

Session 8

Jesus Comes Back to Life

Matthew 27:27-56; 28:1-10



Worship Theme:



Jesus is risen.

Weaving Faith Into Life:



Children will celebrate Jesus because he died for all of us and he is alive.

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
1 Let's Praise God! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	Sing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Rescue Me" • "Jesus Loves Me" • "I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) • "No Matter What I'm Facing" • "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" • "Are You Going to Praise the Lord?" 	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Black plastic, tape, candle, matches, video equipment

Preschool

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	* Where Could He Be? Look for Jesus and discover he's nowhere to be found.	Classroom Supplies: Bible-times costume
	Jesus Is Risen! Hear the Bible story and decide whether parts are happy or sad.	Classroom Supplies: Bible, bananas
	* Led to God Play Follow the Leader.	Classroom Supplies: Bible-times costume

Elementary

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	* "Live From the Tomb" Watch a video presentation of the Bible story, and express thankfulness for Jesus' resurrection.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment, newsprint, markers, masking tape
	Holiday Redesign Plan a new holiday to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.	Classroom Supplies: Paper, pencils
	He Is Risen Indeed Learn a trick to help them remember that Jesus rose from the dead just as he said he would.	

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
3 Let's Pray! <i>(up to 10 minutes)</i>	The Offering Offer their gifts to God.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment, Easter baskets, Easter grass, plastic Easter eggs, paper, pencils
	Bubble Prayers Pray as bubbles rise just as Jesus rose from the dead.	Classroom Supplies: Bubble solution, wand
	Responsive Prayer Pray about all the good things that happen because of Jesus' resurrection.	

* Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together. Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Let's Learn the Point! Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.

Jesus Comes Back to Life

Matthew 27:27-56; 28:1-10

Last week's lesson focused on the climax of Jesus' ministry. But just a few days later, everything had gone wrong—to human eyes. Jesus focused on completing his teaching ministry in his last days on earth and then gave his disciples some final instructions and challenges at the Last Supper and as he went to pray in the garden of Gethsemane.

After betraying his Lord to the Jewish authorities who were out to get Jesus, Judas hanged himself in remorse. Three times Peter denied even knowing Jesus, as Jesus had predicted. False witnesses were rounded up to accuse Jesus at a farce of a trial. And then Jesus was flogged almost to death, mocked, and forced to carry his own cross toward the site of his crucifixion. At Golgotha, Jesus was nailed to a cross to die between two thieves as a common criminal. A sign was placed above his head that mocked who he claimed to be. And the mocking continued until he died.

What happened at the moment of Jesus' death confirmed who Jesus really was (Matthew 27:50-56). The splitting of the curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place in the Temple had deep significance. Not only was it a dramatic supernatural event, but it also symbolized what Jesus had done in his death on the cross. The High Priest entered into the Most Holy Place once a year to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people (Hebrews 9:7). That was the only time he could enter into God's presence. In taking our sins upon himself and dying for those sins, Jesus, the innocent Son of God, opened the way for us to have a direct relationship with God (Hebrews 10:19-20).

The earthquake that happened when Jesus died was paralleled by the one that hit when the angel rolled the stone from the grave. The angel didn't roll the stone away so that Jesus could get out of the tomb but so that humans could get into the tomb to see that Jesus was gone.

The first people to see that empty tomb were the women closest to Jesus. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James arose early to anoint Jesus' body with spices, which

was a common burial practice. The women were greeted by an angel who announced Jesus' resurrection. Jesus had defeated death, literally once and for all!

What Jesus did in his death on the cross was an amazing and powerful demonstration of God's love because he offered forgiveness for our sins. But what Jesus did on the first Easter morning was even more astounding and perhaps more significant. Jesus' resurrection is at the core of our faith. The Apostle Paul puts the importance of the Resurrection in a wonderful perspective in 1 Corinthians 15:17-20: "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." Without the Resurrection, our faith would be useless. But because of the resurrection of Jesus, "in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22b)!

Devotion for Leaders

Jesus' resurrection sealed our eternal life. Because he went to death and back for us, God will forgive our sins and we can live forever in relationship with Jesus. Thank you, Jesus, for your incredible victory!

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: When was the last time you dealt with a difficult situation or felt depressed? Remind yourself of Jesus' resurrection and gift of eternal life. How could reflecting on Jesus have put that situation in perspective and helped you deal with it? Commit to keep exploring Jesus' resurrection and discover how it still changes you.

Why We Worship for Leaders

This week we celebrate the central event of the Christian faith: the glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Scripture teaches us that if Jesus hadn't been raised from the dead, our faith would be futile and we would still be enslaved by our sin. But we know with complete certainty that Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day, just as he promised. And because of Christ's sure resurrection, we have the unshakable hope of forgiveness of our sins and a home with him in heaven. Let's praise Jesus today with great rejoicing!

Easy Prep for Leaders

Let's Praise God!

- Make sure your video equipment is ready.
- Cover any windows with black plastic to make the room as dark as possible. Set one candle and a box of matches at the front of the room.

"Live From the Tomb"

- Watch "Live From the Tomb" at least once before the worship session so you're familiar with it.
- Draw a large cross on a long sheet of newsprint. Roll up the newsprint, and set it aside.

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

1 Let's Praise God!

Light the candle, and turn off the room lights. Close the door to the room, and meet the children outside the entrance to your children's church area. Greet children by name, and say to each one, "Hello, I'm glad you're here today. We're going to all go into the worship area together today. While we're waiting for everyone to get here, talk to a friend about how your family celebrates Easter."

When all the children have arrived, tell them to enter the worship area silently and find a place to sit down.

Say **Today is a very special day. Today is the day we talk about God's best gift to us.**

Hold up the lighted candle.

Say **The Bible tells us that Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus came to the world to show us God's love and to save us from the punishment we deserve because of the sins we do. The Bible says in Philippians 2:6-8 that "Christ himself was like God in everything. But he did not think that being equal with God was something to be used for his own benefit. But he gave up his place with God and made himself nothing. He was born to be a man and became like a servant. And when he was living as a man, he humbled himself and was fully obedient to God, even when that caused his death—death on a cross" (Philippians 2:6-8, New Century Version).**

Say ➤ **Jesus died to rescue us from our sins. Let's sing about that.**

▶ Sing "Rescue Me."

Blow out the candle, and pause for a few seconds. Then light the candle again.

Say ➤ **But Jesus didn't stay dead. On the third day after Jesus died, he came back to life. He is alive. The word we use for Jesus' coming back to life is *resurrection*. And that's what we celebrate today. We celebrate Christ's resurrection. Jesus came back to life 2,000 years ago, and Jesus is still alive today.**

Turn the room lights back on.

Ask ➤ • **Why do you think Jesus died for us?** (Because Jesus loves us; so our sins can be forgiven.)

• **How is Jesus' death and resurrection a good gift from God to us?** (It's a good gift because it means we can go to heaven; it's good because we don't have to pay for our sins.)

Say ➤ **One reason Jesus died for us is because he loves us very much. Jesus died so that we could be forgiven for our sins and live with God in heaven forever. Let's sing about Jesus' love.**

▶ Sing "Jesus Loves Me."

Say ➤ **Jesus died for us, and then he came back to life to prove that he has power over death. When we say that Jesus rose from the dead, we mean he came back to life. There's a very old saying about Jesus' resurrection that I'd like to teach you. When you hear me say, "He is risen," you say, "He is risen indeed!" Ready? Let's try it. He is risen! (Pause.)**

He is risen! (Pause.)

He is risen! (Pause.)

Yes, Jesus is risen indeed! It's wonderful news. Let's sing about the wonderful news of the Resurrection.

▶ Sing "I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25).

Say ➤ **When we get news as good as the news of Jesus' resurrection, we want everyone to know about it. Because of Jesus, we have Jesus' promise to help us no matter what we're facing, and we have the promise of heaven.**

▶ Sing "No Matter What I'm Facing."

Ask ➤ • **Why is Jesus' resurrection such great news?** (It means Jesus has power over death; it means we can live with Jesus forever.)

• **Why do people need to know about Jesus' resurrection?**

(People need to know Jesus can help them live with him forever; they need to know they don't have to pay for their sins.)

Say ➤ **Jesus came back to life. He took the punishment for our sins and for the sins of everyone in the world. We want to praise God for doing something so wonderful, and the Bible tells us that someday the whole world will praise God and say that Jesus is Lord. God is worthy of praise from the whole earth. And Jesus is worthy of being most important in our lives.**

▶ Sing "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus."

Say ➤ **Praising God is so much fun! Let's sing one more song of praise to God.**

▶ Sing "Are You Going to Praise the Lord?"

Pray ➤ **God, you sent your Son to the world to live a perfect life and to die for our sins. Then he came back to life on the third day, and he is still alive today. Thank you, God, for Jesus. Thank you for your plan of salvation, and thank you for the Resurrection. In Jesus' name, amen.**

2 Let's Learn the Point!

Preschool Activities, pages 99-100

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let's Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

Elementary Activities

** "Live From the Tomb"*

Show the video "Live From the Tomb." It's a newscast following Jesus' resurrection. After the video,


Ask ➤ **• What did you learn about Jesus' death and resurrection?** (Jesus was buried in a tomb; some people thought Jesus' body was stolen.)

- **Why was Jesus' resurrection a good thing?** (When Jesus came back to life, he proved he has power over death; coming back to life proved Jesus is God; Jesus can show us the way to God.)
- **What does Jesus' resurrection mean for you?** (It means I can go to heaven if I believe in Jesus; it means God forgives me when I sin.)

Lay the newsprint cross on the floor or on a large table.

Say ▶ **Right now, I'd like you to think of a reason you're thankful for Jesus' death and resurrection. Think of a couple of words to write or pictures to draw to say thank you. Then come to the cross and write or draw what you thought of. Use this time to thank God for Jesus' death and resurrection.**

Set out markers, and have kids write or draw on the cross.

 Play "I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) while kids work.

Then use masking tape to tape the cross on the wall of your worship area.

Say ▶ **Jesus' death and resurrection are wonderful gifts of love to us. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, those who believe in him can live forever with him in heaven. The Resurrection is reason to celebrate. Let's talk about that some more.**

Holiday Redesign

Have kids form groups of two or three. Give each group paper and pencils.

Say ▶ **People around the world celebrate Jesus' resurrection with a special holiday.**

- Ask** ▶
- **What are some of the things people do to celebrate Easter?** (Easter-egg hunts; eat lots of candy.)
 - **If you didn't know that we celebrate Easter to celebrate Jesus' resurrection, would you be able to figure it out from the things people do on Easter? Explain.** (Probably not; yes, because people go to church and I'd learn why at church.)

Say ▶ **Right now, it's your job to redesign Easter to be a holiday that really celebrates Jesus' resurrection. Think of all the things people do to celebrate holidays. Then think of ways to celebrate a holiday that will help people understand and celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead. You have about five minutes to work on your redesign of Easter.**

Give the children five minutes to work. Then have each group share its ideas with the rest of the groups.

(continued on page 101)

Jesus Comes Back to Life

Matthew 27:27-56; 28:1-10

Worship Theme:



Jesus is risen.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Where Could He Be?—Put away any pictures of Jesus in your room. Assemble a Bible-times costume to wear.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

- Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
- Have Theo help the children look for Jesus in the “Where Could He Be?” activity.
- See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today’s worship session.



* Where Could He Be?

Put on the Bible-times costume, and have the children sit on the floor.

If you’re a woman,

Say Hello! My name is Mary. I’ve lost something very important. Will you help me look for it?

If you’re a man,

Say Hello! I’m a friend of Mary’s. She’s lost something very important. Will you help me look for it?

Then continue.

Say Jesus is missing. We can’t find him anywhere. Let’s look for him.

Encourage the children to look for Jesus in the room. Encourage them to look everywhere. After three or four minutes, invite the children back to where they were sitting.

Ask • Did you find Jesus?

- Where do you think Jesus might be?
- Why couldn’t we find Jesus?
- Have you ever lost something that was special to you? What happened?

Say Today our story is about a time two women went looking for Jesus. They didn’t find him where they thought he would be. Let’s find out what happened.

Jesus Is Risen!

Give each child a banana.

Say The story about when Jesus was missing has happy parts and sad parts. We’re going to use our bananas to help us point out the happy and sad parts of the story. If you hold your banana one way, it looks kind of like a smile. Can you hold your banana up to your face so that it looks like a smile? (Pause.)

You can also hold your banana so that it looks a little bit like a frown. Can you hold your banana up to your face so that it looks like a frown? (Pause.)

I’m going to tell you the story about Jesus being missing. I need you to decide whether parts of the story are happy or sad. You can show me whether the story is happy or sad by holding your banana like a smile or like a frown. Ready? Here we go.

Open your Bible to Matthew 28, and show it to the children.

Say This story is from the Bible. It happened many years ago. One afternoon, Jesus was nailed to a cross. His special friends, the disciples, watched while the Roman soldiers mistreated him. It hurt him very much, and he died. After Jesus died, some of his friends took his body and put it in a cave, which was called a tomb, and put a big rock over the opening.

Preschool Activities

Jesus Is Risen! (continued)

Show me with your banana whether the story is happy or sad. (Pause.)

The third day after Jesus died, two of Jesus' friends went to the tomb where Jesus' body was. Both of them were named Mary. They wanted to look at the place where Jesus was buried.

When they got there, there was a huge earthquake. Let's stand and shake and pretend there's an earthquake here. (Pause.)

The earthquake happened because an angel came from heaven. The angel rolled away the stone that was covering the entrance to the tomb where Jesus was buried. The angel sat on top of the stone. Then he spoke to Mary and Mary. He said, "Don't be afraid. I know you're looking for Jesus. But he isn't here. He has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where Jesus was. He's not here anymore! Then go quickly and tell Jesus' friends, the disciples, that Jesus is no longer dead. He's alive!"

Show me with your banana whether the story is happy or sad. (Pause.)

Then the women hurried to tell the disciples what they'd seen. They were full of joy. On their way, they met Jesus. They knelt at his feet and worshipped him.

Then Jesus said, "Don't be scared. Tell my friends to go to Galilee. That's where I'll be."

Show me with your banana whether the story is happy or sad. (Pause.)

- Ask**
- Why couldn't the two Marys find Jesus?
 - How do you think they felt when they couldn't find Jesus?
 - Where was Jesus?
 - What happened to Jesus?
 - How do you think the two Marys felt when they saw Jesus again?

ALLERGY ALERT



Be aware that some children have allergies that are dangerous. Know your children, and consult with parents about allergies their children may have. Also be sure to carefully read food labels as hidden ingredients may cause allergy-related problems.

- Say**
- The two Marys thought that Jesus would be buried in the tomb. But he wasn't. The angel told them that Jesus had come back to life. Then the two Marys saw Jesus for themselves. They were excited and joyful because their good friend Jesus was alive! Let's find out why it's such a good thing that Jesus came back to life.

* Led to God

You'll need the Bible-times costume from "Where Could He Be?" Invite the children to one side of the room. Set a chair on the opposite side of the room, and ask the children to pretend that it's God's throne.

- Say** Because Jesus came back to life, he can show us the way to God. Because of Jesus, we can be friends with God. Let's see how that works. I'm going to pretend to be Jesus, and I'll lead you all to God. Point to the chair that represents God's throne.

Put on the costume, and approach one of the children.

- Say** Hello! My name is Jesus. Do you believe in Jesus?

When the child says yes, hold the child's hand and encourage him or her to follow you. Greet another child, then have the second child hold the first child's hand. Repeat the process with each of the children until the children are all holding hands in a line.

Lead the children in a winding path around the room, and encourage them to follow your motions. You may want to hop, jump, laugh, cheer, clap, or shout, "Hallelujah."

After two or three minutes, lead the children to "God's throne," and have them sit in a circle around the throne.

- Ask** • What does Jesus help us do?
- Say** Jesus helps us be friends with God. Jesus forgives our sins and leads us to God.
- Ask** • Why is it good that Jesus is risen from the dead?
- Say** Jesus came back to life. Sometimes people say that Jesus rose from the dead. Let's celebrate by clapping and cheering together. Let's all say, "Hip, hip, hip hooray! Jesus is alive today!" Ready? Here we go! Hip, hip, hip hooray! Jesus is alive today!

(continued from page 98)

- Ask** • **How did you decide what types of things to do to celebrate the Resurrection?** (We chose things that honor God; we chose things that help us think about Jesus.)
- **Do you think we should celebrate Jesus' resurrection? Explain.** (Yes, because it's the best thing that ever happened; yes, so we won't forget.)
- **What can you do today to celebrate and remember that Jesus came back to life?** (Sing praise songs; read about it in the Bible; talk about it with my friends.)

Say **Jesus' death and resurrection are the most important parts of our Christian faith. We need to do all we can to remember how important Jesus' death and resurrection are and thank God for them. Right now, I'll show you a way to remember what happened to Jesus.**

He Is Risen Indeed

Each child will need to sit in a chair or a pew for this activity. If you don't usually use chairs in your children's church, have them stacked on one side of the room. Have teen or adult helpers help you set out the chairs when you're ready to do this activity.

Say **I'd like to show you a fun trick to help you remember that Jesus rose from the dead.**

Have kids sit in the chairs with their feet firmly planted on the floor. Have them put their palms together, straighten their arms, and position their arms so that their hands are resting between their knees. See the margin illustration.

Instruct the children to press outward with their straightened arms and to press in with their knees for one full minute. They need to press their arms against their knees as hard as they can. Encourage them to keep pressing when they get tired. A minute is a long time, but this activity is more amazing if they press very hard for a full minute. Call time, and have kids stand and relax their arms by their sides. Their arms will automatically rise in the air.

Say **He is risen!**

Have the children respond, "He is risen indeed!"

- Ask** • **Why is Jesus' resurrection such a big deal?** (Jesus paid for our sins; Jesus is stronger than death.)
- **How will this trick help you remember what happened to Jesus?** (I couldn't keep my arms down and death couldn't keep Jesus down; my arms rose in the air, and Jesus rose from death.)
- **Who can you show this trick to in order to explain what happened to Jesus?** (My family; my friends.)



Say Jesus' death and resurrection are very important. They are something for us to celebrate, and they are something for us to tell others about. Think of someone you can tell about Jesus' resurrection.

Now let's thank God because Jesus came back to life!


3 Let's Pray!

The Offering

You'll need Easter baskets with Easter grass, an empty plastic Easter egg for each child, slips of paper, and pencils.

Say Today we're celebrating Jesus' resurrection. Jesus gave his life for us so that we can live with him forever. Think of something you'd like to give Jesus in return. You may want to give Jesus your love or your service or your devotion. You may want to give Jesus a gift of praise. I'm going to hand out slips of paper and pencils. Write your gift or draw a picture of your gift on the slip of paper. Then I'll give you a plastic egg. Put your gift inside the egg. I'll pass around Easter baskets, and you can put your egg in the Easter basket with the offering you brought.

After you hand out slips of paper and pencils, give the children a minute or two to write or draw pictures of the gifts they want to give Jesus. Then give each child an Easter egg to put the gift in.

 Play "It Is by Grace" (Ephesians 2:8-9) while children work.

Bubble Prayers

You'll need a bottle of bubble solution and a bubble wand.

Say As I blow bubbles, wave the bubbles toward heaven, and pray silently to thank Jesus for rising from the dead. Also thank God that you can live in heaven with Jesus forever.

Walk around the room blowing bubbles. Have the children pray silent prayers of thanksgiving and praise.

Responsive Prayer

Say I'm going to call out several things that are possible because of Jesus' resurrection. After each one and when you hear me say "because," I want you to respond by saying "Jesus is risen." Ready? This will be our closing prayer, so be sure to be thanking God in your hearts and minds during this activity.



Dear God, we know that we can be full of joy because...

Dear God, we know that we can have hope because...

**Dear God, we know that we can have victory over death
because...**

**Dear God, we know that we can find forgiveness for our sins
because ...**

**Dear God, we know that we can live in heaven with you forever
because...**

**Dear God, for all these things we praise you! In Jesus' name,
amen.**