

GOD'S BIG PLAN

He's Alive!

Matthew 28:1-15

Supporting Scriptures: Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18; John 11:25-26; John 16:16-22; Romans 1:3-4; Romans 6:1-14; 1Corinthians 15:1-4, 12-58; Philippians 3:8-14; 1 Peter 1:3



Lesson Goals: To see that God raised Jesus from the dead.
To see that those who believe in Jesus will one day live with Him forever.
To see that, through His death and resurrection, Jesus has defeated the enemy.

Scripture Memory Cheer up! I have defeated the world. John 16:33 (CEV)

NOTE: Familiarize yourself with this story. Don't read it. Tell it as a STORY. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

The Lesson: Let's review what we have learned so far. (Review the previous stories. Encourage your students to share.)

When Jesus was nailed to the cross, had He done anything wrong? (No.) Why did He die, then? (Because you and I have disobeyed God.) We inherited our sinful hearts from Adam. And ever since then every single one of us has sinned. Our sin separates us from God. But God loves us so much that He sent His One and Only Son to die in our place. On the cross, God laid on Jesus all of my sin and all of your sin. Jesus took our punishment for us. Did Jesus suffer forever with our sin? Well, what have we seen so far? Jesus died on the cross. After that, two men who had secretly followed Jesus prepared his body and put it in a cave. Jesus lay there, dead, Friday and into Saturday. But Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, passed and Jesus was still dead.

READ: Mark 16:1-4 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Mary Magdalene and her friends had woken up early on that Sunday morning so long ago. They got all of their spices together so that they could go to Jesus' tomb and apply them to His dead body. This must have been a very sad morning for them. They wanted to honor Jesus by doing this, but the Teacher they had followed and believed in was no longer with them. He was dead in that cold cave. With heavy hearts, they left their homes and headed towards the tomb, wondering how they would move the stone so that they could care for Jesus' body.

But, why was the earth moving under their feet? What was happening? A powerful earthquake shook the ground and at that moment, over at the tomb where they were headed, an angel came down from heaven. He rolled back the stone and sat on it. What a sight! The angel's body was shining like lightning and his clothes were bright white. The soldiers who had been guarding Jesus' tomb were terrified! They shook from fear and passed out.

Mary Magdalene and the other women arrived at the tomb. But, the stone had been rolled away! What was going on? The angel spoke to them. "Don't be afraid," he told them. "Why are you looking for the One who is alive where dead men should be? Jesus is not here! He's alive! Don't you remember how Jesus told you He would be nailed to a cross, and on the third day, he would rise from the dead?" And as the angel

reminded them, they remembered what Jesus had said. Then the angel encouraged them saying, "Quickly! Run to the disciples and tell them what has happened! Jesus will meet you in Galilee." So the women hurried away. They were confused and a little afraid, but they were also excited.

When they came back from the tomb, Mary and the others told the disciples everything they had seen and heard. But the disciples didn't believe them. What the women were saying didn't make any sense. Even so, Peter and John went running. John ran past Peter and got to the tomb first, but when Peter arrived, he flew right past John and into the tomb. They saw the linen that had been wrapped around Jesus' body, but no Jesus! They still didn't understand that Jesus was alive, so they went back home.

Mary had also come back to the tomb. She stood there crying, not knowing what to do, and then it happened: Jesus spoke her name, "Mary." Oh, the feelings that flooded over her. He wasn't dead any longer. He really was alive! This Man whom she had followed, knowing He was from God, had come back - just like He said He would. And Mary's response was this: she ran telling the news, "I have seen the Lord!"

Review:

Let's review what you have learned. Who would like to retell the story? (Ask your group if anything was left out or told inaccurately.) Would anyone else like to retell the story?

What is the penalty for sin? What do we deserve because we sin? (Death.) Who suffered for us? (Jesus.) So, back to our question before the lesson, "Did Jesus suffer forever with our sin?" NO! Jesus carried our sin while He was on the cross and then He was buried. But on the third day, He rose from the dead, never to die again! God was pleased to bring Jesus back to life. Jesus had paid the price for my sin. He paid the price for your sin. And God was satisfied with Jesus.

Before the story we talked about how sin came into the world because of one man. Who was that man? (Adam, the first man.) God's word tells us that just as sin came from one man, resurrection from the dead does, too. What does that mean, though? Well, after Jesus was resurrected, or came back to life, His body was a little different. He could go through closed doors, but He still had the scars from being nailed to the cross. Jesus came back to life to show us that we can, too. One day, we can live with Him forever in a new body. Maybe you're asking, "Why would I need a new body?" Well, part of the punishment for Adam's sin, was that man began to grow old. We grow older and older every year. And the Bible tells us that we will all die. But our old body won't be fit for heaven any more than Jesus' earthly body. God will make us new, if we trust Him to.

Not everyone just automatically gets a new body. Do you remember John 3:16? What does it say? (Allow your students to tell you.) Will everyone have eternal life (and the heavenly bodies that go with it)? (No, they won't.) Who will? (Whoever believes in God's Son, Jesus.) Have you believed in Jesus? Have you chosen to follow and obey Him? If you have, then you are assured a place in heaven and a new body, one day. If not, there is still time. What are you waiting for?

Planning for Next Week
Lesson 42 • God's Big Plan Explained
Luke 24:13-43

PRESCHOOL LESSON

SING: "Get All Excited"

SHARE: Last week we talked about someone dying on a cross. Who was it? (It was Jesus.) Jesus wasn't being punished for anything He had done. Jesus died for you and Jesus died for me. Jesus' body was lowered from the cross. Then it was wrapped in cloth and placed in a cave. A big rock was rolled in front of the cave. All of that happened on Friday. Saturday was a quiet day, a sad day.

Jesus' followers, Mary Magdalene and her friends woke up early on Sunday morning. They got all of their spices together so that they could go to Jesus' tomb. They wanted to rub the spices on Jesus' dead body. This is what people did back then. This must have been a very sad morning for them. They wanted to honor Jesus by doing this, but the Teacher they had followed and believed in was dead in that cold cave. They left their homes and walked towards the tomb, wondering how they would move the heavy rock from the cave opening.

As they walked, the earth began to move under their feet? What was happening? A powerful earthquake shook the ground. At that moment, over at the cave where they were headed, an angel came down from heaven. He rolled back the stone and sat on it. What a sight! The angel's body was shining like lightning and his clothes were bright white. The soldiers who had been guarding Jesus' tomb were terrified! They shook from fear and passed out.

Mary Magdalene and the other women arrived at the tomb. But, the stone had been rolled away! What was going on? The angel spoke to them. "Don't be afraid," he told them. "Why are you looking for Jesus here? Jesus is not here! He's alive! Quickly! Run to the disciples and tell them what has happened!" So the women hurried away. They were confused and a little afraid, but they were also excited.

When they came back from the tomb, Mary and the others told the disciples everything they had seen and heard. But the disciples didn't believe them. What the women were saying didn't make any sense. Even so, Peter and John went running. John ran past Peter and got to the tomb first, but when Peter arrived, he flew right past John and into the tomb. They saw the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' body, but no Jesus! They still didn't understand that Jesus was alive. They went back home.

Mary had also come back to the tomb. She stood there crying, not knowing what to do. Then, Jesus called her name, "Mary." Oh, the feelings that flooded over her. It was Jesus! She knew His voice. He wasn't dead any more. He really was alive! Jesus had come back - just like He said He would. And Mary did what we should all do, she ran telling the news, "He's alive, He's alive!"

PRAY: Thank you, God, for bringing Jesus back to life.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Memory Verse Activity - Make paper smiley-face fans from cardstock and large craft sticks. Write the verse on the back.
- Set up your Bible study area to resemble the garden and empty tomb. If you meet inside, you might even want to decorate around your door and have it resemble the tomb. Invite your students to come and see!
- Make an empty tomb from paper plates. Cut paper plates in half. Cut a tomb-like opening in each half. Back with dark construction paper.
- Make “cascarones.” They are a Mexican Easter tradition symbolizing the empty tomb. Simply remove raw egg from its shell and clean the shells. Paint or dye the eggs in bright colors. Place confetti into the dry eggshell and cover the opening with tissue paper. “Cascarones” are used for playing tag and breaking over the head of friends, covering them with confetti.
- Play “Hide and Seek” with things. Before class, hide several items in very odd places. For example: hide a football in the refrigerator or a shoe in the sink. Announce to your students what items they will be searching for. Encourage students as they search, giving clues like “hot” or “cold” if necessary. When all items have been found, talk about how your students began looking in ordinary places. Then talk about how Mary and her friends began looking for Jesus at the tomb. But what were they told by the angels? “Why are you looking for the One who is alive where dead men should be? Jesus is not here! He’s alive!”
- Reenact the story. Chairs draped with a sheet can represent the tomb. Enlist all of your students with parts for Jesus, Mary and her friends, Peter, John, and the other disciples, the angels, the soldiers, etc.
- Run relays. Talk about Peter and John running to the tomb.