



Preparing for Easter

Four Weekly Lenten Lessons for Children's Ministry

Bonus: Good Friday Lesson!

GO
Bible™


new living
TRANSLATION®

Introduction

For over sixty years, Tyndale House Publishers has been making God’s Word clearer to readers through our books and Bible. Our publishing journey began because our founder, Dr. Ken Taylor, desired to make the Bible easier to understand for his own kids. Every day, as he rode the train to and from work, he paraphrased Scripture so his children could internalize the words God gave us.

What began as a father’s passion project for his kids ultimately became the New Living Translation. Through the years, the NLT has touched many lives and made God’s Word accessible to adults around the world.

Now we’re bringing this clear and easy-to-read translation to kids in the *Go Bible*. With exciting features, fun activities, and study aids that help kids make God’s Word an integral part of their everyday lives, the *Go Bible* continues Dr. Taylor’s legacy in an inspiring, life-changing way.

As those who serve God’s children in ministry, we know that you share a similar desire to see God’s Word **transform the children in your care**. That’s why we’ve put together this resource for you to use in your children’s ministry programs during the Lenten season.

In the lessons, we have included page numbers from the *Go Bible* so you can easily find and read passages directly from it. You could use any translation you want, but we recommend the New Living Translation as an excellent translation for elementary-age children. All of the memory verses and scriptural quotes are from the New Living Translation.

In addition, we are highlighting some of the awesome, kid-friendly, and engaging features of the *Go Bible*. **These features include:**

Key Verse Challenge

GENESIS 1:1
Write this verse on a piece of poster board. Then sketch, paint, or doodle images that remind you of God’s creation. You could make a nature scene, draw your favorite animal, or sketch a picture of someone you love. Do this on your own, or ask others to help you, and find a place to display it for all to see!



Key Verse Challenges:

Unlock the truth with these memory verses. Each verse comes with a fun, interactive challenge to help children remember and understand it.

Know, Grow, and Go:

Mini devotions that teach kids to **know** God’s Word, **grow** in their faith, and **go** share it with others.

Choose to Change:

Modern-day dilemmas with multiple-choice options that show kids how to apply Bible knowledge to real life.

Know, Grow, and Go

Wrong Is Wrong Read Leviticus 4–5.

When we know something is wrong and do it anyway, that’s definitely a sin. But sometimes we might do something and not even realize it’s a sin until later—like talking about a friend behind their back or disrespecting our parents. God is serious about sin, whether it’s on purpose or not. Thankfully, he’s also serious about forgiving. And he’ll help you obey him next time.



CHOOSE TO CHANGE

Read Genesis 3:1-19.
man blamed God for making the woman who gave him the forbidden fruit to eat.
It would you do if you got caught eating cookies meant for a classroom party?
a) Tell the teacher to stop putting cookies where you can reach them.
b) Apologize and stop eating the cookies.
c) Thank the baker for making the cookies too yummy.



Answer: B. Because it’s best to tell the truth and take responsibility when you do something wrong.



Factoids:

Interesting and fun facts about life in Bible times.

FACTOID

Ziggu-what?

The tower of Babel was a ziggurat. That's a funny-sounding word for an interesting thousands-shaped structure made of along the outside and a temple at the top. Let's hope they had a railing on there!



True Tales of Transformed People:

Snapshots of people in the Bible whose lives were forever changed by God.

Abraham and Sarah

IN A SNAPSHOT

Invited on King Nimrod's feast
A woman of the world
A woman of the world



Key Question: How did King Nimrod's feast change Abraham and Sarah's lives? **Key Verse:** Genesis 12:1-9

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Book Introductions:

Children are given the context to understand the importance of each book. They include . . .

Answers to these questions:

- Who wrote it?
- What's it about?
- Where does it take place?
- When does it take place?
- Why does this book matter?
- How does it fit in God's story?

Seek and Find: Lists three to four things children can search for while reading.

Timeline: Provides important dates for key events in the book.

Special Pages: Glossy, full-color pages covering big Bible concepts, including . . .

- Faith and Science
- Jesus and the Old Testament
- Where to Turn When Life Is Hard

Genesis

Who wrote it?

Who wrote it? We're not sure who wrote the Book of Genesis, but it's really your people.

What's it about?

Of all the biblical books, this is the one that your people and people in the world read the most. It shows how God created the world and the people in it. It tells us about the beginning of the world and the people in it.

Why does it take place?

Genesis takes place in a journey from Mesopotamia (Genesis 1-11) through the Nile River valley (Genesis 12-50). This is a lot of traveling in one book! Can you keep up?

When does it take place?

The Bible doesn't give dates for much of what happened in Genesis, such as the time of the Flood. But it does tell us that the world was created in six days.

How does it fit in God's story?

Genesis is the beginning of the Bible. It tells us about the beginning of the world and the people in it. It shows us how God created the world and the people in it.

Seek and Find

As you read through Genesis, watch for these important elements that pop up throughout the story. How many can you find?

1. People who choose to follow God
2. Brothers who start a new family
3. Brothers who start a new family
4. People who name things by God

Timeline

Timeline of key events in Genesis. 1. God creates the world. 2. God creates Adam and Eve. 3. God sends Noah's Ark. 4. God sends the Tower of Babel. 5. God sends the Flood. 6. God sends the Tower of Babel.

Ark of the Covenant

The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden chest made from acacia wood and covered in gold. It contained the Ten Commandments, a golden jar of manna, and Aaron's rod. It was carried by the Levites in the wilderness.



Ark of the Covenant

The Ark contained the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, a golden jar of manna, and Aaron's rod. It was carried by the Levites in the wilderness.

Stone Tablets

Two stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments.

Golden Jar of Manna

A golden jar containing manna, the food God provided for the Israelites in the wilderness.

Aaron's Rod

Aaron's rod, which blossomed and bore fruit, as a sign of God's power.

The stone tablets represented God's law and his covenant promises to his people. The golden jar of manna and Aaron's rod were signs of God's power and his love for his people.

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Big Ideas in the Bible:

Dive deep into these informational pages featuring detailed illustrations of the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, the plagues of Egypt, and more!

Full-Color Maps:

Enter the world of the Bible with maps featuring important places, travel routes, kingdom borders, and more.

Abraham's Journey

Abraham's journey from Ur to Canaan and back to Ur.

Abraham's journey from Ur to Canaan and back to Ur.

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How to Use These Lessons

Preparing for Easter will help your children's ministry team meet the needs of the elementary-age children in your church. These lessons will help children during the Lenten season to prepare their hearts and minds with the true meaning of Easter so that they can better celebrate the sacrificial death and miraculous resurrection of our Savior, Jesus!

These lessons are built around the holidays and special days associated with Easter. There is a bonus lesson that you can use if your church provides children's programming for a Good Friday service.

Easy-to-Use

Email these lessons to your elementary Sunday school teachers or the leader of your children's church, midweek program, or any other time when you have children together. All the activities are designed to be quick and easy with little preparation and easy-to-locate materials.

Easy-to-Lead

For the four Sundays prior to Easter, lead children in the activities described in this resource. There is also a bonus lesson if your church has a Good Friday service. Each lesson contains

- **Memory Verse**
- **Big Idea**—The one big idea with which we want kids to walk away.
- **Overview**—This short overview preps kids for what they will be learning.
- **Opening Activity**—This fun and engaging activity will help kids get to know one another while introducing the Bible story.
- **Bible Story**—The Bible story about Easter ties to Lenten themes: forgiveness, hope, praise, Christ's death and resurrection—the true meaning of Easter.
- **Three Alternate Activities**—These activities are designed to grab kids' attention and get them involved hands-on with the lesson. There are a variety of activities: games, crafts, puzzles, hands-on science, snacks, etc.
- **Reproducible Page**—This page is a resource for one of the Alternate Activities and also serves as a reminder of all that they learned during the lesson.

Guided Conversation

Another thing that makes this book easy for leaders is that the Bible story and activities are all scripted with guided conversation. There are also suggested actions in blue type within parentheses.

There are many questions included in the guided conversation to check comprehension as well as to help kids apply these truths to their lives. Every activity, and everything the leader says should lead back to each lesson's Big Idea. When someone asks their kid what they learned in Sunday school, we want that Big Idea to be the first thing they say!

Additional Sources

The following activities were picked up and adapted from RoseKidz books, available from Tyndale.

The Super-Sized Book of Bible Coloring & Art

- Adam and Eve Coloring Page—Disobeying God, page 9

Top 50 Bible Stories about Jesus for Elementary

- God's Word Defeats Temptation—Jesus Is Tempted, page 14
- Musical Praise Code—Musical Praise Code, page 19

Top 50 Science-Based Bible Lessons

- Cross of Love Coloring Page—Love Layers, page 23

The Super-Sized Book of Holidays, Special Days & Celebrations

- Resurrection A-Cross-Tic Puzzle—Resurrection A-Cross-Tic, page 29

Additional Lenten Season Resources

At the end of this guide is a take-home page you can send home with children after the first session. This page has lists of suggested books for families to enjoy during the Lenten season.

Week 1: Ash Wednesday



Bible Story Reference: Genesis 1:26-31; 2:4–3:24 (*Go Bible* pages 4–6)

Memory Verse: “Everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.”
Romans 3:23 (*Go Bible* page 1362)

Big Idea: We need God’s forgiveness.

Overview

Say: What do you think of when you think about Easter? (*Children respond.*) Bunnies and Easter eggs and dinners with your family are all wonderful, good things. However, Easter has a very important meaning to God’s family. For the next several weeks, we’re going to talk about some of the ways God’s family celebrates Easter. Today, we’re going to talk about Ash Wednesday. (*Open with prayer requests, praises, and a time of prayer.*)

Opening Game Circle of Forgiveness

Materials

- Children’s worship music and player
- Index cards
- Marker

Preparation: Print each letter of the word *forgive* on separate index cards. For each team of six to eight players, do this twice, making two sets of letter cards for each team. Add fourteen blank cards to each team’s double set of letter cards. (For each team, a set of cards will have twenty-eight cards.) Shuffle the cards and place them face down in a large circle, making one circle for every team of six to eight players.



Know, Grow, and Go

Wrong Is Wrong Read *Leviticus 4–5*.

When we know something is wrong and do it anyway, that’s definitely a sin. But sometimes we might do something and not even realize it’s a sin until later—like talking about a friend behind their back or disrespecting our parents. God is serious about sin, whether it’s on purpose or not. Thankfully, he’s also serious about forgiving. And he’ll help you obey him next time.



Directions: Players divide into teams of six to eight and stand around the outside of a card circle. As you play music, players walk around the circle. After a few moments, stop the music. Players stop walking and pick up the nearest card.

Teams compare the cards, and if the card has one of the letters of the word *forgive*, they keep the card. Play another round. This time if a card is blank or has a letter that has already been found, the card is placed back in the circle. Play continues until a team has gathered all the letters needed to spell the word *forgive*.

Say: What does it mean to forgive? Why is forgiveness important? (Children respond.) Our Bible story is all about how the need for forgiveness began.

Bible Story

Say: What do you think the world would be like if you were the only person on earth? (Children respond.) How do you think you would feel? (Children respond.)

In only five days, God created all of the universe: the stars, planets, moons, and comets; the sky, seas, land, plants, and animals. God created it all. But God wasn't done creating life yet. (Read Genesis 1:26-28, Go Bible page 4.) God loved the man and woman he created. He named them Adam and Eve. They spent long hours walking and talking with God. God wanted to fill the whole world with people.

Adam and Eve must have loved living in the beautiful Garden that God had created for them. God must have been very happy too! He was no longer alone but had created a family. Another reason everything must have been wonderful is that there was no sin. *Sin* is the Bible word for when we do wrong things. Do you ever do wrong things? (Children respond.) Everyone does wrong things sometimes. But at the very beginning, neither Adam nor Eve sinned. And God never sins! So, everything was wonderful.

Because there was no sin; there was no need for a lot of rules. There was only ONE rule that God gave Adam and Eve. (Read Genesis 2:16-17, Go Bible page 5.) That was it! One little rule. That should have been so easy to obey, right?

Adam and Eve did obey the one rule. Until one day a serpent came along. This was no ordinary serpent; it was Satan disguised as a serpent. (Read Genesis 3:1-6, Go Bible page 5.) Adam and Eve both chose to sin! They did the wrong thing. They broke the one rule they had. How do you think they felt? (Children respond.) The Bible tells us that they were filled with shame. They hurriedly sewed together some clothes to cover their bodies.

Have you ever done something wrong and then heard a parent, teacher, or someone else coming? What did you do? (Children respond.) When I did something wrong as a kid, if I heard my mom or dad coming, I would try to hide!

Well, guess what. That's what Adam and Eve did! When God came to talk with them, they tried to hide. From God! Can you hide from God? (Children respond.) No way!

Adam finally came forward and told God that he was afraid. God asked if Adam had broken the one rule. Adam said that he did, but then he blamed Eve! And Eve blamed the serpent! But who chose to eat the fruit they weren't supposed to? (Children respond.) Adam and Eve both made the wrong choice and willingly disobeyed God. They had no one to blame but themselves.

Have you ever blamed someone else when you did something wrong? (Children respond.) Whose fault was it really? (Children respond.) It's always our own fault when we choose to do what is wrong.

As a result of their sins, Adam and Eve had consequences. Adam would have to work hard. Eve would have pain when she gave birth to children. Adam and Eve even had to leave the Garden of Eden. How do you think they felt about having to leave their beautiful Garden? (Children respond.)

Know, Grow, and Go

Looking More like God Read Genesis 1:26–2:23.

From stars and mountains to manta rays and giraffes, God created everything! But only people are created in his image. Only we are made to look like him—but not in the color of our hair or how tall we stand. Rather, it's in the thoughts we think, the words we say, and the things we do. And the more you pray, read the Bible, and help others, the more you'll think, speak, and act like him. Pay attention to positive things other people do, too, and tell them you appreciate them!



Worst of all, since Adam and Eve had sinned, they would have to die. But God still loved Adam and Eve. He promised that he would send someone who would make a way for them and every person to live with him forever in heaven. Isn't that a great promise? (Children respond.) When we become a member of God's family, we are forgiven for all the wrong things we've done, and we get to live with God forever. Because we sin, **we need God's forgiveness!**



Object Lesson

Taken Away

Materials

- Clear drinking glass approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ -filled with water
- Any color of food coloring
- Spoon
- Bottle of bleach

Say: (Explain to children what you are doing as you add a few drops of food coloring to the glass. Stir with a spoon.)

Imagine this glass of water is like us and this food coloring is like sin. Once sin is in our lives, it changes us. How does sin make you feel? (*Bad. Unhappy. Ashamed.*) Is there any way to get the food coloring out of the water? Can you pour it out? Can you stir it out? (*Children respond.*) Demonstrate trying to pour or stir the food coloring out of the water.)

As members of God's family, when we ask him to forgive our sins, he pours his forgiveness into us. (*Pour about half a cup of bleach into the glass. Stir carefully. As you and the children watch, the color will go away, leaving a glass of clear liquid.*) God's forgiveness takes our sins away!

We need God's forgiveness!

Ash Wednesday is the first day of a period of time we call Lent. We'll talk more about Lent next time. On Ash Wednesday, many churches hold services that teach about our need for God's forgiveness. A cross pattern is often drawn with ashes on the foreheads of those who come to the service. Ashes have been used as a sign of sorrow since Old Testament times. By drawing a cross, we are showing not only that we know we need to be forgiven of our sins, but also that Jesus is the one who makes it possible for our sins to be forgiven.

Because we all do wrong things, we need forgiveness. (*Invite children who would like to hear more about being forgiven of their sins and becoming a member of God's family to talk with you or any other adult helper.*)

Optional Activities

Falling Short

Materials

- Whiteboard or large sheet of paper
- Dry-erase marker or large marker

Preparation: Print the words to Romans 3:23 on whiteboard or large sheet of paper.

Directions: Children read the verse aloud. Children stand and repeat the verse with you, while doing the following motions on the designated verse word or phrase.

- **Everyone**—Sweep hand around in a large horizontal circle
- **Sinned**—Look sad
- **We all**—Same motion as for *everyone*
- **Fall short**—Fall down!
- **God's**—Point up
- **Glorious standard**—Raise both hands up with fingers spread wide, and then slowly bring hands down to sides

Say: Because we sin and fall short of God's standards, **we need God's forgiveness.** How does doing wrong things often make us feel? (*Children respond.*) Who in your family has shown forgiveness to you? (*Children respond.*) How did it feel when they forgave you? (*Children respond.*) As good as it feels when a family member or friend forgives us, it feels even better to be forgiven by God!

Red Light, Green Light

Materials

- Masking tape, clothesline, or rope
- Sheet of green construction paper
- Sheet of red construction paper

Preparation: Use masking tape, clothesline, or rope to create start and finish lines on opposite sides of the playing area.

Directions: Players line up along the start line. Leader stands on the other side of the finish line. When the leader holds up the sheet of green construction paper, players move forward carefully. When the leader holds up the sheet of red construction paper, players must immediately stop moving and remain frozen until the green paper is held up again. Any player caught moving while the red paper is being held up must sit down and wait out the rest of the round. The first player to cross the finish line becomes the new sign-holder. Before beginning a new round, players recite the memory verse aloud or a volunteer tells a sentence about the Bible story.

Say: We had to stop when the red paper was held up. If we didn't, we had to sit out the rest of the round. Adam and Eve should have stopped before they ate the fruit God told them not to eat. We can remember Adam and Eve the next time we are thinking about doing something wrong. But if we don't stop, and we do sin, we can ask God to forgive us. **We need God's forgiveness.**

Forgiveness Art

Materials

- Construction paper
- Variety of additional art materials (scrapbooking papers, scissors, markers and crayons, pom-poms, ribbons, yarn, craft-foam shapes, glue, etc.)

Directions: On a sheet of construction paper, children use art materials to create a picture of a tree or people. At the top or the bottom of the paper, they print the words to Romans 3:23 and other reminders that **we need God's forgiveness.**

Say: Take your picture home and place it where you will be reminded of God's forgiveness. Whenever you feel bad about sinning, you can remember that God forgives his children when they ask him to.

Adam and Eve Coloring Page

Materials

- Adam and Eve Coloring Page, page 9
- Markers or crayons

Preparation: Photocopy Adam and Eve Coloring Page, making one copy for each child plus extras for visitors.

Directions: Children follow the instructions to complete the picture.

Optional: As children work, provide a simple snack of crackers, pretzels, or popcorn—anything that won't spill on their pictures.

God's Good Creation

God made the entire universe out of nothing. He transformed empty darkness into a place full of life that shows us how powerful, creative, and loving he is.

We learn in Genesis that God created the concept of time by separating days from nights. He created the sun, moon, and stars that shine on us. He created the sturdy ground that we walk on and the trees and flowers that grow out of it. God created all the fascinating creatures that swim in the seas, fly in the sky, and walk on the earth. And, most importantly, God created Adam and Eve, the first humans, and gave them a beautiful place to live called Eden.

Eden was filled with different kinds of plants, including the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God told Adam and Eve that they could eat fruit from every tree except one. Only the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was off-limits.

Unfortunately, Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command. As a consequence, they could not live in the Garden with him anymore.

But—spoiler alert! God did not give up on the people he had made. He had a plan that would transform their hearts and bring them back to live in a glorious new home with him. Just like the Garden of Eden, this new home will have a tree of life, and the tree of life will bring joy and healing to all who believe in Jesus. What good news!



God told Adam and Eve to eat the fruit from all the trees in the Garden of Eden except one. Satan became a serpent and talked Eve into eating from that tree. Adam ate some too. God was very unhappy with Adam and Eve because they did not obey him. Even so, God loved them and made a way for them to be forgiven. We all sin, and **we need God's forgiveness.**

Draw some fruit and a serpent on the tree. Color the picture of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.



Adam and Eve Coloring Page

Week 2: Lent



Bible Story Reference: Matthew 4:1-11 (*Go Bible* page 1157); Luke 4:1-13 (*Go Bible* page 1236)

Memory Verse: “The Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled.” Romans 15:4 (*Go Bible* page 1376)

Big Idea: Jesus gives us hope.

Overview

Say: Last time we were together we learned about Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. But what is Lent? (*Children respond.*) Lent is the forty days before Easter, when we take actions to fully appreciate and understand what it is that Jesus did for us at Easter.

All the members of God’s family are encouraged to spend time thinking about their relationship with God and if there are things for which they need forgiveness. One common Lenten practice is to make a sacrifice and not do something that you really enjoy. Instead, God’s followers are encouraged to spend time with God and his Word whenever they feel the urge to do that thing they are sacrificing. For example, some people don’t eat meat or chocolate during Lent. Other people limit their screen time to what they have to do for school or work. Have you ever participated in giving something up for Lent? If so, what did you give up? (*Children respond.*)

It can be very difficult to give up something you really enjoy. Whenever you find yourself in a difficult situation, remember that **Jesus gives us hope.** (*Open with prayer requests, praises, and a time of prayer.*)

Opening Game What Do You Want?

Materials

- Variety of printed materials with advertisements (newspapers, magazines, shopping circulars, catalogs, etc.)

Directions: Children look through the printed materials you gathered and select an advertisement for something they would like to have.

Say: What is it that your ad wants you to do? (*Children respond.*) Why are some reasons you might want to buy this item? (*Children respond.*) People use ads to try to tempt people to buy things. It’s important to be wise and realize what the ad is trying to do.

The word *temptation* is also used for times when we are tempted to do something wrong. It isn’t wrong to be tempted to do something. But it is wrong to do something you shouldn’t because you felt tempted. That doesn’t mean it’s wrong to buy a toy an ad wanted you to buy. But it would be wrong to want the toy so much that you decided to steal it.

What are some wrong things a kid your age might feel tempted to do? (*Children respond.*) Everyone is tempted sometimes—even Jesus! That’s what our Bible story is about today.



Bible Story

Say: What would be worse: going without food or going without screen time? Which would be harder? (Children respond.) Why? (Children respond.) It might not seem like it sometimes, but you could go the rest of your life without any more screen time. How long do you think you could go without eating any food? (Children respond.)

After Jesus grew up, but before he started his ministry of helping people and telling them about God's love, he went into the desert. Jesus wanted to spend time preparing for his ministry. So, in order to focus on God, Jesus decided to fast. That means he didn't eat any food of any kind. Jesus fasted for forty days. How do you think Jesus felt? (Children respond.) He must have been very hungry!

Then something really strange happened. (Read Matthew 4:3-4, Go Bible page 1157.) In the same way that Satan, disguised as a serpent, went to Eve and tempted her to eat the one fruit she was forbidden to eat, Satan had the nerve to try to tempt Jesus to do something! And he cruelly tempted him to make bread! Raise your hand if you would be tempted to have a piece of bread if you hadn't eaten for forty days. (Children respond.)

Even though bread must have sounded wonderful to Jesus, he didn't do what Satan suggested. He wasn't going to break his fast to be closer to God just because Satan thought he should. What did Jesus do when Satan tempted him? (Children respond.) Jesus quoted God's Word from the Old Testament.

Satan wasn't going to give up that easily. Let's hear what happened next. (Read Matthew 4:5-7, Go Bible page 1157.) This time Satan quoted Scripture to Jesus. And Jesus quoted Scripture right back! Jesus was not going to start listening to what Satan thought were good ideas. Who or what should we listen to and obey? (Parents, teachers, God, the Bible, pastors, etc.)

Put your hand on your nose if you think Satan gave up. (Children respond.) Nope. Satan wasn't done yet. (Read Matthew 4:8-9, Go Bible page 1157.)

Worship Satan? Stand up if you think Jesus said NO to Satan. (Children respond. Then, read Matthew 4:10-11, Go Bible page 1157.) There was no way Jesus would ever worship Satan. Instead, Jesus quoted Scripture again. Jesus knew what to say because he knew God's Word. **FINALLY** Satan gave up and went away.

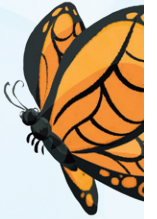
The Bible tells us that after Satan left, God sent his angels to take care of Jesus. Satan tried to tempt Jesus to follow HIM instead of GOD. But Jesus knew that if he made the right choices and obeyed God, God would take care of him. **Jesus gives us hope.**



CHOOSE TO CHANGE Read Matthew 4.

When Satan tried tempting Jesus in the wilderness, Jesus used God's Word to fend off the attacks. You can do the same when you feel weak in the face of temptation. Here are some ideas to get started:

- Read the Bible daily so you become familiar with what it says.
- Ask God to remind you of his Word when you're tempted to sin.
- Check with God's Word before making decisions.



Object Lesson Strong Enough

Materials

- Bible
- Foods or supplements people take to get healthy (protein bars and shakes, vitamins, vegetables, etc.)

Say: (Hold up the health items you gathered.) What are these things? What do they all have in common? (Children respond.) These are all things that people might eat to keep their bodies strong. Think for a minute: What are some other things people do to get strong? If you would like to act out something people do to get strong, raise your hand! (Call on a few volunteers to pantomime actions such as lifting weights, running, doing jumping jacks, etc.)

Jesus didn't have any good foods or supplements when he was in the desert. And he was probably too hot and tired to go for a run! But he had something better to keep him strong. He had God's Word. (Hold up the Bible.) For every suggestion Satan made, Jesus responded with an answer from God's Word. He didn't even have to read it! Jesus knew God's Word so well he could just speak the words.

Reading God's Word, listening to Bible stories, and memorizing verses are all ways we can grow strong in God's Word, the way Jesus is. **Jesus gives us hope.** We don't have to do wrong things. Being like Jesus will always help us find a way to get out of temptation.

When we give in to temptation and do wrong things, we need forgiveness. Jesus' death and resurrection provide a way for us to be forgiven for our sins. Jesus paid the price of our sins for us. (Invite children who would like to hear more about being forgiven of their sins and becoming a member of God's family to talk with you or any other adult helper.)

Optional Activities

Missing Letters

Materials

- Whiteboard or large sheet of paper
- Dry-erase marker and eraser or large marker

Preparation: On the whiteboard or large sheet of paper print the words of the memory verse, Romans 15:4. Draw a blank for each letter of the following words: *Scriptures, hope, encouragement, wait, patiently, promises, fulfilled.*

Directions: Play a game like hangman. Call on volunteers to guess letters of the alphabet. If the letter is used in one of the missing words, print it on the appropriate line(s). Players who guess a letter have a chance to try saying the verse aloud. If a guessed letter is not in any of the missing words, write it on the bottom of the whiteboard or sheet of paper.

Say: So many great promises in this one verse! How does it make you feel to know that by reading and memorizing Bible verses, we can have hope and encouragement? Isn't that a whole lot better than shame and regret? Being like Jesus, following his example, and knowing Scripture gives us hope. No matter what we're going through, **Jesus gives us hope!**



CHOOSE TO CHANGE Read Luke 4:1-13.

At the beginning of Luke 4, the devil tries to get Jesus to sin in the wilderness. Jesus quotes from God's Word to resist temptation. How can you rely on Scripture when you're tempted?

- Memorize Bible verses about God's character, God's promises, and who God says you are.
- Write Bible verses on note cards and place them around your room.
- Listen to music with lyrics that include words from the Bible.



Bible Snacks

Materials

- Fruit leather
- Graham crackers
- Plastic knives, one for each child
- Stacker marshmallows
- Paper plates

Optional

- Edible writing gel or frosting
- Toothpicks

Preparation: Separate the graham crackers into individual pieces. Trim them to be the same length as a stacker marshmallow.

Directions: Unroll a piece of fruit leather. Place two graham cracker pieces on the fruit leather with a space between them. The space should be a little bigger than the depth of a marshmallow. (See image A.)

Fold the excess fruit leather over the edges of the graham cracker. (See image B.)

Place a marshmallow on one of the graham crackers and fold the other cracker over it to make a book.

Say: Our snacks were fun to make and fun to eat. They remind us of God's Word and how God's Word makes us stronger—strong enough to fight the biggest temptations! No matter how strong a temptation might be, **Jesus gives us hope.** And that hope can help us say no to doing wrong things.

Older Child Option: Squirt some edible writing gel or frosting on a paper plate. Pick up some of the gel or frosting on the tip of toothpick and use it like a pen to print "Holy Bible" on the cover of the book.



Image A

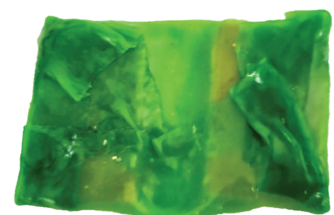


Image B

God's Word Defeats Temptation

Materials

- God's Word Defeats Temptation, page 14
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Decorating materials (stickers, glitter glue, craft-foam shapes, etc.)
- Hole punches
- Binder rings, one for each child plus extras

Preparation: Photocopy God's Word Defeats Temptation, making one copy for each child plus extras for visitors.

Directions: Children follow the instructions to complete the picture.

The World versus the Word

As the messages of the world grow louder and louder, they seem to get further and further away from the truths of God's Word. Sometimes it seems like it would be a whole lot easier to give in and do what the world says is best. But just as Jesus did in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11), we can use truths from the Word of God to fight the temptation to believe the world's messages.

The World Says . . .	God's Word Says . . .
God's rules are out-of-date.	God's rules last forever (see Psalm 119:89).
Do what feels right.	Do what is right (see Proverbs 21:2-3).
Trust in yourself.	Trust in God (see Proverbs 3:5-6).
Focus on what you need.	Focus on helping others (see Matthew 5:40-42).
Hate your enemies.	Love your enemies (see Matthew 5:44).
Hurt those who hurt you.	Pray for those who hurt you (see Matthew 5:44).
There's only your truth.	There's only God's truth (see Matthew 7:15; John 14:6).
Follow your heart.	Follow Jesus (see Matthew 16:24-26).
Treat others however you want.	Treat others how you want to be treated (see Luke 6:31).
Get more for yourself.	Be grateful and generous (see 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

This is just the beginning. The more you read God's Word, the more truths you'll discover. Make your own list and keep it where you can find it when you need reminders of what God says.



God's Word Defeats Temptation

Jesus used the Word of God to defeat Satan. That's why it's good to memorize Bible verses. They can help us defeat Satan. In the same way Jesus used Scripture to shut Satan down, you can use Scripture to overcome temptation. Remember, no matter what the situation, **Jesus gives us hope!**

Below are verse cards that can help you when you are tempted. For example, if you feel tempted to lie, repeat the verse on honesty aloud until the temptation goes away. Cut out the cards, color, and decorate them. Punch a hole in the upper left corner of each card and thread a binder ring through the hole.

<p>Dishonesty</p> <p>Stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth. Ephesians 4:25</p>	<p>Stealing</p> <p>If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need. Ephesians 4:28</p>
<p>Laziness</p> <p>Those unwilling to work will not get to eat. 2 Thessalonians 3:10</p>	<p>Selfishness</p> <p>Don't look out only for your own interest, but take an interest in others, too. Philippians 2:4</p>
<p>Envy</p> <p>Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. Hebrews 13:5</p>	<p>Gossiping</p> <p>The wicked are trapped by their own words, but the godly escape such trouble. Proverbs 12:13</p>
<p>Quarreling</p> <p>A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone. 2 Timothy 2:24</p>	<p>Unforgiveness</p> <p>Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:32</p>
<p>Disobedience</p> <p>Listen when your father corrects you. Don't neglect your mother's instruction. Proverbs 1:8</p>	<p>Any other temptation</p> <p>Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it. James 4:17</p>

Week 3: Palm Sunday



Bible Story Reference: Matthew 21:1-17 (*Go Bible* pages 1185–1186); Mark 11:1-11 (*Go Bible* page 1218); Luke 19:28-40 (*Go Bible* page 1266); John 12:12-19 (*Go Bible* page 1298)

Memory Verse: “Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the LORD! Praise God in highest heaven!” Matthew 21:9 (*Go Bible* page 1186)

Big Idea: Praise Jesus every day!

Overview

Say: What kind of parades have you seen? (*Children respond.*) What are some of the things you see there? (*Children respond.*) Parades are so exciting: the bands, the dancers, the floats! The people watching the parade clap and cheer!

In Bible times, cheering and shouting were a way to praise God. Today we’re going to hear about a parade that took place in the New Testament, but the people shouted praises from the Old Testament. Psalm 118:26 says, “Bless the one who comes in the name of the LORD.” The people shouted this blessing at numerous feasts and celebrations throughout the year. What an appropriate blessing for them to shout to Jesus. We too can **praise Jesus every day!** (*Open with prayer requests, praises, and a time of prayer.*)

Key Verse Challenge

1 JOHN 3:16
Jesus’ actions showed that his love is real. What do your actions show?
What’s something that you could give up to show love to a family member or friend?
Memorize this verse so you can remember what Jesus gave up for you. Ask him to help you love others even when it’s difficult.



Opening Game

Praise Pass

Materials

- Soft foam ball

Directions: Players sit in a circle. Roll the ball to a player. That player names a way to show praise to Jesus (praying, singing a praise song, shouting and cheering, telling others about Jesus, memorizing verses, telling Bible stories, etc.), names a reason they want to praise Jesus, or simply says, “Praise Jesus!” Player then rolls the ball to another player to take a turn. Play continues as time and interest allow.

Say: You all shared some great ways to praise Jesus and some of the many reasons we have to praise him. How does praising Jesus make you feel? (*Children respond.*) Praising Jesus makes me feel happy! It’s good to remember the good things Jesus does for us. Remember to **praise Jesus every day!**

Teaching Tip: If you have a group of more than eight players, consider forming additional circles. Be sure to have a ball for each circle.

Alternate Idea: Instead of rolling the ball across the circle, players pass the ball as in hot potato. Play praise music as the ball is passed. When you stop the music, the player holding the ball responds as described above.

Bible Story

Say: What were some of the ways Jesus helped people when he was here on earth? (Children respond.) Jesus and his twelve friends, or disciples, would travel from town to town, telling people about God and his amazing love. Jesus would help people who were hurt, injured, and even brought some people back to life! The news about Jesus spread all around from town to town. And there was no television or Internet back then! Imagine you lived in Bible times and you heard that Jesus would be coming to your town. How would you feel? (Children respond.)

One day, Jesus and his friends were walking down the road to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish festival called Passover. They weren't alone on the road, though. There were lots of people also going to Jerusalem for Passover. And the people started to whisper things like "Is that Jesus?" and "I hear he can heal people who are sick." The news was spreading fast: Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem!

Why a Donkey?

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey in Matthew 21:1-11, something that Zechariah had prophesied hundreds of years earlier (see Zechariah 9:9). In Bible times, donkeys were considered humble animals, so it was clear that Jesus was entering the city peacefully. Did you know that donkeys can live for over fifty years? Their ears are bigger than horses' ears, and in the desert, a donkey can hear another donkey from sixty miles away!

FACTOID

Jesus sent two of his friends on ahead of them. (Read Matthew 21:2-3, Go Bible page 1185.) How did Jesus know there would be a donkey tied up just inside the city? (Children respond.) Jesus knew because he is God's Son. Everything went exactly like Jesus said, and the disciples came back with the donkey.

Jesus got on the donkey and began to ride into the city. The news that Jesus was coming spread through the town. People stopped what they were doing and rushed to the street. They wanted to see Jesus!

(Read Matthew 21:8-11, Go Bible page 1186.) When the people spread their coats and palm branches on the road, they were welcoming Jesus the way they would welcome a king! With all this excitement going on, more and more people came out to see what was going on, and they joined the parade, too, shouting and singing praises to Jesus!

But not everyone was happy that Jesus was there. Some of the religious leaders didn't like what they had heard about Jesus. They didn't care that Jesus was kind and

loving and helped people. They were afraid the people would stop listening to them and make Jesus their leader instead. And they didn't like that.

They REALLY didn't like the praises the people were saying. "Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the LORD! Praise God in highest heaven!" These religious leaders didn't want people to think Jesus was sent by God! They tried to get Jesus to stop. (Read Luke 19:39-40, Go Bible page 1266.)

Do you think Jesus meant that rocks would really start singing? (Children respond.) Jesus was telling the religious leaders that it is good to recognize who he is and to praise him for being God's Son. It's good to praise Jesus! We're lucky that we can **praise Jesus every day!**

Object Lesson Pantomime of Praise

Materials

- Small pieces of paper
- Marker or pen
- Hat, basket, bag, or other container
- Objects used to honor or praise someone (crown, certificate, medal, red carpet, confetti, trophy, pom-poms, sports pennant, plaque, etc.)

Preparation: On slips of paper, print ways to show honor and praise to someone (put out a red carpet, bow, cheer, throw confetti, salute, place a crown on their head, curtsy, etc.). Fold papers in half and place them in the container.

Say: We show honor and praise to Jesus because of the great things he has done and because of who he is. Who is Jesus? (God's Son, the Messiah, the Savior, etc.)

There are lots of ways to honor or praise someone. (Show the objects you gathered. Children identify each object. Discuss how the objects can be used to honor someone.)

Let's act out ways to show honor and praise to someone. (One at a time, choose a volunteer to select a paper from the container and act out what is written on the paper. The rest of the group guesses what they are acting out. Whoever guesses correctly takes a turn to choose a paper and act it out.)

It's good to praise others, but it's more important that we remember who is the most worthy of our praise—Jesus! It's important to **praise Jesus every day!**

One great reason to praise Jesus is because he made a way for us to become members of God's family. (Invite children who would like to hear more about becoming a member of God's family to talk with you or any other adult helper.)

Optional Activities

Praise Verse

Materials

- Whiteboard or large sheet of paper
- Dry-erase marker and eraser or large marker

Preparation: On the whiteboard or large sheet of paper print the words of the memory verse, Matthew 21:9.

Directions: Children say Matthew 21:9 aloud together. Next, create different groups to repeat the verse by calling out different characteristics. Add a fun motion. For example, “Raise your hands up in the air and shake them if you have a brother or sister.” Continue with other motions (hop on one foot, give a high five, wiggle your body, clap your hands, etc.) and other ways to group kids (if you ate cereal for breakfast, if you have blonde hair, if you like green beans, etc.).

Say: Our verse is words of the highest praise. Jesus is worthy of our highest praise. **Praise Jesus every day!**



Know, Grow, and Go

Hosanna! *Read John 12:12-17.*

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, crowds of people gathered to worship him. They shouted, “Praise God!” or “Hosanna!” in Greek. *Hosanna* also sounds like a Hebrew term that means “Save now!” The people praised Jesus with this word because they hoped he could save them, even though they didn’t fully understand why he had come. Today, we praise a lot of people and things—from movie stars to our family and friends. But only one deserves to be *worshiped*: Jesus. He’s the one who saves us.



Hand-Palm Palms

Materials

- Green construction paper, at least three sheets for every child
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Transparent tape
- Thin dowels, one for each child
- Children’s praise music and player

Directions: Children use pencils to trace their hands on construction paper, making five outlines. The paper palms are then cut out and lined up vertically with a slight overlap. The paper palms are taped together. Finally, children tape the palms to a dowel, making a “palm” branch.

Say: The people of Jerusalem were so excited to see Jesus! They used palm branches as a way to show their excitement and to honor Jesus. Let’s use the “palm” branches we made to honor Jesus by waving them in the air as we sing a song of praise. *(Play praise music. Children sing the song and wave the branches. After a few moments, vary the motion, raising branches high, swaying the branches from left to right, waving them low, etc.)*

Musical Praise Code

Materials

- Bibles
- Musical Praise Code, page 19
- Pencils

Preparation: Photocopy Musical Praise Code, making one copy for each child plus extras.

Directions: Children follow the directions on their papers to discover ways people in the Bible praised Jesus.

Say: There are many different ways to praise Jesus. What is a way you can **praise Jesus every day?**

FACTOID

Sound of Music

Music was a part of everyday life in ancient Israel. In Psalm 71:22, the writer praises God with the harp and the lyre. These were some of the first stringed instruments in history. A harp is plucked or strummed with both hands. A lyre—which is a mix between a harp and a guitar—is held in one hand and strummed with the other.



Musical Praise Code

Use the musical code to find out six of the ways people in the Bible praised Jesus.



EXODUS 15:1



PSALM 145:2



PSALM 47:1



PSALM 32:11



PSALM 95:6



PSALM 75:1

Bonus Lesson: Good Friday



Bible Story Reference: Matthew 26:17–27:66 (*Go Bible* pages 1194–1195); Luke 22:39–48 (*Go Bible* page 1272); John 13:1–30 (*Go Bible* page 1300); 18:1–19:16 (*Go Bible* page 1306)

Memory Verse: “We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us.”
1 John 3:16 (*Go Bible* page 1502)

Big Idea: Jesus died for us.

Overview

Say: Today we’re going to talk about Good Friday. Who can tell me a sentence about Good Friday? (*Children respond.*) Good Friday is three days before Easter and is remembered as the day Jesus died for us. No one knows for sure how it came to be called “Good Friday” when such a terrible thing happened.

Some people say it stands for “God’s Friday.” Other people believe that it’s called “Good Friday” because although a terrible thing happened and Jesus’ death was very sad, many wonderful things came about as a result of Jesus’ death. What are some good things that happen because **Jesus died for us?** (*We can be forgiven for our sins. We can become members of God’s family. We can live forever with Jesus in heaven.*) Let’s pray and thank Jesus that he loved us so much, he was willing to die for us. (*Open with prayer requests, praises, and a time of prayer.*)

Opening Game Washing Feet

Materials

- Masking tape, clothesline, or rope
- Canisters of baby wipes, one for each team of four or five players

Preparation: Use masking tape, clothesline, or rope to create start and finish lines on opposite sides of the playing area. Place the baby wipes on the opposite side of the finish line.

Directions: Players divide into evenly numbered teams of four or five players. The first player on each team races to their team’s canister of baby wipes and removes their shoes and socks.

As soon as the first player’s shoes and socks are off, the next player in line races to them, grabs a baby wipe, and must wipe both feet with the wipe. The first player puts their shoes and socks back on, races back to the team, and goes to the end of the line. Meanwhile, the second player removes their shoes and socks.

Play continues in this manner until the first player races to wipe the feet of the last player and they both race back to their team. The first team to complete the relay recites the memory verse aloud.



Unleavened Bread

During Passover, Jesus and his disciples ate unleavened bread (see Luke 22:1), or bread without yeast in it. (Yeast makes bread rise. Without yeast, bread is flat.) Why? Unleavened bread reminded God's people of how God had freed them from Egypt. In their hurry to escape, they packed their bread dough before adding the yeast because they didn't have time to let the dough rise (see Exodus 12:15, 34).

FACTOID



Say: How did it feel to have your teammate wash your feet? (Children respond.) Before **Jesus died for us**, he set an important example for his friends and for us. This happened as Jesus and his disciples sat down to eat their Passover meal.

Bible Story

Say: What are some things a servant does? (Children respond.) Do you think Jesus was a servant or the person who was served? (Children respond.) Let's find out!

Last time we heard that Jesus and his friends were going to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover meal. When they sat down to eat, Jesus wanted to be an example to them of how they should treat each other. (Read John 13:4-11, Go Bible page 1300.)

As they ate their meal, Jesus went on to explain that one of them would betray him. Jesus knew that the religious leaders had been plotting against him. And Jesus knew that his own friend, Judas, had been paid thirty pieces of silver to betray him to his enemies.

After the meal, Jesus and his friends went for a walk. Where do you think Jesus wanted to go? (Children respond.) If it were me, I'd probably want to get a bunch of supplies and find a place to hide out! But Jesus had a different plan. (Read Matthew 26:36-46, Go Bible page 1195.)

Jesus is God's one and only Son. He had all of God's power available to him. But Jesus willingly let the soldiers arrest him. He willingly stood silent as they accused him and made

fun of him. They beat Jesus. They nailed him to a cross and killed him.

Why do you think Jesus was willing to go through so much pain and agony? (Children respond.) **Jesus died for us.** Jesus knew that the punishment for doing wrong things is death. And he knew that God had a plan for the whole world to be saved from the punishment for their sins. But it meant that Jesus, who had never sinned, had to take our punishment himself. Jesus loves us so much, he willingly died a painful, agonizing death so that we can become members of God's family and live with him forever in heaven.

Object Lesson

Listen to Instructions

Materials

- Sheet of paper, one for each child plus extras

Say: In our Bible story today, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples to show them how to serve each other. He also explained what was going to happen and gave them instructions. Today, I'm going to show you and give you instructions to make a reminder of how much Jesus loves you.

(Give each child a sheet of paper.) Fold your paper in half lengthwise. (Demonstrate the fold on a sheet of paper.) Now fold the top down about one-third of the way. (Demonstrate the fold.) Now, starting on the side opposite the fold, tear out a rectangle that starts about one inch from the top. (Demonstrate how to tear the paper. See image A.)

Open up the paper. (Children open their papers to discover a cross. See image B.) The cross you made can serve as a reminder of how much Jesus loves you. He loves everyone so much that **Jesus died for us.**

Because we all do wrong things, we need forgiveness. Jesus' death made a way for us to be forgiven for our sins. Jesus paid the price of our sins for us. (Invite children who would like to hear more about being forgiven of their sins and becoming a member of God's family to talk with you or any other adult helper.)

Know, Grow, and Go

Pilate's Choice Read Matthew 27:11-26.

After Jesus was arrested, the priests and elders demanded that Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, have Jesus killed. They even threatened to start a riot if Pilate didn't do it! He knew Jesus wasn't guilty, but a riot would get Pilate into big trouble with his superiors. So he gave in to keep the peace. Too often, people do the wrong thing because it's easier than standing up to others. Next time you're faced with a hard choice, ask God for the strength not to give in.



Image A



Image B

Optional Activities

Jesus Loves Us

Materials

- Whiteboard or large sheet of paper
- Dry-erase marker and eraser or large marker
- Four or five sheets of construction paper

Preparation: On the whiteboard or large sheet of paper print the words of the memory verse, 1 John 3:16. Choose a word from the memory verse. Scramble the letters of the word and print the scrambled word on a sheet of construction paper. Repeat, making four or five scrambled verse word papers.

Directions: The group recites the verse together a few times. Show one of the scrambled word papers you prepared. Children try to identify the verse word. The first person to correctly identify the verse word recites the verse or tells a sentence about the Bible story.

Say: According to this verse, why is it that **Jesus died for us?** (Children respond.) How does it make you feel to know that Jesus loved you enough to die for you? (Children respond.) What are some ways we can show Jesus that we love him? (Sing praises to him. Pray to him. Read God's Word. Tell others about him. Follow his example. Obey his commands.)

Teaching Tip: In small letters on the back of each scrambled word paper, print the word correctly so that you won't be confused!



Puffed-Rice Cereal Crosses

Materials

- Individually wrapped puffed-rice cereal snacks, one for each child
- Paper plates
- Plastic knives

Directions: Children unwrap their snack, place it on a paper plate, and then use the knife to cut off rectangles to form a cross.

Say: The cross is very dear to members of God's family because it is a reminder of how much Jesus loves us. Because he loves us, **Jesus died for us.**

Optional: Provide frosting or tubes of icing for children to decorate their crosses before eating.

Cross of Love Coloring Page

Materials

- Cross of Love Coloring Page, page 23
- Pencils

Preparation: Photocopy Cross of Love Coloring Page, making one copy for each child plus extras.

Directions: Children follow the directions on their papers to write the words of 1 John 3:16 and color the heart and cross.

Say: Post your paper in your room or on your refrigerator as a reminder that **Jesus died for us.**

Optional: Provide additional decorative materials such as glitter glue, stickers, adhesive-backed craft-foam shapes, etc.

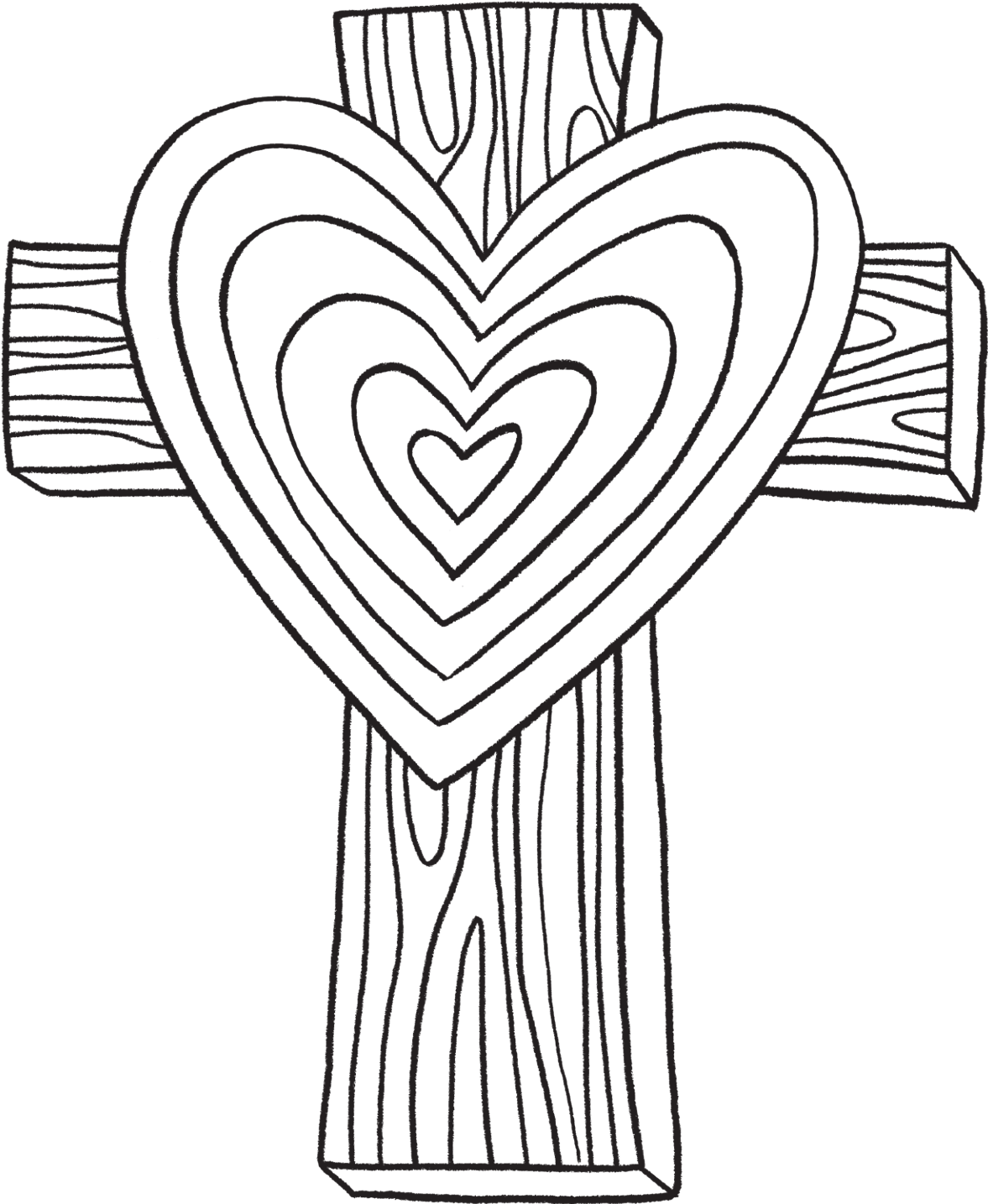
Know, Grow, and Go

Like Him *Read Luke 23:26-43.*

If Jesus were like us, he would have called down an army of angels to rescue him from the cross. He might have zapped those laughing soldiers with lightning. And he probably would have ignored that thief next to him. Thankfully, Jesus' willingness to love and forgive is greater than we can imagine. So great that he asked God to forgive those who crucified him, welcomed the thief into his Kingdom, and died on that cross to rescue us from sin. Let's love and serve others like he did.



Write the words to 1 John 3:16 below. Color the cross and heart.



Cross of Love Coloring Page

Week 4: Easter Sunday



Bible Story Reference: Matthew 27:57–28:15 (*Go Bible* page 1199);
Mark 15:43–16:8 (*Go Bible* page 1227); Luke 23:50–24:12 (*Go Bible* page 1275);
John 19:38–20:18 (*Go Bible* page 1309)

Memory Verse: “If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9 (*Go Bible* page 1371)

Big Idea: Jesus is alive!



Questions about Jesus

Is Jesus God?

Yes! In John 1:1, John described Jesus as “the Word” and wrote, “The Word was with God, and the Word was God.” And in John 10:30, Jesus himself said, “The Father and I are one.”

How did Jesus do miracles?

Even though Jesus is fully human, he is also fully God (see Colossians 2:9). God created the universe simply by speaking, and that same power lives inside Jesus. He is able to heal and transform with just a word or a touch of his hand.

Why didn't Jesus save himself from death on the cross?

He could have—and tells Peter that he could have asked for “thousands of angels” to save him (Matthew 26:53). Instead, he followed through with the plan God had for him (see verses 53–54). He knew his death and resurrection were necessary to make a way for humans to know God.

Where is Jesus now?

When Jesus left the earth over two thousand years ago, we know that he went to heaven to be with God the Father (see Mark 16:19). But just like God the Father, Jesus is everywhere at once. He's always with us, guiding us through his Holy Spirit.

Does Jesus love me?

Yes, he loves you—so much that he gave his life for you!

Key Verse Challenge

ROMANS 10:9

Do you believe that Jesus died and came back to life to make a way for you to be right with God? Do you want to dedicate your life to following him? Congratulations! You are part of God's family. Go share the good news with someone you trust, and look for ways to show your faith through your actions.



Overview

Say: If you were here on Friday for the Good Friday lesson, you know that we heard a very sad story. Even though Jesus had done nothing wrong, he'd been arrested, beaten, and killed. Today, we're going to hear about the wonderful, amazing, spectacular, awesome thing that happened next. Are you ready? **(Children respond.)** Then let's get started with prayer. **(Open with prayer requests, praises, and a time of prayer.)**

Opening Game Egg and Spoon Relay

Materials

- Masking tape

For each team of four to six players

- Penny
- Plastic Easter egg
- Spoon

Preparation: Use masking tape to form start and finish lines on opposite sides of the playing area. Place a penny inside each Easter egg to give it weight. Tape the egg closed to secure.

Directions: Players divide into teams of four to six and line up behind the start line. Hand the first player on each team an egg you prepared and a spoon. Balancing the egg on the spoon and holding it with one hand, players race from the start line to the finish line and back again. Players then hand the egg and spoon to the next player on their team to take a turn. Play continues until each team completes the relay.

If at any time the egg is dropped, the player must pick up the egg, return to the start line, and begin again. The first team to finish recites the memory verse.

Say: Our egg and spoon relay was fun! What are some Easter traditions involving eggs? **(Children respond.)** Easter traditions are fun and a great way to celebrate that **Jesus is alive!**

Bible Story

Say: Today's story is the most important story ever in the history of the world. Can you guess what story it is? **(Children respond.)** Last week we heard the sad, sad story about Jesus dying on a cross. Today, we're going to hear a happy story!

After Jesus died on the cross, his body was taken to a tomb to be buried. **(Read Luke 23:50-56, Go Bible page 1275.)** How do you think Jesus' friends must have felt? **(Children respond.)** They loved Jesus so much! And even though Jesus had done nothing wrong, he'd been arrested, beaten, and killed on a cross.

The religious leaders who had Jesus arrested and killed were not quite done yet. **(Read Matthew 27:62-65, Go Bible page 1199.)** These men knew Jesus had said that he would rise from the dead after three days. They figured Jesus must have made a plan with his friends to take his body away and **LIE** that Jesus was alive again. So the men got permission to roll that huge stone in front of the opening to the tomb and even had guards posted to make sure Jesus' friends didn't get in. Do you think a big stone and guards were enough to keep Jesus in the tomb? Why? **(Children respond.)**

After the Sabbath was over (the Jewish people were not allowed to do any work on the Sabbath), some of the women who loved and followed Jesus went to the tomb. They wanted to show respect to Jesus by preparing his body with oils and spices as was their tradition. What do you think the women talked about as they walked to the tomb? **(Children respond.)** As they walked, the women talked and worried about how they would get the stone away from the tomb so that they could go inside.

(Read Matthew 28:1-10, Go Bible page 1199.) Wow! The women were so amazed and excited. They'd just seen Jesus! **Jesus is alive!** How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is alive? **(Children respond.)** Jesus is in heaven and one day, all the members of God's family will live with him in heaven forever. That's a **GREAT** reason to celebrate!

FACTOID

Spreading the News

Did you know Mary Magdalene was the first person to see Jesus after he rose from the dead (see John 20:11-18)? During Bible times, women were viewed as less important than men, and their words weren't thought to be as reliable as what men said. But Jesus valued women and men equally. He gave Mary Magdalene a big job: spreading the news that he was alive!

Object Lesson

Nothing Can Separate

Materials

- 3 clear glasses
- Light corn syrup
- Red and blue food coloring
- Spoon
- Water
- Baby oil
- Bleach

Preparation: Pour some corn syrup into one glass, add food coloring, and stir to make the syrup blue. In another glass, pour a couple of inches of water, add red food coloring, and stir to make red. Place corn syrup glass, water glass, baby oil, and the remaining empty glass where you will lead the activity.

Say: (Pour some baby oil into the empty glass.) The oil in this glass represents God. Before he created the world, there was only God. Then God created the world and everything in it, including people.

(Hold up the glass with blue corn syrup.) This blue fluid represents Adam and Eve, the first people. We talked about Adam and Eve during our lesson about Ash Wednesday. (Carefully pour the syrup into the glass with baby oil. The corn syrup will pool under the oil. Hold up the glass so that children can see the layers.) God and Adam and Eve were so close! This is the way God wants things to be with us. Nothing is separating God from people.

But things changed. Something came between God's relationship with Adam and Eve. (Carefully pour the red water into the layered glass. The red water will slip between the oil and syrup to form a middle layer. Hold up the glass so that children can see the layers.) Can anyone tell me what happened? (Children respond.) What does the red water represent? (Sin.) Adam and Eve sinned! The red water represents sin, and that sin separates us from God.

Ever since, everyone has been separated from God because we all sin. But God loves us so much that he made a way for us to be forgiven for our sin and be close to him again. Jesus died on a cross to pay the penalty for our sin. He came to life again and can forgive us! (Carefully pour the bleach into the layered glass. The bleach will react with the red water, transforming it clear again. Hold up the glass so that children can see the layers.) This bleach is like Jesus' forgiveness. It removes the sin from our lives so that we can be close to God and become members of God's family. All this is possible because Jesus died and took the punishment for our sins and then rose from the tomb. Praise God! **Jesus is alive!**

Because we all do wrong things, we need forgiveness. Jesus' death and resurrection provide a way for us to be forgiven for our sins. Jesus paid the price of our sins for us. (Invite children who would like to hear more about being forgiven of their sins and becoming a member of God's family to talk with you or any other adult helper.)

Optional Activities

You Say the Verse Game

Materials

- Whiteboard or large sheet of paper
- Dry-erase marker and eraser or large marker

Preparation: On the whiteboard or large sheet of paper print the words of the memory verse, Romans 10:9.

Directions: Players stand in a circle and recite the verse together aloud. Choose a player to begin the game by saying, "If you" and pointing to another player on the word *you*. That player then continues saying the words of the verse until they get to the word *your*, and then they point to another player. Play continues, with players pointing to another player to take over every time they say *you* or *your* until everyone has had a turn and the verse has been repeated several times.

Say: Our verse says that we will be saved if we say with our mouths that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that **Jesus is alive**. If you believe like I believe, say with me, "Jesus is Lord!" (Children respond.)

Know, Grow, and Go

His Mission Read *John 19:28-30*.

"It is finished." Those were Jesus' last words before he died. But what was finished? *His mission to save us*. That mission started before the world began and continued throughout the Old Testament. Jesus' mission led him from heaven down to a manger in Bethlehem. And it ended when he died to take the punishment for the whole world's sins—and to open the doors of eternal life to everyone who believes in him.





Easter Egg Hunt

Materials

- Slips of paper
- Pen
- Plastic Easter eggs, one for each child plus extras
- Individually wrapped candies

Directions: On separate slips of paper, print an Easter tradition: Easter egg hunts, Easter dinner with family, chocolate bunnies, sunrise services, Easter baskets, new clothes, decorating Easter eggs, church, etc. Fold each slip and place in a plastic Easter egg along with an individually wrapped candy. Prepare one egg for each child. It's OK if more than one egg has the same tradition written on the paper. Hide the eggs in different places around the room.

Say: Every year at Easter, my family has a big ham dinner with cheesy potatoes and asparagus. What are some of the traditions you have at your house? *(Children respond.)* Which of your Easter traditions remind you of Jesus and his death and resurrection? *(Children respond.)* As members of God's family, we know the important thing about Easter is that **Jesus is alive!** However you choose to celebrate Easter, be sure to remember that what's really important is how Jesus showed his love for us.

Resurrection A-Cross-Tic

Materials

- Resurrection A-Cross-Tic Puzzle, page 29
- Pencils

Preparation: Photocopy Resurrection A-Cross-Tic Puzzle, making one copy for each child plus extras.

Directions: Children follow the directions on their paper to solve the puzzle.

Say: The word *resurrection* means to come to life again. That's what Jesus did. Thousands witnessed when Jesus was killed, but then he came to life again. **Jesus is alive!**



Resurrection A-Cross-Tic Puzzle

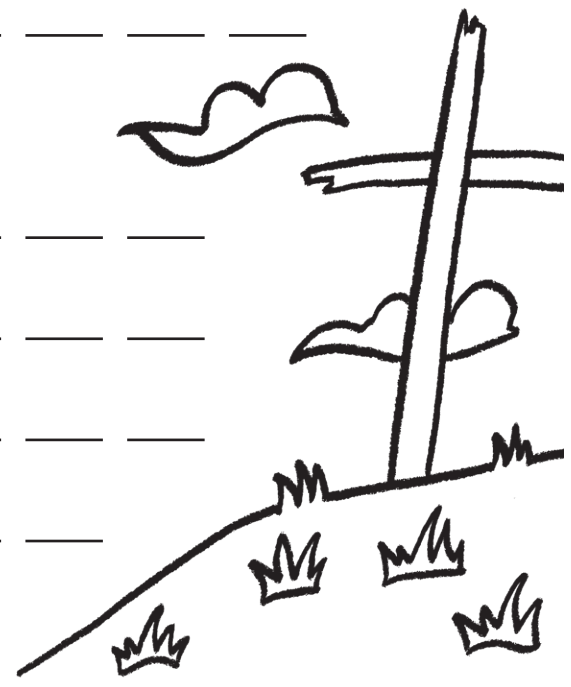
Read the Easter story below. Based on the capitalized words in the Easter story, write the correct word to fill in the blank lines.

Tip: Count the number of letters in each capitalized word and the number of blanks in each line.

“**CRUCIFY** him!” cried Jesus’ enemies at his trial. **PILATE**, the judge, finally agreed. They nailed Jesus to a **CROSS**. On the **CROSS**, Jesus **DIED** for the sins of the whole world. He was **BURIED** in a **TOMB**. A **STONE** covered the entrance, and **SOLDIERS** stood outside as guards. On the first day of the week, women came to put **SPICES** on Jesus’ body. They saw an **ANGEL**, who said, “Jesus is not here; he is **RISEN!**”

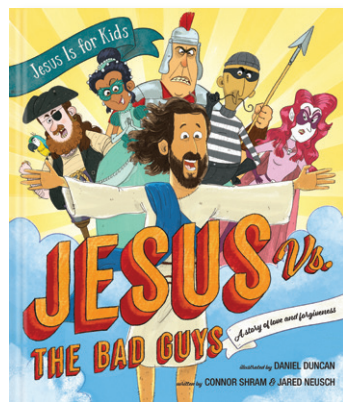
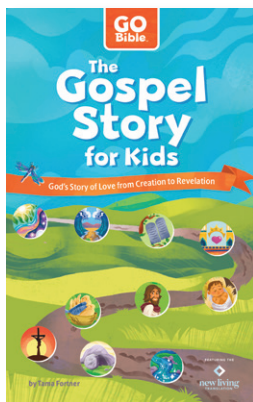
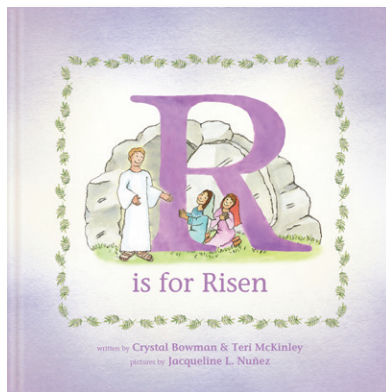
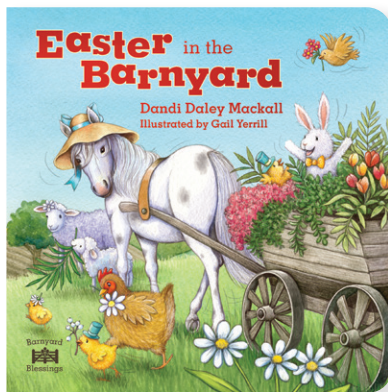


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Additional Lenten Season Resources

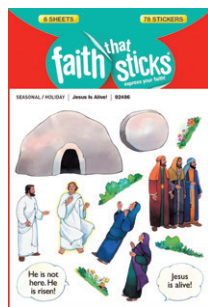
Here are some great resources for your family during the Lenten season or any season!
Available at Tyndale.com.



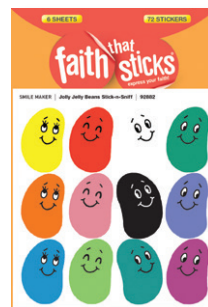
Happy Easter!



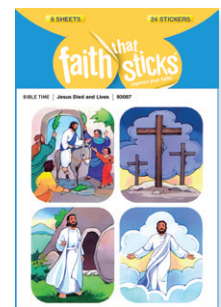
Animals and Flowers



Jesus Died and Lives



Jolly Jelly Beans Stick-n-Sniff



Jesus Is Alive!