



Bible Point ▶

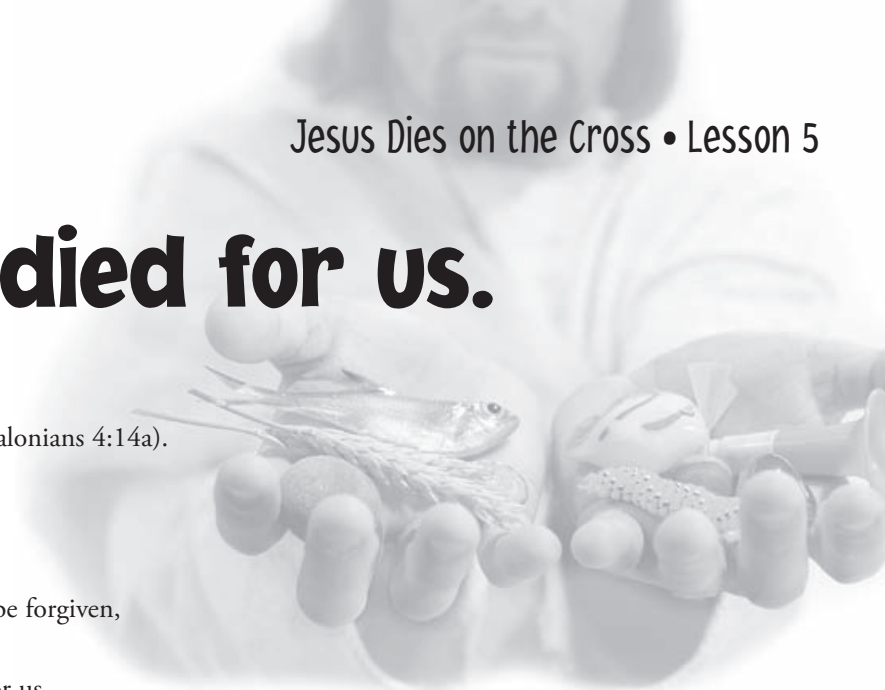
Jesus died for us.

Bible Verse

“Jesus died and was raised to life again” (1 Thessalonians 4:14a).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- forgive Whiskers for stealing,
 - hear how Jesus died so we can be forgiven,
 - make a forgiveness cross, and
 - thank Jesus for giving his life for us.



Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Jesus dies on the cross.

Luke
22:63–23:47



Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, had taken money from the Temple treasury for a city water project and had brought images from the Roman Empire into the city of Jerusalem. But he knew not to go too far in his irritation of the Jews. If too many complaints about him reached Rome, he might lose his position. Thus, even though it

appears that Pilate felt Jesus was innocent, he was unwilling to stand up against the Jews. Against his better judgment, he granted their wish and sent Jesus to be crucified.

When Jesus died, the skies became dark from noon until three o'clock in the afternoon when the sun would normally have been at the height of its brilliance. There is no way to explain this darkness as a natural phenomenon. God must have darkened the sun. When this passage was written, hundreds of thousands who could have attested to the accuracy of the statement would still have been alive.

The centurion mentioned in Luke 23:47 was a Roman soldier, loyal to the emperor. Something about what happened as Jesus died made a difference in that man's life. Everyone who witnessed Jesus' death seemed to sense that something very wrong had happened (Luke 23:48). But thanks to God, the story doesn't end in death!

Prayer

- Read Romans 3:22-24.
- How does what happened on the cross make a difference in your life?
- Pray: Lord, thank you for the sacrifice you made for me. Help me to demonstrate your grace to...













Be sure to repeat the Bible Point as it's written each time it appears. You may feel you're being redundant, but you're actually helping children remember an important Bible truth. Repetition is a good thing!

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: You Be the Judge —Play a game about a judge, and hear that Jesus was put on trial.		
	Option 2: Kingly Crowns —Make crowns from chenille wire, and hear that Jesus wore a crown of thorns.	Chenille wires	
	Option 3: Pretzel Cross —Make a cross out of pretzel sticks, and hear that Jesus died on the cross for us.	Pretzel sticks, baby wipes	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Discover that Jesus took our punishment.	Adult helper, cheese, “The Great Cheese Caper” script (pp. 65-66), table knife	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	 
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Hear from Luke 22–23 how Jesus died on the cross.	Bible, black construction paper	 
	Do the Bible Story —Make a shining cross to celebrate Jesus’ forgiveness.	“Forgiveness Cross” handout (p. 74), poster board, tissue paper, scissors, glue, flashlight, CD player, pen	
Closing 	Once for All —Help Whiskers understand the forgiveness Jesus offers.	Cheese shapes, plate, baby wipes	
	Forgiveness Crowns —Put crosses on their crowns to remind them that they’re forgiven; then sing a Bible memory song.	Bible, chenille-wire crowns from Option 2, construction paper crosses, CD player	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Easter Lily Name Tags” (p. 10), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape

- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about how they put last week’s lesson into practice. Use questions such as “What did you tell your family about the garden where Jesus prayed?” and “Did your family find a special place to pray?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► Jesus died for us.**
- Hand out the Easter lily name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopyable handout.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



◀ BIBLE POINT



teacher tips
Be sensitive to children’s feelings as you present the story of Jesus’ death. Emphasize that Jesus gave his life so we can be forgiven and that Jesus came back to life and is alive today.

Check the chenille wire before giving it to the children for the “Kingly Crowns” activity. If the ends of the wires are sharp, tape over them with masking tape so children won’t poke their fingers.

If children finish early, have them help you make crowns for the rest of the class. You’ll use the crowns in the closing activity. If you choose not to do this activity, have children make the crowns as part of the closing activity.

Let’s Get Started

Set out one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate between the activities to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “What does a judge do?” or “Who wears a crown?”

■ **Option 1: You Be the Judge**

SUPPLIES: none

Play this game like Mother, May I? Choose one child to be the Judge. Have the Judge sit in a chair on one side of the room, while the rest of the children line up on the other side. Have other children ask the Judge’s permission to advance toward him or her. Each question they ask must begin with the phrase “Judge, may I...” For example, a child might ask, “Judge, may I take three giant steps?” The Judge may then answer yes or no.

Choose a new Judge every few minutes, whether or not anyone reaches the Judge. As children play the game, explain that today’s Bible story is about a time Jesus went before a judge.

■ **Option 2: Kingly Crowns**

SUPPLIES: chenille wires

Give each child two 12-inch chenille wires. Show the children how to wrap the ends of the wires together to make one long wire. Then help them bend their wires into pointed crowns, as shown in the margin. As children finish bending their wires, help them wrap the crowns around their heads and then twist the ends of the wires together. Children may wear their crowns, or set them aside for use later in the lesson.





As children work on the crowns, tell them how nice their crowns are. Explain that people didn't give Jesus a nice crown like the ones they're making. When **▶ Jesus died for us**, he wore a crown of prickly thorns.



■ Option 3: Pretzel Cross

SUPPLIES: *pretzel sticks, baby wipes*

Help children clean their hands at a nearby sink or with baby wipes. Set out a bowl of pretzel sticks, and help children lay them out on a table in cross shapes. Have them make small crosses with two pretzels, and big crosses with lots of pretzels. Then let children eat the pretzel sticks. Remind them that **▶ Jesus died for us** on the cross, and then he came back to life.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: *CD player*



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" (track 2) with the *CD* to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

■ Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: *adult helper, cheese, "The Great Cheese Caper" script (pp. 65-66), table knife*

Tell the children you'll turn the lights off and on to get their attention. Explain that when you flash the lights, the children are to stop what they're doing and be quiet. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Made pretzel crosses; played a game about a judge; made crowns.)

Say: **If you made a crown, stand up and put your hands on your head as if you're wearing a crown, and then sit down.** Pause. **If you played a game about a judge, stand up and say, "Order in the court!" and then sit down.** Pause. **If**

you made a pretzel cross, stand up and hold your arms out to make a cross shape, and then sit down. Pause.

You were all learning important things about our Bible story. Today we're going to hear that ► Jesus died for us on the cross. But before we hear our story, I thought you might like a little snack. Is anybody hungry?

Hold up the cheese you've brought. Say: **I brought some cheese for a snack. My helper, [name of adult volunteer], will stay with you while I go get a knife to cut the cheese.**

Leave the cheese on the floor in front of the children, and then leave the room. While you're gone, have your helper begin the following puppet script with Whiskers and the children.



The Great Cheese Caper

Whiskers: *(Whispering as he creeps out)* Hi, friends, I see my favorite food! *(Starts heading toward cheese.)*

Helper: Whiskers, that cheese is for our snack. You can't eat it.

Whiskers: But it looks so good and cheesy. Mice love cheese, you know. I love American cheese and Swiss cheese and cheddar cheese. I like cheese sandwiches and cheese pizza. I even like cheese cookies. Do you like cheese cookies?

(Let children respond. As they're responding, have Whiskers casually pick up the cheese.)

Helper: Whiskers, I told you that cheese is for our snack.

Whiskers: *(As if he didn't hear)* This looks like very good cheese. I think I'll just take it home and make myself some cheese cookies. Mmm. *(Walks away with cheese.)*

Helper: Hey, Whiskers, come back! That's our cheese! You're stealing our cheese!

(Encourage children to join you as you try to get Whiskers to return the cheese. Have Whiskers ignore you and put the cheese out of sight. Just as Whiskers puts the cheese away, the teacher returns with a table knife.)

Teacher: What's going on in here? I heard a lot of noise.

Whiskers: What noise? I didn't hear anything.

Teacher: [Name of helper], I brought a knife. Now where's the cheese?

Helper: Whiskers took our cheese.

Teacher: Children, is that true? Did Whiskers take our cheese? *(Let children respond; then continue.)* Whiskers, did you take our cheese?

Whiskers: *(Nodding slightly)* I needed it to make cheese cookies.

Teacher: Whiskers, that's stealing. Children, what do you think would be a fair punishment for stealing our cheese?

(Let children volunteer possible punishments for Whiskers. You may need to offer the first suggestion. You might suggest something like "No cheese cookies for a year." After children have suggested several punishments, have Whiskers interrupt.)

Whiskers: Wait a minute! I didn't want a punishment. I just wanted some cheese cookies.

Teacher: Well, you should have thought about that before you stole our cheese. Stealing is wrong, Whiskers, and you deserve to be punished. But if you say you're sorry and give back the cheese, maybe we can forgive you. Do you think we can forgive Whiskers, children?

(Let children respond. You may need to encourage them by saying, "I think we can forgive Whiskers.")

Whiskers: *(Hanging head sadly)* I'm sorry I took your cheese. I'll go bring it back. *(Disappears and returns with cheese.)* Here's your cheese. Will you forgive me?

Teacher: Of course we will, Whiskers. Thanks for returning our cheese. We'll save it for later. Right now it's time for our Bible story. Maybe you'd like to stay and hear it. It's all about forgiveness. We're going to hear how ► Jesus died for us. He took the punishment for the wrong things we do so we can be forgiven.

Whiskers: I think I'd like to hear about that. I'll go find a nice corner where I can listen quietly. 'Bye. I'll see you later.

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■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



tracks 3, 4

Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" (track 3) with the CD to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



SING

I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.

Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *hosanna stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *hosanna stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for** [name of child who brought the Bible], **and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" (track 4) with the *CD* to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



**I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, black construction paper



Open the Bible to **Luke 22**, and show it to the children. Say: **Our story comes from the Bible, God's special book. Our Learning Mat shows us pictures of our Bible story.** Fold the *Learning Mat: Jesus' Death and Resurrection* so that the triumphal-entry, Last Supper, and garden scenes are showing.

Ask: • **Who can help me remember what happened in our Bible story last week?** (Jesus prayed in a garden; soldiers arrested Jesus.)

Then place the *Bible figure* of Jesus praying by the garden scene. Say: **Jesus was praying in the garden of Gethsemane. He knew that some soldiers were going to come and arrest him. He was being arrested because the leaders of the Temple didn't like it that everyone followed Jesus and listened to him. They wanted people to listen to them instead.** Hand the *Bible figure* of the soldiers to a child, and invite the child to put it on the mat as you say: **Jesus didn't try to escape. He knew this was part of God's plan.** Then remove the figures from the mat, and unfold it so that all but the Resurrection scene is showing.

Hold up the *Bible figure* of Pilate, and say: **After the soldiers arrested Jesus, they took him to a judge named Pilate. It was Pilate's job to decide if Jesus had done anything wrong and if Jesus should be punished. Had Jesus done anything wrong?** Let children respond.

The Temple leaders and other people who didn't like Jesus wanted Pilate to say that Jesus should be punished, even though Jesus had never done anything wrong.

Set the figure of Pilate and the standing figure of Jesus on the platform in the picture of the courtyard. Set the figure of the two disciples at the back of the crowd. Say: **Pilate asked Jesus a lot of questions. He didn't think Jesus had done anything wrong, so he sent Jesus to the king. Let's walk over to the other side of the room to pretend we're going to see the king.**

Walk with the children across the room. Then continue: **The king and his soldiers were mean to Jesus. They made fun of him. How do you feel when someone makes fun of you?** (Bad; sad; it makes me cry.)

The king sent Jesus back to Pilate. Let's go back to our *Learning Mat*.

Walk with the children back to the *Learning Mat*. Sit down with them, and then continue: **Pilate asked Jesus some more questions. He still didn't think Jesus had done anything wrong, so he told the people that he wanted to let Jesus go. But the people didn't want to let Jesus go. They shouted at Pilate that Jesus should die.**

Turn the figure of Pilate so it's facing away from Jesus. Say: **Pilate was afraid of the crowd. So he agreed to let Jesus die even though Jesus hadn't done anything wrong. The people in the crowd didn't know that Jesus was dying to take the punishment for all the wrong things they'd done. And they didn't know that Jesus would come back to life again. They didn't know about our Bible verse that says, ►"Jesus died and was raised to life again."**

BIBLE VERSE ►

Turn the figure of the disciples so it's facing away from Jesus, and then continue: **All of Jesus' friends got scared and ran away. Then soldiers hit Jesus and put a crown of sharp thorns on his head. Jesus knows what it's like to feel lonely and hurt.**

Set the figure of Jesus in front of the picture of Simon on the *Learning Mat*. Say: **They made a man named Simon carry Jesus' cross up a hill. Can you find Simon on our *Learning Mat*? As children are finding Simon, remove all the figures from the *Learning Mat*. Say: **Let's pretend we're Simon and our *Learning Mat* is the cross. We'll carry it up a pretend hill to the other side of our room.****

Pick up the *Learning Mat*, and make sure each child is holding on to it. Help children carry the mat across the room and set it down. Fold the mat so only the crucifixion scene is showing. Say: **When they got to the top of the hill, they put Jesus on the cross. Two other men were on crosses next to Jesus. Can you find them on our *Learning Mat*?** Let children find the two men on crosses.

Then say: **These two men had done some very bad things and they were going to be punished. But Jesus never did anything wrong. Jesus loves us so much he was willing to die on the cross for us so we could be forgiven.**

Jesus looked around at the soldiers and the people who were watching. He knew they didn't understand that he was God's Son. So Jesus prayed to God, "Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they are doing."

When Jesus died, the sky got very dark. Place the black construction paper on top of the picture of the three crosses. Set the *Bible figure* of the soldiers on top of the black paper. **One of the soldiers said, "Jesus really is God's Son!"**



Say: ► **Jesus died for us on the cross. But in three days, he came back to life. Now we can be forgiven for the wrong things we do because Jesus took our punishment for us. Let's quietly thank Jesus for loving us so much.**

Have children bow their heads and encourage them to silently thank Jesus for his love. Then pray: **Dear Jesus, we love you so much. Thank you that you died for us on the cross. Because you did this, we know how much you love us. In your name, amen.**



BIBLE POINT

■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: “Forgiveness Cross” (p. 74), poster board, pen, white and red tissue paper, scissors, glue, flashlight, CD player



track 11

Before class, make one photocopy of the “Forgiveness Cross.” If you have more than 10 students in your class, you may want to enlarge the cross on the handout. Cut out the center cross. Trace around the outside and inside of the cross on poster board. Then trace around the outside of the cross on white tissue paper. Cut out both crosses, and then glue the tissue paper cross to the poster board cross. Cut red tissue paper into heart shapes that will fit on the tissue paper cross. You’ll need one heart for each child.

Give each child a tissue paper heart. Keep one for yourself, and hold it up. Say: **Jesus loves us so much, he was willing to die on the cross so we can be forgiven. Let's make a cross to remind us how much Jesus loves us.**

Hold up the cross you’ve prepared. Say: **This is our forgiveness cross. I'm going to put some glue on it, and then you can put your hearts on it. The hearts will help us remember Jesus' love.**

Apply a thin layer of glue to the tissue paper center of the cross you’ve prepared. Then invite children to come up, one at a time. As each child attaches his or her paper heart, say: **Jesus loves** [name of child].

After all the children have attached their paper hearts, turn on your flashlight and shine it through the tissue paper section of the cross. Say: **See how pretty our cross is? The cross reminds us that ► Jesus died for us so we can be forgiven. The hearts remind us how much Jesus loves us.**

Let children look at the lit-up cross for a moment; then turn off your flashlight. Say: **I'm going to turn off my flashlight now, but you can keep looking at our cross. We'll put it up in our room to remind us how much Jesus loves us. We've also been learning a song that can help us remember about Jesus' love. Let's sing it together now.**

Lead children in singing “I’ll Remember” with the CD (track 11) to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me.” After you sing the song, put the cross on a wall or bulletin board.



SING

**Jesus said, “Remember me.”
Then he died for you and me.
I know Jesus is God's Son.
I'll remember what he's done.**



BIBLE POINT



At this stage in their emotional development, 3- and 4-year-olds are influenced by the reactions of other children and are sensitive to the moods and reactions of adults.



Be sure children have cleaned their hands at a nearby sink or with baby wipes before distributing snacks.

**Yes, I'll remember;
Yes, I'll remember;
Yes, I'll remember
That Jesus died for me.**

**Jesus is alive today.
He rose again on the third day.
He watches me from heav'n above.
I'll remember his great love.**

**Yes, I'll remember;
Yes, I'll remember;
Yes, I'll remember
That Jesus is alive.**



Closing

■ Once for All

SUPPLIES: *cheese shapes, plate, baby wipes*

Before class, use cookie cutters to cut out cheese shapes and put the shapes on a plate. Bring out Whiskers, and go through the following script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



Teacher: Did you hear our Bible story, Whiskers?

Whiskers: I sure did. That was a good story. I'm glad to know that ► *Jesus died for us* so we can be forgiven. I'm sorry I took that cheese. I'm going to try to be really good from now on.

Teacher: You're forgiven, Whiskers.

Whiskers: I won't be stealing any more cheese. I don't want Jesus to have to die again.

Teacher: What do you mean, Whiskers?

Whiskers: Well, Jesus died for me so I can be forgiven for stealing the cheese. But what if I do something else wrong? What if I'm mean to my cousin Joey or tell a lie to my brother? I don't want Jesus to have to die every time I do something wrong. So I'm going to try to be good from now on.

Teacher: *(To children)* I think Whiskers is confused. Do you think Jesus has to die again? *(Let children respond.)* Whiskers, Jesus doesn't have to die again.

Whiskers: He doesn't? But what about all the wrong things people do?



Teacher: When Jesus died on the cross, he took the punishment for all the wrong things anyone will ever do. It's a good idea to try to be good, but we know that if we tell God we're sorry when we do wrong things, God will forgive us.

Whiskers: That's a relief. I do try to be good, but sometimes I lose my temper, or say things that aren't true, or (*hangs head*) take things that don't belong to me. I really am sorry about the cheese, so I brought some cheese cookies as my way of saying thank you for forgiving me. Would you like some?

(Give each child a cheese shape to eat. Then continue.)

Teacher: Thanks, Whiskers. We're glad you're our friend. And we're glad you came to class today to learn that ► Jesus died for us.

Whiskers: Me, too. I'm really glad I came. I'd better go home now. We're going over to my cousin Joey's house for dinner. Have a good day everyone!

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■ Forgiveness Crowns

SUPPLIES: Bible, crowns from Option 2, construction paper crosses, CD player



Before class, cut a small cross for each child.

Say: ► Jesus died for us. Let's all jump for joy because we're forgiven!

Lead children in jumping up and down several times; then have them jump over to a table or other work area and sit down. Let children who made crowns earlier find their own crowns. Give other children the extra crowns you made. Give all the children a small cross.

Say: **Remember our lesson a few weeks ago about Jesus being a king? We learned that Jesus isn't a king who lives in a palace and rules a country. Jesus is our king who lives in heaven. Let's put crosses on our crowns to remind us that Jesus is our king who died for us.**

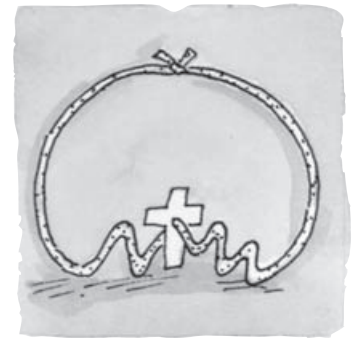
Show children how to untwist the wires in their crowns and poke one end through their crosses as indicated in the margin illustration. Help them push their crosses around their crowns until the crosses are in the front. When children have finished, have them wear their crowns as you sing together. If you like, children can move about the room as they sing.

Open your Bible to **1 Thessalonians 4:14a**, and say: **Our Bible verse tells us, ► "Jesus died and was raised to life again." Let's sing a song to help us remember this verse.**

Lead children in singing "Jesus Died and Was Raised" (1 Thessalonians 4:14) to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It," track 7 on the CD.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**



◀ **BIBLE VERSE**



**Jesus died and was raised to life again.
Jesus died and was raised to life again.
Jesus died and was raised.
That's why we will give him praise.
Jesus died and was raised to life again.**
(Repeat.)

Then gather children together to pray.

Pray: **Dear Jesus, thank you that you love us so much that you died for us.
We love you. In your name, amen.**



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Cross Building**

Lay four blocks on the floor to form a cross. Let children take turns adding blocks to the cross until you've exhausted your supply. When children finish building their cross, have them march around the large cross and sing "I'll Remember," "Jesus Died and Was Raised" (1 Thessalonians 4:14), or other favorite songs about Jesus.

■ **Make to Take: Cross Cookies**

Make or buy sugar cookies and frosting. Help children clean their hands at a nearby sink or with baby wipes. Let each child frost one or two cookies. Then show children how to make crosses on their cookies with colored sprinkles or small candies. As children decorate their cookies, remind them that ► Jesus died for us. Explain that we don't have to be sad when we see the cross because it reminds us that we're forgiven. Encourage children to share their cookies with friends or family members.



■ **Treat to Eat: Crown of Thorns**

Help children clean their hands at a nearby sink or with baby wipes. Give each child a napkin, a round cracker (or a sliced mini-bagel) with cream cheese, a large shredded wheat biscuit, and six chocolate chips. Show them how to pull the shredded wheat apart and arrange it on their crackers. Point out that the shredded wheat feels sort of prickly. Then have children set chocolate chip "thorns" around their shredded wheat wreaths.

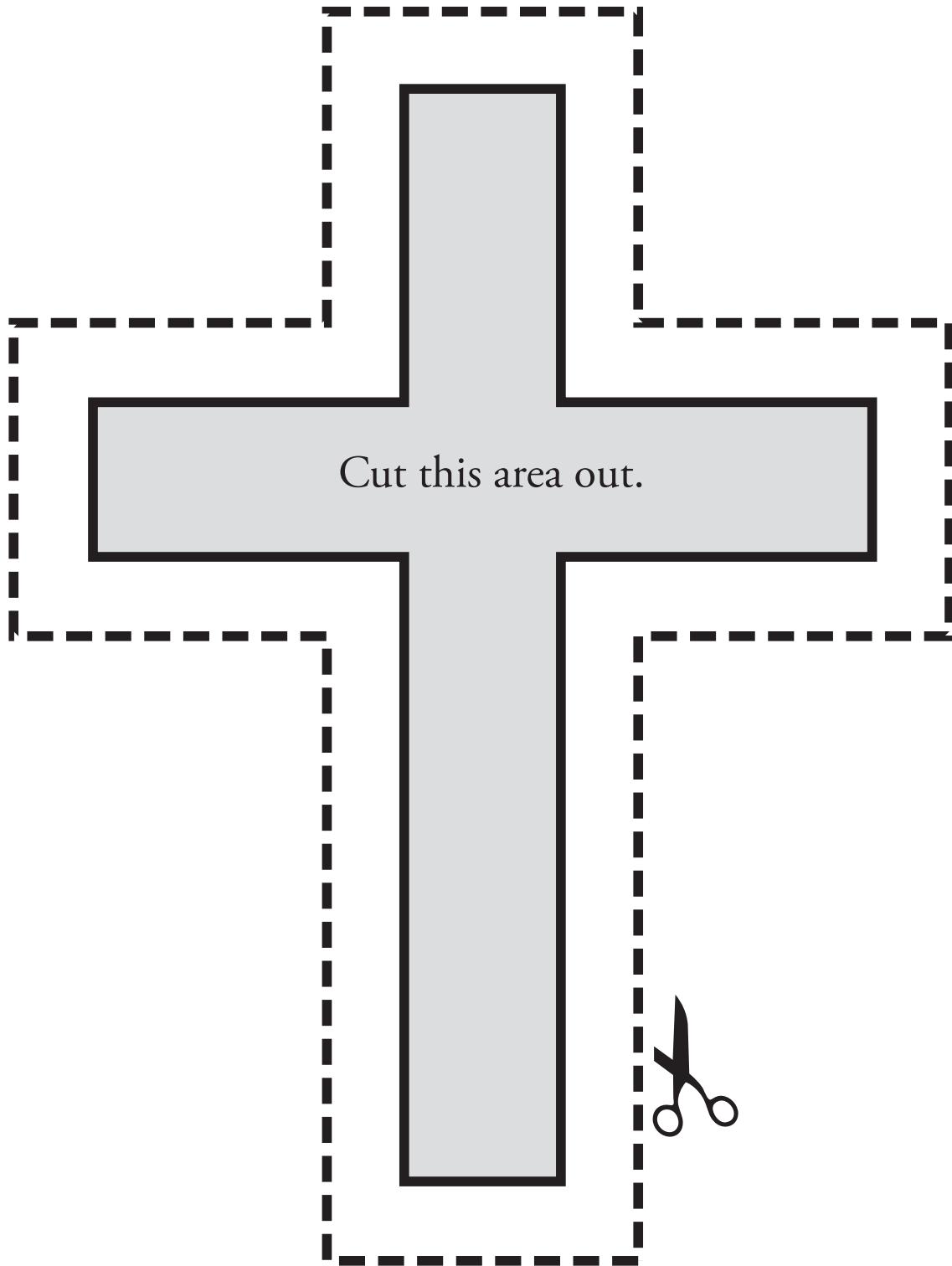
Remind children that soldiers put a crown of thorns on Jesus. Thank God for sending Jesus to take our punishment. Then let children eat the snack.

■ **Story Picture: Jesus Died for Us**

Give each child a copy of the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson). Set out glue and twigs, and help children glue the twigs to the crosses in the picture. Then let children color the rest of the picture. As they work, review the details of today's Bible story. Remind them that ► Jesus died for us.

Forgiveness Cross

Photocopy and cut out the cross pattern as shown.



Today I learned...
Jesus died for us.

Help me learn this:

"Jesus died and was raised to life again"
(1 Thessalonians 4:14a).

Ask me:

- Why did Jesus have to die?
- What does the cross remind you of?
- How can our family thank God for forgiveness this week?

Lesson 5
Today your child learned that **JESUS DIED FOR US**. Children heard how Jesus died on the cross. They attached hearts to a cross to remind them that Jesus died so they can be forgiven.

Family Fun

- Collect Easter symbols such as crosses, bread, crowns, or palm branches. Talk about what part of the Easter story each symbol represents; then have a "holy hunt." Hide the symbols around the house, and then find and collect them in Easter baskets. When you've found all the symbols, thank God that Jesus gave his life for us.

Jesus Died for Us
(Luke 22:63-23:47)

