

God's Plan: 2 SAVE Us!

Why did Jesus
have to die?

Jesus died and rose
again so that you can
be part of God's family.

Session 4
Preschool

Bible Story

Jesus Saves Us

Luke 22—24:35

Bible Verse

Jesus died so that we can be with God.
(See 1 Peter 3:18.)

Session Goals

1. PARTICIPATE in telling the story of Jesus' death and resurrection.
2. TELL how it feels to be forgiven.
3. THANK God for His plan to save us and for sending Jesus so that we can be forgiven.

Spark Principle—Transformation

Transformations occur when something new is introduced to an existing object and changes the object. Jesus changes us.



Cross

Jesus died on a wooden cross. Jesus did this to take the punishment for our sins. Because Jesus died, we can be forgiven and choose to be part of God's family. A cross reminds us that Jesus died and came back to life again!

Today's Tip

Consider dressing in a Bible-times costume to tell the Bible story. You'll find that children respond very differently to you when you are "in character." They will often ask you questions that would not be asked of the preschool leader!

Heart Prep by Henrietta Mears

Today we come to the greatest of all events. We were created to be companions of the Father, but sin separated us from God. Christ died on the cross to make a way for us to get back to God. He paid the wages of sin with His own life, that we might be brought into fellowship with the Father. Listen to His prayer: "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). This is the only way an unholy people can approach a holy God.

Others have died for a good cause, but the grave was the end. Jesus Christ rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. He appeared to Mary Magdalene (John 20:11–18), the other women (Matthew 28:1,8–10), Peter (1 Corinthians 15:5) and the disciples on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35).

What effect did all these appearances have on the disciples? They knew in whom they believed; they knew that He had conquered death and that He was a risen Master and Lord and Savior.

The cross upon which Christ died has become the focal point of all history. The cross was the triumphant goal of Christ's life—the one thing to which He had been looking forward, not from the beginning of His earthly life, but from before time began. He is "the Lamb whose death was planned before the world was created" (Revelation 13:8). Surely salvation is God's greatest plan and His greatest miracle.

Daily Recap

At the end of each session, take time to reflect on what happened. Use these questions as a guide:

- ① What worked well today? Pray for the energy to finish VBS strong.
- ② Which children seemed to understand more about Jesus today? Thank God for this! Pray for each child by name. Ask God to water the seeds that were planted today!
- ③ For Session 5, be prepared to tell briefly about a way someone has shown the love of Jesus to you, and a way you have shown that love to others.

Bible Learning Activities (40–45 minutes)

Science Center *Grow Lab!*

Materials

- * newspaper
- * clear plastic cups
- * permanent marker
- * spoons
- * gravel or small stones
- * potting soil
- * small nursery plants or cuttings from plants
- * small pitcher of water

Preparation: Cover tables with newspaper.

Procedure: Give each child a plastic cup labeled with child's name. Child spoons a little gravel or small stones into the bottom of cup and then spoons potting soil into cup until it is about half-full. With adult help, child sets a plant or cutting in soil and then spoons in more soil, patting it down to make plant stand. Child then pours a little water around the base of the plant. **Some people think dirt is bad. But dirt makes plants grow—and that's GOOD! Today in our Bible story we'll hear about something that people thought was very BAD—but it became something very GOOD!**

Note: Be sure children wash hands before leaving this center.



Dramatic Play Center *Bubble Up!*

Materials

- * Lab Report Page (p. 54)
- * clipboard and pencil
- * dress-up clothes and props (lab coats, safety glasses, gloves, plastic test tubes and beakers, magnets and magnetic toys, plastic jars and cups, clipboards, etc.)

For Each Experiment

- * ¼ cup baking soda in a small, clear cup
- * large, clear plastic bowl
- * 1 cup vinegar in cup

Preparation: Photocopy Lab Report Page and place on a clipboard with pencil. Set the baking soda cup in the clear bowl. Set out all ingredients. (Be prepared to do the experiment several times.)

Procedure: Children dress in clothing and use props to play out lab activities. **Let's experiment to see what happens when we add this liquid to this powder!** With adult help, children take turns to pour the vinegar over baking soda and watch the resulting carbon dioxide bubbles. **Vinegar is the liquid. When we add it to the baking soda, it turns the white powder into something completely different—and it makes a gas that makes bubbles!** Children "write" or draw the results on the Lab Report Page.

Kindergarten Option: Before they pour vinegar, children predict what they think will happen.



Talk About

Use these discussion ideas with any of the Bible Learning Activities.

- 🕒 In our Bible story today, we're going to learn about a very SAD day that happened and a very GLAD day. We are going to find out what Jesus did so that we can join God's family!
- 🕒 What are some things people do that hurt others or make them sad?
- 🕒 What can we do when we hurt others? (Say we are sorry.) What can we do when other people hurt us? (Forgive them.) How do we feel when we are forgiven? (Glad!)
- 🕒 Thank You, God, for Your plan to save us. Thank You for sending Jesus so that we can be forgiven. In Jesus' name, amen.

Art Center Joy Badge!

Materials

- ✳ Joy Badge Pattern (see p. 56)
- ✳ card stock
- ✳ scissors
- ✳ yarn
- ✳ crayons or markers
- ✳ glue sticks
- ✳ sequins
- ✳ stapler

Preparation: Photocopy Lab Report page and place on a clipboard with pencil. Photocopy one Joy Badge Pattern onto card stock for each child. Pre-cut 3-foot (0.9 m) lengths of yarn. Set out all materials. (If children are not yet able to cut, pre-cut badges.)

Procedure: Today we are going to hear about a time when Jesus' friends were very SAD. But three days later, they were full of JOY because Jesus is alive! Give each child a Joy Badge. Child adds colors and decorates with sequins as desired. Write child's name, if needed. With adult help, child folds badge and staples over center of length of yarn. Help tie yarn around child's neck so child can wear badge.

Kindergarten Option: Children cut out their own badges, using decorative-edge scissors.



Block Center Along the Way

Materials

- ✳ Stand-Up Activity Cards from *Posters & Props*
- ✳ masking tape
- ✳ small toy animal and people figures
- ✳ blocks in a variety of shapes and sizes

Preparation: Place Session 4 Stand-Up Activity Cards in Block Center area. Lay masking tape on floor in parallel lines about 10–12 inches (25.5–30.5 cm) apart. Extend path with curves and turns.



Procedure: Children use materials for free play. **Let's walk some people on our path.** Guide children to use Session 4 Stand-Up Activity Cards to act out the story as you retell it. Children build with blocks along path, moving toy animals and people as desired.

To extend play, invite volunteers to walk, slide or tiptoe down path, trying to stay within the lines.

Bible Story Time

(15–20 minutes)

Materials

- * Bible
- * Music & More CD and player
- * "Jesus Saves Us" Session 4 Big Book from *Posters & Props*
- * Session 4 Daily Plan Pennant
- * Sparky the Lab Dog puppet

Song: Play "God's Plan 4 U" from CD. Sing song once or twice with children, clapping or making some of the song motions. **Where's Sparky?**

Puppet Script: Use a Labrador puppet or other puppet to perform the following script.

Sparky: (Sparky enters.) **Woof! Hello, friends. I was very sad today. I did something really wrong! I dug up my lab partner's flower. Have you ever done something wrong?** (Children respond.) **I was SO sad. But I told my partner, "I'm VERY sorry. I was wrong!" Guess what she said?** (Children respond.) **She said, "Sparky, I forgive you!" Whew! I'm GLAD that she is so forgiving. Being forgiven makes me HAPPY! WOOF!**

Leader: Sparky, it's good that you said you were sorry. (To children.) **When we are sorry for the wrong things WE do, we can ask God to forgive us. When we tell God we have done wrong and ask Him to forgive us, He WILL—just as I forgave Sparky!**

Sparky: And it feels GOOD to be forgiven! See you tomorrow, friends. Good-bye! ROWF!
(Sparky exits.)



Rhyme: **Let's see what fun things our bodies can do!** Lead children in the following action rhyme:

God gave me feet that can turn me around;



God gave me hands that can touch the ground.



God gave me legs that can jump to the side;



God gave me knees that can bend and glide.



God gave me food and a place to live;



God gave me people with love to give.



So I thank God 'cause it's easy to see



God is good and He cares about me!



Activity Sharing: **Who planted a plant today? God made dirt. It does very GOOD things! Who got to see the bubbles? That is fun! I saw (Bindi) playing with the stand-up figures on the road. (Jen) built a house there.**

Bible Verse: Hold Bible open. **Our Bible verse today tells us that Jesus died so that we can be with God.** (See 1 Peter 3:18.) Children echo phrases after you. **Jesus died . . . so that we . . . can be with God. . .** Repeat several times.

Song: Play "God So Loved the World" from CD. Lead children in singing and doing motions.

Prayer: Pray, **Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus. Thank You that You have a plan to forgive us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Transition: Hold up Bible. **Today we're going to hear about one very SAD day and one very GLAD day! Listen to find out what made those two days sad and glad.**

Bible Story: Jesus Saves Us

Hold Bible open to Luke 22. Expressively tell the story, leading children to do actions in **magenta**. Use Session 4 "Jesus Saves Us" **Big Book** as a visual aid to tell or review today's story.

The Plan

One day, Jesus told His friends, "In a few days, some people will take Me away. I am going to be killed."

This sounded very strange to Jesus' friends! And it made them sad. **Look sad.** But Jesus knew that it was part of God's good plan. **Nod.** This good plan was the BIG reason Jesus came to Earth! And Jesus knew He wouldn't STAY dead!

You see, some leaders did NOT like it that so many people loved Jesus. These angry leader said, "If we don't STOP Jesus, WE won't be in charge!" **Whisper.** They decided to take Jesus away when no one was around. "Then we'll kill Him," they said.

This was a mean plan! **Shake head no.** But Jesus knew that God would turn this mean plan into something VERY GOOD. **Nod head yes.** Jesus knew the BIGGEST reason He had come to Earth was to die to pay for all the wrong things people had ever done—or ever would do. Jesus knew God was in charge of what was happening. So when guards came to take Him away, He let them take Him. And He let them hurt him. And then, He let them kill Him on a cross. **Look sad.**

The SAD Day

Jesus' friends were VERY sad that day. Jesus was DEAD! But they didn't know how GOOD God's plan was yet. **Shake head no.** They put Jesus' body into a tomb in a pretty garden. A tomb is a little room made in the side of a hill. Jesus' friends went home feeling very sad. **Walk in place. Look sad.** Later, a HUGE rock was rolled in front of the doorway to the tomb.



Stretch out arms to show size of rock. That way, no one could get into the tomb. And no one could get OUT—or at least, that's what they THOUGHT!

The GLAD Day

Hold up three fingers. But three days later, very early in the morning, some ladies came to the garden where the tomb was. The sun wasn't up yet—but they could see that the big rock was ROLLED AWAY from the door. They looked inside. ANGELS were there! The angels said, "Don't look for a person who's alive here. Tombs are for dead people! Jesus is ALIVE! Remember what Jesus told you?"

The women were AMAZED! Then they remembered! Jesus had SAID this would happen! They went and told Jesus' other friends. **Run in place.** One friend ran back to look. Jesus' tomb was EMPTY! Jesus wasn't there. **Walk in place.** He didn't know what to think! **Look surprised.**

But later that day, OTHER friends saw Jesus. They walked and talked with Him! At first, they did NOT know it was Jesus. But when they DID, they were HAPPY! They RAN back to tell their friends! **Run in place.**

That night, Jesus came into the room where His friends were. He said, "Peace! Don't be afraid! It's ME!"

Jesus' friends were VERY happy! The very BAD thing was part of God's GOOD plan. The very SAD day became a GLAD day—because Jesus is alive!

Conclusion

Today we heard about how something that seemed BAD became something GOOD! A very SAD time became a very GLAD time! Show Daily Plan Pennant. These words say, "God's Plan: 2 SAVE Us!" When Jesus died, He took the punishment for our sins, the wrong things we do. He did this so that we could be forgiven. Then we can be with God forever.

This is our Bible verse: Jesus died so that we can be with God. (See 1 Peter 3:18.) Children echo phrases after you. Jesus died . . . so that we . . . can be with God. . . Repeat verse with children several times. God had a plan to forgive us and make us part of His family.

Lead children in prayer. Dear God, thank You for Jesus. Thank You that we can be forgiven and be part of Your family. In Jesus' name, amen.

Application (10 minutes)

Materials

- * Bible
- * "Jesus Saves Us" Session 4 Big Book from Posters & Props
- * Session 4 Sparky's Lab Fun Pages
- * crayons or markers

Bible Story Review: Leader and helpers sit at tables with children. Distribute Session 4 Sparky's Lab Fun Pages and crayons or markers. As children look at the pictures on their Fun Pages, review story by showing the "Jesus Saves Us" Big Book as you ask the following:

- Why were Jesus' friends sad? (Jesus had died. They thought they'd never see Him again.)
- What good news made them happy? (Jesus is risen! Jesus was alive again.)
- Jesus died so that all the wrong things we've done could be forgiven. How do we feel when we are forgiven? (Good. Happy. Glad.)

Life Application: Guide children to turn over the page. Point to Bible verse on the page. Children echo phrases after you. Jesus died . . . so that we . . . can be with God. . . Repeat several times.

- Children complete "Jesus Loves Me!" activity. Jesus loves every one of us. He died so that we could be with God forever and be part of God's family!
- Our Bible verse tells us that God had a very GOOD plan. Because Jesus died and rose again, we can be forgiven. We can be part of God's family. Describe briefly how you were forgiven and became part of God's family.

Lead children in a prayer activity. If you would like to thank God for Jesus, stand up! Children take turns to say, "Thank You, Jesus, for loving me!" Children repeat prayer as you point to each standing child. Then lead children in prayer, saying, Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus so that we could be forgiven. Thank You for loving us. We feel . . . (use words children mentioned) when we are forgiven! In Jesus' name, amen.

Salvation Tip

A child's personal relationship with Jesus is something that is more effectively handled one-on-one than in a group. Ask questions that will help you determine what a child understands. Open-ended, what-do-you-think questions give you a chance to hear what's really going on in the child's mind and heart. "What do you like best about Jesus?" helps children give words to thoughts and feelings about Him.



Bonus Learning Centers

Recreation Game *Mouse, Mouse, Cat!*

(10–15 minutes)

Materials

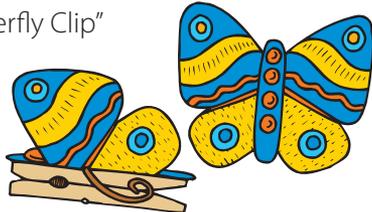
- * none

Procedure: Play a game like Duck, Duck, Goose using other animals. Children sit in a circle. One child stands outside circle as the “Mouse.” The Mouse walks around the circle and taps each child on the head in sequence, saying “Mouse.” When the Mouse taps a player and says “Cat,” that player chases the Mouse around the circle. The Mouse tries to get back to the empty place left by the Cat. If the Cat tags the Mouse, the Mouse sits in the middle of the circle (the “cage”) until another mouse is caught.



Craft *Butterfly Clip* (15–20 minutes)

Children make “Butterfly Clip” craft. For complete craft instructions, see *MasterMind Crafts*.



Snack *Pretzel Crosses* (10–20 minutes)

Materials

- * sharp knife
- * apples
- * pineapple juice in a shallow container
- * paper plates
- * jack cheese, cubed
- * pretzel sticks
- * napkins



Preparation: Cut apples into halves, one half for each child. Dip cut sides of apples into pineapple juice, and place each half cut side down on a paper plate.

If children are making their own snack, make a sample. Use cheese cubes to connect pretzel sticks to make crosses.

Procedure: Children wash and dry hands. Give each child a napkin and a plate with half an apple on it. Children use pretzels and cheese cubes to make their own crosses. Kids stand crosses in their own apple halves and then eat both crosses and apple halves.

Talk About: **Our crosses remind us of Jesus. Jesus died on a wooden cross. He did this to take the punishment for our sins. Because Jesus died, we can be forgiven for the wrong things we do. We can join God’s family. How do you think it feels to be forgiven?** (Good. Happy. Glad.) **A cross reminds us that Jesus died and came back to life again!**

Pray, thanking God for the snack before eating. After eating, children dispose of plates and napkins.

Daily Wrap-Up (10–15 minutes)

At the end of the session, gather children together for a few moments. Review the day’s events, the Bible Verse and the Q&A. See **Transition Tips** on page 10 for fun ideas that will help make a smooth ending to a fantastic session!