



SESSION FIVE

JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS FOR US – THE SADDEST DAY

BIG IDEA

Jesus, the Son of God, died a real human death – and it was so important that it

CHANGED THE UNIVERSE!

PREP *(Kids can help!)*

- Find a hammer and nails
- Find an empty tin (such as from baked beans)
- Get some post-it notes and pens or pencils
- Matches or gas lighter

WHAT GOES IN THE BOX?

- Hammer and nails
- Post-it notes and pens/pencils
- Matches or gas lighter



INTRO

This session takes a different form in that it can begin with a family excursion to collect wood to build a cross. Traditions help us remember important things, and an Easter tradition like this will remind your children what a price Jesus paid for us – so that we can be forgiven and set free from sin.

- Go with your children to the beach or bush to find pieces of wood you can use to build a cross.
- Bring the wood home and together build a cross. Then set it up in your lounge.

OUT OF THE BOX

- Have everyone gather in the lounge for family time, near the cross you have built together.

Easter Week is very special for our family. This is the week that we remember how Jesus died for us, and for the whole world. This part of the Easter story is the saddest day, but it is not the end. There is more to the Easter story that we will learn about next time.

We're going to read the story and think about how truly special Easter is. It is when we remember how God made a way for all our sins to be forgiven and for us to become beloved members of God's family.

- **But before we do, can anyone think of three things that happened on the day Jesus died – things that made people realise something huge had happened?**
 - 1) The sun went dark.
 - 2) There was a huge earthquake.
 - 3) The curtain in the temple ripped from top to bottom.

READ

Listen carefully to see if you can work out when these 3 things happened!

“ The sun stops shining

“So you’re a King are you?” the Roman soldiers jeered. “Then you’ll need a crown and a robe.” They gave Jesus a crown made out of thorns. And put a purple robe on him. And pretended to bow down to him. “Your Majesty!” they said. Then they whipped him. And spat on him. They didn’t understand that this was the Prince of Life, the King of heaven and earth, who had come to rescue them.

The soldiers made him a sign – “Our King” and nailed it to a wooden cross. They walked up a hill outside the city. Jesus carried the cross on his back. Jesus had never done anything wrong. But they were going to kill him the way criminals were killed. They nailed Jesus to the cross. “Father, forgive them,” Jesus gasped. “They don’t understand what they’re doing.”

“You say you’ve come to rescue us!” people shouted. “But you can’t even rescue yourself!” But they were wrong. Jesus could have rescued himself. A legion of angels would have flown to his side – if he’d called. “If you were really the Son of God, you could just climb down off the cross!” they said. And of

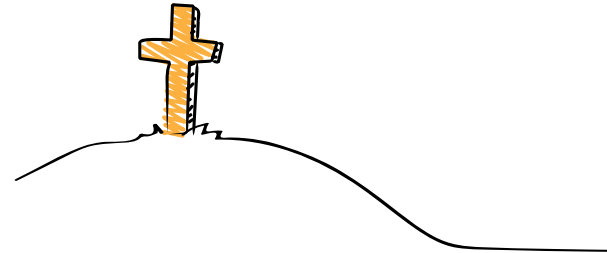
course they were right. Jesus could have just climbed down. Actually, he could have just said a word and made it all stop. Like when he healed the little girl. And stilled the storm. And fed 5,000 people.

But Jesus stayed. You see, they didn’t understand. It wasn’t the nails that kept Jesus there. It was love. “Papa?” Jesus cried, frantically searching the sky. “Papa? Where are you? Don’t leave me!”

And for the first time – and the last – when he spoke, nothing happened. Just a horrible, endless silence. God didn’t answer. He turned away from his Boy. Tears rolled down Jesus’ face. The face of the One who would wipe away every tear from every eye.

Even though it was midday, a dreadful darkness covered the face of the world. The sun could not shine. The earth trembled and quaked. The great mountains shook. Rocks split in two. Until it seemed that the whole world would break. That creation itself would tear apart.

The full force of the storm of God’s fierce anger at sin was coming down. On his own Son. Instead of his people. It was the only way God could destroy sin, and not destroy



his children whose hearts were filled with sin.

Then Jesus shouted out in a loud voice, “It is finished!” And it was. He had done it. Jesus had rescued the whole world. “Father!” Jesus cried. “I give you my life.” And with a great sigh he let himself die. Strange clouds and shadows filled the sky. Purple, orange, black. Like a bruise.

Jesus’ friends gently carried Jesus. They laid Jesus in a new tomb carved out of rock.

How could Jesus die? What had gone wrong? What did it mean? They didn’t know anything anymore. Except they did know their hearts were breaking.

“That’s the end of Jesus,” the Leaders said. But, just to be sure, they sent strong soldiers to guard the tomb. They hauled a huge stone in front of the door to the tomb. So that no one could get in. Or out. ”

The crucifixion from Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19; The Jesus Storybook Bible, Sally Lloyd-Jones, pages 302-308, Zonderkidz



SESSION FIVE

OUT OF THE BOX

- Take out the post-it notes and pens and give one to each person.
- Take out the hammer, nails and tin.

FAMILY TALK TIME

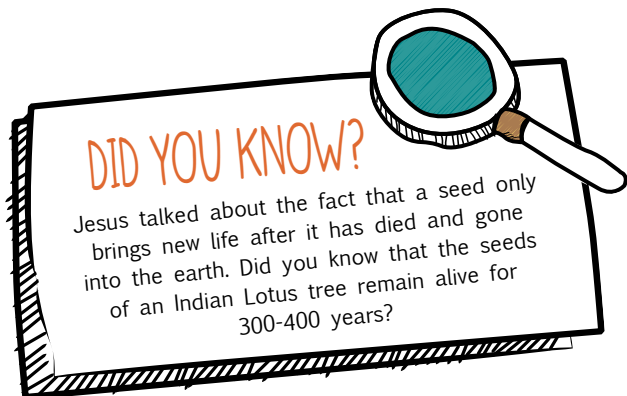
Questions

- **Why did Jesus die?**
- **Do you think that Jesus could have stopped himself being killed?**
- **Does anyone remember why Jesus said, "It is finished"? e.g. because at that moment all of our sin was laid on Jesus, and he took the punishment instead of us.**

Jesus was perfect. He didn't ever do anything wrong. He was also very brave and strong. What made him so strong was his love. God's love is stronger than any evil or bad thing in the whole world.

The Bible says all of us have sinned.

- **Who knows what a sin is?** (Can you give an example of what a sin would be?)
- Get everyone to think about sins that they know they have done; things that have made God sad – and write them down on their post-it notes.



- Now starting with Dad and Mum, take your paper with sins written on it, kneel in front of the cross, say sorry to God for the things you have done that have made him sad, and say, "Thank you Jesus for dying for me."
- Nail your paper onto the cross (or you can just lay them at the bottom of the cross).

When Jesus died all our sins were nailed to the cross with him, along with all the sins that other people do against us.

- Now gather up the notes and put them in the tin.
- Together take the tin outside in the back yard and burn the notes. Let the children see them disappear into cinders.

When Jesus came, he brought his kingdom – the kingdom of God – into our world. Because Jesus sacrificed his life on the cross we are welcomed into God's presence as his very own children – loved and cherished.

- All say together:

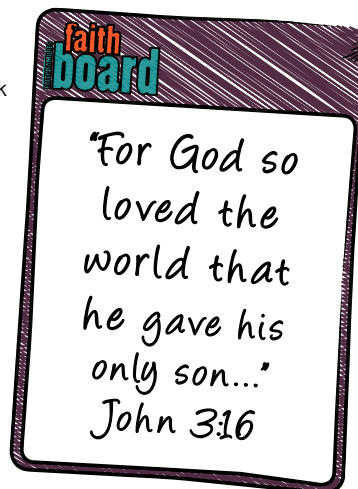
"By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place... For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean." *Hebrews 10:20-22 (NLT)*

PRAY

Gather around the cross, hold hands and each thank Jesus for dying for you.

LIVE

Make a plan to do something special on Easter Sunday. Ring up a grandparent or Christian friend and say, "He is risen!" Make the rice bubble tomb on the next page, or the Easter Garden from Volume 1, session 5.



OTHER IDEAS

- **The Tea Bag Gospel**
(Find a labelled tea bag and two dishes.)

The Label

Remove the label and show it. It tells us what kind of tea it is. Jesus has many labels that tell people something about who he is (e.g. Christ, Saviour, Good Shepherd, Messiah etc). But when he came to earth Jesus put aside all his glory and became like a servant, setting aside all his titles to become like us.

The String

Remove the string and hold it up. We can often become attached or tied to things here that we think make us happy. But Jesus had his eye on the future kingdom and knew that doing what God wanted – even if it meant going to the cross – was the most important thing.

The Staple

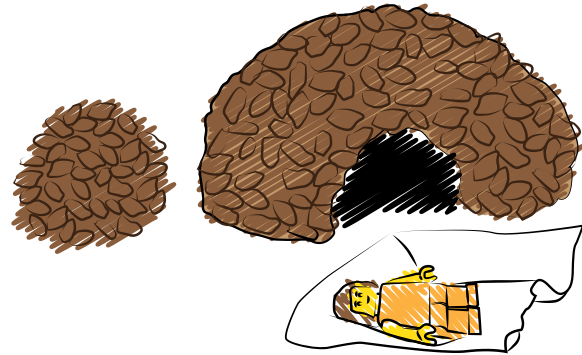
Carefully remove the staple from the tea bag and hold it. Look at the holes left in the tea bag. Jesus was not pierced with a staple but with nails and a spear when he was put on the cross.

The Tea

Carefully open the tea bag without ripping it and empty the tea leaves into a dish. Tea looks like dirt and when put it in water, it colours it all. When we do things that are wrong, it is a bit like the tea, it makes the rest of our lives feel yucky too. When Jesus died on the cross, he made a way for all our sins to be washed away. When we say sorry to God, Jesus' blood makes us clean again.

The Tea Bag

Carefully open up the tea bag completely into a long tube and stand it on the second dish. Because God loves us, we can stand tall like that and be a light to the world. Light the bag from the top and allow it to burn. As we shine for Jesus, we will become more like him and one day, we too will be raised from the dead to be with him! (The tea bag may float as it burns!)



- **Make a rice bubble tomb and stone for Jesus!**

Ingredients

- 40 large marshmallows (or 4 cups mini marshmallows)
- 30g butter (or 3 tbsp melted butter)
- 4 cups Rice Bubbles (or Cocoa Pops)

Method

Melt butter in saucepan, add marshmallows and cook over low heat until melted. Remove from heat and stir in Rice Bubbles. Using buttered hands or spoon, grab a small handful for the 'stone', and mould the remaining mixture onto an overturned greased ramekin or bowl to make a cave with an entrance. On Good Friday, wrap a Jesus figure (e.g. small doll, Lego man, popsicle stick with drawn-on face) in tissue and put in cave, rolling the stone in front of the entrance. Remove 'Jesus' on the eve of Easter Sunday, leaving the tissue, so that the children can see that "He is risen!"

[Healthy alternative: 1/2 cup honey, 1/2 cup chocolate hazelnut spread (or almond butter), 4 cups gluten-free puffed rice. Heat first two in microwave, stir in cereal.]

**CHECK OUT WHAT YOU
NEED FOR NEXT SESSION...**

