

Unit 8– Easter

Information for Leaders

Bible References:

The Last Supper: Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, Luke 22:7-23, John 13:21-30

Jesus arrest, trial, and crucifixion: Matthew 26:36 -27:66, Mark 14:32- 15:47, Luke 22:39 - 23:56, John 18:1-19:42

Main Teaching Points

- Jesus' death was part of God's rescue plan for us.
- Jesus suffered a great deal on the cross but was willing to go through it all to be our Saviour
- Jesus' death has paid the punishment for all our sin.
- We can be close to God again because of Jesus' sacrifice.

Themes to discover

In these next two sessions, we focus on the last 2 days of Jesus life from his last meal with his friends to his arrest, trial, and crucifixion. The second Saddleback Kids video continues the narrative through to Jesus rising from the dead and this is important so that the children are reminded of Jesus's power over death and leave with the whole story. However our sessions concentrate on Jesus' last supper and his sacrifice for us all. We look at what Jesus said and did and what it means for us. We give children the chance to reflect on what they have heard and make a response if they would like to.

The **Introductory activities** help familiarise the children with themes or aspects of the story.

The **Story videos** and **Activities** tell and reinforce the biblical story in a child friendly way.

The **Chat times** and **Prayer activities** give the children a chance to reflect on and respond to what they have heard.

Additional discussion questions

Ages 4-7

What did Jesus and his disciples eat and drink at their last meal together?

Who betrayed Jesus?

What did Jesus' friends do after he was arrested?

Ages 7-11

At the last supper, Jesus and his disciples had bread and wine. When do we eat bread and drink wine to remember Jesus' sacrifice?

What did Jesus do in the garden of Gethsemane when he needed the courage to go on?

How did Jesus' friends let him down after he was arrested?

Week 1 The Last Supper

Welcome and Intro

Registration/Welcome/Prayer

Intro Idea

You will need

Red grapes, sieve, jug, disposable plastic gloves, flat breads

What to do

Today we are going to hear about Jesus' last meal with his disciples. This happened at 'Passover' a special time of the year for the Jewish people. Passover still happens today and is a celebration when Jewish people remember how God brought their ancestors the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. In order to force Pharaoh to let his people go, God sent 10 plagues on the Egyptians. The last and most terrible one was the death of the first born of every Egyptian family but the angel of death 'passed over' the houses of the Israelites and did not harm their children. After this plague, Pharaoh finally let the Israelites go. They left in such a hurry (for fear that Pharaoh would change his mind) that there was no time to wait for their dough to rise, so they made flat or unleavened bread (with no yeast in it) to bring on their journey. [Show the children some flat breads]. That is why flat bread is eaten as part of the Passover meal.

Wine is drunk as part of the Passover meal because it is considered a royal drink, and one that symbolizes freedom. We are going to make some wine this morning. Wine is just made from grapes, squashed so that the juice comes out. [A leader squeezes the grapes into a sieve set on a jug. Pour the grape juice into a glass and hold it up to show the children. If you want to let the children taste the juice later, make sure to wear disposable gloves].

Later we are going to taste the bread and the wine but first let's watch the video of Jesus' last supper.

Story

Watch the Saddleback Kids video 'The story of Easter – The Last Supper'

Meal and Chat

You will need

Table set with cups and plates

Flatbreads

Grape juice (supplement the freshly squeezed grape juice from earlier with bought grape juice e.g. red grape Shlöer)

Fruit salad (optional)

What the cross does PPT (see Digital resources)

What to do

Set a table with a tablecloth and cups and plates etc. Seat the children around the table and give out flatbreads and grape juice.

Chat together as everyone is eating and drinking.

What colour is the grape juice? What does it remind you of? Why do you think Jesus asked the disciples to remember him when they drank red wine?

What was the bread to remind them of? Why do you think Jesus used bread as a way for his disciples to remember him?

Jesus and his disciples were sad when Jesus told them he was going to die but Jesus' death was all part of God's plan. God always punishes sin, so does that mean that God will always punish us when we do wrong

things? No, Jesus gave himself to be punished instead of us. When Jesus died on the cross, he took the punishment for us. Jesus died because he wanted to be our Saviour. He will be glad to forgive our sins if we ask Him to. And when God forgives us, He looks at us as if we have never sinned.

Look together at the visual 'What the cross does' and ask the children to talk about it in their own words.

Prayer Activity

Seed Cross Prayer

John 12:24 (CEV)

²⁴ I tell you for certain that a grain of wheat that falls on the ground will never be more than one grain unless it dies. But if it dies, it will produce lots of wheat.

You will need

Variety of seeds and grains
Seed card templates (see resources)

What to do

Read aloud Jesus words from John 12:24. Explain that Jesus was talking about himself when he said that a seed (or grain of wheat) would die and then bring new life. Let everyone glue seeds onto the card cross as a reminder that Jesus died as part of God's plan so that we could be forgiven and have new life.

Write a prayer inside your card thanking Jesus for dying on the cross so that we could have life through Him.



Thank you, Jesus, for your love for us.

Thank you for suffering so that we can have new life.

We praise you because you defeated death.

Help us to know you are close to us always.

Amen

Activity

Puzzle sheets and Colouring

You will need

Last Supper Colouring Sheet
Last Supper Puzzle sheet

What to do

Younger children will enjoy colouring the sheet and older children who can read can have a go at the puzzle sheet.

Week 2

Jesus Sacrifice

Welcome and Intro

Registration/Welcome/Prayer

Intro idea Noughts and Crosses

This idea comes from:

<https://ideas.brf.org.uk/easter-presentation-on-good-friday-easter-through-noughts-and-crosses>

You will need

Large sheet of paper or card

Lengths of thick wool

Green, black, and red marker pens

What to do

Attach the wool to your card to make a 3x3 grid with two vertical and two horizontal lines. Stick the wool with a small amount of tape so that it can be removed.

Let another leader know that they will be your opponent in this game of noughts and crosses and show them where to put the crosses. You will be the noughts.

Play to the crowd about the game. Who's going to win? Who's the cleverer?

The other leader starts by putting his/her cross in the top left. You put a nought in the middle bottom.

Then the other puts his/her next cross in the top right. The crosses should be slightly at an angle, slanting toward the middle of the grid. Dither about where to put your next mark but eventually decide to put your nought in the bottom left. Ignore the children's advice (which will be to stop the line of crosses at the top).

The leader/teacher wins with a flourish by putting a final cross in the top middle!

The leader/teacher leaves satisfied with an easy win.

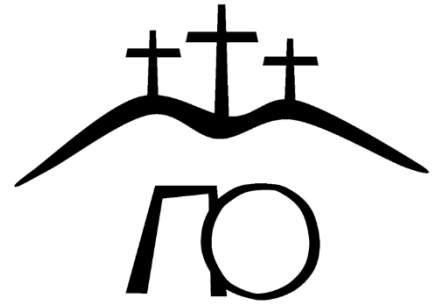
Say something like: Oh dear it looks like he/she has won. An easy win and I know what you're thinking. I didn't even try and stop him/her winning. I just let him/her have the winning line. So he/she has won.

You know, this game makes me think of Easter. About Good Friday and Easter Sunday. On Good Friday it seemed like Jesus just let death and evil and hatred win. It looked like he was completely defeated. He'd lost the battle. But had he? Let me add some scenery and shading to the game that we have just played.

Remove the grid and draw a green line to make a hill for the crosses and with the black marker pen fill in the nought in the bottom middle, so it looks like the stone rolled away from an empty tomb.

Three crosses on a hill on Friday. But in three days' time, by Easter Sunday, a stone rolled away from an empty tomb down below! Jesus didn't stay dead. He beat death. He won a victory over evil and hatred and all that is ugly and horrible in this world and inside us. Now he can offer us the power to beat that in us when we become his followers.

It looked like he'd lost but in fact he won. That's why it's called Good Friday. Easter is so important to every Christian because it tells them loud and clear that death has been defeated forever and that evil can be beaten, as they trust in him. Easter can completely change a life. God in Jesus has the winning line.



Story

Watch the Saddleback Kids video 'The story of Easter –Jesus' Sacrifice'

Chat time

You will need

Respond visual (see Digital resources)

Jesus summed up the 10 commandments when he said Matthew 22:37-39 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest of the Laws. The second is like it, 'You must love your neighbour as you love yourself.'

We fall short of doing these two things every day. We don't love God with all our hearts and we don't love others as much as ourselves. We fail and we let God down but Jesus' sacrifice means we can have a new beginning.

[Show visual]

Jesus has done an incredible thing for us. He has already paid the price for the wrong things we have done. He has suffered the punishment. All we have to do is want to turn away from the wrong things we have done and turn to Jesus. 'To repent means to turn around and seek a new way in the love of Jesus Christ.'

If you want to respond to what Jesus has done for you by dying on the cross and rising again to new life, here is a simple prayer you can pray. It involves three parts: sorry; thank you; and please. (Sometimes called The Believer's Prayer, or The Sinner's Prayer). If you don't want to pray this prayer, then just listen quietly.

"Lord Jesus Christ, I am sorry for the things I have done wrong in my life (take a moment to ask his forgiveness for anything in particular that you are thinking of). Please forgive me. I now turn from everything that I know is wrong.

Thank you that you died on the cross for me, so that I could be forgiven and set free. Thank you that you offer me forgiveness.

Please come into my life by your Holy Spirit to be with me forever. Thank you, Lord Jesus, Amen."

Encourage the children who have prayed this prayer to come and speak to a leader. You may want to give the child a book to take away with them to encourage them in their faith. Some examples are:

Younger children 4-7s

The Garden, the Curtain and the Cross by Carl Laferton & Catalina Echeverri

Knowing God – J. John

Older children 8-11s

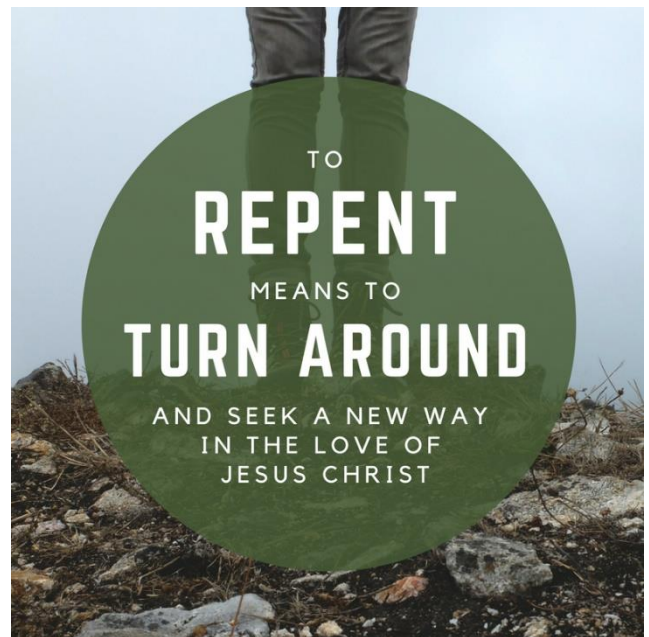
Best News Ever by Chris Morphew

How do we know that Christianity is really true? by Chris Morphew and Emma Randall

Edible Craft Crown of Thorns Biscuit

You will need

Round shortbread or digestive biscuit



Chocolate spread
Curly Wurly chocolate bar pieces

What to do

Put the chocolate spread in a ring around the edge of the biscuit in a thick layer.
Stick Curly Wurly pieces into the chocolate spread like thorns.
Eat and enjoy!



Prayer Activity

You will need

Smarties
Small bags
Copies of the Smarties prayer (see resources)

What to do

Before the session make up small bags with smarties inside (one of each colour).
Print out copies of the Smarties Prayer onto card and cut out. Stick a copy onto each bag or put inside.
Explain that as they say each line of the prayer, they eat a Smartie of the same colour. Give everyone a bag to take home.

Pink for the people who came and praised,
Green for the palm leaves that they raised;
Purple for the robe that Jesus wore,
Brown for the cross that Jesus bore;
Red for the blood that Jesus shed,
Blue for the tears when he was dead;
Orange for the stone that was rolled away,
Yellow for joy- He's alive today! AMEN!



A Takeaway Smarties Prayer