



HOLY WEEK

Date: 4.13.25 | Title: Jesus is Crucified |

Scripture: Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 22:63-23:56 and John 18:19-19:42

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

Middle School Students:

- Jesus lived a perfect life and died on the cross to save us from our sins.
- From the beginning, God had planned to send a savior, Jesus.
- Jesus' death on the cross is the death that we deserve. Because of His sacrificial death, we can be made right with God by believing in Jesus.
- Jesus is the only way people can connect with God

High School Students:

- From the beginning, God planned that Jesus would save people from their sins.
- God's salvation is eternal, and once we are adopted into God's family, nothing can separate us from Him.
- Because of Jesus, we who were once separated due to sin are now accepted into His presence due to Christ's righteousness.
- Because Christianity involves following Christ, we should continually live in obedience to His commands as an expression of our faith.



MEMORY VERSE

"If you confess (declare) with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Romans 10:9



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INTRODUCTION TO THE LESSON

Talk to your group about the consequences. Every choice we make in life brings some kind of consequence- good or bad. Good choices like eating healthy, being kind, and working hard will have good consequences. Bad decisions like the ones listed below will have bad consequences. Ask your group to give you a possible consequence for each of the following examples:

- cheating on a test
- yelling at your mom
- hitting your brother
- running a red light
- lying to your teacher
- saying mean things about one friend to another friend
- stealing candy from the store.

When we sin in our actions or words, we may see immediate consequences like the ones you named. All sin has an ultimate consequence: death. The punishment for sin is death because God is holy and without sin. Because we are all sinners, this is unfortunate news. Thankfully, there is also excellent news- God made a plan to save us from sin and death through His Son, Jesus. Today, we will learn about how Jesus took the consequences we deserved!



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BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

After His arrest, Jesus is interrogated by the Jewish leaders, beginning with Annas, the former high priest, and later by Caiaphas, the current high priest, along with a partial Sanhedrin (John 18:13-24; Matt. 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65). Seeking incriminating evidence, they rough Him up, but when He remains silent against false accusations, the high priest demands to know if He is the Messiah. Jesus affirms, quoting Scripture to declare His divine authority. Outraged, the high priest accuses Him of blasphemy, and the religious leaders declare He deserves death. Since only the Romans can carry out an execution, they take Him to Pilate, and at this point, Judas, overwhelmed with guilt, takes his own life (Matt. 27:1-10; Acts 1:18-19).

The Roman trial unfolds in three stages. First, the Jewish leaders accuse Jesus before Pilate of misleading the nation, opposing taxes to Caesar, and claiming to be a king (Luke 23:2). Finding no basis for these charges, Pilate sends Him to Herod Antipas, who only mocks Jesus before sending Him back (Luke 23:6-12). Now, with Pilate again, Jesus faces a second interrogation (Matt. 27:15-31; Mark 15:6-20; Luke 23:13-25; John 18:39-19:16). Pilate, seeking to appease the crowd, offers to release Him, but the crowd demands him to release Barabbas instead. Throughout the trial, Jesus subtly yet powerfully presents Himself as a sacrifice for sinners.

Guided by their religious leaders, the people feel as if they are doing God's will by opposing a false messiah. Ironically, the religious leaders are so intent on putting Jesus to death that they claim ultimate loyalty to Caesar. They say to Pilate, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar...We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:12, 15). Pressured by the leaders, Pilate gives in and has Jesus scourged- a cruel and painful form of whipping- before turning him over to the soldiers to be crucified. The Roman soldiers then dress Jesus in a kingly robe and adorn him with a crown of thorns before mocking and beating him. Next, they lead him away to Golgotha to crucify Him.



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Crucifixion was a brutal and humiliating form of execution reserved for criminals, enslaved people, and foreigners. Victims suffered severe blood loss from scourging and often died slowly from asphyxiation. Jesus is nailed to the cross between two criminals who respond to Him differently (Luke 23:39-43). At the same time, soldiers gamble for His clothes and place a sign above Him reading, “King of the Jews” (Luke 23:39-43; Matt. 27:39-43). They leave Him to die in shameful nakedness. Those who pass by the death scene mock Jesus for claiming to be able to rebuild the temple in three days, for not coming down from the cross although He says He is the Son of God, and for not saving Himself although He claims to be the King of Israel (Matt. 27:39-43). Jesus’s last sayings from the cross speak volumes about who He is, what He has come to do, and how He faces death.

At noon, darkness falls over the land for three hours. Then, Jesus cries out, “It is finished,” and surrenders His spirit. His death is marked by miraculous signs, including the tearing of the temple curtain, symbolizing access to God through Him (Matt. 27:51-53; Mark 15:38). A Roman soldier, witnessing these events, declares, “Surely this man was the Son of God!” (Mark 15:39).

All four Gospels emphasize the presence of eyewitnesses at the crucifixion, particularly the women from Galilee who remained faithful to Jesus until the end (Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 23:49; John 19:25-27). They also unanimously record His burial, confirming that Jesus indeed died (Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:31-42). This detail is crucial—without an actual death, the resurrection claim would be meaningless. To prevent any tampering, Matthew notes that the Jewish leaders secured permission from Pilate to seal the tomb and station guards, ensuring that no one could steal the body and falsely claim Jesus had risen (Matt. 27:62-66). Yet, despite their precautions, the soon-to-be-empty tomb will be undeniable proof of something far more significant than human deception.



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LOCATE THE SCRIPTURE & TELL THE STORY

Locate the scripture in the Bible: Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 22:63-23:56 and John 18:19-19:42

Remind your group that we are now studying the New Testament. The first four books, the gospels, tell the story of Jesus' time as a man on earth from the voices of different authors.

Tell the story:

Before Jesus was born, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel told Joseph that Mary was going to have a baby son, that they should name him Jesus, and that He would save people from their sins. The time had now come for Jesus to die on the cross so He could save people from their sins.

Today, we will talk about Jesus' death on the cross. Some stories in the Bible, like this one, are hard to hear. Jesus was hurt and sacrificed His life to pay for our sins. As we read our story, remember that because of Jesus' death on the cross, our sins can be forgiven, and we can have life with God forever.

After Jesus was arrested and put on trial, soldiers took Jesus to the governor's palace and gathered around Him. They took off His clothes and put a scarlet robe on Him. They made a crown of thorns and put it on His head. Then, they hit Jesus and mocked Him. "Hail, King of the Jews!" they said.

The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross. Then they cast lots to decide who would get His clothes. They made fun of Jesus by putting a sign above His head that said: This is Jesus, The King of the Jews. Two criminals were sacrificed next to Him, one on the right and one on the left.

As Jesus was on the cross, people passed by and mocked Him: "If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross!" Some said, "He saved others, but He cannot save Himself!" Even one of the criminals next to Jesus taunted Him.



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From noon until three in the afternoon, darkness covered the land. Then Jesus cried out, “My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?” Jesus cried out again loudly, “It is finished!” Then Jesus died. Suddenly, the curtain in the temple sanctuary split in two, from top to bottom, and there was an earthquake.

Many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee were watching from a distance. A Roman soldier near the cross and those with him saw what was happening and said, “This man really was God’s Son!”

Jesus was buried in a rich man’s tomb cut into a rock. A stone was sealed in front of the tomb, and Roman soldiers stood guard so that no one could steal Jesus’ body.

Re-tell the Bible Story: Have students re-tell the story as best they can.

Share the GOSPEL:

We deserve to die because of our sins, but God loves us and keeps His promise to send a Savior. Jesus never sinned, but He died in our place. Those who trust in Him have forgiveness through His blood and are no longer separated from God.

When Jesus said, “It is finished,” and died, the temple curtain tore in two from top to bottom (Mark 15:38). The curtain stood between the Holy of Holies and the rest of the temple. The Holy of Holies was where God dwelt and where no man could enter, except for the high priest once a year to offer a sacrifice for the people’s sins.

The writer of Hebrews describes in detail how Jesus’s once-for-all sacrifice has ended the sacrificial system and opened a new way into God’s presence where people may find forgiveness (Hebrews 9-10). Now, even Gentiles (non-Jews), once forbidden to enter the temple, may enter God’s very presence through Jesus, the true high priest (Hebrews 4:14-5:10).

Sin causes us to be separated from God, but through Jesus’ death on the cross, His blood washes away our sins when we trust in Him. We have access to God through Jesus. Anyone who trusts in Jesus is no longer separated from God and will experience forgiveness of sin and eternal life.



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QUESTIONS TO REBUILD THE STORY

“Storying” Questions: As you ask these questions, have your students find the answers in the actual verses of scripture instead of recalling them from your re-telling of the story. We always want to encourage all of our students to go directly to God’s Word over a commentary on or summary of scripture. Use the Bible Study Bookmark Questions as well as these questions to help students understand the text:

1. If Jesus is God, why did He not stop what was happening to Him?
2. What are some parts of this story that prove Jesus is God? Based on this text, what evidence proves Yahweh as the one true God over otherworldly “gods”? What makes our God different?
3. How does Jesus’ death show that God loves us?
4. How can someone trust Jesus as Savior?
5. Is obedience still necessary if we are saved by faith and not works? Why?
6. Who can you share the gospel with?
7. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
8. What does the story teach me about myself?
9. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
10. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
11. How does this story help me live on mission?



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PRAYER PROMPTS

Thank You, Lord, for our forgiveness and eternal life because of Jesus' death on the cross. Help us share the good news of salvation with those around us. Amen.

IF TIME ALLOWS:

Play a game of Bible drill using only scripture passages from the Gospels.

MISSIONS EMPHASIS:

For the months of March and April we will collect money for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering in the giving funnel at the top of the lobby. Encourage your group to bring change to drop in as you head to the worship center after Sunday School.

REVIEW UNIT VERSE:

Spend time reviewing memory verse with students.

IYCWYMTJILABIYHTGRHFTDYWBS - Romans 10:9



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Application Questions

LOOK UPWARD



- How does this story apply to your relationship with God?
- What does it teach you about Him- His will and His heart?
- What aspect of His character is He inviting you to experience and enjoy?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your relationship with God?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in your relationship with God?

LOOK INWARD



- How does this story apply to your heart and your own spiritual growth?
- What does it teach you about yourself, your needs, or your goals in life?
- In what aspects of your personal life is God inviting you to grow and mature?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story inwardly?
- How will those around you benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to allow these truths to help you grow spiritually?

LOOK AROUND



- How does this story apply to your relationship with others?
- What does it teach you about how to see others and relate to them?
- What is god inviting you to do differently in your relationships?



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Application Questions

LOOK OUTWARD

- How does this story apply to your ministry and mission in life- to your role in God's kingdom, in society, and in the world?
- What does it teach you about God's purposes for the world?
- What part of His mission is He inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your ministry?
- How will the world benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in the world?

LOOK FORWARD

- How does this story apply to your future, both in this age and in eternity?
- What does it teach you about God's plan for your life, now and forever?
- What aspects of eternity is God inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit in the future by applying these truths now?
- How will God's kingdom benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to impact eternity now with these truths?



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ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

ATTENTIVE - God hears and responds to the needs of his children.

COMPASSIONATE - God cares for his children and acts on their behalf.

CREATOR - God made everything. He is uncreated.

DELIVERER - God rescues and saves his children.

ETERNAL - God is not limited by time. He exists outside of time.

FAITHFUL - God always keeps his promises.

GENEROUS - God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

GLORIOUS - God displays His greatness and worth.

GOOD - God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

HOLY - God is perfect, pure, and without sin.

IMMUTABLE/UNCHANGING - God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

INCOMPREHENSIBLE - God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

INFINITE - God has not limits in His person or on His power.

JEALOUS - God will not share his glory with another. all glory rightfully belongs to him.

JUST - god is fair in all his actions and judgements. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

LOVING - God feels and displays infinite, unconditional affection toward his children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response, or merit.

MERCIFUL - God does not give his children the punishment they deserve.

OMNIPOTENT/ALMIGHTY - God holds all power. nothing is too hard for God. What He wills He can accomplish.



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ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

OMNIPRESENT - God is fully present everywhere.

OMNISCIENT - God knows everything, past, present, and future - all potential and real outcomes, all things micro and macro.

PATIENT/LONG-SUFFERING - God is untiring and bears with His children.

PROVIDER - God meets the needs of his children.

REFUGE - God is a place of safety and protection for his children.

RIGHTEOUS - God is always good and right.

SELF-EXISTENT - God depends on nothing and no one to give him life or existence.

SELF-SUFFICIENT - God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.

SOVEREIGN - God does everything according to His plan and pleasure.

TRANSCENDENT - God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.

TRUTHFUL - Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.

WISE - God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.

WORTHY - God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

WRATHFUL - God hates all unrighteousness.