



EASTER – MARCH 2024 – PRETEEN

Bible Story: *Easter | Luke 24:1-12, 36-49*

Key Question: *Why does Easter matter?*

Memory Verse: *“God so loved the world that He gave his one + only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but have eternal life.” – John 3:16 NIrV*

Virtue: *Easter – Celebrating that Jesus is alive*

Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what*

Series Overview: Throughout Scripture, we can see how peace is something near to God’s heart. Even though people chose to break their relationship with God, God made a way to fix that relationship through Jesus. And because we reflect God’s image, making peace with others should be a priority for us as well. That’s why we’re taking the first three weeks of March to highlight some passages and stories about peace to help kids understand more about how they can be peacemakers in their world.

Key Question: Why does Easter matter? When you look around at the bunnies and flowers and chocolate eggs, you can understand why it might be hard for kids to grasp the importance of Easter. We start with this question in order to engage kids in a discussion about who Jesus is, what Jesus came to do, and how they can have a relationship with Him. We hope all kids can discover an everyday faith in Jesus and discover all sorts of ways to celebrate that Jesus is alive!

EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

Opening Small Group Activity

Move: an activity that increases oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: “Easter Charades” Activity Page; plastic Easter eggs; Easter basket

What You Do:

- Greet kids by name as they arrive and wish them a “Happy Easter”
- Set out the Easter basket filled with Easter eggs
- Instruct one kid to choose an Easter egg out of the basket, open it and silently read what is written on the paper inside
- Direct the kid to act out what’s on the paper without using any noises
- Instruct the rest of the group to guess what the kid is acting out
- Direct the kid who guesses correctly to choose an egg and take a turn acting
- Continue playing as time allows or until you’ve worked through all of the Easter egg

LARGE GROUP

Large Group Overview: We finish March by celebrating Jesus’ resurrection as described in **Luke 24:1-12, 36-49**. God went to great lengths to make peace with us. All of God’s promises came true, and everything that Jesus said and did led up to this moment. When Jesus paid the price for our sin on the cross and then came back to life, He made it possible for us to have peace with God forever! THAT is something to celebrate

SMALL GROUP

Take a Snapshot

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding + application

What You Need: butcher paper; sticky notes; writing utensils; tape

What You Do:

- Invite the group to sit where they can see the butcher paper
- Draw a large cross on the butcher paper
- Pass the stack of sticky notes around
- Instruct each kid to take two sticky notes
- Give each kid a pen or marker
- Ask: “Can anyone recap what we’ve been talking about all month for anyone who hasn’t been here?”
- Prompt kids to mention the following if needed:
 - Connected: Switch on the power of peace
 - Peace: Proving that you care more about someone than winning an argument
 - Memory Verse (Weeks 1-3): If possible, live in peace with everyone. Do that as much as you can – Romans 12:18
 - Memory Verse (Weeks 4-5): God so loved the world that He gave his one and only son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.
- Ask: “What are some ways you can work on making peace with other people?”
- Instruct the kids to write down their answer on one of their sticky notes
- Direct the kids to stick their note along the horizontal part of the cross on the butcher paper
- Ask:
 - What is the significance of Easter?

- Help kids recap that Jesus is our promised Savior and He and rose again so we could have a relationship with God that will last forever
- Ask: “What does Jesus’ death on the cross and resurrection mean to you when it comes to your connection with God?”
 - If kids are stumped, give suggestions like: “I can trust God” or “God keeps the promises made to me”
- Instruct the kids to write a summary of their answer on their sticky note and stick it anywhere along the vertical part of the cross
- Ask:
 - Why do you think we put the first sticky note on the horizontal part of the cross and the second sticky note on the vertical part of the cross?
(The horizontal portion symbolizes our connection with each other. The vertical portion of the cross symbolizes our connection with God)
 - Why is it important to have peace with people and also be at peace with God?
- Talk with the group about how God sent Jesus. Jesus is God’s Son. During Jesus’ time on Earth, He would tell people to love God and love others. One way we can do this is by making peace with God and others. We can show others that Jesus is alive by how we choose to show love and peace.

Make It Personal With Prayer

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding + application

What You Need: Dry erase board; dry-erase marker; “PEACE Prayer” Activity Page; writing utensil

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to gather in your group space
- Ask kids they ever feel distracted or unsure what to say when they try to pray
- Explain it can sometimes help to have a guideline for prayer time
- On the dry erase board, write:

- P
- E
- A
- C
- E
- Next to the P, write: *Praise*
 - Say: “We have an opportunity to start our prayer time by giving God praise for things. This may mean thanking God for things or reflecting on how amazing God is.”
- Next to the E, write: *Examine*
 - Say: “This is a great time to focus on anything that you may be navigating or struggling with. When you examine yourself, it can be a deep dive into what’s really going on in your mind and your heart. God is here with us through all of that, so we can always talk to God about it.”
- Next to the A, write: *Ask for help*
 - Say: “God wants us to ask for help! And no ask is too big or small. We may want to ask God to help us with that big math test coming up, or we may want to ask God for wisdom in how to handle a difficult situation.”
- Next to the C, write: *Confess*
 - Say: “It’s so important that we admit when we’ve messed up. Even though God already knows everything about us, when we choose to confess our sin and talk to God about it, it gives us an opportunity to turn away from it. We are more likely not to keep making the same mistakes when we have accountability with God.”
- Next to the E, write: *Everyone else*
 - Say: “We all know people who need prayer! In this final portion of prayer time, we can talk to God about all the things that may be happening with the people in our lives.”
- Invite kids to spread out in your group space
- Give each kid a copy of the “PEACE Prayer” page and a writing utensil
- Instruct the kids to write down things on the page that they would want to pray about in each of the categories

- When the kids are finished writing things down, invite them to pray silently about what they wrote
- After everyone has finished, gather everyone together again
- Close your group time in prayer
- Encourage kids to take the prayer guides with them as a reminder for how they can pray at home