



The Best Gift Ever:
JESUS GIVES HIS LIFE



Big idea: Jesus died to give us life

Key verse: Romans 4:25 : Jesus was handed over to die for our sins. He was raised to life in order to make us right with God. We have been made right with God because of our faith. Now we have peace with him because of our Lord Jesus Christ

THOUGHTS FOR LEADERS

While for many of us, the Easter story is old news, to many of our children, this is not a familiar story. Try reading the story with fresh eyes: feel the incredulity of a claim to rise from the dead, the discomfort of reading about an unjust legal system and the horror at an innocent man receiving a tortuous death sentence. This is the story of our God, and it is a new story every day.

With this lesson, we have chosen not to end with Christ's suffering because, although Christ's death is important, it is in the end, *good* news. While we want to teach the truth of the gospel – including the uncomfortable parts – we also want to emphasize that it is the *gospel*. It is good news.

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Supplies List:

Attention Grabber	Small Group	Memory Verse	Craft Table
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - video capabilities - DVD or internet connection for showing video 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - printouts of minibook (pg 10) for each child - printout of instructions for assembling minibook (1/small group) (pgs 8-9) - pencil crayons (optional) - scissors - prayer journals (optional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Romans 4:25 Memory Verse printout for each child (pg 9) - Scissors - Pieces of yarn or ribbon - Hole punch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coffee Filters - Washable Markers - Small spray bottle with water - Black felt pen - Paper towels

No supplies needed for **Teaching Time** or **Games**



attention grabber



Show a video of the Easter story. There are many movies that have depicted this event, and some made especially for children. Feel free to pick one that will work for your group. We recommend the following 4-5 minute video clips, available free online:

Cartoon Version:

Animated 4 minute video with a brief intro to Jesus' life and concentrating on Jesus' death & resurrection. Fairly accurately sticks to the Biblical story (narrated with an Australian accent). Developed by www.jesusallaboutlife.com.au

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3UKd6LQKng>

Downloadable (upon free registration):

<http://www.jesusallaboutlife.com.au/resources/children.html>

Anime Version

This 5 minute anime video shows Jesus' crucifixion through the eyes of the thief. It is powerful, but shows graphic violence. For older children only. Developed by www.jesusvideo.com

YouTube link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glDYvg73RuM>

Downloadable link: <http://www.globalshortfilmnetwork.com/my-last-day-p-344-c-8.html>



Teaching Time

Last week we talked about how Jesus used bread & drink to remind us that he was choosing to die so we could be free, and that every time we ate bread and drank juice we could remember how much he loved us. Today we're going to finish that story of what all he did out of love for us.

After that special supper was over, Jesus and some of his friends went for a walk in Gethsemane park, nearby. They prayed – or rather, Jesus prayed - while his friends kept falling asleep. Then, one of the worst things happened: one of Jesus' so-called best friends, named Judas, found Jesus, only he was with a bunch of soldiers and religious police. He went right up to Jesus, as if they were best friends, and kissed him on the cheek – it used to be pretty cool to do that back in the day. But that kiss wasn't one of friendship. It meant that he had sold out Jesus. He knew there was reward money for Jesus because the priests hated him so much, and instead of being Jesus' friend, he took the reward money and ran. As soon as Judas kissed Jesus, the guards came forward and arrested him – for no reason at all! His other friends tried to fight, but Jesus had already decided he was going to go along with the soldiers.

They took Jesus away, and had a trial in the middle of the night. It wasn't much of a trial. The witnesses were all paid to say what they were told to say, and Jesus wasn't allowed any time to defend himself. By morning, all Jesus friends had left him alone – they were scared that if Jesus could get arrested, they might be arrested, too. One of Jesus' best friends, Peter, was even asked – 3 times – if he knew Jesus, and each time he lied and said he had never heard of the guy. Jesus must have felt so alone!

After his trial was over, the judge actually tried to let Jesus go free, since Jesus had done nothing wrong, but by then a crowd had gathered and they demanded that Jesus be executed. The judge let the crowd have their way, and Jesus was sent to the death chambers. In his day, that meant something called crucifixion. It meant they nailed a person's hands and feet to two pieces of wood, shaped like a cross. On the day Jesus died, there were 3 people all being executed at the same time: the other two men were thieves and they knew they deserved the death penalty. But everyone knew Jesus was innocent, and didn't deserve this at all. What puzzled people, was they knew Jesus had the power to stop it all, but he still let people crucify him. Why wasn't he trying to save himself? They didn't realize Jesus knew that the only way to free us from the sin that traps us was for him to give up his life.

Later that day, Jesus died. The Bible says the sun went completely dark, and there was an earthquake. It was like even the ground was sad that Jesus died.

First thing Sunday morning, some of Jesus' friends went to his grave to start getting ready for his funeral... but his grave was open! And no one was there! Can you imagine? They probably thought someone was playing a cruel joke, or that they had the wrong grave or something, but no – an angel appeared and told them not to be afraid, that Jesus was okay and he was alive! It was the most astonishing thing they had ever heard!

At first no one believed it, but Jesus kept showing up to people: he walked to some friend's house for supper one day, another time he showed up at a campfire on the beach. Once, he came to the room where all his friends were staying and let them touch him just to make sure he was real! It was true – he really had come back to life! He really was God!

Every Easter we set aside a few days to remember this amazing true story of how Jesus willingly gave up his life for us.

Good Friday is the day we remember how Jesus died for us, just so we can be free. It's a sad time because it was so painful and hard for Jesus. But it's also called Good Friday because it is such good news for us that Jesus was willing to do that because he loves us so much.

On Sunday we celebrate Easter Sunday and remember how Jesus didn't stay dead, but came back to life! It's a happy time and we eat sweet treats, and celebrate all sorts of signs of new life, like eggs and bunnies and baby chicks, because through Jesus' new life, we can have a brand-new life as well!

But the best way we can celebrate Easter is by accepting the free gift Jesus gives us through his death and coming to life again. All of us are born with a serious condition called sin: we can't help it, we just sin – a lot. It's like a trap, and we keep doing things we don't want to do, or think things look awesome when really they just make us sick. It's like we don't actually have a choice. And when we live that way, the Bible says that the payment we get for living in sin is death: we will never get to see heaven. So Jesus paid that price: he died, so that we can live forever! The Bible says when we believe in Jesus and live for him, we can be free from the punishment sin gives. It means we get to choose who we will live for: ourselves, or Jesus, and because we have that choice we can choose to live for God, and one day live forever with him in heaven!

It's great getting Easter eggs and chocolate bunnies at Easter, but it's even better to get the gift of a life that never ends – a forever life with our forever friend, Jesus! If you would like to take this gift, you can! Just tell God that you want to live for him, and that you are tired of living for sin all the time. Let God know that you believe and trust Him



10:10 Kids

to lead your life from now on, and ask for His help. If you don't want to do that alone, ask your leader to help you. Let's pray together:

Dear Jesus, Thank you so much that you gave us the best gift of all: freedom! We know it cost you a lot to give this to us; that you had to die so we could have this gift. Thank you that you didn't stay dead, but are alive today! Help us to live like you do and follow your ways. Amen.



small groups



Printouts of Easter minibook for each child (pg 10)

Instructions for assembling minibook (pgs 8-9)

Scissors

Stapler

Pencil Crayons (optional)

Have the children cut out and assemble their minibooks.

Leader: How did Jesus show he loves us?

By living & dying on the cross for our freedom

Leader: What gift did he give us by dying on the cross?

Freedom to make a choice: live for God or stay stuck in sin.

Leader: Let's thank God for giving us that choice! God, we're so thankful that you were willing to pay such a high price – your life – so that we could choose freedom! Thank you! Amen!

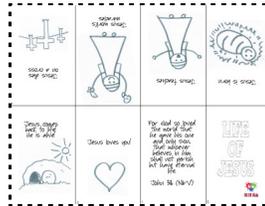
Close with prayer journals.



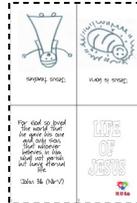
10:10 Kids

Minibook Assembly Instructions:

1. Cut along the dotted outer line.



2. Fold along line #1, a book fold.



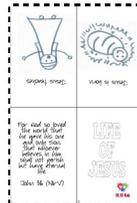
3. Fold along lines #2 (both at once)



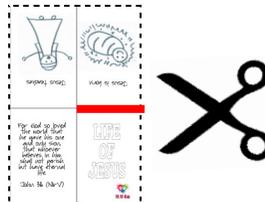
4. Fold book one last time, from top to bottom, so only the "Life of Jesus" title page is showing



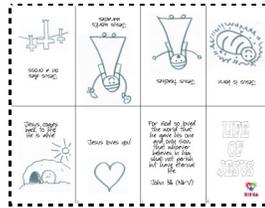
5. Unfold and open book up until it looks like step #3 (book fold)



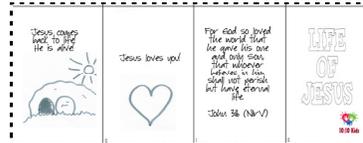
6. Cut from the fold to the center of the book fold



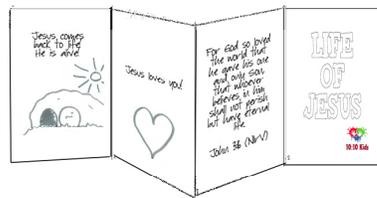
7. Open book up to full size.



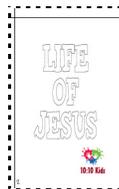
8. Fold along line #3



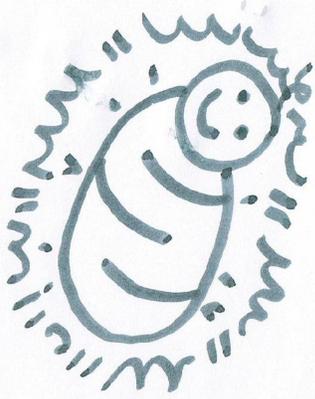
9. Grab the ends of the book with your fingers, and push together to "pop" open the centre pages, where the cut edges are.



10. Fold the book until only the cover page is showing.



Additional photo instructions for assembling this type of minibook is available at <http://www.biblestoryprintables.com/TutorialBibleminibooks.html>

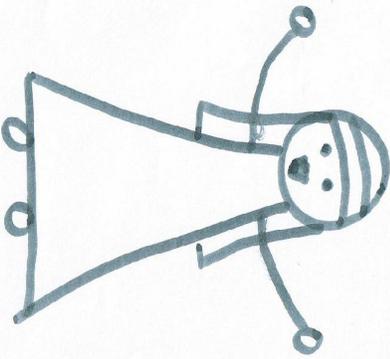


Jesus is born

LIFE
OF
JESUS



2

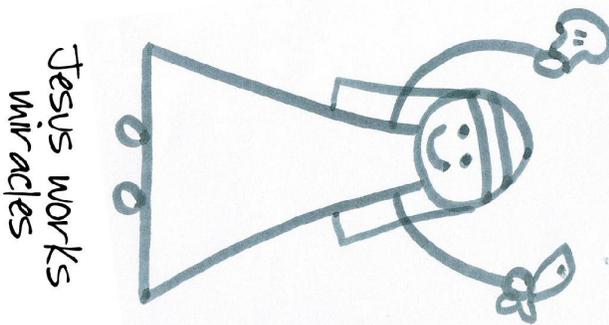


Jesus teaches

For God so loved
the world that
he gave his one
and only son,
that whoever
believes in him
shall not perish
but have eternal
life.

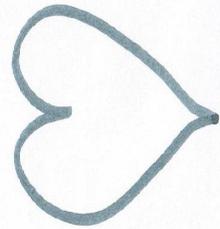
John 3:16 (NIV)

1

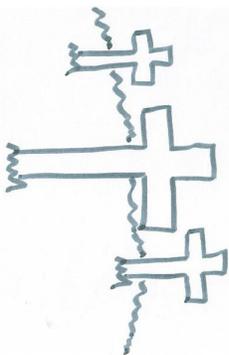


Jesus works
miracles

Jesus loves you!

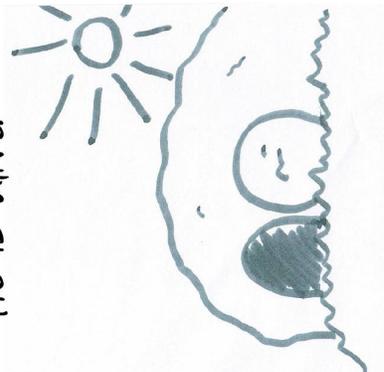


2



Jesus dies
on a cross

Jesus comes
back to life!
He is alive!



3



memory verse



Printouts of Romans 4:25 Memory Verse (pg 9) for each child

Scissors

Pieces of string, ribbon or yarn

Monthly verse: 1 Corinthians 15: 3b-4 : [This is the good news: that] Christ died for our sins, just as Scripture said he would. He was buried. He was raised from the dead on the third day, just as Scripture said he would be.

Weekly verse: Romans 4:25 : Jesus was handed over to die for our sins. He was raised to life in order to make us right with God. We have been made right with God because of our faith. Now we have peace with him because of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Activity:

Hand each child a printout of Romans 4:25 Memory Verse. Cut out each section, and punch holes in each of the 4 corners. Tie ribbons between the sections, to make a ladder-style hanging of the memory verse. As you are making the verse hanging, practice saying the verse out loud together.



Romans 4:25

Jesus was handed over
to die for our sins.

He was raised to life
in order to make us right with God.

We have been made right with God
because of our faith.

Now we have peace with him
because of our Lord Jesus Christ.



CRAFT TABLE



Coffee Filters
Washable Markers
Small spray bottle with water
Black felt pen
Paper towels

1. Flatten the coffee filters.
2. Have the children color the coffee filters using washable markers. The colors will smear & blend in the end, so scribbles are just fine!
3. Spritz the filters lightly with water, then place on a flat surface covered with dry paper towels to dry. This should only take a few minutes.
4. Once dry, use a black marker to draw a silhouette of the cross in the centre of the coffee filter.



games

Freeze Tag

- Choose one person to be "it" (choose more than one for larger groups).
- The person who is "it" must run around and try to tag other players.
- Once tagged, a person must "freeze" with their arms stretched out to the side in a T-shape, and may not move their feet at all.
- A person may become "unfrozen" if someone who has not been tagged runs underneath one of their outstretched arms.
- The person who is "it" wins if they manage to freeze all the players.
- Place a time limit on the game – usually 3-5 minutes – and switch who is the person who is "it" for multiple rounds.