

An Introduction to The Wonder of Easter

Welcome to **The Wonder of Easter**, following Jesus on his journey in Luke's Gospel. Through these five passages your children will discover the story of Jesus' death and resurrection as the most amazing story ever told.

This Sunday school resource has been written to dovetail with **The Wonder of Easter** book of family Bible times, so that families can explore the Easter story at home while their church teaches these key stories:

1. The return of the King (Luke 19:30, 35–40)
2. Taken away by guards (Luke 22: 47–54)
3. Saved! Just in time (Luke 23:32–34; 39–43)
4. Jesus is alive! (Luke 24:36–49)
5. He's gone, we're still happy (Luke 24:50–53)

For your planning you will see that the fifth lesson is on the ascension, so you may want to schedule it for after Easter.

Getting Started

The lessons all follow the same pattern for

 **Preparation:**

 **Big Idea** – the lesson is written so that each part builds on this one main idea from the passage.

 **Faith in Kids looks like** – a summary of how the big idea applies to the children's lives. If a child's heart was gripped by this passage, how would we expect their life to be changed?

 **Where are we going?** – Don't miss the wood for the trees. Let's see context to set the scene and point to where the narrative is heading.

 **Win my heart first** – Simple notes to help you navigate the Bible passage text. One of the greatest

joys of teaching the Bible to children is that the leader is taught too.

 **Questions to Ponder** – take a few minutes to think through these questions and to consider how this truth makes a difference to your life. Pray it impacts your heart. Pray for your preparation. Pray for the children you teach.

All Together

To include your church family on this exciting Easter journey, use the  **Bible Story Idea** as a 5 minute all-age slot to introduce them to what the children will be learning. A script with suggestions for props and PowerPoint slides has been provided so that the story can be told in a visually engaging way. If you choose not to do this with the church family then it could be used to tell the story to all the children together or the group leaders could adapt it to use in their individual classes.

What to Expect

Four different plans are jam packed with games and teaching ideas to help the leader prepare a lesson that is age appropriate, clear, engaging, faithful and fun. While the lessons have been written with these specific ages in mind, you as the leader know your children best. All the games, teachings ideas, crafts, discussion questions and worksheets are centred on the one big

idea of the passage. This means that you can decide if a different age group suggestion will work better for your particular children.

The mixed age component is suitable for a class of children aged 3–11 years old. Use this if you have a single mixed age group.

Lesson Plans

The lessons all follow the same pattern for the

 **Lesson Overview:**

 **Get Going** – an activity to introduce the children to the lesson's theme in a fun way so they are ready for **Teaching Time**.

 **10 Minutes to Focus** – when preparing, keep these questions in mind and check your planning to see that you are ready to engage your group. Take that clarity into your **Teaching Time** so that you get the **Big Idea** across.

 **Teaching Time** – an age appropriate, engaging, fun and visual Bible story time. Don't just tell the story. Finish with a teaching point that is in line with the **Big Idea**.

 **Brain Break** – an active game to give the children a chance to burn off some energy before settling down for the vital **Heart and Hands** time. Links between the game and the big idea have been provided to help you reinforce the truth the children have been learning.

 **Heart and Hands** – if this lesson was an ice cream sundae then **Heart and Hands** is the cherry on top. It's the most important part of the lesson as it gives the children time to talk and think about how the Bible truth makes a difference to their lives. Plan your lesson with more than enough time for **Heart and Hands**.

For younger children, you are helping to lay the foundation of biblical truth in their lives. A large part of this will be through craft and play. During **Craft Time**, repeat the truth you have taught and affirm them in it. During **Think Time**, use the illustrations to

repeat the story while asking questions about what was happening. Get them to repeat the answers to the questions in fun and different ways. Pray to finish.

For older children, we have designed worksheets to use alongside the questions. The aim is to help them be challenged and encouraged by the Bible truth so they apply it to their thinking and feeling. You're not just trying to get right answers. Make this a group discussion. Writing down answers usually stops hearts from engaging! If you have a mature group, push them further with the **Xtra Stretch** questions. As the leader, ask the questions and speak the least. Get them talking and give every child an opportunity to speak. Pray to finish. Don't force anyone to pray but if they are reluctant encourage them to give suggestions that you or others can pray.

"I've already done this story at home"

These lessons have been written to use alongside **The Wonder of Easter** book which means you may have some children say, 'I've already done this story at home!' Don't be discouraged! There is always something new to learn. Encourage them to ask the Holy Spirit to help them understand more from the story. They might be able to explain something they've better understood to the rest of the group. Challenge them to tell you something new they discovered at the end of the lesson.

Enjoy the Journey

Finally, as you go through familiar passages about Jesus' final days leading to the cross, ask the Holy Spirit to make these truths new to you again. Pray for a fresh perspective as you see the life-altering sacrifice Jesus made for his followers, the gift of forgiveness and life that he offers and the wonderful truth that he still reigns over everything.