

Jesus Is Alive

Special Unit
see table of contents

Scripture: Matthew 26:36-50, 57, 59-66; 27:32-38, 45-65; 28:1-10

Bible Memory: Matthew 28:6

Focus: ♥ Only Jesus has power over death.

Heart to Heart Teacher Devotion

When all seemed lost and Jesus' followers were totally discouraged, Jesus surprised them by showing His great power in one ultimate feat. When you are discouraged and all seems lost, remember and trust in Jesus' resurrection power. Jesus may work through a friend, a family member, or even a stranger. He may work in ways you never thought possible. Don't be surprised. Jesus has power—even over death!

Jesus' Resurrection Lesson at a Glance

1 FOCUS IN
Use one or more of these activities to help children *explore times they celebrate*.



Quick Step
Celebration Snapshots



Option
Let's Celebrate!



Bible Memory
Introduce the Bible Memory verse.

Immerse Materials
• Resources CD sheet 2
Celebrations Photo Cards

Other Materials
• (optional: digital camera)

• party horn

• Bible, reusable adhesive

2 EXPLORE HIS WORD
Use these activities to help children *tell how Jesus showed His power over death*.



Bible Exploration
Matthew 26-28



Bible Review Activity



Bible Memory
Matthew 28:6



Optional Bible Skill Builder

• Resources sheet 2 Bible Story Figures JAa-JAg, Resources CD Bible Story Quote Strips printable file, Teaching Picture Jesus Is Alive
• Resources sheet 2 Bible Story Figures JAa-JAg
• Resources sheet 1 Special Unit Bible Memory Poster

• whiteboard, dry-erase marker, Bibles

• gift bag

• Bibles, whiteboard, dry-erase marker, gift bag, reusable adhesive

3 MAKE IT REAL
Use one of these activities to help children *understand why it is important that Jesus came back to life*.



Quick Step
Jesus Keeps His Promises



Option
Power to Set Free



Option
Story from *Weekly Bible Reader*

• *Weekly Bible Reader* issue JA

• Bible

• party horn

4 LIVE IT OUT
Use one of these activities to help children *praise Jesus for His power over death*.



Quick Step
Praise Jesus!



Option
Praise Jesus Cards



Saying Good-bye

• *Activities* pp. 5 and 6 and stickers

• *Weekly Bible Reader* issue JA and special issue

• inflated balloon

• scissors, unsharpened pencils, chenille wires, tape, resealable plastic bags

Focus In (10–15 minutes)

- 1** Use one of these activities to help children **explore times they celebrate**. Use the Bible Memory activity to introduce the memory verse.

Welcome

- Welcome each child by name.
- Engage early arrivers by offering one or more of the activities described on the Additional Activities for Special Unit page.

Quick Step Celebration Snapshots

Have children gather in a circle. SAY: **Today is an exciting day. It's a day to celebrate. Let's act out some reasons to celebrate.** Have the children work with partners or in small groups. If you have children with special needs, prepare the groups ahead of time so that children with special needs will be included appropriately. Give each group one of the photo cards. Let each group take a turn acting out the event pictured on its card. See whether the other children can guess what event is taking place.

ASK: **What's your favorite reason to celebrate?**
Who do you like to celebrate special events with?

SAY: **Today we're going to learn that ♡ only Jesus has power over death. Then we'll celebrate and praise Jesus.**

Option Let's Celebrate!

Have children gather in a circle. SAY: **Let's do some celebrating! I'll name a reason to celebrate. When I blow my party horn, show how you would celebrate the occasion. When I blow the party horn again, stop celebrating. Then I'll name another reason, and we'll celebrate some more.** Name a reason to celebrate. Give the signal and let kids show how they would celebrate. Continue with as many situations as you have time for.

ASK: **Why do we celebrate special occasions or events?**
What was the greatest party you've ever been to?

SAY: **Today we're going to learn that ♡ only Jesus has power over death. Then we'll celebrate and praise Jesus.**

Bible Memory Matthew 28:6

SAY: **Our Bible Memory tells something very special about Jesus. Listen for what's so special about Jesus.** Read Matthew 28:6.

ASK: **What's so special about Jesus?** (He rose from the dead.)

Display the Bible Memory poster. Ask the kids to join you in reading the verse. Pause when you come to an empty space, and ask who knows what word is missing. Attach the missing word. Lead the children in saying the verse three times, a little louder each time. SAY: **We're going to learn that ♡ only Jesus has power over death. That's a reason to celebrate!**

Focus

♡ Only Jesus has power over death.

Materials

Resources CD sheet 2
Celebrations Photo Cards
(optional: digital camera)



Added Fun!

Parents love to see pictures of their children having fun. Take pictures as groups are acting out their situations. Print and display the pictures in your classroom.

Materials

party horn (or whistle)



Reasons to Celebrate

You won your big soccer game.
Today is your birthday.
You got a B on the math test.
You were brave enough to give a report in front of the class.

Materials

Bible, Resources
sheet 1 Special Unit
Bible Memory Poster, reusable
adhesive



Transition to Explore His Word

See the Resources CD Transition Tips printable file. As children gather, make sure you have all the materials you need.

Focus

♥ Only Jesus has power over death.

Explore His Word (20 minutes)

2 Use all of these activities to help children **tell how Jesus showed His power over death.**

Bible Background for the Teacher

In the very act of crucifixion, Jesus was subjected to the most degrading form of punishment known to man. The Romans would not even allow Roman citizens to be crucified; they reserved crucifixion for slaves and foreigners or criminals.

Joseph of Arimathea was obviously a man of wealth since he had his own burial vault in a garden. He also had the courage to ask for the body of Jesus. Jesus was buried shortly before sunset on Friday afternoon, lay in the grave through Saturday, and came forth from the grave before sunrise on Sunday morning. The order of events on this memorable day is probably as follows: an earthquake, followed by the descent of the angel, the rolling away of the stone and opening of the tomb, and the resurrection.

For the proof of Christ's resurrection, we have the testimony of the angel, the women, and Jesus himself. Five appearances of Jesus are recorded in the four Gospels as occurring during the day of resurrection. Five more appearances occurred during the 40 days that Jesus remained on earth—more than enough proof to show that Jesus really had risen from the dead.

Worship Time

If you want to offer a time of worship, see the *Resources* CD Special Unit Worship Time Ideas printable file for suggestions.

Materials

whiteboard, dry-erase marker, Bibles, *Resources* sheet 2 Bible Story Figures JAa-JAg, *Resources* CD Bible Story Quote Strips printable file, scissors *Teaching Picture* Jesus Is Alive (optional: empty paper tubes and tape; or self-adhesive magnetic strip, whiteboard, dry-erase marker)



Before Class

Print and cut apart the Bible Story Quote Strips.

Decide how you want to display story figures. You might want to stand the figures by attaching empty paper tubes to the backs of figures.

Bible Exploration Matthew 26-28

SAY: Today's Bible story comes from the book of Matthew. Write "Matthew 27:31" on the board. Help the children use the table of contents in their Bibles to find and turn to the book of Matthew. Help them find Matthew 27:31, and ask for a volunteer to read the verse.

During the Bible story, we will hear some important things that were said as the various events took place. We'll repeat the phrases together. Listen for how Jesus showed His power over death. Show the story figures as instructed in the story. Choose volunteers to hold up the Bible Story Quote Strips at appropriate times.

As we learned last week, some people did not like what Jesus taught. They put Jesus on a cross to die. Sometimes bad people were put to death on crosses. But we know that Jesus wasn't bad. He was God's Son and never did anything wrong. Jesus could have saved himself from these bad people, but it was God's plan that Jesus would die.

When Jesus died on a Friday afternoon, it became dark outside. A huge, heavy curtain in the temple tore from top to bottom, all by itself. There was an earthquake. Show JAc. The soldiers guarding Jesus felt the earthquake and saw what was happening. They said, "He was the Son of God!" Have a volunteer hold up quote strip 1. Repeat the words together.

After Jesus died, a man named Joseph asked for Jesus' body. This Joseph was not Jesus' father, but he was a follower of Jesus. He wrapped Jesus' body in cloth. Then Joseph put Jesus' body in a tomb. Show JAa. A very large stone was rolled in front of the tomb. Put JAB over the opening of the tomb. Guards were posted by the tomb. Move guards JAc in front of the tomb.

Early Sunday morning, God sent another earthquake. An angel of the Lord went to the tomb. The angel rolled the stone away from the tomb and sat on the big stone. Move JAb; place JAf on stone. **The soldiers were so afraid, they shook with fear.** Move JAa away from tomb entrance.

Display JAd and JAe. **As the sun was coming up that morning, some women went to the tomb where Jesus' body had been buried. The women were afraid when they saw an angel at the tomb.** Display the *Teaching Picture*. **But the angel said, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead.'"** Ask a volunteer to hold up quote strip 2. Repeat the words together.

The women ran from the tomb. They were still afraid, but they were also happy. They wanted to tell Jesus' friends the good news. Then Jesus met them. Display JAf. **The women fell down and worshipped Jesus. Jesus said, "Don't be afraid. Go tell my friends that they will see me soon."** Show quote strip 3. Repeat the words. **Jesus had died, but was alive again. Jesus has power over death because Jesus is God's Son.**

Bible Review Activity

ASK: **What did the Roman guards say about Jesus?** ("He was the Son of God.")

What did the angel tell the women? ("He has risen from the dead.")

What did Jesus say to the women? ("Go tell my friends that they will see me soon.")

Place the story figures in the gift bag. Ask kids to sit in a circle. SAY: **This gift bag reminds me that we have something great to celebrate—Jesus' coming back to life! Pass the bag until I say, "Only Jesus has the power." Whoever is holding the bag can reach in, pull out a story figure, and tell us what it has to do with the Bible story.** Play the game. Place story figures back in the bag as needed so that all the children have an opportunity to select and tell about a figure. SAY: **It's great to know that Jesus is God's Son. ♥ Only Jesus has power over death!**

Bible Memory Matthew 28:6

"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."

Write "Matthew 28:6" on the board. Ask the children to tell you what the different parts of the reference mean: Matthew (book of the Bible), number 28 (chapter), number 6 (verse). Help kids find Matthew 28:6 in their Bibles. Ask a volunteer to read the verse aloud.

Remove the word cards from the Bible Memory poster and place them in the gift bag. Ask volunteers to draw word cards from the bag and place them in the correct spaces on the Bible Memory poster. Repeat the verse together. SAY: **Matthew 28:6 is a great verse to memorize so that we can tell others why we are celebrating today. We know ♥ only Jesus has power over death.**

Before Class. continued

Another option is to draw a simple outdoor scene on a whiteboard. Add a piece of self-adhesive magnetic strip to the back of each figure and place the figures on the board as you tell the story.

Materials

gift bag, *Resources* sheet 2 figures JAa–JAf (optional: *Resources* CD Jesus Is Alive lesson Review Questions printable file)



Teaching Tip

Use the *Resources* CD review questions for more questions to help children review the story.

Materials

Bibles, whiteboard, dry-erase marker, *Resources* sheet 1 Special Unit Bible Memory Poster, gift bag, reusable adhesive



Optional Bible

Skill Builder

Display the books of the Old Testament and New Testament posters provided with the *Resources* CD Classroom Tools. Ask children if the story of Jesus' coming back to life is found in the Old or New Testament. (New Testament) Ask a volunteer to point to the book of Matthew on the New Testament poster. Then say together the names of all the books of the New Testament.



Focus

♥ Only Jesus has power over death.

Make It Real (10–15 minutes)

3 Use one of these activities to help children understand why it is important that Jesus came back to life.

Materials

Bible



Discuss



Children with developmental disabilities often struggle with managing their emotions. You may want to suggest hypothetical situations, rather than ask the children to name disappointing broken promises from their pasts.

Promises of Jesus

Matthew 6:25, 33 (give what we need)

Matthew 11:28 (give rest)

Matthew 28:20 (be with us)

John 3:16 (give eternal life)

Materials

party horn (or whistle)



Game

Added Fun!

For a tabletop version of freeze tag, have kids each extend an arm and place one hand on the table. The person designated as “It” will try to tap other players’ hands before they are pulled back. A hand that is tapped must remain on the table until “unfrozen” by another player.

Materials

Weekly Bible Reader
issue JA



Read

Quick Step Jesus Keeps His Promises

Read the Bible Memory verse, Matthew 28:6. SAY: **The angel told the women that Jesus had come back to life “just as he said.”**

ASK: **Have you ever had someone promise you that something good would happen, but then it didn’t? How did you feel?** Let children share a few situations.

SAY: **Matthew 16:21 says that Jesus told His disciples He would die. Jesus also said He would come back to life.** Read Matthew 16:21. ♥ **Only Jesus has power over death. If Jesus could keep a promise that big, He can (and will) keep any promise.**

ASK: **What are some other promises Jesus made to us?** Help children as needed to name promises of Jesus.

How does it make you feel to know Jesus will keep all His promises to you?

Option Power to Set Free

Move to an open area and let kids play a quick game of freeze tag. Designate one person to be “It.” That person will try to tap the other players. Anyone who is tapped must freeze in position until a free player taps them. Tell the kids that whenever you blow the party horn, everyone is unfrozen and you will name another person to be It. Play as time allows. Then have the children sit in a circle.

ASK: **Why was it important to have someone who could help you if you were tagged?** (If no one helped, the person had to remain frozen and couldn’t keep playing.)

SAY: **Just as in our game, the world needed someone who had power to free others, someone with more power than Satan and death. ♥ Only God’s Son, Jesus has power over death. And only Jesus could give us eternal life. We can celebrate and praise because Jesus is alive today! We can be free!**

Option Story from Weekly Bible Reader

SAY: **We know that ♥ only Jesus has power over death. Let’s think about a time when knowing about Jesus’ power can help others and us.** Read the rebus story “The Letter.” Pause whenever you come to a picture, and let kids call out the pictured word.

Ask: **How did knowing about Jesus’ power over death help Hannah? How did Hannah try to help Ashley?**

Live It Out (10 minutes)

- 4** Use one of these activities to help children **praise Jesus for His power over death.**

Focus

♥ Only Jesus has power over death.

Quick Step Praise Jesus!

SAY: **We began our class time today thinking about reasons to celebrate. ♥ Only Jesus has power over death. That's the best reason to celebrate. Let's celebrate and praise Jesus now.** Lead the children in singing a praise song to Jesus. Sing these words to the tune of "God Is So Good": I praise You, Jesus. / I praise You, Jesus. / I praise You, Jesus. / I praise You.

Show the balloon. SAY: **Let's tell Jesus how much we want to celebrate His power. We'll pass a balloon around the circle. When it comes to you, you can say, "Dear Jesus, I praise You for Your power over death." Then if you want to, you can add another prayer. When you are finished, pass the balloon to the next person.** When everyone has prayed, end the prayer time. Have the kids stand in a circle and gently tap the balloon into the air. Each time someone taps the balloon, call out a praise to Jesus.

Option Praise Jesus Cards



Before class, make samples of different ways children can use the Praise Jesus Cards. Options: (1) Pencil toppers. Tightly wrap a chenille wire around a pencil. Tape or glue a praise card to the free end of the wire at the top of the pencil. Repeat with other cards. (2) Name cards. Write names of family members on the outside of cards. Take the cards home and use them to show where individuals should sit at a meal. (3) Mini greeting cards. Write inside each card a message that tells about Jesus.

SAY: ♥ **Only Jesus has power over death. Let's make some special cards that we can use today to praise Jesus.** Distribute the activity pages and stickers. Set out the other supplies and show the samples made before class. Let the children choose whether to make pencil toppers, name cards, or mini greeting cards. Assist as needed in making the crafts. Provide resealable bags for taking the crafts home. SAY: **There are lots of ways to praise Jesus. We can pray and thank Him. We can praise Jesus by singing songs about His power. We can make something that shows how much we love Jesus.**

ASK: **What is your favorite way to praise Jesus?
How will you use what you have made today to praise Jesus?**

Ask for a volunteer who will pray at the end of the class time. Encourage the person to praise Jesus for His power over death.

Saying Good-bye

- Make sure children have projects and activity pages they have done in class.
- If you have time before parents arrive, use some of the activities on the Additional Activities for Special Unit page.

Materials

inflated balloon



Materials

Activities pp. 5, 6 and stickers, scissors, unsharpened pencils (4 per child), chenille wires, tape (or glue sticks), resealable plastic bags



Weekly Bible Reader

Give each student a *Weekly Bible Reader* and the special issue to take home.

Be sure parents know about the *Faith & Family* pages available online to print and use with their children at home. Go to www.21stcc.com.

