or print out a picture of Jesus, pictures of several religious leaders, and an empty speech bubble. Display the pictures. As you tell the story, move the story bubble between the people to show who is talking.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Questioned

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 22; Mark 12; Luke 20

STORY POINT: Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

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. Prompt kids to share stories about a time they had to answer a hard question at school. How did they figure out the answer?

SAY • We all face many questions that are tricky or difficult to answer. Thankfully, God is perfectly wise, and His Word helps us know the answers to many of life's most difficult questions. Today, we will hear about a time the religious leaders asked Jesus very difficult questions to trick Him into saying something wrong. Do you think their plan worked?

Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Tricky Questions" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Tricky Questions" activity page. Encourage the kids to read the riddles and circle the picture that represents the answer to the riddle.

SAY • Riddles are supposed to be tricky. If you think about the wording of a riddle, there is usually only one answer that makes sense. Today we will learn about a time Jesus answered many tricky questions.

Session starter (10 minutes)**OPTION 1:** Twenty questions

Think of an object and give the kids 20 chances to ask yes or no questions about the object. When they have asked all their questions, see if they know what object you are thinking of. Play additional rounds as time allows. If this is too challenging for your group, consider offering descriptive statements one at a time to see if they can guess the object before you give them 20 statements.

SAY • It took a lot of questions to figure out what object I was thinking about. In our story today, we will learn about a time the religious leaders asked Jesus many questions. However, they weren't playing a game; they wanted to trick Jesus into saying something wrong. What do you think happened to their plan?

OPTION 2: Bible quiz

Provide a Bible to each kid. Ask the kids general questions about the Bible. Award one point to each kid who answers correctly and two bonus points if they can tell you where to find the answer in the Bible.

• Bibles

Suggested questions:

- What is the first book of the Bible? (*Genesis*)
- Where was Jesus born? (*Bethlehem, Luke 2*)
- How many plagues did God send on Egypt? (*10, Exodus 7–11*)
- How many apostles did Jesus choose? (*12, Mark 3*)
- How many books make up the Bible? (*66*)

SAY • Great job with those questions. Let's see what kind of questions the religious leaders asked Jesus.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Questioned

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 22; Mark 12; Luke 20

STORY POINT: Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• gavel

[Leader enters wearing a long black robe and carrying a gavel.]

LEADER • Hey, everyone! Welcome back to my courtroom.

I'm Judge [*your name*]. My job is to make sure justice is done. Whenever people are accused of a crime, they come here with lawyers. There are two teams of lawyers in every case. One team, called the prosecution, tries to show that the accused person is guilty of the crime. The other team of lawyers is called the defense and tries to show that the prosecution is wrong.

In our system, a person is considered innocent until proven guilty by the prosecution. That means that the defense doesn't have to prove the client's innocence, they only have to show that the prosecution is unable to prove guilt. As a result, sometimes the questions the lawyers ask people in court can get a little tricky. Both teams of lawyers

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

will try to catch the other team making a mistake, and a great way to do that is by asking certain questions in very specific ways.

You know, it kind of reminds me of a Bible story. Jesus' enemies wanted to catch Him saying something wrong, so they asked some very tricky questions. Do you think Jesus was surprised? No way! Let me tell you all about it.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • As we talk about our story, it's good to have a big picture question to guide our thinking. Right now our question and answer is: *What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.* Each part of that answer is important. If Jesus had not lived a perfect life, then His death couldn't have paid for our sins. Had Jesus not died, then the punishment for our sins would still fall on us. Had Jesus stayed dead, then we would have no hope of eternal life with God. Jesus did all three things to save us from sin and death.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

• Giant Timeline

LEADER • Jesus is God's Son. He came to earth as a human and traveled Israel teaching about God and His kingdom, performing miracles, healing people, and even raising people from the dead. Jesus' ministry made Him very popular with the people and very unpopular with the religious leaders. Last week we learned that **people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem**

as their King. This week, we will learn about the beginnings of the religious leaders' plan to put a stop to Jesus' ministry.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 22; Mark 12; Luke 20. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus Was Questioned."

- Bibles
- "Jesus Was Questioned" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

LEADER • Wow! Those were some tricky questions. I know for a fact that I wouldn't have been able to answer them. However, **Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.** No matter what kind of question Jesus' enemies asked, He had just the right answer.

The questions they asked were about things that could have easily caused anger if Jesus hadn't been perfectly wise to answer them. Taxes are the money governments charge people to pay for things like roads and armies. No one really likes paying taxes, but the Jews in Jesus' time especially disliked paying taxes to Rome. Rome was an enemy living in their land, and the Jews pay them taxes! The religious leaders were hoping that Jesus would say one of two wrong things.

If Jesus had said, "Yes, it's good to pay taxes to Caesar," the religious leaders would have accused Jesus of being an enemy of God and His people. If Jesus had said, "No, we should not pay taxes," the religious leaders would have tattled on Jesus to the Romans. Jesus' answer was perfect. He showed that governments do have the right to charge some taxes, but we all have a responsibility to live generously

toward God and His people. No matter what question they asked, Jesus had the right answer.

When Jesus finally asked a question of His own, the religious leaders saw that they were outmatched for sure. They thought they had a great understanding of Scripture, but Jesus showed them they understood much less than they thought. The Messiah is both the son of David—because Jesus was a descendant of David—and the Son of God—because He was born to Mary alone and God is His true Father.

Christ connection

LEADER • When the religious leaders questioned Jesus, He answered with wisdom and power. Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. He is the Word of God, who came to show us exactly what God is like. Jesus has authority in heaven and on earth.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 26, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about why the religious leaders hated Jesus. Guide them to discuss how they can love people who reject Jesus.



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Print a copy of the “Not on Sunday” printable. Display the photo of Eric Liddell and read the short story about him. You may choose to select a strong reader to read the story.

LEADER • Eric wanted to be obedient to Jesus in all things, even at the Olympics. We are learning that **Jesus**

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

• “Unit 26, Session 2”
Questions from Kids
video

• “Not on Sunday”
printable

spoke with wisdom and authority, and Eric knew that the words in the Bible are true and should be followed. It was more important to him to do what he believed was right, instead of what his country wanted him to do.

Close in prayer, thanking God for missionaries who are obedient to God. Focus on those your church supports.

Key passage (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster
• “He Humbled Himself
(Philippians 2:8)”
song

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Philippians 2:8. Then sing the key passage song.

LEADER • When sin entered the world, God would have been perfectly just to destroy Adam and Eve. God showed His wonderful love and mercy by working out His perfect plan to save people from sin. Jesus obeyed God perfectly. He left His home in heaven and came to earth. He lived a perfect life and still allowed His enemies to kill Him as though He were a criminal. Jesus’ obedience to God’s plan made the way for us to be saved from sin.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “Jesus Saves” song

LEADER • God is good to us. Let’s sing praises to Him. Sing together “Jesus Saves.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father, thank You for Your love. We know that Jesus is Your Son—perfect in wisdom, power, and authority. Help us have faith in Him. 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 Was Questioned

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 22; Mark 12; Luke 20

STORY POINT: Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- “Key Passage Flip Cards” printable
- pencils

Print the “Key Passage Flip Cards” printable double sided and cut them apart. Ask the kids to start at level one and fill in the missing words of the key passage. After completing each level, challenge the kids to fold the card so previous levels are hidden and play the next hardest level.

SAY • Our key passage comes from a letter written by the apostle Paul. Paul’s writing helps us understand the wonderful nature of Jesus’ sacrifice. Jesus is God’s Son. He obeyed God’s plan to become human and die a death He did not deserve so that we can have life with God forever. Jesus’ humility and love provides our hope for forgiveness and our perfect example of how to live.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Mark 12. Remind them they can use the table of contents to find Mark, and that the large numbers represent the chapters. For the first three questions, ask the kids to find a verse that proves their answer. Consider showing the New Testament Israel Map to point out where Jerusalem is (*H4*).

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why did the religious leaders come to ask Jesus difficult questions? *(to trap Him in His words, catch Him saying something wrong; Mark 12:13)*
2. Whose image was on the coin Jesus asked to see? *(Caesar's, Mark 12:16)*
3. What are the greatest and second greatest commandments? *(to love God with all we have and to love others as ourselves, Mark 12:29-31)*
4. How was Jesus able to answer those tricky questions so well? *Guide kids to think about Jesus' identity. Remind them that, though Jesus is fully human, He is also fully God. Jesus has all the wisdom and authority of God and was able to see through the religious leaders' schemes.*
5. How can we answer with wisdom if people challenge our knowledge of God or the Bible? *Help kids see that the source of wisdom is God Himself. Remind them that God gives wisdom generously to all who ask Him for it in faith. [See James 1:5.] Explain that we gain wisdom by studying God's Word, praying, gathering with other believers, and following the Holy Spirit's guidance.*
6. When is it difficult to trust Jesus' wisdom and authority? *Guide kids to speak honestly about their lives. Acknowledge the difficulty of trusting Jesus in hard or sad times. Help them see that we can trust Him even when we do not understand His plan or why difficult things are happening.*

SAY • The religious leaders wanted to catch Jesus saying something wrong so they could get Jesus in trouble, or get the people to turn against Him. But **Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.**

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

Note: Be sensitive to kids who may be dealing with abuse or neglect. Always report suspicions to proper parties according to the laws where you live and your ministry's policies.

LOW PREP

- dry erase board or poster board
- colored markers

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

- index cards
- pens or pencils

Tip: If any kids write down questions that are better addressed by parents, plan time to help parents answer them.

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: For God's glory

Draw the Olympic rings on a dry erase board or piece of poster board using blue, yellow, black, green, and red markers. Invite kids to write skills and interests they have inside the rings. Encourage them to discuss their gifts and talents.

SAY • God made missionary Eric Liddell fast. Eric used that gift to work hard and go to the Olympics. There, with the whole world watching, he had a chance to share his faith in Jesus. After the Olympics, he went back to China to continue his mission work. How can you use the gifts and skills God gave you to glorify God and grow His kingdom?

OPTION 2: Tricky questions

Help kids write down questions they have about God, Jesus, the Bible, or the gospel. Invite a pastor or elder at your church to come and answer some of the questions the kids have submitted.

SAY • **Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority**, so the religious leaders could not trick Him with hard questions. In life, we face a lot of tricky questions that we may not know the answers to. Thankfully, God has given us ways to learn the answers to the most important questions. God provides us with His Word, the Holy Spirit, and other believers. God's Word tells us what is true about God and ourselves, and the Holy Spirit helps believers—like our pastors, elders, and us—understand God's Word. We won't have all the answers to every question we can think of, but God has given us all the answers we need to

have faith in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. When we do, God forgives our sin and gives us new life with Him forever.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. 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 to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

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
- paper
- 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.

Use Week of: **October 18**

Unit 26 • Session 3

The Last Supper



BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 26; Mark 14;
Luke 22; John 13

STORY POINT:

Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.

KEY PASSAGE:

Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 108



TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 110



APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 116



Leaders, grow on the go! Listen to session-by-session training every week on Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or LifeWay's Digital Pass:
ministrygrid.com/gospelproject | gospelproject.com/podcasts

LEADER Bible Study

As the Passover celebration drew near, Jerusalem hummed with excitement. Everyone wondered if Jesus—teacher, miracle-worker, and prophet—would come for Passover. (John 11:56-57) The Passover meal was a permanent statute God intended for every Israelite family to observe each year. (See Ex. 12:1-28; Lev. 23:5-8.) But it was no secret the religious leaders were determined to kill Jesus. Jesus had warned His disciples what would happen this Passover. (Mark 10:33-34; Luke 18:31)

As they ate the Passover meal, Jesus broke bread and gave it to His disciples. He shared the cup with them too, explaining that the bread and cup represented His body and blood. Jesus established a new covenant.

In the Old Testament, God made a covenant, or promise, with His people. He gave them commandments to follow so they could live in right relationship with Him. But God's people broke the covenant. They didn't obey God, and they didn't love Him.

What the sacrifice of the Passover lamb could not do—take away sins once and for all—the perfect Lamb of God was going to do. Jesus, the perfectly sinless Son of God, was going to take the punishment for sin upon Himself. (See Heb. 10:1-10.) As Jesus' disciples prepared for Passover, Jesus prepared to die. By dying on the cross, Jesus brought forgiveness and made the way for people to know and love God again.

Believers take the Lord's Supper to remember what Jesus did for us in His death and resurrection. We remember God's faithfulness, and we look forward to the day that Jesus will return.

Not all the kids you teach will be ready to take the Lord's Supper at church. Gently explain that the Lord's Supper, like baptism, is an ordinance of the church and is a celebration for those who have repented of their sin and trusted in Jesus for salvation.

The BIBLE Story

The Last Supper

Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 13

Jesus and His disciples were in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover.

Long ago, God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt. He sent ten plagues to Egypt and during the tenth plague, the firstborn of the Egyptians died. The Israelites smeared the blood of a lamb

on their doorposts, and God kept them safe;

He passed over their houses. God said

that once a year, the Israelites should

celebrate the Passover to remember

how He rescued them. He told

His people when and how to

celebrate.

On the day when the Jewish people were supposed

to kill the Passover lamb,

Jesus sent Peter and John to get the meal ready. He said,

“Go into the city, and you will meet a man carrying a jug of water. Follow him.”

Jesus said that the man would go to a house, and the homeowner

would show Peter and John a large

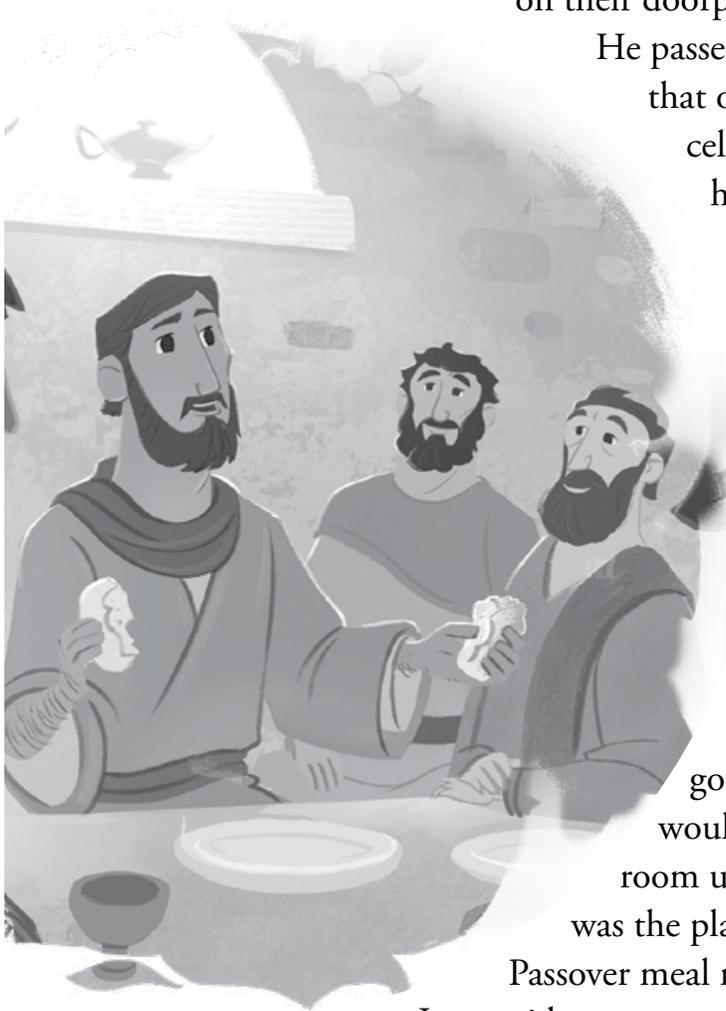
room upstairs with furniture in it. That

was the place Jesus wanted them to get the

Passover meal ready. So Peter and John did as

Jesus said.

When the Passover meal was ready, Jesus and His disciples reclined to eat. Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray Me.” The disciples were upset, but Jesus knew this was part of God’s



plan. Peter said he would never betray Jesus, but Jesus said Peter would deny Him three times.

Then Jesus took the bread, gave thanks to God for it, broke it, and then gave it to His disciples to eat. Jesus said, “This is My body, which I am giving for you. Do this to remember Me.”

Jesus took the cup and gave it to His disciples. They drank from it, and Jesus said, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many.”

They sang a hymn together, and then they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus knew He would be arrested and would suffer. Then He would die on the cross to take the punishment for the sins of the world. On the third day, Jesus would rise from the dead.

Christ Connection: Jesus showed His disciples with the bread and the drink that He is the true Passover Lamb. God’s people had broken the old covenant, and God promised to make a new covenant to forgive sins. The new covenant says that everyone who turns away from sin and trusts in Jesus’ death and resurrection will be forgiven of his sins and will have eternal life.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Display props:** Consider showing the Bible story picture, a toy lamb, a water jug, a depiction of the Last Supper, unleavened bread, and grape juice.
- **Use a flannelgraph:** Print pictures of people and elements in the story (a man carrying a water pitcher, Jesus, the disciples, a long table, bread, and a cup) on heavyweight paper. Use hook-and-loop fasteners to stick the pieces to flannel as you tell the story.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: The Last Supper

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 13

STORY POINT: Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

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. Prompt kids to discuss what foods they would prepare if they were going to have a special meal with all their closest friends.

SAY • We often use special meals to celebrate. Today we will learn about a very special meal Jesus ate with His disciples. They were celebrating Passover together, and Jesus used the meal as a time to teach them many important things He wanted them to remember. What do you think they ate and drank at this special meal?

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Foot Match” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the “Foot Match” activity page. Challenge the kids to match each item or creature on the left with the foot that matches it on the right.

SAY • Great job matching each foot to the object or creature it belonged to. Human feet can be pretty stinky and dirty, but in Jesus’ time, they were even stinkier and dirtier. Would you wash such feet? Jesus did!

Session starter (10 minutes)**OPTION 1:** Setting up a Passover meal

Direct the kids to sit in a circle. Think of a theme such as fruits, vegetables, or foods that start with the same first letter as the speaker's name. Start the game by saying "I'm setting up a Passover; I plan to bring _____" filling in the blank with a food that fits the theme.

Allow each kid to add a dish to the meal. For an added challenge, you can keep the theme secret, and see if kids can figure it out using trial and error.

SAY • If we were really planning a Passover meal, we wouldn't get to choose what foods to make. God gave His people very specific instructions about what to eat at Passover. In our story today, we will learn about very specific instructions Jesus gave to His disciples. Jesus' instructions gave the meal a whole new level of meaning and importance.

OPTION 2: Pass the plate

Instruct the kids to stand in a circle. Give one kid a paper plate, and place 5–10 table tennis balls on the plate.

Challenge the group to pass the plate around the circle without spilling any of the table tennis balls. For an added challenge, consider using a stopwatch to see how quickly the kids can pass the plate around the whole circle without spilling any of the table tennis balls.

SAY • It was tricky to pass that plate without spilling. Today we will learn about a time Jesus passed bread and drink around to all His disciples. Do you know what Jesus said those foods represented? We'll soon learn!

- paper plate
- table tennis balls, 5–10
- stopwatch

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: The Last Supper

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 13

STORY POINT: Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• gavel

[Leader enters wearing a long black robe and carrying a gavel.]

LEADER • Hey, everyone. Welcome back to my courtroom.

My name is Judge [*your name*], and my job is to make sure justice is done. That means that if a person is guilty of a crime, I have to decide what kind of discipline will help make it right for the victims of the crime. But it also means if a person is innocent, I have to make sure he has a fair trial so he can go free.

The process of going through a trial can take a long time: weeks, months, or even years if the case is very complicated. Thankfully, I can call a recess—that's like a break in the trial—to do things like eat lunch, or go home at the end of the day.

That actually reminds me of our next Bible story. Jesus and His disciples were preparing to eat a very special meal together: the Passover feast. Though, when I call a recess for lunch, the important

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

discussions stop until we come back to start the trial again. In Jesus' case, He had a lot of important things to explain to His disciples while they ate!

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • As we learn about the Last Supper, it will be very important to remember our big picture question and answer: ***What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.*** Each part of that answer is extremely important. If any single piece of that puzzle hadn't happened, there would be no salvation from sin. Jesus' perfect life meant He could be the perfect sacrifice and take away our sins. His death meant that He did pay the debt we owed. His resurrection means that His sacrifice was enough. We have hope for eternal life. Faith in Jesus makes us new creations who live with God for all time. God gives us Jesus' righteousness and adopts us as sons and daughters.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. • Giant Timeline

LEADER • As Jesus traveled around Israel teaching and working miracles, many people began to follow Him. **People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.** They believed He would be the conqueror who would free them from Roman authority. But the religious leaders hated Jesus. Despite their best efforts to trick Him, **Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.** This made the religious leaders hate Him all the more. They made a plan to kill Jesus, but their

plan was all wrapped up in God's perfect plan. Jesus knew He would soon die. He spent His last night as a free man eating dinner with and teaching His disciples.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 13. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "The Last Supper."

- Bibles
- "The Last Supper" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

LEADER • Jesus knew all along that the time was coming for Him to be arrested and put to death. Passover was an incredibly important celebration for God's people, and Jesus made it even more special and significant. Jesus used the bread and the cup to show a picture of what He was preparing to do for us.

Jesus explained that the bread represented His body. Jesus allowed evil men to arrest Him. He did not fight back when they hurt Him and made fun of Him. He laid down His life willingly.

The cup represented Jesus' blood. The wounds Jesus suffered caused Him to bleed. Generations before, the blood of a spotless lamb had been the mark of a house that trusted God and had saved God's people from death. At the cross, Jesus shed His blood to save people from an even greater death. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice. We do this in many ways, but one of the most important is by taking the Lord's Supper, or communion. Different churches practice this in

different ways. Some may pass a plate with a lot of small crackers and another with many small cups of grape juice. Others may use larger bits of bread and dip it into the cup. The important thing isn't how a church takes communion, but that they remember Jesus and honor His sacrifice through obedience. Communion is like baptism in some ways: it is for those who already have faith in Jesus, and it cannot save you. It is a symbol to you and the rest of the world of what Jesus did for you.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus showed His disciples with the bread and the drink that He is the true Passover Lamb. God's people had broken the old covenant, and God promised to make a new covenant to forgive sins. The new covenant says that everyone who turns away from sin and trusts in Jesus' death and resurrection will be forgiven of his sins and will have eternal life.

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 26, Session 3" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about why Jesus wanted us to remember His sacrifice. Guide them to discuss any questions they have about how your church celebrates the Lord's Supper.

• "Unit 26, Session 3" Questions from Kids video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Print and cut apart the "Eric Liddell Facts." Select strong readers to read the strips in order.

LEADER • Eric Liddell gave his life serving Jesus. Even when it was dangerous, he did not leave China

• "Eric Liddell Facts" printable

but chose to stay and continue the mission work. We know that **Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice**. Eric remembered Jesus' sacrifice and was willing to sacrifice his own life. Missionaries today are serving all over the world and are willing to sacrifice their own lives for Jesus because He gave His life for us.

Pray for the missionaries your church supports.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Philippians 2:8. Then sing the key passage song.

LEADER • Jesus wanted to glorify God and rescue us. He obeyed God's plan even though it meant a painful and shameful death on the cross. Jesus never sinned, but He allowed sinful people to put Him to death as if He were a terrible criminal.

Sing (4 minutes)

LEADER • The Lord's Supper isn't the only way to celebrate Jesus' sacrifice for us. We can sing praises to Him as well! Let's do that together.

Sing together "Jesus Saves."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • God, thank You for sending Jesus. Help us remember His sacrifice daily. Thank You for providing a way for believers to celebrate Him through the Lord's Supper. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

• Key Passage Poster
• "He Humbled Himself
(Philippians 2:8)"
song

• "Jesus Saves" song

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: The Last Supper

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 13

STORY POINT: Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- Allergy Alert
- balloon

Inflate a balloon and tie it off. Direct the kids to stand in a circle. Toss the balloon into their midst and challenge them to keep the balloon aloft, bopping it each time they say a word of the key passage. If a kid bops the balloon without saying a word or allows the balloon to hit the ground, restart the game. Play until the kids complete the entire key passage at least once. You may wish to institute a rule that no kid may bop the balloon twice in a row, or that each kid must bop the balloon at least once.

SAY • Jesus specifically chose Paul to preach the gospel. In our key passage, Paul explained the amazing fact that Jesus was perfectly obedient to God—to the point of dying on the cross for us. His death and resurrection give us life.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Luke 22. Consider showing the Old Testament Mediterranean Map to point out where Egypt was during the first Passover (*H7*) and the New Testament Israel Map to point out the location of Jerusalem. (*H4*)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Whom did Jesus send to prepare the Passover? (*Peter and John, Luke 22:8*)
2. What two items did Jesus share with His disciples as a way to remember His sacrifice? (*the bread and the cup, Luke 22:19-20*)
3. What did Jesus say Peter would do three times before the morning came? (*deny that he knew Jesus, Luke 22:34*)
4. Why is the Lord's Supper so important? *Guide kids to think less about the specific foods used and more about the symbolism of the meal. Remind them that Jesus' sacrifice was a choice. He did not have to allow His enemies to hurt and kill Him. The Lord's Supper is a meaningful way for us to honor Jesus by obeying Him. The Lord's Supper is a beautiful picture of what Jesus did for us in dying on the cross.*
5. Who can participate in taking the Lord's Supper? *Guide kids to think about the importance of the bread and the cup. Remind them that only those who have faith in Jesus' death and resurrection have salvation from sin. Those who reject Jesus or who have not yet come to faith do not participate in the Lord's Supper.*
6. What other ways do we remember and celebrate Jesus' sacrifice for us? *Direct kids to think about when most churches gather. Discuss the hymns and songs we sing. Remind the kids that we celebrate Easter in the springtime. Talk about the burial and resurrection symbolism of baptism.*

SAY • Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice. Christians today remember the same way.

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

LOW PREP

- play money coin
- pillow
- piece of sports equipment
- clock

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

- elements of the Lord's Supper as your church observes it

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Give it up

Bring in four objects: a play money coin, a pillow, a piece of sports equipment, and a clock. Set up four stations around the room. Place one of the objects at each station. Guide the kids around the room to visit each station and think through how obeying God might require us to change our thoughts about:

- our treasures or money (giving to missions)
- our comfort (going somewhere difficult)
- our hobbies (learning new hobbies or sharing hobbies with new people)
- our time (volunteering to serve others)

SAY • Obeying God often requires us to sacrifice things that we enjoy. Missionary Eric Liddell sacrificed everything, even his life, to be obedient to God in China. God may not call us to give up everything we enjoy, but He does want us to be willing to sacrifice for His sake. **Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.**

Pray, thanking God for Jesus' sacrifice. Ask Him to help us sacrifice for the Kingdom, like Eric Liddell did and like missionaries your church supports do.

OPTION 2: The Lord's Supper

Set up a display that shows the elements of the Lord's Supper as your church observes it. Walk the kids through the process and explain why your church observes the Lord's Supper in this way. Ensure kids understand who may participate (*believers*) and why (*to obey Jesus and remember His sacrifice*). To avoid hurt feelings and inappropriate participation, do not allow kids to take communion at this

time. Any kids who wish to take communion should be directed to their parents, a pastor, or an elder at your church to discuss their salvation.

SAY • Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice. One of the biggest ways we do that is by taking communion, also known as the Lord's Supper. Different churches practice this act in different ways, but the meaning is the same for all believers. The bread we eat represents Jesus' body, which was broken for us. The drink we use represents Jesus' blood, which was spilled for us. When we have faith in Jesus' perfect life, death, and resurrection, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life. We then obey God out of love for Him, which also means remembering Jesus' sacrifice in the way He said to.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

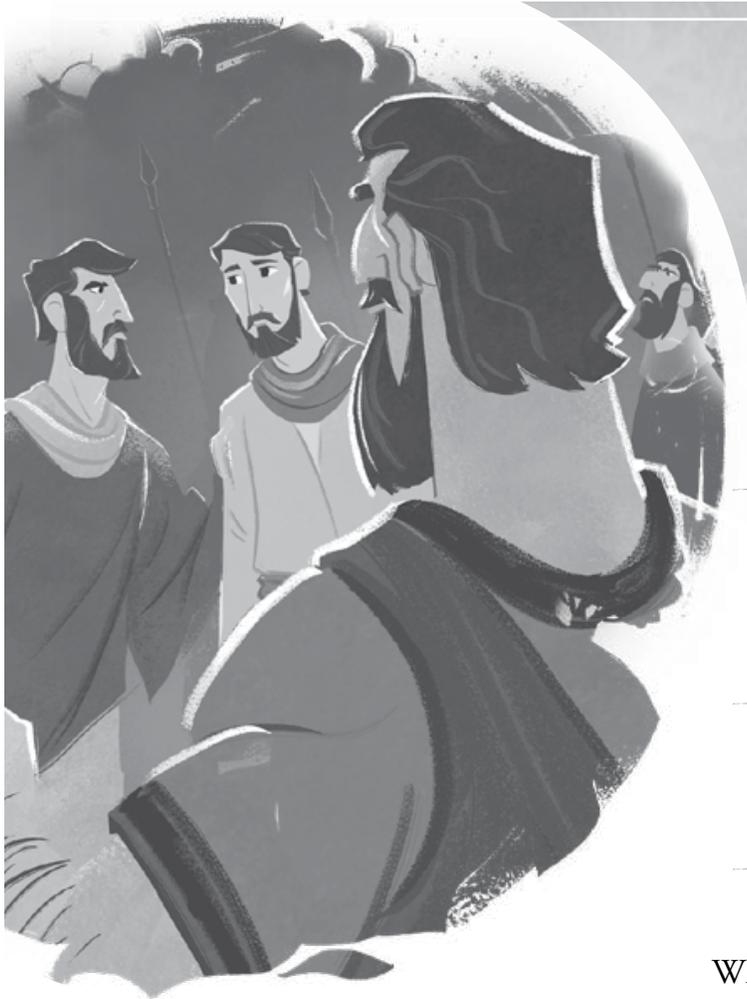
- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

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
- paper
- 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.



Use Week of: **October 25**

Unit 26 • Session 4

Jesus Was Arrested

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 26–27

STORY POINT:

Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.

KEY PASSAGE:

Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 124



TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 126



APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 132



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LEADER Bible Study

The Pharisees and other Jews in Jerusalem did not like Jesus. He didn't play by their rules (Matt. 12:1-14), He claimed to be God (John 8:58-59; 10:22-33), and He extended salvation beyond the Jewish people (Luke 4:27). So they plotted several times how they might kill Him.

The events leading up to His death did not surprise Jesus. Each step was part of God's established plan. (See Isa. 53:10; Acts 2:23.) But knowing God's plan didn't lessen Jesus' suffering as He was betrayed by His friends, arrested, falsely accused, and beaten. As you teach kids about the arrest of Jesus, help them understand the gravity of the events.

First, Jesus wanted to do God's plan. Jesus came to earth to rescue people from sin. He was committed to doing the Father's will. (Matt. 26:39,42) When Judas showed up with a crowd, Jesus didn't run. He didn't even allow Peter to stand in His defense. (Matt. 26:52) Jesus willingly gave Himself up for us because He loves us. (Eph. 5:2)

Second, Jesus was betrayed and arrested even though He did nothing wrong. The Jews tried to find a legitimate reason to kill Jesus, but they couldn't find one. (Matt. 26:59-60) Jesus did what we failed to do; He perfectly obeyed the law. His arrest was not just. The trial was not fair. But this had to happen. Only a sinless, perfect sacrifice could take away sin. (Heb. 9:11-14)

Finally, Jesus is who He says He is. After Jesus' arrest, the high priest asked Jesus if He was the Son of God. Jesus affirmed that He is. (Matt. 26:64) The high priest accused Him of blasphemy (speaking against God), but Jesus always told the truth.

Jesus felt the pain of betrayal and the agony of His imminent suffering and death. He came to do His Father's plan no matter what in order to bring salvation to the world.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Was Arrested

Matthew 26–27

Jesus came with His disciples to a garden called Gethsemane (geth SEM uh nih). He said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” **Jesus took three of His disciples into the garden, and Jesus**

became very sad and troubled. Jesus told the three disciples to stay there, and He went a little farther. **Jesus fell facedown and prayed, “Father! If it is possible, spare Me from this. But I want to do Your plan.”**

Jesus came back and found the three disciples asleep.

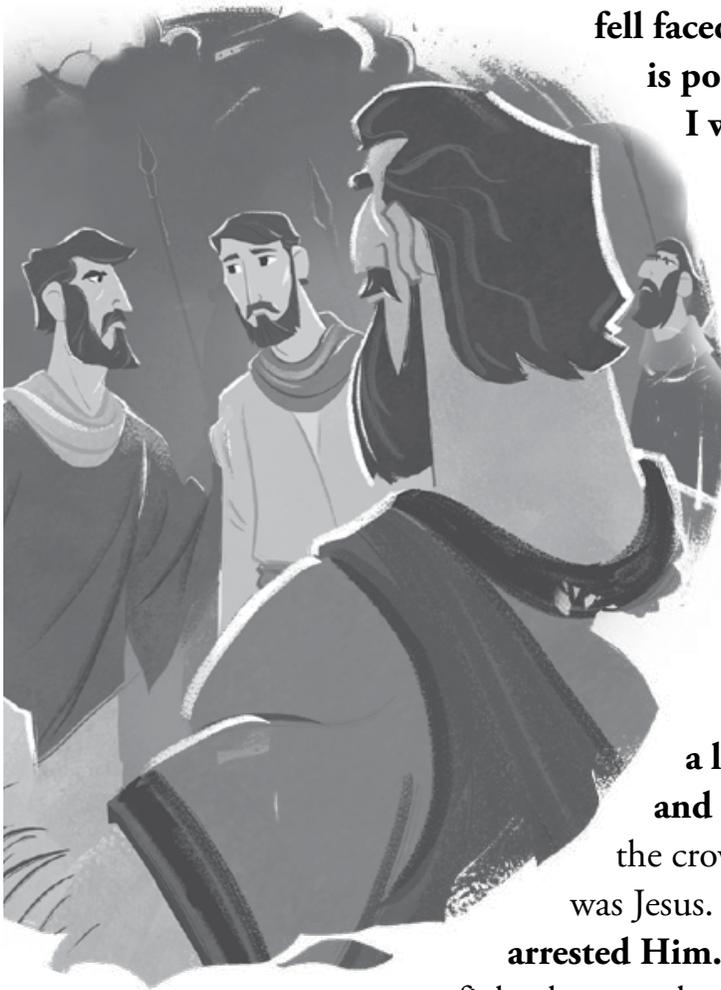
He asked Peter, “Couldn’t you stay awake with Me for one hour?” **Jesus went away and prayed a second time.**

Then He found His disciples sleeping again. **He said, “Are you still asleep? Get up, for it is almost time. Someone is going to betray Me.”**

Suddenly Judas arrived with a large crowd carrying swords and clubs. Judas kissed Jesus so the crowd would know which man was Jesus. **The men grabbed Jesus and arrested Him.**

Peter pulled out his sword to fight the men, but Jesus told Peter to put away his sword. Jesus said, “Isn’t this what God planned all along?” **Jesus’ followers ran away, but Peter stayed nearby to watch.**

The men who arrested Jesus led Him to the house of Caiaphas the



high priest. The religious leaders wanted a reason to kill Jesus, but they couldn't find one. The high priest asked, "Do You have anything to say? Are You the Messiah, the Son of God?"

Jesus replied, "Yes, that's right."

The high priest said, "Ah ha! He has spoken against God." **Caiaphas and the religious leaders did not want to believe that Jesus is God's Son. They said Jesus was lying, but Jesus was telling the truth! The crowd said, "He deserves to die!"** They spit in Jesus' face and hit Him.

A servant saw Peter and asked, "Aren't you one of Jesus' disciples?" "No, I'm not!" Peter said. Twice more as Peter watched what was happening to Jesus, someone asked him if he was a follower of Jesus. Peter lied. "No!" he said. "I don't even know Him!"

The next morning, the religious leaders decided how they would kill Jesus. Then they took Him to Pilate, the governor.

Christ Connection: Jesus knew that His death was God's plan to save people from sin. Jesus' friends turned against Him and He was arrested and put on trial, but Jesus followed His Father's plan in order to bring salvation to the world.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Act it out:** Recruit adult volunteers to act out the roles in the story. If available, dress in Bible times clothing and use props. Tell the story as the narrator while volunteers act it out.
- **Vary your voice:** Change the way you speak as you read dialogue for each person or use adult volunteers to help you with the story by assigning them to "voice" a person in the story while you act as the narrator.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Arrested

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26–27

STORY POINT: Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

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. Prompt kids to tell about a time they were grounded or put in time out.

SAY • When we break rules, there are usually consequences. That may mean being in time out or losing privileges. Adults who break the law may be arrested or put in jail. Today we will hear about a time Jesus was arrested, even though He never did anything wrong or against the law.

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. Challenge the kids to find the seven changes between the two versions of the Bible story picture.

SAY • Great job examining that picture to find the changes. Some were really hard to see. Today we will learn about the time Jesus was arrested. However, no matter how hard Jesus’ enemies looked at His life, they couldn’t find any sins; Jesus is perfect and never sinned!

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Red light, green light

Invite the kids to stand along one wall. Select one kid to stand at the opposite wall, facing away from the rest of the group. When she says “green light,” the other kids may move across the room to reach her. When she says “red light,” she may turn around to try and catch kids who are still moving. Any kid caught moving on a red light must return to the starting position.

SAY • If you broke the rules of that game, you had to start over. It is difficult to play a game like red light, green light perfectly. It is impossible to live our lives perfectly. We all have sin. The only exception is Jesus, who never sinned. Today we will learn about a time Jesus was arrested even though He did not do anything wrong.

OPTION 2: Paper chains

Help the kids make paper chains by connecting looped strips of paper together like links. Provide time for kids to slip their hands into the links at the ends of their chains to pretend they are handcuffs. Allow the kids to break free of their chains, if they wish.

SAY • If you are actually going to arrest someone, you need much stronger chains than these! Today we will hear about a time Jesus was arrested. Jesus is God’s Son, so the only way any chains could hold Him is if He allowed it to happen. Why would Jesus allow His enemies to arrest Him? We’ll learn more soon.

**LOW
PREP**

• tape (optional)

• strips of paper
• tape

Tip: Be sensitive to kids whose parents or family members may be imprisoned.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Arrested

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26–27

STORY POINT: Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Countdown

· countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

· leader attire
· gavel

[Leader enters wearing a long black robe and carrying a gavel.]

LEADER • Hi, everyone. My name is Judge *[your name]*, and this is my courtroom. I hope and pray that each of you won't have to see the inside of a courtroom unless it is for something educational like a field trip or joyful like an adoption. I don't really get to handle adoptions though. My courtroom hears mostly criminal cases.

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

Criminal cases start out with an arrest. When the police have evidence that seems to suggest a certain person may be guilty, they can get a warrant, which means they have permission to arrest the person and take him or her to jail. But that's the beginning of the process. The accused is allowed to hire a lawyer or the government will provide one. The lawyer helps the accused person come up with a plan to show they are not guilty. As you might imagine, the whole

process can get very complicated very quickly, but that's the general idea of how things work.

Speaking of arrests, our Bible story today is about the time Jesus was arrested. Normally, you can't be arrested unless you've broken the law, but Jesus' enemies didn't want to treat Him fairly; they only wanted to get rid of Him.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Jesus is God's Son, so no one could have arrested Him without His allowing them to. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him** because He knew it was part of God's plan to save us. *What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.* Through those actions, Jesus made the way for us to be declared righteous by God. Jesus took on our sin at the cross and God gives us Jesus' righteousness. When Jesus rose again, His resurrection proved His sacrifice was enough.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. · Giant Timeline

LEADER • The week before Jesus' death was kind of like an emotional roller coaster. At the start of the week, **people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.** But soon, His enemies were plotting to kill Him. Their first plan to catch Him saying something wrong didn't work. **Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.** Then Jesus shared a special Passover meal with His followers. **Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.** That's where we pick up.

- Bibles
- “Jesus Was Arrested” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 26–27. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Was Arrested.”

LEADER • Have you ever known the right thing to do but been afraid to do it? In a way, that’s what Jesus felt as He prayed in the garden the night He was arrested. Jesus knew God’s plan, and He wanted to obey. But obeying God’s plan meant being hurt, made fun of, spat on, hit, and killed. Jesus asked God for another way, but He was committed to God’s plan.

Even in the middle of this difficult time, Jesus put God’s glory above His feelings. When the men led by Judas came to arrest Jesus, He did not fight back. He did not even let Peter fight back. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.**

The Jewish Scriptures explained how to have a trial if you thought someone had broken a law. The religious leaders threw all that out when it came to Jesus. They didn’t care about fairness or justice; they just wanted Jesus dead. What they didn’t know is that God was using their evil plans to work out His wonderful one.

The Old Testament is filled with stories of hard, scary, and sad situations happening to people. Each and every time, God used the sad things to do something beautiful and glorious. God used Job’s suffering to show His power and sovereignty. God used Joseph’s slavery to save his whole family from a famine. God used Esther’s forced marriage to protect His people from Haman. And now, God was preparing the saddest and most unfair thing ever to

make the way for us to be saved.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus knew that His death was God’s plan to save people from sin. Jesus’ friends turned against Him and He was arrested and put on trial, but Jesus followed His Father’s plan in order to bring salvation to the world.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 26, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about Jesus’ sinless life. Guide them to discuss what we should do when we have sinned.



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Play the “Why Olympics?” missions video. Then ask kids which Olympic events they enjoy watching most.

LEADER • We’ve been learning about missionary Eric Liddell, who won a gold medal at the Olympics in 1924. Missionaries today still look for ways to share the gospel during the Olympic games. In fact, Christians from all over the world go to the Olympics because they can meet people from many countries at one event. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him** and crucify Him because He wanted people all over the world to be saved.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Philippians 2:8. Then sing the key passage song.

LEADER • **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.** He is God the Son, and no one can do anything apart from

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

• “Unit 26, Session 4”
Questions from Kids
video

• “Why Olympics?”
missions video

• Key Passage Poster
• “He Humbled Himself
(Philippians 2:8)”
song

God's allowing it to happen. Jesus' death on the cross wasn't unexpected. It was the high point of God's plan all along. Our key passage reminds us that Jesus was obeying God the Father. He died because that was the way to give God the most glory and make the way for people to live with Him forever.

Sing (4 minutes)

• "Jesus Saves" song

LEADER • Jesus is our Savior. Let's sing praises to Him because of who He is and what He did for us. Sing together "Jesus Saves."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father, thank You that Jesus was courageous in the face of great difficulties. Thank You that He perfectly obeyed Your plan to save us. Help us obey You out of love. Help us be bold in the face of scary times. 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 Was Arrested

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26–27

STORY POINT: Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- index cards
- pen

Write each word or phrase of the key passage on a separate index card. Invite volunteers to say the key passage from memory. Praise each kid's effort and encourage all the kids to continue working on the key passage. Then, distribute each card to a kid. Ask the kids to arrange themselves in key passage order and sit down. Then say the key passage with each kid standing when his word or phrase is spoken.

SAY • Jesus chose to lay down His life so that we could live with God forever. Jesus is the Son of God, and He obeyed God perfectly, even going to the cross. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.** Jesus willingly laid down His life.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Matthew 26. Encourage the kids to use the table of contents to find Matthew. Remind them that Matthew is the first book of the New Testament. Ask a volunteer to provide the names of the book before and the book after Matthew. (*Malachi, Luke*) You may allow a strong reader to read a few verses from Mathew 26.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. What did Jesus pray in the garden? (*“Let this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will,”* Matt. 26:39)
2. Which disciple betrayed Jesus and how? (*Judas, with a kiss; Matt. 26:47-49*)
3. How did Jesus respond when the high priest told Jesus to say if He is the Messiah? (*Jesus agreed, Matt. 26:64*)
4. Why do you think Peter denied knowing Jesus? *Guide kids to discuss the fear Peter surely felt. If the religious leaders had arrested Jesus, what would stop them from also arresting and punishing Jesus’ followers? Peter was focused on his own physical well-being and comfort, not on Jesus.*
5. When might we feel tempted to pretend we don’t know Jesus? *Guide kids to discuss the pressure the world will put on them to disobey God. Remind them that Satan is always working to convince people to worship things or people other than God. It may feel easier or more comfortable to ignore Jesus, but we are called to boldly preach the gospel to all.*
6. What is something difficult or scary that God may ask you to do? *Guide kids to think through situations they may face now or in the future. Remind them that no matter what situations we face, we always have hope for the future. Someday Jesus will return and destroy all evil, fixing the world for us to live with God forever.*

SAY • Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him. He knew that God’s plan would be painful, scary, sad, and very difficult. He obeyed anyway and went to the cross to take the punishment we deserve. He is our Savior.

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

- flashlight
- tissue paper
- tape

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

LOW PREP

- plastic cup
- music

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Torch pass prayer

Make a simple Olympic torch by taping tissue paper around the top of a flashlight. Show the torch to kids and ask if they have seen the Olympic torch on the television. Encourage kids to spread out in the room. Assign a volunteer to hold the torch and say a prayer aloud for missionaries who shared the gospel in Japan and the people who heard the gospel. After she prays, ask her to pass the torch to a friend. Continue until every kid has had a chance to hold the torch and pray.

SAY • Every four years, the world holds the Olympic Games. Before the games start, a relay race carries the torch to the location where the games will happen, and a much larger torch is lit with the small one. At the 2020 Summer Olympics, missionaries in Japan created a prayer guide that went with the places where the Olympic torch would be. We can be a part of God's mission on earth when we pray for missionaries and those who hear the gospel.

OPTION 2: Pass the cup

Invite the kids to sit in a circle. Give one kid a plastic cup. While you play music, the kids will pass the cup around the circle. When you stop the music, whoever is holding the cup must say the big picture question and answer, story point, or key passage from memory.

SAY • In the garden, Jesus prayed that God would spare Him from dying on the cross. Even so, Jesus knew that there was no other way for us to have forgiveness and eternal life. Jesus obeyed God even though it was difficult and scary. **Jesus allowed His enemies**

to arrest Him. Jesus wanted to obey God and glorify Him, even though it meant death on the cross.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. 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 to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

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
- paper
- 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.

Use Week of: **November 1**

Unit 26 • Session 5 Jesus' Crucifixion

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 26–27; John 18–19

STORY POINT:

Jesus died on the cross to pay
for our sins.

KEY PASSAGE:

Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived
a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose
from the dead.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 140



TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
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APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
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Leaders, grow on the go! Listen to session-by-session training every week on
Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or LifeWay's Digital Pass:
ministrygrid.com/gospelproject | gospelproject.com/podcasts

LEADER Bible Study

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 rescue sinners from slavery to sin, and when we trust in Him, we are free indeed.

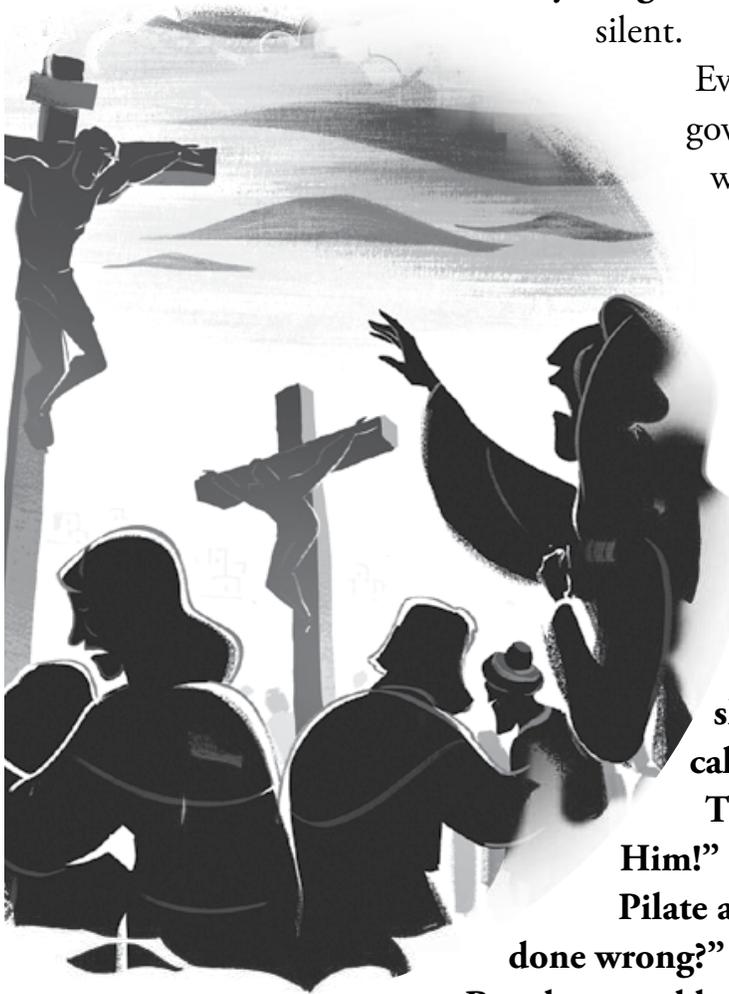
The BIBLE Story

Jesus' Crucifixion

Matthew 26–27; John 18–19

Jesus stood before Pilate, the governor. Pilate asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

Jesus answered, “Yes, that’s right.” Then the religious leaders made accusations against Jesus, but Jesus did not say anything. Pilate was surprised that Jesus was silent.



Every year at Passover, the governor would free a prisoner—whichever prisoner the people chose. At that time, there was a prisoner named Barabbas (buh RAB uhs) who was very dangerous. So Pilate asked the crowd, “Who do you want me to set free? Barabbas or Jesus, who is called the Messiah?”

The crowd answered, “Barabbas!”

Pilate asked, “Then what should I do with Jesus, who is called the Messiah?”

The crowd answered, “Crucify Him!”

Pilate asked, “Why? What has He done wrong?”

But the crowd kept shouting, “Crucify Him!”

Pilate’s soldiers took Jesus to the governor’s palace and gathered around Him. They took off His clothes and put a scarlet robe on Him. They made a crown of thorns and put it on His head. Then

they hit Jesus and mocked Him. “Hail, King of the Jews!” they said.

The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross. Then they cast lots to decide who would get His clothes. **They put a sign above His head that said: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Two criminals were crucified next to Him.**

As Jesus was on the cross, people mocked Him. “He saved others, but He cannot save Himself!” they said.

From noon until three in the afternoon, darkness covered the land. Then **Jesus cried out, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” Jesus shouted again with a loud voice, “It is finished!” Then Jesus died.** Suddenly, the curtain in the temple sanctuary split in two, from top to bottom, and there was an earthquake. One of the men near the cross said, “This man really was God’s Son!”

Jesus was buried in a rich man’s tomb cut into a rock. A stone was sealed in front of the tomb and Roman soldiers stood guard so that no one could steal Jesus’ body.

Christ Connection: 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 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.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Draw the story:** As you tell the story, show simple drawings of elements from the story. Or ask an adult volunteer to draw corresponding images on a dry erase board or large sheet of paper.
- **Use props:** Display props related to the story (scarlet robe, crown of thorns, large nail, torn curtain, picture of tomb). Consider playing a sound effect of falling rocks when you tell about the earthquake after Jesus’ death.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Crucifixion

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26–27; John 18–19

STORY POINT: Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

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. Prompt kids to tell about times they did something to help someone else.

SAY • Helping others is a great way to show you love them and God. Sometimes, we might have to sacrifice, or give up, something we enjoy in order to help someone else. For example, to help your parents prepare dinner, you may have to give up some time you would have spent playing with your friends. Today we will learn about the greatest sacrifice—and show of love—that has ever happened. Can you guess what it is?

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Connect the Cross” activity page,
- 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the “Connect the Cross” activity page. Invite the kids to draw lines to connect the dots in numerical order.

SAY • When you finished, those dots revealed three crosses. Today we will learn about Jesus’ death on a cross. He was killed alongside criminals, but He never sinned.

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Crime and punishment

Write silly ideas for crimes on index cards, such as eating too many bananas, wearing more than one hat at a time, or sleeping in your shoes. Allow the kids to take turns drawing cards and brainstorming ideas for punishments that might fit the given crime. End the game with a card that says *live a perfectly holy and obedient life*.

SAY • Obviously, none of those crimes were really illegal. No one will be punished for eating too many bananas, though if you do, you could get a stomachache. But that last card was especially odd. Today we will learn about a time Jesus was punished despite living a perfectly holy and obedient life.

LOW PREP

- index cards
- pens

OPTION 2: Ink blob art

Before the session, place a small blob of black ink near the center of each sheet of heavyweight paper. Fold the sheets in half, forcing the ink to spread into an abstract shape. Unfold the sheets and allow them to dry. During the session, distribute an ink blob sheet to each kid. Give them time to turn their blob into an artwork using crayons, markers, or colored pencils.

SAY • Those blobs of ink looked like mistakes. Even so, you were able to turn them into wonderful works of art. In a similar way, God can take any sad, scary, or difficult situation and turn it into something wonderful. Today we will learn about the saddest day in history and why we call that day *Good Friday*.

- heavyweight paper,
1 sheet per kid
- black ink
- crayons, markers, or
colored pencils

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Crucifixion

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26–27; John 18–19

STORY POINT: Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• gavel

[Leader enters wearing a long black robe and carrying a gavel. He or she looks very sad.]

LEADER • Hello, everyone. I'm glad you are here.

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

Sometimes being a judge is really difficult. It always feels good to help justice flow through our nation, but at times the weight of this job can feel unbearable. When you hear about some of the awful things people do, it can feel like there's no hope. Thankfully, I know that no matter what crimes are committed or how hard it might be to ensure the bad guys are always caught and prosecuted fairly, there is always hope.

The hope we have doesn't come from a criminal justice system. It doesn't come from laws or government. It doesn't come from lawyers, judges, or any people at all. It comes from God. Our hope comes from the work that Jesus did to save us.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • That brings us to our big picture question and answer. *What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.* We have hope because of God's perfect plan to send His Son, Jesus. He lived a life without any sin, perfectly obeying all of God's laws. He died the death we deserve to die, as though He were a criminal guilty of sin. Then, He rose again to prove His sacrifice was perfect and complete. When we have faith in Jesus, God says we are righteous with Jesus' righteousness and gives us eternal life. Hope comes from the truth of the gospel.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

· Giant Timeline

LEADER • You may remember that a few weeks back we learned about Jesus' triumphal entry. **People welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.** They sang praises to Him and followed Him lovingly. When the religious leaders tried to trick Him, **Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.** While eating the Passover meal, **Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.** Then, Jesus went to pray in the garden, where Judas betrayed Him. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.** Today, we'll see what happened after Jesus' enemies arrested Him.

· Bibles
· "Jesus' Crucifixion" video
· Big Picture Question Poster
· Bible Story Picture Poster
· Story Point Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 26–27; John 18–19. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help

you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus’ Crucifixion.”

LEADER • This story is the saddest story in the history of the world. All people are guilty of sin, and the Bible teaches that we all deserve death. Jesus is the only Person who ever lived who did not deserve death, and He experienced one of the saddest and most painful kinds of death.

Though a week before the people had praised Jesus, now the crowds laughed at Him, called Him names, and demanded that Pilate nail Him to a cross. The people even called for a murderer named Barabbas to be set free. They preferred a dangerous criminal be on the loose rather than Jesus.

It’s important to realize that Jesus could have stopped the whole process at any time if He had chosen to. Jesus could have explained to Pilate how He had not broken any laws. He could have used His power as God to instantly transport Himself away from His enemies. But instead, Jesus chose to let the evil plan happen. Jesus knew that the evil plan of His enemies was just a small piece of God’s wonderful, unstoppable plan!

And so, Jesus carried a cross to a hill outside the city and allowed the Romans to nail His hands and feet to it. **Jesus died on the cross for our sins**—on purpose, of His own free will.

Christ connection

LEADER • 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 died in our place. He

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

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.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 26, Session 5” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about why we do good deeds. Guide them to discuss the ways doing good things can point others to Jesus.

· “Unit 26, Session 5”
Questions from Kids
video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Display the “Connect 2020” printable and read the three goals of that ministry to the kids.

· “Connect 2020”
printable

LEADER • The Bible teaches us that **Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.** This is what we want to teach people all over the world. Missionaries in Japan knew they would have a unique opportunity to reach many nations during the Olympics. They created a ministry called Connect 2020 to direct their Olympic missions efforts. Even though the 2020 Olympics are over, the missionary efforts in Japan are still going. We can be a part of them by praying for the missionaries working there and the people who will hear the gospel.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Philippians 2:8. Then sing the key passage song.

· Key Passage Poster
· “He Humbled Himself
(Philippians 2:8)”
song

LEADER • We learned today about the story our key passage is based on. Paul explained that Jesus didn’t die because He deserved to or because He had no control

over the situation. Jesus died on the cross because He was obedient to God’s plan—100 percent, all the way. We have forgiveness and eternal life because of Jesus’ perfect obedience, including His death and resurrection.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “Jesus Saves” song

LEADER • Jesus is the wonderful Savior God sent for us. We do not deserve Him, but because of God’s grace, we don’t have to work to earn salvation. Faith is a gift from God. Let’s sing praises to Him.

Sing together “Jesus Saves.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father, thank You for sending Jesus. Thank You that He obeyed Your plan. Thank You for loving us and giving us grace. Help us obey You as Jesus did and love You with all our hearts, minds, and strength. 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' Crucifixion

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26–27; John 18–19

STORY POINT: Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- pool noodles, 2
- scissors
- permanent markers
- hula hoops

Before the session, cut the pool noodles into sections that are about two inches in length. Write each word of the key passage on a section of pool noodle. Cut a slit along each section of noodle so that they can be placed onto a hula hoop. During the session, challenge the kids to place the key passage on the hula hoop in order. Then allow volunteers to say the key passage from memory. Praise each kid's efforts and encourage kids to continue working to memorize the key passage.

SAY • **Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins.** God could have chosen to allow all of us to die apart from Him, but Jesus obeyed God's plan and came to earth to rescue us. Jesus is the perfect example of what obedience and love looks like. He is our Savior.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find John 19. Consider using the New Testament Israel Map to point our Jerusalem (*H4*). Ask the kids which books contain accounts of Jesus' crucifixion. (*Matthew–John*) Remind the kids that the Gospels also tell of Jesus' life and ministry.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. How many men were crucified with Jesus? (*two, John 19:18*)
2. What did the sign over Jesus' cross say? (**JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS**; *John 19:19*)
3. What did Jesus say right before He died? ("*It is finished,*" *John 19:30*)
4. What do you think Jesus meant when He said it is finished? *Guide kids to think through the various layers of meaning. Jesus' death provided the payment for sin, ending its power over people. His death was also the completion of the most difficult part of His mission on earth. Discuss the importance of Jesus' death in purchasing our salvation.*
5. Why did Jesus have to die? *Help kids process the depth and weight of sin. Remind kids that God created us to love and worship Him by enjoying Him. Explain that sin is rebellion against our Creator and King. The fair payment of sin is death, and the only way for us to escape that death was for Jesus to take the penalty for us.*
6. How do you feel when you think about Jesus' crucifixion? *Remind kids that Jesus' crucifixion is both wonderful and terrible. For a perfectly righteous man to die instead of us is a great tragedy. However, God used that tragedy in a beautiful way, to provide life and hope for all who trust in Jesus. Only God can work wonderful things from terrible situations.*

SAY • Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins. We could never do anything to earn such a gift, and God gives salvation freely to all who believe in Jesus. Thankfully, Jesus did not stay dead either! He rose!

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

LOW PREP

· yarn

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

· adhesive price tags
· pens
· play money
· toys, games, or
classroom supplies

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Missions connections

Instruct the kids to spread out around the room. Give a ball of yarn to one kid. Encourage the kids to pass the ball of yarn across the circle to others, holding onto the string each time so that it begins forming a web. Continue this until all the kids are connected by the string.

SAY • Through missions, we can be connected with people all over the world and even throughout history. When we are committed to sharing the gospel, God will connect us with many opportunities and people all over the world. For example, through ministries like Connect 2020, God has connected churches in the U.S. with churches in Japan, Olympic athletes, and tourists who visited Japan to watch the 2020 Olympics. God uses these connections to spread the gospel and build His kingdom.

OPTION 2: The ultimate price

Write various prices on the price tags and label different toys, games, or classroom supplies in the room. Provide the kids with play money and help them use their play money to “purchase” different objects to play with. After a few minutes, gather the kids to discuss their purchase choices.

SAY • You all had different reasons for buying the toys and games you bought. In our story today, we learned about the price Jesus paid to rescue us from sin.

Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins. There was no other way for us to have forgiveness and eternal life with God. Jesus showed His incredible love for us by paying the ultimate price.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. 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 to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

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
- paper
- 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.