

Easter Story Part One: Jesus warns of the future



Bible verses:

Matthew 16:21-28

Jesus says that he must die



Aim:

To find peace about the future



In today's story we join Jesus and his disciples.

As Jesus taught the people and performed miracles, they started to question who he really was. Peter knew that Jesus was the Son of God, but when Jesus told him what was going to happen, Peter didn't want to hear it. He believed that God would stop Jesus from facing the suffering of the cross. Jesus trusted God's plan for his life and was at peace about the future.

Each child will need:

- Memory verse wristband
- Resources for a Holy Week activity – see Action it
- Pens/pencils and paper
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- A ball for the children to throw and catch
- To select a Holy Week activity – see Action it



Start it

Say:

Can you play a ball game while staying as quiet as possible?

Ask the children to stand in a circle. One child throws a ball to someone else in the circle; if they drop it or make a noise, then they are out. If the child who throws the ball makes it impossible to catch or makes a noise, then they are out. Keep going until you have a winner.

Sing it

Say:

Each week our *Explore It* session focuses on a different fruit of the Spirit. Today's fruit is peace. Our song reminds us that Jesus is the source of all our peace.

Song

'Peace like a river' kids worship motions with lyrics by CJ and Friends (1:40)

Tell it

Say:

In our *Explore It* sessions this month we have followed King Saul's story and watched as he tried, and failed, to obey God's word. When God asked him to do something, Saul immediately focused on what others thought of him and whether there was an easier way.

Say:

You may know that we call Jesus King, but that is a very different type of kingship from Saul. Today we jump from the Old Testament to the New Testament, where it seems that God's followers continued to experience a similar problem as King Saul. They too struggled to obey and believe what God was saying, in particular to truly follow Jesus as their King. Before we discover more about today's story, let's share our memory verse, which reminds us that we should always follow God's guidance for our life.

Memory verse

**'The Lord's orders are right.
They make people happy.
The Lord's commands are pure.
They light up the way.'**

(Psalm 19:8 *ICB*)

Ask:

Have you ever thought about who Jesus is? If so, how would you describe him?

Say:

Some people describe Jesus as just a good moral teacher. Muslims believe he was a messenger from God, or call him a prophet like Muhammad. Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that he died and rose again.



Ask:

What do you believe about Jesus?

Say:

In our Bible story today Jesus told the disciples who he was and what would happen to him. Jesus had been creating a stir, with religious leaders trying to trap him and get him into trouble with the authorities. It was against Jewish law (blasphemy) for someone to say that they were God.

Read:

‘Jesus went to the area of Caesarea Philippi. He said to his followers, “I am the Son of Man. Who do the people say I am?”

‘They answered, “Some people say you are John the Baptist. Others say you are Elijah. And others say that you are Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

‘Then Jesus asked them, “And who do you say I am?”

‘Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”’

(Matthew 16:13-16 *ICB*)

Ask:

How did Peter describe Jesus?

Say:

At that moment, Peter knew exactly who Jesus was and yet, just a few verses later, he seemed to totally forget. As Jesus explained what would happen to him, Peter did not like what he was hearing. Let’s read what happened next.

Read:

‘From that time on Jesus began telling his followers that he must go to Jerusalem. He explained that the Jewish elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of the law would make him suffer many things. And he told them that he must be killed. Then, on the third day, he would be raised from death.

‘Peter took Jesus aside and began to criticise him. Peter said, “God save you from those things, Lord! Those things will never happen to you!”

‘Then Jesus said to Peter, “Go away from me, Satan! You are not helping me! You don’t care about the things of God. You care only about things that men think are important.”’

(Matthew 16:21-23 *ICB*)

Ask:

Why was Jesus so annoyed with Peter?



Say:

Jesus had explained clearly what needed to happen for God's plan to be fulfilled. Peter didn't like the sound of that plan and criticised Jesus. Just like Saul in last week's story, Peter was focused on what others thought and decided he knew better than God. Jesus wanted to follow God's plan for his life, no matter how hard that would be, and he was at peace about it.

Say:

Let's watch what happened in the Easter story. Notice how Jesus trusted God throughout all the challenges he faced.

Video

The Easter Story by J John

Watch 0:00 to 7:06 (The sacrifices and the Temple were never going to be needed again.)

Say:

Jesus knew he would have to face a horrible death on the cross, just as he had told Peter and the disciples. Over the coming days we will remember the events of Holy Week. When we next meet for our Explore It session we will focus on the most important and amazing part of the story of Jesus.

Action it

The aim of this activity is for the children to identify the main events remembered throughout Holy Week. A number of resources and craft ideas are provided below. Please choose an activity based on your budget and the resources you have available.

Discuss each event of Holy Week as the children complete the activity. Most of the events appeared in the Easter Story clip from the Tell it section.

- **Colour-in Holy Week story wheel kits** by Baker Ross
- **Colour-in Holy Week calendars** by Baker Ross
- **Holy Week wheel** by StJohnwc.org (Free)

Pray it

Say:

Jesus was able to feel peaceful inside even when he faced the most challenging circumstances.

Ask:

What helps you to feel peaceful inside?



Say:

We may do and say lots of things to feel peaceful, but trusting in God is the main way we can be at peace. Knowing that he is in control of everything, good and bad, means that we can trust him to be with us in every situation. We don't need to worry about what will happen in the future as God's peace is always with us.

Say:

There are lots of places in the world that need the peace of Jesus right now. As you listen to the music, take time to pray for all the places in the world where there is war and conflict. Ask Jesus to bring his peace to our world.

Listen

'Peace in Christ' acapella cover by Lucca Sounds (3:46)

When the music finishes ask the children if they would like to pray out loud. If not, bring the session to a close praying for peace in our world.

Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



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Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



Bible verses:
Matthew 16:21-28
Jesus says that he must die



Aim:
To find peace about the future



Watch

To discover more about the events of Holy Week, watch this clip. It talks about why Jesus died and how we are able to connect with God again, even though we choose our own way sometimes – called ‘sin’.

Using today’s word ‘peace’, his death might even bring you peace if you are ever worried about your own future.

The story of Jesus’ death for kids (The Easter Story for kids, Pt 3) by Minno – Bible Stories for Kids

Share what you have discovered with your friends and family.



Play

Grab a ball and play the silent game from our *Explore It* session. Remember, if you drop the ball, throw a ball that’s impossible to catch or make a noise, then you are out!



Memory verse

‘The Lord’s orders are right.
They make people happy.
The Lord’s commands are pure.
They light up the way.’

(Psalm 19:8 ICB)



Song for the week

‘Peace like a river’ kids worship motions with lyrics by CJ and Friends

**LIVING
OUT FAITH**

Kids Alive! Online – salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive

Kids Alive! The UK’s only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

Jesus has bad news



Bible verses:
Matthew 16:21-28



Aim:
To see that the Easter story was bad news followed by good news



Memory verse

'The Lord's orders are right.
They make people happy.
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(Psalm 19:8 *ICB*)



Sing It

'Shine! (from the inside out)' by Nick Jackson uploaded by Tangy Crayfish (2:20)

'Holy Spirit' for children by Aji and her friends. Sing only the chorus (0:44-1:15)



Start it

Today Jesus tells his friends that he is going to die on a cross, and one friend, Peter, doesn't like it.

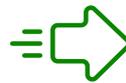


Tell it

Share a child-friendly version of Matthew 16:21-28.

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

- When was the last time you heard some good news?
- When is your favourite day of the week?
- Which day do you think Jesus died on?
- How do you feel when you hear something you don't like?
- Does anybody know how Jesus died?



Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- Create actions for 'bad news' and 'good news' and call them out as children move around
- Create a picture of some good news
- Read a bad news story that ends with good news - like *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle
- Show a friendly action while pretending that someone has heard some bad news.

