

# Just Us Little Guys

*A Series of Bible Study Lessons  
For Children 4-7 Years Old*

## Series 4

### Easter

Lesson 1	Palm Sunday (Jesus Welcomed into Jerusalem)
Lesson 2	The Last Supper with His Disciples
Lesson 3	Jesus in the Garden (of Gethsemane)
Lesson 4	The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus
Lesson 5	The Empty Tomb (Easter Sunday!)
Lesson 6	Jesus Appears to His Disciples (Doubting Thomas)
Lesson 7	Jesus Makes Breakfast! (Peter's Reconciliation)
Lesson 8	The Great Commission / Jesus Ascends into Heaven

## Using these Lessons

### Each of these lessons:

- Is designed to work with children, ages 4-7 years old
- May be used separately, or in a series of lessons
- Is Bible-based and Christ-honoring

### Each of these lessons consists of 7 parts:

<u>Teacher Pep Talk:</u>	A few words of encouragement written especially for you, the teacher who will present the lesson. You'll also find a few Bible verses to review prior to teaching the lesson.
<u>What You will Need:</u>	A list of items you will need to present the lesson. Review over the suggested activities to see if you need any items for the ones you choose.
<u>Major Points:</u>	A list of the major points to be made during the lesson.
<u>Memory Verse:</u>	A verse of appropriate length for the age of the children.
<u>Lesson:</u>	Step by step ideas for presenting the Major Points to the children. Use your own words, embellish with your own stories or examples.
<u>Prayer:</u>	Pray with and for the children
<u>Suggested Activities:</u>	Games, crafts, or activities that allow the children to respond to the Lesson

### Teaching Tips:

**Read** over the **Teacher Pep Talk** and review the suggested **Bible Verses** in advance, so that the Bible truths will be in your own heart before you try to teach the children....

***This is the secret of being a good teacher!***

**Suggested Activities** are just that... **Suggestions!** You may think of even better games, crafts, drawings or activities to do with the children. If so, then DO THEM! Remember, you have different gifts and talents than anyone else. You may have different resources available. Ask God to help you be creative in ways to reach out to the children with His message!

The **Major Points** are the ideas that are to be conveyed to the children during the Lesson. These are stated in very simple terms, but they are vast concepts to propose. Children are AMAZING in that they can understand these very big things, even if they are stated in very simple words. Perhaps this is why our Savior instructed us that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to "such as these".

**Each time** you teach children **YOU SHOULD NOT FAIL TO DO THESE 3 THINGS:**

- LISTEN to them
- PRAY with and for them
- Let them see you READ from THE BIBLE

**LISTEN:** Sit on the floor with the children and ask them how their week went. Then LISTEN to the various children as they tell you something that is on their heart or mind. Often this takes time and effort, but the children NEED to be able to tell you about them, so that you can connect.

**PRAY:** At the beginning of your time together, pray with the children and for the children. You may wish to pray for some of their concerns or for your time together. Ask God to help you teach the lesson so that they will be blessed by it. Do this out loud. Children need to know that you pray and that they can pray as well.

**READ from the BIBLE:** Hold the Bible in your hands or in your lap and let the children SEE you read at least one verse from it. It is good for them to know that there is a reference where we may go to seek God's answers. If they see you read from it, they will learn that they may do so as well.

God bless you as you work with the children to present these great spiritual truths to them! May your work in the field bring a great harvest for the Kingdom of God!

With love in Christ,

*Sharon*

**A SPECIAL NOTE FOR EASTER SERIES LESSONS!**

Never teach a child (or anyone for that matter) about the Crucifixion of Jesus, **UNLESS** you intend to teach that child about the Resurrection of Jesus **IN THE SAME LESSON!**

Be sure to LEAVE ENOUGH TIME to explain and discuss **BOTH THE CRUCIFIXION AND THE RESURRECTION** during the same lesson!

This is important because you want the child to have the WHOLE STORY. It is true that God sent His Son to die on the cross for our sins, but it is IMPERATIVE, especially for young children, that you do not leave off the story there. The child may not be familiar with the story of the Resurrection, and you MUST NOT leave the child worrying about innocent Jesus dying for our sins on the cross without knowing that on the third day God raised Him from the dead and that now He is alive FOREVER!

Perhaps all of this goes without saying... but I felt obliged to say it anyway! Thanks! ☺

Hebrews 12:2 says about Jesus: *For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

## Palm Sunday (Jesus Welcomed into Jerusalem)

Teacher Pep Talk: Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter when all the children dress up and carry “palm” leaves (that someone got from a helpful florist’s shop) waving them around as they walk into the Sanctuary at the beginning of the Worship Service, while everyone sings a traditional Easter song like [“All Glory, Laud, and Honor”](#). (Nice.)

It’s fun. It’s expected. And everyone loves it! But the kids may not know what it all means. YOUR JOB (as the trusted Sunday School teacher) is to EXPLAIN the story behind the pageantry.

As you can see, you have your work cut out for you! I hope that this lesson will provide you with the information and the resources you need to teach a great lesson on Palm Sunday! God bless you!

You will need: One of those “palm” leaves the kids had earlier. ☺  
Copies of the activity sheet for each child  
Scissors, crayons, tape or glue, and thin wooden dowels

Major Points: God keeps His promises  
God promised the Jews a King and Savior  
Jesus is the King of the Jews  
Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (fulfilling prophecies)  
The people welcomed Him on that day

Scripture Ref: John 12:12-16, Psalm 118:25-26, and Zechariah 9:9

Memory Verse: John 12:13 ... “Hosanna!” ... “Blessed is the King...”

Lesson: **God keeps His promises**

- Have you ever made a promise? (*Wait for responses.*)
- Has anyone ever made a promise to you? (*Sure!*)
- Did that person keep their promise to you? (*Listen attentively to the children’s answers.*)
- Do you think God would keep a promise that He made? (*Yes!*)
- I think so too! God ALWAYS keeps His promises!!

**God promised the Jews a King and Savior**

- God has a special group of people whom we call the Jews
- A long time ago God promised the Jews that He would send them a King (whose Kingdom would never end)
- The Jews waited and waited for their King
- They knew He would come one day (because God ALWAYS keeps His promises!)

### Jesus is the King of the Jews

- Jesus is the King and Savior that God promised to the Jews
- But when Jesus came, at first the Jews did not recognize Him.  
(Read the story below once by yourself and then read it again, asking the children to do the hand motions with you.)

When Jesus came as a baby, They didn't know Him.	(hold arms as if cradling a baby) (shake your head "No!")
When He grew up, They didn't recognize Him.	(raise arm up high showing how tall) (cover your eyes)
When He did miracles, They wondered about Him.	(hold your hands up in surprise) (scratch your head in wonder)
When He raised the dead, They began to believe in Him.	(bring both hands up dramatically) (shake your head "Yes!")
When He rode into Jerusalem, They welcomed Him as King! <i>Hosanna! Blessed is the King!</i>	(act as if riding and holding reigns) (wave your hands in the air) (have the children repeat "Hosanna!")

### Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (fulfilling prophecies)

- God gave the Jews many promised signs so that they would know their King when He arrived
- These signs are called prophecies
- One of these prophecies was that their King would come to His people riding on a donkey
- Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (fulfilling the prophecy)

### The people welcomed Him on that day as their King

- The people heard Jesus was coming!
- They went and got palm branches (*hold up palm branch*) and placed them on the road for Him to ride over.
- And on that day they welcomed Him as their King!
- They shouted Hosanna! Blessed is the King! (*Have the children repeat the word "Hosanna!" and raise their hands in praise.*)

**NOTE:** The word "Hosanna" literally means "Save us, we pray." The people recognized Jesus Christ as their promised King and Savior. Realizing that their promised Messiah had come, they immediately sought for salvation calling out "save us, we pray!"

**Reference:** <http://www.bibleornot.org/hosanna-save-us-we-pray/>

Prayer: Let's pray and thank God for sending Jesus as our Savior and King.

Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us.  
Thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior and King.  
Amen.

Suggested Activities: (Pick and choose the activities that work best for you!)

### **Blessed is the King!**

Read this story from the lesson again and have the children repeat the hand motions with you. Use palm branches to wave, if you have some available.

When Jesus came as a baby, They didn't know Him.	(hold arms as if cradling a baby) (shake your head "No!")
When He grew up, They didn't recognize Him.	(raise arm up high showing how tall) (cover your eyes)
When He did miracles, They wondered about Him.	(hold your hands up in surprise) (scratch your head in wonder)
When He raised the dead, They began to believe in Him.	(bring both hands up dramatically) (shake your head "Yes!")
When He rode into Jerusalem, They welcomed Him as King!	(act as if riding and holding reigns) (wave your hands in the air)
Hosanna! Blessed is the King!	(have children repeat "Hosanna!")

### **Palm Branches**

**Items Needed:** For each child a copy of the palm branch coloring page (or a piece of green construction paper) scissors, tape, and one paper rod off the bottom of a pants hanger. (Alternatively use something like an unsharpened pencil or a short dowel.)

**Before class starts:** Copy one coloring sheet per child. **OR** Using the pattern provided on the attached sheet, draw a "palm branch" on a green sheet of construction paper for each child. Older children may use the pattern to draw out their own palm branches.

**During class:** Provide crayons and scissors for the children. Allow them to color and then cut out their palm branches. Have them cut the "leaves" by cutting down the dotted lines, but stopping well before they reach the center! Allow the children to tape the "stem" and center to a short cylindrical object like an unsharpened pencil or dowel. (Alternatively: The round paper rod at the bottom of a pants hanger works great!)

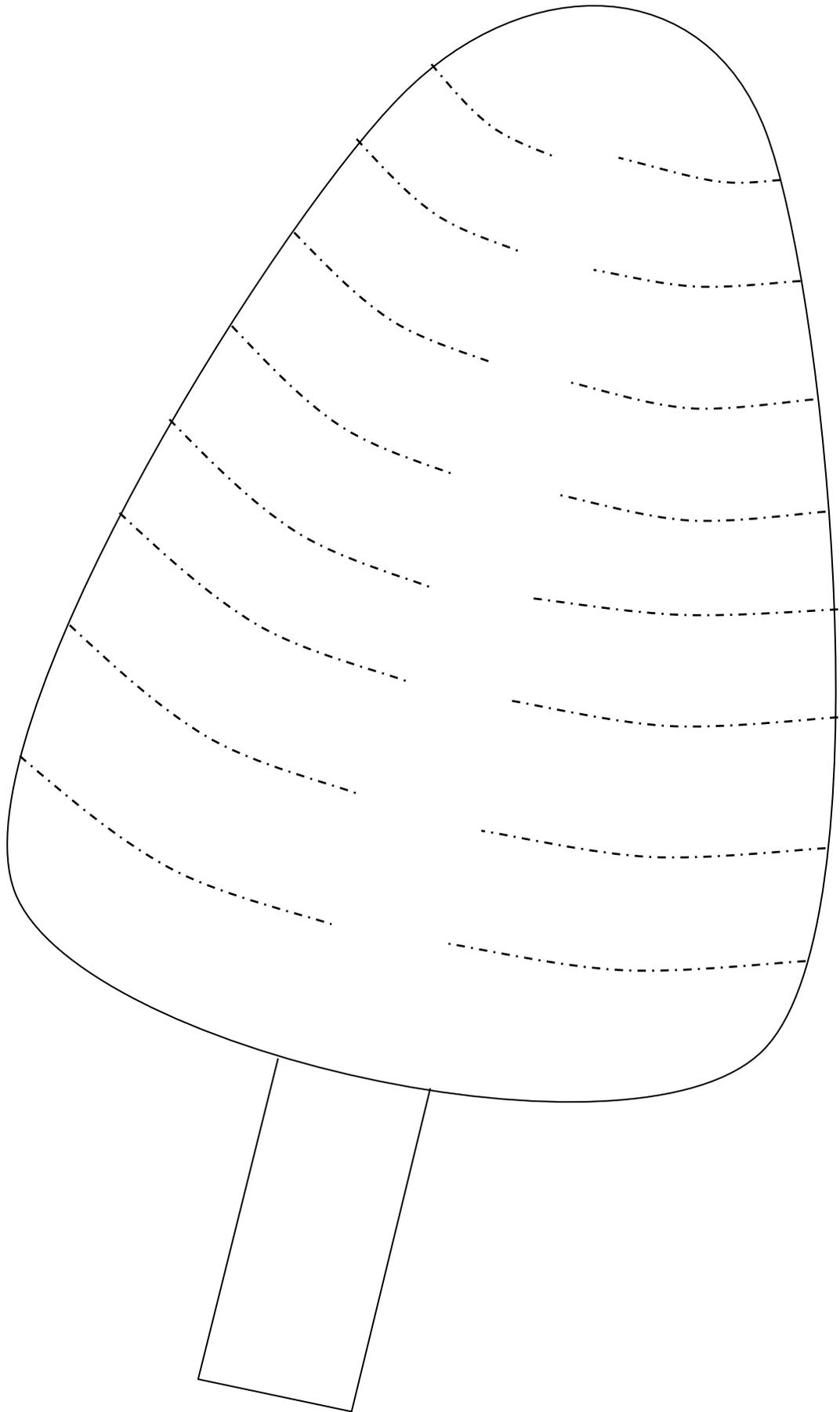
### **Palm Sunday Parade**

*(You don't have to have palm branches to do this! But be sure to use them if you do.)*

Line up the children in a parade formation. Have them walk around the room, or possibly to an adjacent classroom (*older adult classes will love this, but be sure to make arrangements beforehand*), waving their palm branches in the air and saying "Hosanna! Blessed is the King!" or singing a favorite song such as "Jesus Loves Me." Then march back to the room and have a snack!

### **Suggested Snacks:**

Easter is next Sunday. That should give you some ideas for snacks. (It is never too early to get a "jump" on the Easter Bunny. ☺) Watch out for choking hazards, such as jelly beans... And NEVER, EVER serve nuts. However, otherwise, have fun and make the snacks nice and sweet! Water is the best drink to offer with this type of snack!



## The Last Supper (with His Disciples)

Teacher Pep Talk: Little Guys will like learning about Jesus' Last Supper with His Disciples. During the Last Supper Jesus gave them a picture of the New Covenant that He established between God and Mankind. We call this picture "The Lord's Supper" (or Communion.)

Teaching small children about The Lord's Supper is a sweet and meaningful thing. Little children seem to understand that one thing can stand for another. The bread represents Christ's body, broken for us, and the wine represents Christ's blood, shed for us. It is similar to how Christ represented us (or died for us) on the cross.

During the lesson you may distribute crackers and grape juice to illustrate the bread and wine. (*You may wish to seek approval for this from your Pastor prior to the lesson.*) If asked, your Pastor might even be willing to come to your class to talk about The Lord's Supper with the children! (*Ask early!!*)

You will need: Crackers and grape juice, small paper cups  
Copies of the Activity Sheet for all students (crayons, pencils, etc.)

Major Points: Jesus had a Last Supper with His Disciples  
He asked them to remember Him  
Jesus gave them a picture to help us remember Him  
We call the picture, The Lord's Supper  
The picture is to help us remember what Jesus did for us

Scripture Ref: Luke 22:15-20 (The Last Supper)

Memory Verse: Luke 22:19 ...*Do this in remembrance of me.*

Lesson: **Jesus had a Last Supper with His Disciples**

- I have a question to ask... What do we call the meal we have in the morning when we get up? (*Breakfast*)
- And what do we call the meal we have in the middle of the day? (*Lunch or Dinner*)
- And what do we call the meal that we have at the end of the day? (*Supper or Dinner*)
- How many of you had supper (or dinner) last night? Do you remember what you had to eat? (Wait for answers.)
- That's good! You remember a lot!
- Today we are going to talk about another supper we remember. It was a very important supper. We are going to talk about the Last Supper that Jesus had with His Disciples.

**Jesus asked the Disciples to remember Him**

- Jesus had His Last Supper on earth with His Disciples because He loved them very much.
- Jesus loves us very much too.
- We remember and think about people we love.
- During the Last Supper Jesus had with His Disciples, He asked them to remember Him.
- Actually, He asked them to remember Him in a special way.
- Jesus gave them a sort of picture to remember Him by.

**Jesus gave them a picture to help us remember Him**

- The picture He gave them wasn't taken with a camera
- It wasn't drawn on a piece of paper or painted on a canvas.
- The picture Jesus gave them was one of bread and wine. *(Can you imagine a picture drawn with bread and wine? That's silly! You can't have much of a picture if you drew it with a piece of bread... That just wouldn't work!)*

**We call the picture... The Lord's Supper**

- This special picture is called the Lord's Supper. Jesus is the Lord. And so it is His Supper.
- In the Lord's Supper there is bread and wine (or grape juice!)
- These help "paint" a picture of what Jesus did for us!

**The picture is to help us remember what Jesus did for us!**

- Jesus said the bread was His body, which was broken for us
- Jesus said the wine was His blood, which was shed for us
- The bread and the wine stand for what Jesus did on the cross for us
- The picture, of the Lord's Supper, helps us to remember what Jesus did for us!
- When we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we are to remember Jesus and what He did for us on the cross!

Let's pray and thank God for sending Jesus and for giving us a picture to help us remember Him!

Prayer:

Dear God,  
Thank you for sending Jesus.  
Thank you for giving us a picture to help us remember Him!  
Thank you for loving us.  
We love you back!  
Amen

Suggested Activities:

**Take Pictures**

Have the children DRAW a picture of themselves on top of the activity sheet with this lesson. OR...Take pictures of the children and print them off at the top of a full sheet of paper or tape their pictures to the top of a full sheet of paper.

On the bottom part of the paper, under the picture, write: “This is a picture of me on this date. The Lord’s Supper is like a picture of what Jesus did for us on the cross.” Send the paper home with the children to display in their room (or on the refrigerator.)

**Recreate the Last Supper**

Create a place in the room to simulate the meeting of Jesus and the Disciples at the Last Supper. Seat the children together like they are gathered around a large low table.

Examples for creating the idea of a large low table:

Place a large sheet or blanket on the floor.

Place a large folded-up table on the floor and have the children sit around it.

Pull several small tables together and seat the children around them.

Pass out crackers and grape juice and let the children eat them sitting around the table.

**NOTE:** *At this young age, I would NOT recommend reviewing the words of Jesus at the Last Supper during this activity. It is probably enough to have the children experience eating together while sitting around the table. Remind them that Jesus ate His Last Supper with the disciples because He loved them very much, and that He loves all of us too! If your class seems very interested in the meaning of the bread and the wine, ask your Pastor to come and give a talk to your class about Communion at a later date.*

*If the children in your class are older, you may wish to refer to our lesson on The Last Supper written for Elementary Students.*

**Freeze Tag**

*After sitting still for a long time, a nice wiggly game may be just what your children need!*

**Directions:** Define a space within which to play. *(Make sure it is free of obstacles.)*

Three children are designated to be “it.” Have the children who are “it” stand around in the center of the space, and have the other children stand around them. At the signal to begin, the children who are “it” try and touch the other children who are not it. When they are touched they must “freeze” in place *(the more awkward the position, the more fun.)* When almost everyone is “frozen” choose 3 new people to be “it.” Play again!

**Alternative:** If you like, assign one person who can “unfreeze people” just by touching them, unless they get touched and “frozen” themselves. *(Uh oh!)*

This is a picture of me:

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On this day:

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Now, when you see this picture, you can think of me!

*The Lord's Supper is like a picture of what Jesus did for us on the cross. Now, when we see that picture, we can think of Him!*

## Jesus Prays at Gethsemane

Teacher Pep Talk: One of the most poignant and powerful stories in the Bible is the story of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is there that Jesus prayed on the night before His death, asking His Father, "...if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me." However, Jesus finished His prayer with these words, "...yet not as I will, but as you will."

Jesus went through untold agony in the Garden, even to the point of sweating blood. But despite this He stayed true to the Father's will. It was important that the Savior (Jesus) be a willing sacrifice. It would not have been alright for God the Father to have somehow forced His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross. But Jesus, though He in His humanity dreaded all that it meant to die on the cross, was willing to do what His Father asked, even if it meant His death.

When Peter fought back as Jesus was arrested, Jesus stopped him and asked *"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"* (Matthew 26:53-54)

Jesus was not forced to die on the cross. As He told Peter, He could have called on His Father and received the immediate help of more than 12 legions of angels (more than enough!) But He wanted to do the Father's will, to fulfill the scriptures, and to set mankind free from sin and death.

Jesus went to the cross willingly for you and for me.

You will need: A copy of the Activity Sheet for each child, and colored pencils or crayons

Major Points: Jesus prayed on the Mount of Olives at a place called Gethsemane  
Jesus said "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me;"  
Then Jesus said, "...yet not my will, but yours be done."  
Jesus went to the cross willingly for you and me.  
Jesus is alive now forever!

Scripture Ref: Luke 22:39-46

Memory Verse: Luke 22:42 *"... not my will, but yours be done."*

Lesson:

**Jesus prayed at a place called Gethsemane**

- How many of you pray? (*Wait for responses.*) Good! I'm glad that you pray!
- When do you pray? (*Wait for responses; some may have been given already.*)
- We often pray together before we eat, or just before bedtime. We pray together at church or even in Sunday School!
- Did you know that Jesus prayed? He did. He prayed a lot. The Bible talks about Him praying at night, early in the morning, in front of big groups, with His Disciples, and even all by Himself. He always prayed to His Father in Heaven (God the Father.)
- The Bible also tells us that He prayed on the night before His death on the cross.
- On that night He prayed on the Mount of Olives at a place called Gethsemane.

**Jesus said "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me;"**

- Jesus knew He was about to go to His death.
- He prayed "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me;"
- Cup, what cup? What cup is Jesus talking about?
- He is talking about His upcoming death
- Jesus did not look forward to dying on the cross. He asked His Father, if He was willing, to take this cup from Him, or to let Him not have to die on the cross, if it was in God's will.

**Then Jesus said, "...yet not my will, but yours be done."**

- What does it mean to be willing? What if I ask you "who will eat this ice cream cone for me?" I imagine that some of you would be willing to eat some ice cream for me.
- Or what if I asked "Who will go with me to the zoo?" I imagine that some of you might be willing to go to the zoo with me.
- When you say you **WILL** do something that means that you are **WILLING** to do it. It means that you choose to do it.
- It can work the other way too. What if I asked, "Who will take out the garbage for me?" Maybe not as many people would be willing to do that.
- Or what if I asked "Who will work hard in my yard for me every day for a week?" Probably not many people would be willing to do that... even if I paid them! ☺
- But what if I asked the almost impossible. What if I asked, "Who will die for me?" Then almost everyone's hand goes down. Only very few people would be willing to die for me.
- Jesus said "...not my will, but yours be done." Jesus chose to do His Father's will!

**Jesus went to the cross willingly for you and me.**

- Jesus went to the cross willingly.
- Nobody made Him go!
- He chose to lay down His life for His friends (you and me!)

**Jesus is alive now forever!**

- But the Good News is that Jesus is NOT dead now!
- On the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead!
- Now Jesus lives forever!
- Because of what Jesus did, we can live forever with Him too!

Let's pray together and thank Him that Jesus His Son was willing to do His Father's will!

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that Jesus was willing to do Your will!  
Thank you that He died on the cross for us!  
Thank you that now Jesus is alive forever!  
Amen!

Suggested Activities:

**Olive Branch Coloring Page**

Distribute a copy of the attached Gethsemane Activity Sheet to each child. Allow the children to color the olive branch pictured, with leaves and two olives. Encourage them to draw a picture of Jesus praying to His Father on the Mount of Olives.

While they are drawing, you may want to read them this short story. (It's true.)

*"The lady who drew this picture of the olive branch, (although she admits that she is not much of an artist) has actually been to the Mount of Olives and seen the olive trees, which are still there. It is a lonely and quiet place, full of sunshine and wind during the day. It is actually a nice high hill and from the top of it you can see all around for miles. The City of Jerusalem sits right across from it, on another hill, and you can easily see it.*

*The Olive trees there are very old. Their bark is coarse and hard and it is almost shiny it is so gray. Their leaves are long and skinny, and grayish-green in color. The olives on the trees are green when they are new and purplish-black when they are ripe.*

*The lady wants you to know that when she was a little girl it was hard for her to imagine that the places in the Bible were real places that you could actually go to and visit. They seemed so very far away and so very long ago. But when she got bigger God allowed her to go to the Mount of Olives and see the place called Gethsemane. While she was there, she remembered how Jesus had been right there too (and she cried a little.) She drew this picture for you so you could know that the places in the Bible are really there."*

*An Olive Branch*



Suggested Activities (continued):

### **The Lord's Prayer**

In this activity the children will learn the meaning of the first part of the Lord's Prayer.

#### **Say this to the children:**

In Gethsemane, Jesus prayed "...yet not my will, but yours be done." We have talked a lot today about what "will" means. Let's learn part of a prayer that Jesus taught His Disciples when they asked Him "How should we pray?" Do you think Jesus did the things He taught His disciples when He prayed? Did He choose the Father's will? (Yes)

The Lord's Prayer (or Part of the Prayer Jesus taught His Disciples)

*Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.  
(Matthew 6:9-10 KJV)*

NOTE: Depending on the age of the children in your group, go through the following explanations with them. Do at least "**Thy will be done**" and "**In earth, as it is in heaven.**"

#### **Our Father**

- means that we are talking to God the Father

#### **Which art in heaven**

- means that God the Father is in heaven

#### **Hallowed be thy name**

- Means that we set God's name is very special to us and we praise Him

#### **Thy Kingdom come**

- means that we want God to bring His Kingdom here now and later (when Jesus returns to earth again)

#### **Thy will be done**

- means that we want God's will to be done in all things
- even if it might not be exactly the same as our will
  - Just like Jesus prayed "...not my will, but yours be done."

#### **In earth, as it is in heaven**

- means that we want God's will to be done here on the earth
- just like it already is done up in heaven

Have older children memorize some of the words, or copy them down on paper.

## The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus (Friday was Sad, but Sunday was Glad!)

Teacher Pep Talk: How wonderful! You are going to teach children about the first Easter! It is an awesome and holy thing to teach little ones about Jesus' Death, Burial, and Resurrection. As you know, these make up the foundation of the Gospel Message! **God bless you!**

Be sure to pray beforehand, and prepare your own heart to present these precious truths to these precious children. God bless you!

NOTE: Whenever you teach children about the Crucifixion of Jesus, it is important to teach them about His Resurrection **during the same lesson!** Be sure to teach them **both** on the same day!

To prepare to teach this lesson read over John chapters 19 and 20, giving special attention to the following verses: John 19:41-42 and John 20:11-18.

You will Need: Paper, construction paper, crayons, pencils, and glue

Major Points: One Friday, Jesus died on the cross for our sins.  
Jesus was buried on that same day.  
Everyone who loved Jesus was sad!  
But... On that Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead!  
Everyone who loved Jesus was glad!  
We can be glad too!  
We can live forever with Him

Reference Verses: John Chapters 19 and 20 (John 19:41-42, and John 20:11-18)

Lesson: "Friday was Sad, but Sunday was Glad"

### **One Friday, Jesus died on the cross for our sins.**

- One Friday, Jesus lay down His life for us.
- He died on a cross to pay for our sins
- Sins are when we do something on purpose that we know is wrong.
- A sin isn't the same thing as a mistake or an "oops".
- [NOTE: talk to your class some about sin, depending on *the level of understanding in your group.*]

**Jesus was buried on that same day.**

- On the same day Jesus died, his friends buried him in a tomb.
- Jesus' tomb was probably like a little cave in a hill with a big rock rolled in front of it.

**Everyone who loved Jesus was sad.**

- Everyone who loved Jesus was sad: the disciples, his family, and his friends.
- *[Discuss death and burial with your class a little. The children may have had family members who have died and been buried. If not, they may have had a family pet that died. Talk about sad feelings that we may have when people we know and love die.]*
- Just like we are sad, if someone we know and love dies, after Jesus died all the people who knew and loved Him were very sad.

**But...On that Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead!**

- On the Sunday after Friday... *[Count on your fingers: "Friday... Saturday... Sunday." Show three fingers: One for each day.]*
- On the Sunday after Friday, or as they say in the Bible "On the third day" *[Hold up three fingers again. Children repeat.]*
- On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead!
- What does that mean? It means that Jesus wasn't dead anymore! It means that Jesus was not in the tomb anymore!
- Let's find out how it happened!
- On Sunday... or on the third day... *[Hold up three fingers]* ...some people, who were friends of Jesus, came to the tomb.
- But the tomb was empty! Where was Jesus? No one knew!
- A woman named Mary was there. She was crying outside the empty tomb.
- Mary looked inside the tomb and saw 2 angels.
- "Woman, why are you crying?" they asked. They told her that Jesus wasn't there anymore, but that He was ALIVE!
- Mary turned around and saw a man... it was JESUS!
- He was alive again! Mary was very glad!

**Everyone was glad!**

- Jesus had risen from the dead!
- He was alive forever!
- Everyone who knew and loved Jesus was glad!

**We can be glad too!**

- We can be glad that Jesus rose from the dead.

**Because of what Jesus did, we can live with Him forever!**

Prayer: Let's pray and thank God that we can live with Jesus forever.

*(Have the children repeat the lines after you.)*

Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us.  
Thank you that Jesus is alive.  
Thank you that we can live with Him forever.  
Amen.

Activities: *(Choose the ones that work best for your classroom.)*

**"Friday was Sad, but Sunday was Glad!" Card**

The idea is to make a nice Easter Card for family members or friends, by using the attached coloring sheets.

If possible, copy the two pages so that they are on the FRONT AND BACK of the same sheet of paper for each child. Then just fold the paper in half to make the card. If this is not possible, simply print off both pages for each child. Have the children decorate the pages and glue them together back to back to create the card, or cut out both decorated sections and glue them on a folded piece of construction paper to make the card.

For **older children** encourage them to decorate the cross by doing something creative like drawing flowers across it or writing Jesus' name on it. Also encourage them to draw Jesus alive on the inside of the card, near the empty tomb.

Color in the words "Happy Easter!" If you have access to some flower stickers, or some tiny silk flowers, those could be used to decorate the cross on the front of the card.

**Learn the Days of the Week:**

Just like in the lesson, hold up your fingers to count off the days of the week with the children. Start with the first day of the week, Sunday. Hold up one finger for each day as you count off the days of the week.

Say the days of the week with the children:

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday.

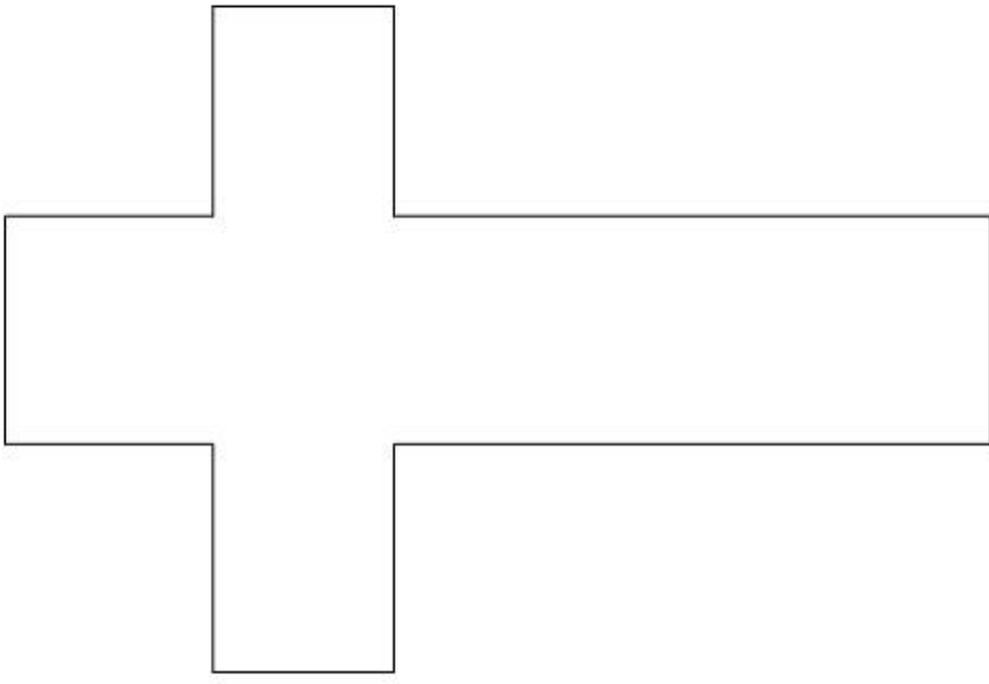
How many days of the week are there? *(Seven)*

Let's count them again. *(Repeat)*

Remind the children of what you learned in the lesson:

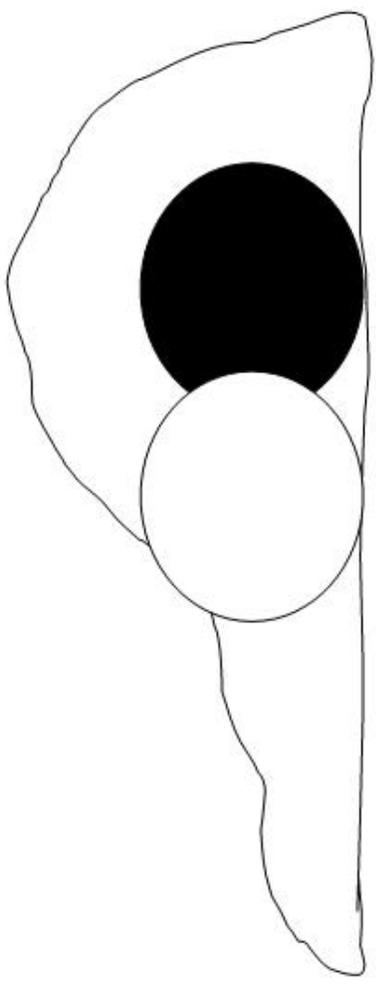
Jesus died and was buried on a Friday. He was raised from the dead on the following Sunday. It was the third day. Friday, Saturday, Sunday *(Three days.)*

Friday was Sad!



**But...**

**Sunday was Glad!**



**Happy Easter!**

Activities (continued):

**Glad (Not Sad) Easter Egg Hunt:**

**Before class:** Obtain empty plastic Easter Eggs, enough to have 2-3 for each child in class. Place tiny objects in the eggs that remind the children that Jesus loves them! (For instance, you could include little slips of paper with the words “Jesus Loves You” on them, or tiny cross stickers, or other stickers that have to do with Easter or with Love. You may also choose to add candies, etc, to the eggs. If so, SEE NOTE!)

NOTE: If you decide to include candies or treats in any of the Easter Eggs, be sure to **follow any guidelines your church may have** regarding the distribution of candy or treats to children. If you have any questions, please confer in advance with the Children’s Ministry team leader or the church staff.

Do **NOT** include NUTS of any kind with the treats. Some children may have nut allergies, and there is ALWAYS a danger of choking with young children.

Hide the eggs around the classroom or in a location near the classroom where the children may safely search for them at the end of the lesson.

**During class:** Tell the children that “Just like the women went to search for Jesus at the tomb, we will go and search for Easter Eggs. The women went expecting to find something SAD (Jesus still in the tomb) but instead the women found something that was GLAD (Jesus was alive again! The tomb was EMPTY!)”

When the children discover all the eggs and they have been divided more or less evenly among them, show the children that there are wonderful GLAD things inside of them! Read some of the slips of paper which say “Jesus Loves You!” and eat some of the delicious candy! Remind the children that “BECAUSE of the Resurrection, Easter morning is GLAD, NOT SAD!”

**Sing a Happy Song:**

Sing “This is the Day” (that the LORD hath Made) with the children. Talk about how we are happy on Easter because of all that God has done on this wonderful day!

This is the day (This is the day)  
That the LORD hath made (That the LORD hath made.)  
I will rejoice (I will rejoice)  
And be glad in it (and be glad in it)

This is the day that the LORD hath made.  
I will rejoice and be glad in it!  
This is the day,  
This is the day, that the LORD hath made!

## The Empty Tomb! (Easter Sunday)

Teacher Pep Talk: Congratulations! You get to teach children the greatest Bible story of all: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ! EASTER!!

There is no greater story of God's power and love, than the story of Easter: The day that the Lord, Jesus Christ, was raised from the dead! It is an unparalleled event in human history and is central to the core beliefs of Christianity.

Be sure to pray and prepare your heart to tell the story of the first Easter. The children will need to know this story forever!

**REMEMBER:** Whenever you teach children about the Crucifixion of Jesus, it is important to teach them about His Resurrection as well! The children need to know that Jesus is Alive!

To prepare to teach this lesson read over John 20:1-18. (*You may also want to review the passages in the other gospels regarding the events at the Empty Tomb, for example Luke 24:1-12.*)

You will Need: Paper plates (2 for each child), paper cups, scissors, and markers

Major Points: Jesus had died on the cross and had been buried in a tomb  
That Sunday some women came to visit His tomb  
The tomb was empty!  
An angel said that Jesus was alive!  
Mary Magdalene saw Jesus alive!  
Jesus is alive!

Reference Verses: John 20:1-18

Lesson: The Empty Tomb

**One day Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a tomb.**

- What's a tomb? (Wait for answers. Listen carefully. Then give this answer if it hasn't been described already. *A tomb is like what we usually call a grave. It is where they bury a person's body after he/she dies. A tomb is usually a carved out place in the side of a hill and they often roll a stone in front of to close it.*)
- Tombs can be opened and closed by rolling the stone away and by putting it back.
- The stones in front of tombs are very heavy and they are hard to roll away!

**That Sunday some women came to visit His tomb**

- Often, when people die, their friends and family go to visit the grave. (Sometimes they pray, or weep, or bring flowers)
- Jesus had friends and family who missed Him
- On the Sunday after He died some women, who were friends and family members, came to visit Jesus' tomb.
- They came early in the morning, just after the sun was up

**The tomb was empty!**

- When they arrived, they found that the tomb was empty!
- The stone had been rolled away!
- They were so surprised!
- They expected to find Jesus' body there
- But it wasn't there!! Where was it??? They didn't know!

**An angel said that Jesus was alive!**

- A woman named Mary Magdalene stood in front of the tomb
- She was crying! Why do you think she was crying? (*She was upset. First Jesus had died and now His body was missing!*)
- She looked again in the tomb. This time she saw two angels sitting there where Jesus had been.
- The angels asked her "Woman, why are you crying?"
- "They have taken my Lord away, and I don't know where they have put him."

**Mary Magdalene saw Jesus alive!**

- Then Mary Magdalene turned around and saw Jesus standing there (*but she didn't recognize Him at first*)
- "Woman, why are you crying?" He asked her.
- Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."
- Then Jesus said to her "Mary."
- And then she recognized Him. She knew it was Jesus!!

**Jesus is alive!**

- Jesus was alive!
- Mary Magdalene ran and told the disciples: "I have seen the Lord!"
- Later that day the disciples saw Jesus too!
- Forty days later, Jesus went up to heaven to be with His Father
- Jesus is alive today and forever!

Let's pray and thank God that Jesus is alive forever!

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that Jesus came and died on the cross for us!  
Thank you that he was buried in the tomb.  
Thank you that He was raised from the dead!  
Thank you that Jesus is alive forever!  
Amen

Suggested Activities:

### **The Empty Tomb Craft**

This is a fun craft for children who are good with sharp scissors. If your students are younger, you will need to cut the paper plates for them. (It will still be fun for them! ☺)

- Cut the bottom third off of a paper plate, so that it has a long flat edge.
- OPTIONAL: On the top of the curved part of the plate write “The Tomb is Empty!” Or “Jesus is Alive!” Or “Happy Easter!”
- With a hole punch, punch a hole about 1/2 inch from the long edge in the center.
- Start at the punched hole and cut a larger hole 2-3” in diameter
  - (Don’t get too close to the edge!)
- Place a paper cup (or Styrofoam cup) through the hole, so that just the top of the cup sticks out from the front of the paper plate.
  - (If the hole is not big enough to let most of the cup through, cut some tabs around it to help enlarge it a bit.)
- Stand the paper plate up on its long edge.
- From another paper plate, cut a circle about 3 inches in diameter.
- Have the children draw on the “3” circle so that it looks like a big stone.
- Roll the “stone” in front of the cup opening.
- Roll the “stone” away from the opening to see the Empty Tomb!



Suggested Activities (continued):

### **The Story of the Empty Tomb – Easter Skit**

This is a short Easter Skit for children 4-7 year olds. It relates the events recorded in John 20:1-18 (NIV). A Narrator reads the script and the children may (or may not) repeat the dialogue. Stage the skit in your classroom, deciding with the children where the empty tomb will be, where the angels will sit, and who will play which parts first. Allow the children to do the skit more than once and try out the various parts. Costumes, if you want to have them, can be as simple as large pieces of cloth draped across their shoulders, and tied at the waist. No props are necessary, but you may want to use a table covered with a white sheet to denote the Empty Tomb.

For fun, do the skit for parents or siblings! (*Happy Easter!*)

### **EASTER SKIT – The Story of the Empty Tomb**

**NARRATOR:** Jesus had died on the cross just a few days earlier. All of His family and friends were sad. After He died, He had been buried in a tomb. His family and friends missed Him very much!

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene and some other women went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away!

Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she cried, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

**ANGELS:** Woman, why are you crying?

**NARRATOR:** "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."

**MARY:** They have taken my Lord away, and I don't know where they have put him.

**NARRATOR:** At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

JESUS: Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?

NARRATOR: Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”

MARY: Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.

NARRATOR: Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

JESUS: Mary.

NARRATOR: Now Mary recognized Him. It was Jesus! He was alive!

Mary Magdalene ran to tell the disciples the news: “I have seen the Lord!”

MARY: I have seen the Lord!

NARRATOR: Now all of Jesus’ friends and family were happy!

EVERYONE: Jesus is Alive! Happy Easter!

**THE END**

## Jesus Appears to His Disciples (Doubting Thomas)

Teacher Pep Talk: It is easy, perhaps, to think less of the Disciple named Thomas. When we hear of him, we often think of the well-known phrase “Doubting Thomas.” We remember the story of how he doubted the other disciples, when they told him that Jesus was alive!

We wonder what kind of man would doubt the Resurrection of Christ, even after his friends had told him they had actually seen Jesus alive again. We hear him stubbornly saying *“Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”*

We forget that just a few chapters earlier in the Gospel of John, it had been Thomas who showed great courage by insisting that all the disciples go with Jesus to Bethany, although it was dangerous for them to do so. John credits Thomas with having said *“Let us also go, that we may die with him.”* This is a far cry from the more familiar *“Unless I see the nail marks... I will not believe.”*

Perhaps it is not wise for us to look back at Thomas with contempt. It is probably much more prudent for us to look back and wonder quietly what we would have said, if faced with the same situation.

You will Need: For the Bookmark Activity:  
Copies of the Activity Sheet for each child  
A 6 inch piece of yarn for each child (*optional*)  
Tape, glue, scissors, and crayons

Major Points: On Easter Sunday morning Jesus was raised from the dead  
That evening Jesus appeared to His disciples  
Thomas was not with them at the time  
Thomas would not believe that Jesus was alive  
A week later, Jesus appeared to all of the disciples  
Thomas believed!  
We can believe too!

Reference Verses: John 20:19-20 and John 20:26-29

Memory Verse: *“Stop doubting, and believe.”* John 20:27

Lesson: **Jesus Appears to His Disciples (Doubting Thomas)**

**On Easter Sunday morning Jesus was raised from the dead**

- What holiday have we just celebrated? (*Easter!*)
- (*Quickly review the Easter story with the children*)
- Jesus had died on the cross and been buried in the tomb
- That Sunday morning the women found His Tomb was empty!
- Then Mary Magdalene saw Jesus!
- Jesus was alive again!

**That evening Jesus appeared to His disciples**

- So far the Disciples had not seen Jesus yet. (*And even though some of the women had told them they had seen Jesus, the disciples didn't believe them because "their words seemed to them like nonsense." Luke 24:11*)
- What does the word nonsense mean? (*Right! Something that doesn't make sense! It didn't seem to make sense to the disciples that Jesus could be alive after He had been dead.*)
- After the women told them, some of the disciples ran to the tomb and also found it empty, but they didn't know yet what it meant. They had not seen Jesus for themselves.
- But that night (Sunday night) when all the disciples (except one) were in a locked room together, Jesus appeared to them
- Jesus said "Peace be with you."
- After this He showed them His hands and His side? Why do you think He showed His disciples His hands and His side? (*They had been injured during the Crucifixion. He had evidently retained these particular scars on His body.*)
- The Disciples were overjoyed when they saw Him.

**Thomas was not with them at the time**

- Unfortunately one of the Disciples, Thomas, was not with them
- Thomas missed seeing Jesus

**Thomas would not believe that Jesus was alive**

- The Disciples tried to tell Thomas about it later.
- Thomas doubted what they said. What does "to doubt" mean? (*It means that you don't believe it, or you wonder about it maybe, but you don't really think it could have happened.*)
- He would not believe them. He said, "*Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.*"
- Those were pretty big words! What do you think you would you have said? (*Wait for answers.*)

**A week later, Jesus appeared to all of the disciples**

- The next Sunday Jesus appeared to His Disciples again
- This time Thomas was there too!
- Jesus showed Thomas His hands and His side
- And Jesus told Thomas, *“Stop doubting, and believe.”*

**Thomas believed!**

- Thomas said to Jesus, *“My Lord and my God!”*
- Thomas finally believed!
- He didn’t doubt anymore. Why? *(Because he had seen with his own eyes that Jesus was alive. He had seen Jesus’ hands and His side that had been pierced during the Crucifixion.)*

**We can believe too!**

- Jesus said *“Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”*
- We can believe Jesus is alive!
- Jesus said we are blessed if we believe, even though we have not seen Him with our own eyes
- We can know that these things are true because God says so!
- Jesus is Alive! (No doubt!)

Let’s pray and thank God that Jesus is Alive, and ask Him to help us always believe it!

Prayer: Dear God,  
Thank you that you sent Jesus to die for us on the cross.  
Thank you that He was raised from the dead.  
Thank you that Jesus is alive again!  
Help us to always believe that Jesus is Alive!  
Amen

Suggested Activities:

**I Doubt It** (No, not the old card game! ☺)

In this game the children all sit in a circle. The teacher stands in the middle of the circle, makes up outrageous claims, and says them out loud. The children say “**I doubt it!**” each time. But, whenever the teacher says “Jesus is Alive!” and all the children say “**No Doubt!**” NOTE... This can get pretty loud! ☺ Choose someone else to stand in the middle and play again!

Outrageous Claims (examples)

Outside it is raining lollipops!  
I have a purple dog!  
Trains fly through the air!  
Jelly Beans grow on trees!

**Learn the Memory Verse**

“*Stop doubting, and believe.*” John 20:27

Jesus said this to Thomas. We can think about it too. Are we doubting Jesus? If so, we can stop doubting and believe!

Technique: Have the children break into two groups stand on opposite sides of the room. One side says “Stop Doubting...” The other side responds “...And Believe.” Do this several times. Now switch sides and repeat. Ask for volunteers to say the entire Bible verse. Have them stand in the middle as they say it. Once they have said it, they get to stand to the side and enjoy watching the others, or get to do other things... etc.

**No Doubt – Bookmark**

Make a “No Doubt!” Bookmark with your class. (Two styles of bookmarks are provided.)

- Make a copy of one of the No Doubt! Bookmark Activity Sheets for each child.
- Also cut a 6 inch piece of yarn for each child. (optional)
- Allow the children to color the letters in the words: “Jesus is Alive!” and “No Doubt!”
  - These words will be on opposite sides of the bookmark when you are finished
- Using scissors cut out carefully around the entire bookmark.
  - **(BUT... Do NOT cut down the center line between the two sides!)**
- **Fold** on the center line.
- If you like, make a loop of yarn and tape both ends on the back of one of the sides
- Put glue on the back of one of the sides and press the two sides together.
  - OR tape the two sides together by taping the edges or using two-sided tape
- Now you have a bookmark... **No Doubt!**

NO  
D  
O  
U  
B  
T  
!

NO  
D  
O  
U  
B  
T  
!

*"...blessed are those  
who have not seen  
and yet have believed."  
John 20:29*

Jesus is Alive!

No Doubt!

*“...blessed are those  
who have not seen  
and yet have believed.”  
John 20:29*

## Jesus Makes Breakfast (The Reconciliation of Peter)

Teacher Pep Talk: Sometimes we sin. That's it. We sin and that sin separates us from God, who loves us. When Peter denied Christ three times, you would have thought that all was lost. Here was Peter, who had followed Jesus faithfully for three years, denying that he even knew Him. And just a few hours earlier, Peter had told Jesus that he was ready to lay down his life for Him. However, Jesus knew what Peter didn't. He knew that in reality Peter would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed. And he did. Thankfully, that wasn't the end of the story! The Risen Christ came and found Peter, confronted him gently, and reconciled him to Himself. After that, He put Peter back to work. "Follow me," He told him. And Peter did. From that time forward he faithfully followed Christ, right up until the time of his death... just like he said he would do.

You will Need: Breakfast by the Sea: Picnic blanket, Sticks or wood, and Snacks  
Puzzling Pieces: Copies of activity sheet, crayons, scissors, and construction paper and glue (both optional)

Major Points: Sometimes....We sin  
Sin pushes us away (or separates us) from God.  
Jesus comes and finds us.  
He forgives us, and puts us back together with God.  
He gives us purpose (or things to do).

Reference Verses: John 21:1-19 and John 13:37-38

Memory Verse: *"Lord, ...you know that I love you."* John 21:17

Lesson: **Sometimes... We sin.**

- We do things every day. Don't we? Every day we make choices about things we are going to do.
- Sometimes we choose to do really good, fun things: Like ride our bike, or play nicely with our brothers or sisters. We do what our parents tell us to do. We say "please" and "thank you." We get up and go to bed when we are told to do so.
- Tell me some other things we may choose to do that are good and right. (*Wait for several answers.*)
- Good. I'm glad that you do so many things that are good! That is wonderful! You do lots of good things!

- But, I have to say that we don't ALWAYS do everything that is right... Do we? Sometimes... SOMETIMES... sometimes (not often, maybe) we do things that are wrong.
- Not a mistake, like "Oops, I spilled my milk." Or "Uh, oh, I forgot to feed the dog." But something really, really wrong that we decide to do on purpose... even when we KNOW that we aren't supposed to. This is what we call a "sin."

### **Sin "pushes us away" (or separates) us from God**

- When we do wrong things on purpose, we call that sin.
- Sin pushes us away (or separates) us from God, who never ever sins.
- In the Bible there is a story of a man named Peter. Peter was one of Jesus' disciples. He followed Jesus every day for three years. He cared about Jesus very much. He thought he was Jesus' best follower. He even once told Jesus, "I will lay down my life for you." (John 13: 37-38)
- Jesus told Peter that on that very night he would deny even knowing Jesus three different times. And that he would do all of this before the rooster crowed the next morning.
- *(Roosters crow in the morning, before the sun comes up.)*
- That night Jesus was arrested. Afterwards someone asked Peter if he knew Jesus. Peter told the person "No." He was asked again and again. All three times Peter said that he didn't know Jesus. All of a sudden the rooster crowed and Peter remembered what Jesus had told him. Peter cried.
- Why do you think Peter cried when he heard the rooster crow? *(He was sad that he had denied his friend, Jesus. And he knew that he had lied. Lying is a sin.)*
- Peter's sin had pushed him away from his friend, Jesus, the Son of God. Perhaps he was afraid that was forever.

### **Jesus Comes and Finds Us**

- But, happily, the story doesn't end there! Jesus died and was buried. But on the third day He rose from the dead! After that He visited with His disciples.
- One day Jesus met His disciples at the side of the lake. They all had breakfast together.
- Jesus asked Peter "Do you love me?" And Peter said "Yes, I love you." Jesus asked him that three times. Each time Peter told Jesus that he loved Him. But, Peter was ashamed that Jesus asked him three times.
- Think back. How many times did Peter tell the person that he didn't know Jesus? *(Three)* And how many times did Jesus ask Peter if he loved Him? *(Three)*

- Jesus came and found Peter. He allowed Peter to say how he felt about Jesus.
- After that Jesus talked to Peter about his future again, and this time there was no talk of him denying Jesus. (In fact Jesus gave Peter some big things to do. Then he told Peter, “Follow me.” Peter followed Jesus all the rest of his life.)
- When we sin, it is Jesus who comes looking for us.

**Jesus forgives us and puts us back together with God.**

- Jesus is the one who sets things right. He died for us on the cross, so He can forgive us.
- When He forgives us, He puts us back together with God.

**Jesus gives us purpose.**

- When Jesus comes into our lives and forgives us, He then also gives us purpose for our lives.
- And He calls us to follow Him!

Let’s pray and thank God for His goodness to forgive us of our sins and to bring us back together with Him.

PRAYER: Dear God,  
Thank you that you love us.  
Thank you that you forgive us of our sins.  
Thank you that you put us back together with you!  
We love you.  
Amen

Suggested Activities:

**Barnyard Business**

Discuss what kind of sound a rooster makes. See who can make the best rooster sound. (*Test out everyone... If you like, choose one or two winners.*) Read the following and have everyone say “**No**” and make the **Rooster** sounds. (*Repeat.*)

Jesus said, “Peter, before the rooster crows you will deny me three times.”

Later that night someone asked Peter “Do you know Jesus?”

And Peter said, “**No.**”

The person asked Peter again “Do you know Jesus?”

And Peter said, “**No!**”

The person asked Peter a third time “Do you know Jesus?”

And Peter said, “**No!!!**”

**(Rooster crows!!!)**

**Sing Old McDonald**

For fun sing the “Old McDonald” Song. Don’t forget the rooster!

### **Breakfast by the Sea**

Re-enact the Breakfast by the Sea encounter of Jesus with His Disciples.

Spread a blanket on the ground to sit upon. *(For fun, bring in some wood or sticks and “lay” a fire nearby.)* Hand out snacks for the children. For example: Goldfish crackers or other crackers, Gummi Worms, juice, water, etc. While the children have their snacks retell the story of Jesus and His encounter with His Disciples by the Sea of Galilee. Review the Bible story found in John 21:1-19. **Say the story in your own words.**

Peter and the disciples had gone fishing. They had been fishing all night and had caught nothing. The next morning they were headed in to shore when they saw someone on the bank of the lake. (It was Jesus, the Risen Christ, but they didn't realize it yet.) Jesus asked them “Have you caught anything?” No, they hadn't. “Let down your net on the right side of the boat,” Jesus told them. They did so and caught 153 large fish. All of a sudden they realized it was Jesus! Peter jumped into the water and swam to shore. When they arrived Jesus was cooking breakfast for them on a fire of coals. He fed them bread and fish.

*(Note here that you are having a snack, just like the disciples had breakfast. And that you have sticks for a fire, just like they had that day. Do you think they used Gummi Worms for fishing? Probably not.)*

After breakfast, Jesus had a long talk with Peter, who had denied Him three times. Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him. Peter said he did three times. (But he was embarrassed that Jesus had to ask him three times. He remembered that he had denied Jesus three times.)

Each time when Peter said he loved Jesus, Jesus told him things like “Feed my lambs,” “Take care of my sheep,” and “Feed my sheep.” Jesus was giving Peter something to do for Him. He wanted Peter to help take care of those who would believe in Jesus. Jesus put Peter “back together” with God and gave Peter some very important jobs to do! Finally He told Peter, “You follow me.”

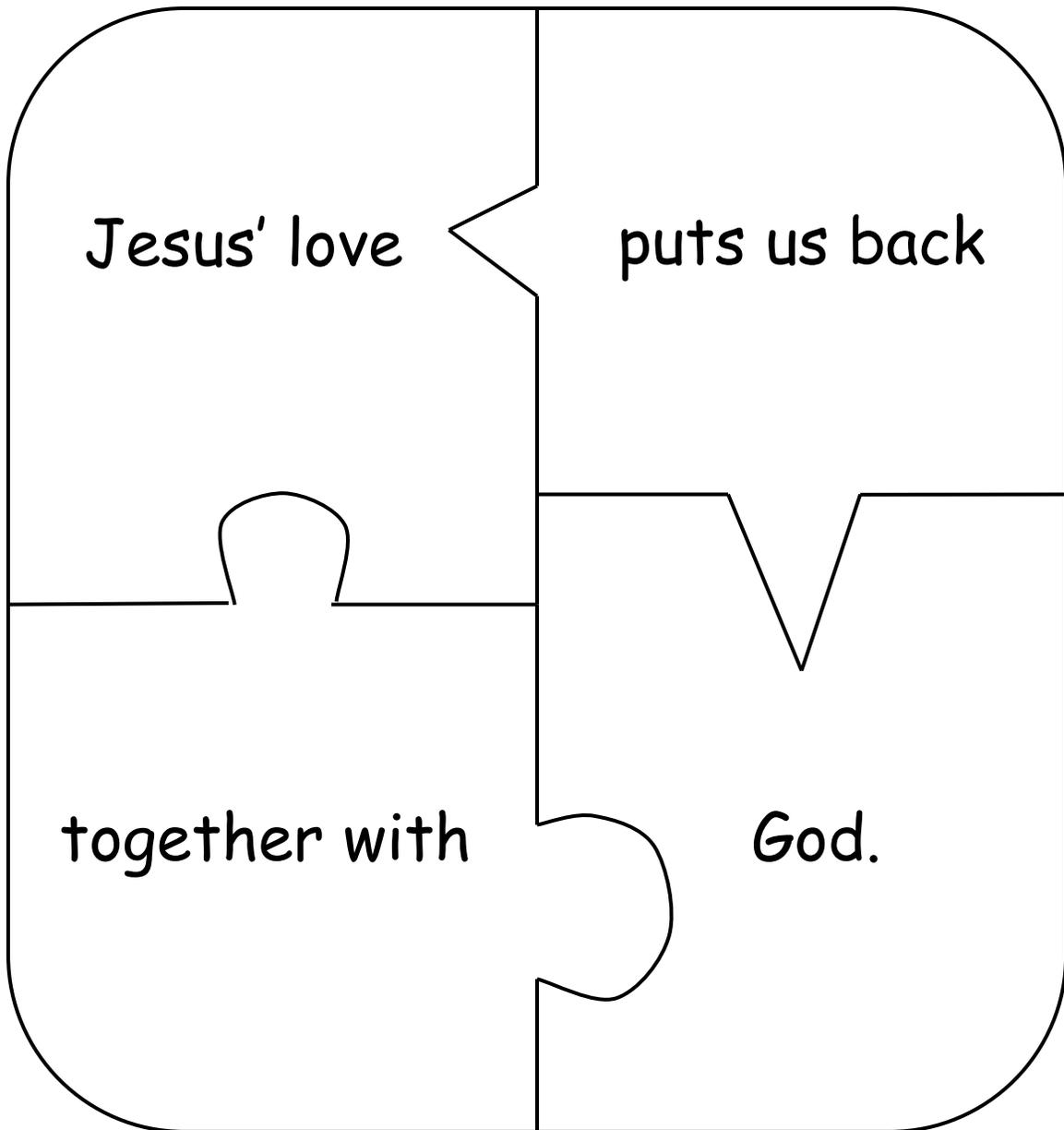
When we do things that are wrong, it pushes us away from God. When we do that, it is Jesus Himself who searches for us, and puts us back together with God. He even gives us fun and wonderful things to do!

From that time on there are no stories about Peter denying that he knew Jesus again. In fact, Peter became a great preacher and was a follower of Christ until the day he died. Now Peter is alive with Jesus forever! Hurray! **The End.**

Clean up the cracker crumbs and fold up the picnic blanket. Get some special help putting things away.

**Puzzling Pieces**

Allow the children to decorate and color the puzzle pieces on this sheet. Then cut out the pieces carefully, creating a puzzle that can be put together again later. You may glue the pieces to construction paper after they are back together again, if you like.



## The Great Commission (Jesus Ascends into Heaven)

**Teacher Pep Talk:** Picture it: You are a disciple standing there watching Jesus as He ascends into heaven. He goes up and up and up... finally He is completely out of sight. And what do you do? You keep standing there, of course! (Probably with your mouth still hanging open!) You just saw the most amazing thing! You keep watching to see what will happen next. And then suddenly two angels appear to tell you to “Snap out of it.” Perhaps you have forgotten what Jesus said a little earlier: “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” You have a lot to do... better get busy! You don’t want to just be standing around here doing nothing when He comes back!

**You will Need:** “I’ll Be Back”: suitcase or backpack, travel items, and snacks  
Make a Cloud: copies of activity sheet, cotton balls, and glue.

**Major Points:** After Easter Sunday, Jesus was on the earth for 40 more days. He gave His Disciples a new job. (The Great Commission)  
After 40 days, Jesus went up (Ascended) into heaven.  
One day Jesus will come back!

**Reference Verses:** Matthew 28:19 (The Great Commission)  
Acts 1:7-11 (The Ascension of Jesus)

**Memory Verse:** Acts 1:8 “...you will be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth.”

**Lesson:** **After Easter Sunday, Jesus was on the earth for 40 more days.**

- We have talked a lot about Easter lately. We have learned all about how Jesus died on the cross, and was buried in the tomb, and how He was raised from the dead on Easter Sunday. But what happened to Jesus after that? Where is He now? Is He ever coming back? And what are we supposed to be doing in the meantime? These are things we are going to talk about today.
- After Jesus was raised from the dead on Easter Sunday, He was ALIVE again forever.
- For 40 days after Easter, Jesus was seen here on the earth. He visited people and talked with them. He ate with them and taught them. Many, many people saw Him alive again.

**He gave His Disciples a new job. (The Great Commission)**

- Jesus visited with His Disciples during those 40 days.

- While He was with them one day, He gave them a new job.
- Their new job was to “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
- Wow! That’s a BIG job!! He wanted them to go out into the WHOLE WORLD and make disciples. That means that He wanted them to go around talking to people about Jesus!
- This job is SO BIG that we call it the Great Commission.
- And, guess what! That is still the job of believers today!

**After 40 days, Jesus went up (Ascended) into heaven.**

- Jesus was seen for 40 days on the earth, and then a MIRACULOUS thing happened. One day, right in front of His Disciples, Jesus was taken up into heaven!
- The disciples and Jesus were up on the top of a hill talking. And then Jesus started going up, up, up into the sky. And the disciples were all watching Him. (Probably with their mouths hanging open... like this...) And then, He was gone!
- And there they were... still standing there... looking up... with their mouths open... (Just like this)... and watching... (Like this)... wondering what was going to happen next. Do you know what happened next?
- Two angels came and stood with the disciples. They told them very politely, “*Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.*” Or in other words: “Hey... Snap out of it!!”
- If it had been me, I can tell you what I would have done. I would have been standing there, watching, with my mouth hanging open, like this, waiting to see what would happen next. And, if the angels hadn’t come along when they did, I would probably still be up there on that hill, looking up... and waiting... with my mouth hanging open... just like this... until He came back. But that’s not what God had in mind, is it?
- Jesus had given the disciples a job, hadn’t He? They were to be His witnesses in all the world, starting in Jerusalem. They couldn’t just stand around waiting forever on top of a hill! They had a job to do!

**One day Jesus will come back.**

- The angels told the disciples that Jesus was in heaven and that one day He would come back!
- Until then, we are to be busy doing the job He gave us!

Let's pray and thank God that Jesus is in heaven and that one day He is coming back.

PRAYER: Dear God,  
Thank you for sending Jesus to us!  
Thank you that now He is in heaven with you!  
Thank you that one day He is coming back!  
Thank you for loving us! We love you back!  
Amen

Suggested Activities:

### **"I'll Be Back!"**

*In this activity, the children experience a short-term separation from one of the teachers. The children will be astonished that you actually leave the classroom during class!*

Bring a suitcase, backpack, or other piece of luggage into the classroom. For fun, fill it with various items you might take with you on a trip. (Canteen, snacks, sunglasses, etc.)

Have the children sit where they can see the door. Explain to the children that you are going to be taking a little trip pretty soon. Show them your piece of luggage. Drag out all of the packed items and put them on the floor in front of you. Talk about what the things are as you put them back into your luggage. (Take some time with this. Explain what each item is and what it does.) After you are all packed, tell the children you are leaving now, but that you will be "right back." Tell them to watch and wait for you.

Take your luggage, and head toward the door. Wave good-bye, and tell them again that you will be right back. Go out the door and close it. Count to 10 and then open the door and come back in. Be excited to see them, like you've been gone a long time.

Say things like "Hello! How are you? I missed you! How did you do while I was gone? Oh, you've grown so much... etc!" The kids will love this. For extra fun, bring them a "souvenir" of your trip; something that was hidden in your luggage, or in the hallway. (I suggest snacks!)

While you are having your little snack, remind them that even though Jesus went up into heaven, He promised to come back again. And, since He always keeps His promises, we can expect Him anytime!

NOTE: Don't leave your class unsupervised while you are in the hallway. Have another adult or older teen in the room while you are gone on your "trip!"
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### **Make a Cloud**

The Bible says that Jesus was "taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight." Make a cloud by gluing cotton balls to the activity sheet. Pull the balls apart a little; it makes it easier to glue them on. *(Children may also wish to draw Jesus in the picture. If so, then use crayons and **do that FIRST, BEFORE** the glue is used!)*

**Jesus said to His Disciples:** “ ... you will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth. ” After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. **Acts 1:8-9**

