

Jesus' Death and Resurrection

After three years of ministry, Jesus entered Jerusalem for his last Passover celebration. By now, Jesus was famous for his miracles and his teaching. People lined the streets and pushed in to get a closer look at this Jesus of Nazareth. They shouted jubilantly, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” (New International Version). A few short days later that same crowd turned against Jesus, crying out angrily, “Crucify him!” So Jesus went to the cross, where he paid the ultimate price for the sins of the world. But death could not hold him. He triumphed over sin and death to rise again on the third day.

Three- and four-year-olds are still learning the true meaning of Easter. While they're quite familiar with the secular, commercial aspects of Easter, such as baskets full of candy, they need to understand that Jesus loves us so much that he was willing to give his life for us. These six lessons will teach children how Jesus died and rose again so that we can have a relationship with him.

Six Lessons on Jesus' Death and Resurrection

Lesson	Bible Point	Page	Bible Basis
1	We can show our love to Jesus.	11	John 21:15-25
2	Jesus is our king, and he died for us.	23	Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-40
3	Jesus died for us, and he wants us to remember him.	35	Luke 22:7-20
4	Jesus died for us because he loves us.	49	Mark 14:32-50; Luke 22:39-54a
5	Jesus died for us.	61	Luke 22:63-23:47
6	Jesus died for us and then came back to life.	77	Matthew 28:1-8; Luke 24:1-12

Easter Lily Name Tags

Photocopy and cut out the name tags.





Bible Point ▶

We can show our love to Jesus.

Bible Verse

Believe in Jesus Christ, and love one another (adapted from 1 John 3:23b).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- hear the story of how Jesus asked Peter, “Do you love me?”
 - practice showing love; and
 - talk about ways they can show their love to Jesus.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Peter is asked to show his love to Jesus.



**John
21:15-25**

All four Gospels record Peter's threefold denial of Jesus, yet only John records this account in which Peter was fully restored by Jesus. It happened during the third of Jesus' many appearances to the disciples after his resurrection. This particular appearance was probably the most significant of them all for Peter.

After breakfast, Jesus took Peter aside for a serious conversation. Peter was disturbed that Jesus asked him three times in a row whether he loved him. But the repetition was necessary because on the night of Jesus' arrest, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times. By asking three times, Jesus was restoring Peter fully. But it was a painful process.

Jesus was doing more than restoring Peter to friendship. He was preparing him for his important new role. Jesus is called the good shepherd in John 10. Now that Jesus was about to ascend into heaven, Peter would be responsible to provide shepherding leadership and care for Jesus' disciples. Jesus loved his sheep enough to sacrifice his life for them (John 10:11). Jesus let Peter know that in service to him, Peter would die a martyr's death (John 21:18-19). Church tradition says Peter was later crucified, but upside down because he didn't consider himself worthy to die in the same position as Jesus had died.







Prayer

- Read Matthew 22:36-38.
- What do the words “all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind” mean in your life?
- Pray: Lord, help me keep my love for you genuine. Help me model your love to the children as I...

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 in teaching 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: Lacing Love —Sew hearts with yarn, and talk about how much they love Jesus.	Poster board cut into heart shapes, hole punch, shoelaces or yarn	
	Option 2: Loving Bridge —Play a game like London Bridge to show love to their friends.		
	Option 3: Sending Love to Jesus —Make special cards to show their love to Jesus.	Construction paper, crayons, stickers	
	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 —Form pairs and answer questions about showing love.		
	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 John 21:15-25 about a question Jesus asked Peter.		
	Do the Bible Story —Play a game and sing a Bible verse song to show their love for Jesus.	Bible, CD player	
Closing 	How Can I Show Love? —Teach Whiskers what it’s like to show love to someone.		
	I’ll Show Jesus I Love Him —Learn a song to remember to show love to Jesus.		

*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.
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► we can show our love to Jesus.**
- Give each child an Easter lily name tag. Help children write their names on their name tags, and pin or tape them on their clothing. If you like, let children color their name tags with crayons.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



You may wish to laminate the name tags before next week so they’ll last all quarter.



Let’s Get Started

Set up 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 the point of today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “Who loves you?” “How do you show love to someone?” and “What can you do to show love to Jesus?”



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point again and again will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.

■ Option 1: Lacing Love

SUPPLIES: poster board cut into heart shapes, hole punch, shoelaces or yarn

Before class, cut large hearts (approximately 10 inches wide) out of poster board. Punch holes around the edges. Set out shoelaces or yarn and encourage the children to weave the laces in and out around the edges of their paper hearts. As children are weaving, ask them to tell you what they love about Jesus.

■ Option 2: Loving Bridge

SUPPLIES: none

Set aside an area where children can play a game. Tell children they’re going to play a game like London Bridge, only they’re going to show love to their friends by catching them in a circle of love. Have two children face each other, connect their hands, and hold their arms up to make a bridge. Tell them to catch someone inside their “loving bridge” at the end of the song. Direct the rest of the children to form a line and walk under the bridge.

Sing the following song to the tune of “London Bridge.”



**Loving bridge is coming down,
Coming down, coming down.
Loving bridge is coming down
To love our friend!**

When a child is caught in the loving bridge, have that child choose a friend from the line to be the new bridge. Repeat this game until everyone who wants to has had the chance to be the “loving bridge.”

**teacher
tips**

An attention-getting signal will let children know when it's time to stop what they're doing and look at you. Each week remind the children about your signal and practice it together. Soon, regaining their attention will become a familiar classroom ritual.

■ *Option 3: Sending Love to Jesus*

SUPPLIES: construction paper, crayons, stickers



Set out colored construction paper folded like greeting cards, various stickers, and crayons. Set out the *stamps* and *ink pad* from the Learning Lab for the children to use to stamp on their cards. Tell children that people send cards to people they love. Invite children to make special cards for Jesus. Tell children that making special cards is

one way ► *we can show our love to Jesus.*

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.

**teacher
tips**

At this stage in their spiritual development, three- and four-year-olds enjoy Bible stories, recognize their own church and develop a sense of belonging there, and understand that prayer is talking to God. They can pray simple, spontaneous prayers.



**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: none

Tell the children you'll turn the lights off and then on again 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?** (Sewed on a big heart; played a loving bridge game; made a card for Jesus.)

Say: **Some of you talked about what you love about Jesus as you sewed your hearts, some of you played a loving bridge game, and some of you made special cards to show your love for Jesus. You were all learning important things about our Bible story.**

Our Bible story today is about a time when Jesus talked to Peter. Jesus had some important questions to ask Peter. Peter needed to show his love to Jesus. I want you to find a partner to sit with. I'm going to ask you some important questions, and I want you to give your answers to your partner. Make sure both of you get a chance to answer the questions.

Ask the questions, one at a time, and give the partners the opportunity to tell each other the answers before you ask the next question.

Ask: • **What is your name and how old are you?**

- **Who loves you?**
- **Who do you love?**
- **How do you show your love to those you love?**

Say: **In our Bible story today we're going to learn that we can show our love to Jesus. Let's walk quietly to our story area and sit down.**



■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



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.



Remind children that each one will get a turn to bring you the Bible as the weeks go by—and be sure you keep track of who the Bible person is each week so that each child has an opportunity to serve in this way.



**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 *cloud stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *cloud 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: none

Open the Bible to John 21, and show it to the children. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of John in the Bible. This week we're going to learn about a meeting between Jesus and his friend Peter.**

When Peter spent time with Jesus he showed Jesus that he loved him and promised Jesus he would always love him.

Ask: • **Have you ever had a friend not want to be your friend anymore? How did that feel?** (It hurt my feelings; it made me sad; it made me feel left out.)

Say: **After Jesus was arrested, Peter pretended he didn't even know Jesus. He turned his back on his friend, Jesus. He did that three times. Peter didn't show his love to Jesus very well. Can you count to three with me? One...two...three. Three times Peter said he didn't even know Jesus.**

Ask: • **How do you think that made Jesus feel?** (Sad; hurt; mad.)

Say: **Our Bible story today takes place after Jesus died and came back to life again. Jesus has appeared to his friend Peter and is having a very important discussion with him. Jesus asked Peter the same question three times. Say to the children: Hold up one finger. The first time Jesus said, "Do you love me?" Peter answered, "Yes, Lord, you know I love you." Pause. Hold up two fingers. The second time Jesus said, "Do you love me?" Peter answered again, "Yes, Lord, you know I love you." Pause. Hold up three fingers. The third time Jesus said to Peter, "Do you love me?" Peter was beginning to get**

teacher tips

You'll be covering the events surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection in more detail later during this module. However, each lesson makes the important point that Jesus died for us. Be sure to take time to listen to children's questions and concerns about Jesus' death each week. Explain that Jesus died and came back to life so that we could be forgiven. If you feel uncomfortable explaining Jesus' death to your preschoolers, ask one of your church leaders to help you.

teacher tips

You'll be amazed to discover how much your children have learned as they share the lesson with Whiskers. Even children who are shy around adults will open up to Whiskers. You can purchase Whiskers directly from Group Publishing by visiting group.com.

frustrated with how many times Jesus asked him this question. He answered, “Lord, you know everything. You know I love you.”



Say: **Peter had the chance to tell Jesus he loved him three times. ►We can show our love to Jesus, too. Jesus loves each of us, and wants to be our very best friend. Let’s stand up and say three times, “I love Jesus!”** Lead children in saying “I love Jesus” three times just as you would shout a cheer at a sports game.



■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Direct children to stand in a circle and link elbows. Place one person in the middle to be the first pretend Jesus. Then open your Bible to today’s Bible verse, **1 John 3:23b**, and say: **Our Bible verse tells us to ►believe in Jesus Christ, and love one another. Let’s sing a song to remind us of our Bible verse.** Lead children in singing “Believe” (1 John 3:23) with the *CD* (track 13) to the tune of “A-Tisket, A-Tasket.” As everyone sings, direct the circle to slowly rotate around “Jesus.”



SING
Believe, believe, believe in Jesus Christ.
Believe, believe in Jesus Christ
And love one another.
(Repeat.)

Pause the *CD* at random, and have the pretend Jesus stop in front of someone in the circle and ask, “How can you show your love to Jesus?”

The selected child can say or can do something to show love to the pretend Jesus. Then that child gets to be the new pretend Jesus. Continue playing until everyone has had a chance to be the pretend Jesus.



Closing

■ How Can I Show Love?

SUPPLIES: none

Bring out Whiskers the Mouse and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



Whiskers: (*Shakes his head back and forth.*)

Teacher: Whiskers, why are you shaking your head? You seem as if you're having trouble figuring something out.

Whiskers: I just don't know what to do!

Teacher: About what?

Whiskers: I have this special friend. He and I were talking about birthdays and how much fun they are. I told him that because he was such a special friend that I would come to his party and give him not one, but three special gifts 'cause he's turning three.

Teacher: What a nice friend you are! I'm sure he can hardly wait to spend some time with you on his birthday.

Whiskers: (*Shakes his head back and forth as he looks down.*)

Teacher: There you go again. Why are you shaking your head like that?

Whiskers: You won't believe it. I'm so ashamed! His birthday was last week and I forgot it. It was a preschool day and we were even at school together. Not only did I forget his birthday, I was playing with someone else and ignored him and didn't even play with him. I pretended I didn't know him. I feel just awful!

Teacher: Children, does this remind you of what happened to Peter in our Bible story? Can you tell Whiskers what Peter did to his friend Jesus just before Jesus died? (*Wait for children to retell the Bible story.*)

Whiskers: Yes, that's just like what I did to my friend. Peter must have felt awful, just as I do. Did Jesus understand? What did Jesus do? (*Wait for children to retell the next part of the Bible story.*)

Teacher: Jesus gave Peter a chance to ►show his love to Jesus. Peter got to say three times how much he loved Jesus. Whiskers, I'm sure you could go and tell your friend you're sorry and then show him that you love him.

Whiskers: Thanks for telling me about how Peter showed his love for Jesus and how I can show love to my friend. I'm going to go find my friend right now.

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■ I'll Show Jesus I Love Him

SUPPLIES: none

Say: **Remember the question Jesus asked Peter? He said, "Do you love me?" He asked that question three times. Let's learn a song to remember to show our love to Jesus.**

Lead children in singing "I'll Show Jesus I Love Him" to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me." This song is not on the *CD*.



SING

Jesus asked, "Do you love me?" (*Hold up one finger.*)

Jesus asked, "Do you love me?" (*Hold up two fingers.*)

Jesus asked, "Do you love me?" (*Hold up three fingers.*)

Can you show me that you do?

Yes, I love Jesus (*hold up one finger*),

Yes, I love Jesus (*hold up two fingers*),

Yes, I love Jesus (*hold up three fingers*),

I'll show you I love you!

Close the class time by joining hands in a circle and saying, ► "We can show our love to Jesus!" together.



BIBLE POINT



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: Do You Love Me?**

Tell children to form a circle. Select one person to be the pretend Jesus, and ask him or her to cover his or her eyes. Tell the rest of the children to spread out away from “Jesus” and turn their backs on him. Tell Jesus to call out: “Do you love me?” Tell the children to turn around, run toward Jesus, and touch him saying, “Yes, Lord, I love you!” The first child to reach Jesus and show Jesus his love gets to play the part of Jesus next. Repeat the game as long as the children are interested. Remind children that ► we can show our love to Jesus.

■ **Make to Take: Loving Reminders**



Set out large craft sticks and glue. Help each child glue two of the craft sticks together to make a cross. Set out a sandwich bag and seven small stickers for each child. Tell the children to place the stickers and the crosses inside their bags. Encourage the children to place the bags on their nightstands at home and take time every day during the week to place a sticker on their crosses and tell Jesus how much they love him. While the children create their crosses, you might want to play track 13 on the CD, “Believe” (1 John 3:23), as background music.

■ **Treat to Eat: Sweet Hearts**

Have children clean their hands at a nearby sink or with baby wipes. Cut red apples from top to bottom to make many thin slices. Point out that each slice looks like a heart and that a heart reminds us to show love. Set out store-bought caramel apple dip and encourage children to say something they love about Jesus each time they dip a slice of apple.



■ **Story Picture: Jesus Asks Peter, “Do You Love Me?”**

Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Provide crayons, and ask children to draw arms on Jesus and on Peter so they are reaching out to hug each other.

Remind children that ► we can show our love to Jesus.

Today I learned... We can show our love to Jesus.

Help me learn this:

Believe in Jesus Christ, and love one another
(adapted from 1 John 3:23b).

Ask me:

- How do you show love?
- What did you learn about ways you can show love to Jesus?
- How can our family practice showing love to Jesus?

Family Fun

- Spend some time together as a family talking about ways that you know you are loved by other family members.
- Talk about ways that you can show Jesus how much you love him. For example, family members might sing songs telling Jesus how much they love him, take a gift to a friend as if giving it to Jesus, or pray together. Select one of those ways and do that together as a family sometime this week.

**Jesus Asks Peter,
"Do You Love Me?"**
(John 21:15-25)



