

Paid in Full

Quarter 4 • Lesson 13
Celebration!

1. *Connecting:* Talk about good things in the children's lives.
2. *Teaching:* Hear about Jesus' death and resurrection (Mark 14:32—16:15; John 18—20).
3. *Responding:* Choose how to respond to God's invitation.

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Fist-sized rock
- Sticks of various lengths (6 or more)
- Mud

Optional Supplies:

- Memory Verse poster
- Paper
- Crayons
- Student Pages
- Pencils
- Worship song
- Small treats

Teacher Devotion

"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats.

Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

"He himself bore our sins" in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed."

1 Peter 2:22–24

Think of the worst physical pain you have experienced. Now think of the worst emotional pain you have experienced. Imagine experiencing them at the same time. This is probably something that you would never want to endure. It would be too much.

There is someone who chose to endure the worst physical, emotional, and spiritual pain imaginable—Jesus. And He did this so that we might die to our sins and live for righteousness. He did this for the joy of bringing us back into a right relationship with God the Father. He endured the cross for you. As you teach your children today, remember that He endured the cross for them. Pray that your children may hear and understand this great thing that Jesus has done for them.

Family Connection: Encourage your children to ask members of their families about hard and painful things they have experienced. They can share how Jesus endured pain and grief on the cross; therefore He knows their pain. The children can share that Jesus endured this pain so we can be forgiven and have life with God, who loves us.

Teacher Tip: Today is an exciting day! For some of your children, today may be the very first time they hear the account of Jesus' death and resurrection. Adoption into God's forever family is only possible because of what took place on Easter. While our God is loving and kind and longs for relationship with us, that cannot happen unless we receive the costly gift given by Jesus. Never pressure a child to make a decision about following Jesus. Pray and trust the Holy Spirit to work in hearts even if you do not see any decisions today. Before today's lesson, review the Salvation Path at the front of this guide. Be available after class to talk with any children who may have questions, and offer to pray with them.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Talk about good things in the children's lives.

Welcome the children today with an Easter greeting!

Today we have the most exciting story to hear! Before we hear this story, I want to ask you a few questions. Let's think about good things that have come into our lives. I want you to think about things that are not physical objects.

For each question, allow 2–3 different children to respond.

- **What good things have come into your life? For example, you might think of a good friend.**
- **Did you have to work for this good thing?**
- **Now think of something good that you did nothing to earn or work for. It was a gift. How did you feel receiving that gift?**

The story of today's lesson is about the best gift that God has given us. Everyone come sit in a circle and listen carefully to this true and important story.

2. Teaching: Hear about Jesus' death and resurrection (Mark 14:32—16:15; John 18—20).

Teacher Tip: Today's Bible story deals with the painful topics of Jesus' arrest and death, as well as His resurrection. Some children may respond strongly to the painful things He experienced for us. It is okay if some children express emotion during the story. Pause to comfort them as needed. Encourage them that this story has a very happy ending, and we are all invited into it.

Today we will hear the story of Easter. Easter is the holiday that celebrates when Jesus rose from the dead. Because He defeated death by coming back to life, everyone who believes in Him can have eternal life with God too! Today we will learn how much this cost Jesus.

I will tell you the story of Jesus' last days on earth as a man. Every time Jesus endured something that caused Him emotional, physical, or spiritual pain, I want you to pass the rock to the person on your right. Hold up the rock.

Read the following story and have the children pass the rock when prompted. After the first few times, just pause in an obvious way so they will know to pass the rock.

Because Jesus was God, He knew the time had come when He would be crucified. He knew He would endure a lot of physical pain in the coming hours. He felt greatly distressed and troubled (pass the rock). He took His disciples with Him to pray in a garden of olive trees. Heavy with grief, He asked His disciples to pray with Him, but instead they fell asleep (pass the rock). When He came back, He asked them again to pray with Him. But again they fell asleep (pass the rock). This even happened a third time (pass the rock)!

Then Judas, 1 of the 12 disciples, came to the garden with a crowd armed with swords and clubs. Judas had agreed to betray Jesus to the religious leaders and told them the person he kissed would be Jesus. With the armed crowd around them, he betrayed Jesus with a kiss (pass the rock). They arrested Jesus and bound His wrists (pass the rock). His friends deserted Him and fled (pass the rock).

Jesus was brought to the Jewish high court. They asked Him, "Tell us, are You the Son of God?" Jesus said, "I am." They condemned Jesus to death because they did not believe He was the Son of God (pass the rock). Some began to spit at Jesus (pass the rock). They blindfolded Him and struck Him with their fists (pass the rock). They mocked Him by commanding Him to tell them who had hit Him while He was blindfolded (pass the rock). Then the guards beat Him (pass the rock).

While Jesus was being questioned, Peter, a close friend of Jesus, was nearby. A servant girl asked if he was 1 of the disciples. Peter denied knowing Jesus (pass the rock). She insisted that he was 1 of Jesus' followers. Again he denied it (pass the rock). A little later some of the people standing there accused him of being 1 of Jesus' disciples. But Peter denied it. He said, "I do not know this man you are talking about" (pass the rock).

Jesus was brought before Pilate, the Roman governor. After questioning Jesus, Pilate offered to release either Jesus or a murderer named Barabbas. The crowd cried out for Pilate to release the murderer rather than Jesus (pass the rock). Pilate asked the crowd what he should do with Jesus, and they shouted, "Crucify Him!" (pass the rock). So Pilate had Jesus whipped with leather straps that had sharp pieces of metal and sheep bones attached to them (pass the rock). Then Pilate handed Jesus over to Roman soldiers to be crucified.

The soldiers put a purple robe on Jesus. They twisted a crown of thorns and pushed it onto His head (pass the rock). Again and again they struck Jesus (pass the rock) and spit on Him (pass the rock). They mocked Him by kneeling in front of Him like they were bowing before a king (pass the rock). Then they forced Jesus to carry a heavy cross up a hill (pass the rock).

They nailed Jesus' hands and feet to the cross (pass the rock) and crucified Him next to 2 criminals (pass the rock). The people who passed by, and even the 2 criminals, insulted Jesus as He hung there dying (pass the rock).

Quoting a psalm, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" (pass the rock). When He knew He had completed all that God the Father had planned, Jesus said, "It is finished." And He died (pass the rock).

Jesus was taken down from the cross, wrapped in cloth, and buried in a tomb. A heavy rock was rolled in front of the opening of the tomb, sealing His body inside. On the third day after this, some women who were followers of Jesus went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. When they arrived, they saw that the large stone had been rolled away!

Inside the tomb, there was an angel who said, "Do not be alarmed! You are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. Go tell His disciples to meet Him in Galilee." Soon after that, Jesus appeared to His disciples, who were in awe. He told them to tell others the good news that He was alive again.

We passed the rock 28 times during this story. We all touched this rock that represents the pain that Jesus endured. None of us was actually there causing Jesus' pain, but we did contribute to it. Like the disciples, we have all fled from or denied Jesus in some way. We have turned to our own way instead of looking to Him. We did not beat Jesus with our hands like the guards, but we have hurt Him when we hurt others by not showing love, respect, or kindness. When we hurt any of God's children, it hurts Him too. We did not nail Jesus to the cross, but He accepted that suffering so that our sins could be paid for. On the cross, Jesus took our punishment so we could have the opportunity to become part of God's forever family.

Let's pass this rock around our circle again. As we do, think of something you do that denies Jesus. You do not have to say it out loud. Just think of it silently to yourself. Perhaps you choose to not believe in Him. Perhaps you choose to hurt others because of your own pain. Perhaps you choose to lie instead of telling the truth. Perhaps you often react out anger instead of kindness.

Allow the children time to think and to pass the rock. It is okay if this is a quiet time.

- **What did God do about the big rock that sealed Jesus in the tomb?**

The children may answer that He rolled it away.

God does that with our rock too—the one we passed from 1 person to the next that represents our sin. When we believe in Jesus and ask for His forgiveness, God gets rid of that rock. He rolls it out of His sight so that He no longer sees our sin. Then we can be raised to life in God's forever family!

Encourage the children to talk more about the Easter story.

- **What sounded like the most painful thing in the story to you? Explain.**

The children may talk about the physical pain Jesus endured or the emotional pain of being rejected by His friends and mocked by others. They may talk about the fact that Jesus felt abandoned by God.

- **Knowing that He would suffer, why do you think Jesus allowed Himself to be arrested?**

So that He could pay for our sins and make a way for us to be part of God's family.

- **What does Jesus' sacrifice tell you about God?**

He loves people so much that He would endure something so awful to restore our relationship with Him!

- **What does that say about you?**

You are valuable and loved very much!

Easter is the celebration of Jesus' resurrection. Jesus' resurrection proved His victory over death and sin. Jesus knew that all of us sin. All of us rebel against God by choosing to do what we want. All of us miss the mark of following God perfectly. That is what sin is: missing the mark of what God has for us. Jesus hit the mark perfectly though. Through Him, we can come to God!

Listen to a verse we have heard before that tells us about God's great love for us, and let's learn it together.

Show the Memory Verse poster if you are using it.

*God demonstrates his own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
Romans 5:8

3. Responding: Choose how to respond to God's invitation.

We all miss the mark when it comes to living how God wants us to. We hurt God by turning to our own way. But instead of turning away from us too, God chose to save us because He loves us so much. God made that choice, and now you have a choice.

Jesus is not automatically everyone's Saviour. He would like to be everyone's Saviour, but He is only the Saviour of those who receive His gift. His death and resurrection only saves people who choose to believe in Him. That belief is your choice.

Use a small amount of water to create a small muddy area on the ground. You will create a cross scene with the sticks in this muddy area.

Optional Supplies:

Pass out paper and crayons to the children. Tell the children to draw pictures of themselves (their entire body, not only their face).

If you are using Student Pages, the children can use them for this activity.

End of Option

Use some of the sticks to make a cross on the centre of the muddy area. Have the children stand around the cross you have made. Say the following:

Jesus' sacrifice on the cross made a way for us to be with God. Because He paid for our sins, the cross is not only a symbol of death and pain—it is a symbol that we can have life with God. Through the cross, we can be home with God. He can live in the home of our hearts now, and one day, we will share His home in heaven.

Now take the sticks from the cross and make an outline of a house on the ground.

If you want your home to be with Jesus, come up and leave a fingerprint inside the house. If you are not sure you want to make your home with Jesus yet, you can think about it this week. You can place your fingerprint outside the house. If you have any questions you can come talk to me.

Teacher Tip: Be sure that children do not feel pressured to respond to the invitation to become a Christian—that decision needs to be sincere and made individually. If a child does not respond, be sure to pray for God to draw that child to Him!

Optional Supplies:

If you want your home to be with Jesus, come up and place the picture of yourself inside the house with Him. If you are not yet sure you want to make your home with Jesus, that is okay. Just keep your picture for now. You can think about it this week. If you have any questions you can come talk to me.

End of Option

If possible, play a fun song celebrating God's love and allow the children to sing and dance to the Lord.

Offer a small treat since Easter is a great celebration!

Teacher Tip: Ask if any children would like to pray with you individually. Review the Salvation Path at the front of this guide with each child who responds.

Close by praying this blessing based on Romans 5:8 and 6:23 over the children.

Blessing: God has demonstrated His love for you in this: While you were still a sinner, Jesus died for you. May you know and accept His free gift of eternal life with Him in His forever family.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song if possible.

"Reckless Love" by Cory Asbury: <https://youtu.be/Sc6SSHuZvQE>