



BECAUSE HE LIVES

Jesus was Crucified

March 28- 3 year olds and 4 year olds

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

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BOTTOM LINE: Jesus died for me so I can live for Him.

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 sacrifice made once and for all for the forgiveness of sin. Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, and those who put their faith in Him have forgiveness and eternal life.

Context

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 Deut 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 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 Romans 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.

TAKEAWAYS

- Today we will learn about the greatest sacrifice—and show of love—that has ever happened.
- 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.

- Jesus could have stopped this at any point. Because, He IS God, but He chose not to. He chose to die for us because it was God's way to save us.
- Jesus 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.

Bottom Line: Jesus died for me so I can live for Him.

Social Activity: Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt

What You Need: Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt Printable (1 per group), plastic eggs, and other objects on the scavenger hunt list, basket

What You Do:

Before you begin, ask a leader to help you hide the objects for the hunt around the room.

Break kids into teams of 2. As you read the items on the scavenger hunt list, send one team of 2 at a time to find the object hidden in the room. Celebrate with kids as they return with the objects they have found.

“Spring is right here around the corner and spring makes me think of Easter. Our game today really gets me excited about celebrating Easter with you. Our Bible stories are going to help us remember Jesus' last week on earth as we prepare to celebrate Easter together. Let's pray and listen to our story today.”

Small Group Prayer: “Dear God, thank you for making me, thank you for loving me and thank you for sending your son, Jesus to be my savior. We love you, Amen.”

Introduce the Story

“Jesus did not do anything wrong, but people took Jesus to jail. The people did not believe Jesus is the Son of God, so they took Him to the governor, Pilate. The leaders wanted Pilate to put Jesus on a cross. Pilate did not think Jesus had done anything wrong, but Pilate did what they wanted. They put a robe and a crown of thorns on Jesus. They put Jesus on the cross with a sign above Him that said, *This is Jesus, The King of the Jews*. Jesus died on the cross because He loves us. It was God's plan for Jesus to die on the cross and come back to life on the third day.”

Play a Worship Song or 2 from DVD or Roku

Play the Teaching Video on DVD or Roku

Application Activity: Draw Chalk Crosses

What You Need: chalk, “Jesus was Crucified” printable (1 per kid), hairspray, sidewalk chalk (optional)

What You Do:

- Give each kid a piece of construction paper and a piece of chalk.
- Encourage kids to draw 3 crosses on their paper.
- After kids are done with their picture, gently spray the paper with hairspray in a well ventilated area to set the drawing.
- Lay aside to dry.
- If weather permits, consider leading kids outside to draw cross pictures on the sidewalks around the church building.

What You Say “When we look at these crosses, we can remember how God loves us and kept His promise to send a Rescuer, His very own Son. Jesus never did anything wrong, but He died in our place. Jesus died on the cross for our sin. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us life forever with Him.

Discussion Questions:

- **What did the sign over Jesus' cross say?** (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews; John 19:19)
- **What did Jesus say right before He died?** (“It is finished,” John 19:20)
- **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.

- **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.
- **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.