

## Jesus is Alive

### CONCEPT

Jesus is not dead – He's alive!

### GOAL

Children will learn that Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sin.

**PASSAGE: MATTHEW 27:11-28:10, MARK 15:1-16:8**

**Key Verse:** "Do not be afraid... Jesus is not here, for He has risen..." Matthew 28:5a & 6a

### PLANNING AHEAD

#### Lesson Supplies

#### Lesson:

- *The First Step Bible*, Mack Thomas, pp. 404-437
- *The Rhyme Bible Storybook for Toddlers*, Sattgast, pp. 234-249
- *The Bible in Pictures for Toddlers*, Lindvall, pp. 122-135
- *The Beginner's Bible for Toddlers*, Zonderkidz, pp. 148-159
- Laminated, magnet-backed pictures

## Background Information / Teacher's Helps

The children have heard much this year about the benefit of the cross and Christ's death for them. It is His resurrection, though, that is the great hope of the believer. It is the guarantee of the completion of Jesus' earthly work and Christ's restoration to his heavenly position.

DEFINITION: Christ rose bodily from the dead, resulting in an empty grave . . . While Christ's resurrected body was in some ways different, it was the same material body as the one he had before his death (Lk. 24:39). Therefore, the interpretation that Jesus' resurrected body was completely different than his previous body, or that the resurrection was only spiritual, or that it was only the imagination of the apostles is unacceptable.

### IMPORTANCE:

The resurrection validates the authority and truthfulness of Jesus and his message (Mt. 12:39,40; Jn. 2:19; see also Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:14). Jesus made a unique claim for himself (that he was the Messiah), and he offered to provide unique evidence for those claims (that he would be resurrected). If Jesus was not raised from the dead, he was a false messiah, the apostles were liars, and Christians are fools to be pitied.

It objectively demonstrates our forgiveness (Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:17; 1 Pet. 1:3). In the Old Testament, the fact that the High Priest emerged alive from the Holy of Holies demonstrated that the sacrifice had been accepted by God. If his sacrifice had been unacceptable, he would have been killed (Lev. 16:1,2). In the same way, Jesus' resurrection demonstrated that his death was fully accepted by the Father as payment for our sins.

It guarantees the believer's future resurrection (1 Cor. 15:18-23). Paul refers to Jesus' resurrection as the "first fruits" (vs. 20,23). This is a reference to the Old Testament Festival of First Fruits. The earliest fruits were tangible evidence that God would grant them a full harvest. In the same way, Paul says that Jesus' resurrection is the tangible evidence that we will be resurrected at his coming (the Rapture).

It assures the believer's position in Christ (Rom. 6:4,5; Eph. 1:20,21; 2:6). Paul argues that Christians have been freed from the authority of sin and Satan. This is because Jesus overcame both of them through his death and resurrection, and we have been united with him in his resurrection. Obviously, if Jesus was not resurrected, Christians have no authority over sin or Satan.<sup>1</sup>

The doctrine of the resurrection is central in the Christian faith, not peripheral. . . "Of all the great religions, Christianity alone bases its claim to acceptance on the resurrection of its Founder. If it is not a fact, our preaching is emptied of content. Instead of being a dynamic message, it merely enshrines a fragrant memory. Our faith is without a factual basis and is therefore empty. The Scripture writers become purveyors of intentional lies, and the Scriptures themselves unreliable. Deliverance from the penalty and power of sin is no more than a mirage, and the future life still shrouded in midnight darkness. Thus Paul makes Christianity answer with its life for the truth of the resurrection."<sup>2</sup>

As Christians, we can walk in newness of life because Christ rose from the dead (Romans 6:4; consider also Romans 4:25 and Matthew 20:28). "Jesus claimed that His death would atone for man's sin. He said that He had come 'to give [his] life as a ransom for many'. . . He died as He said. But the question still remained. Could it be true that the death of this man would be acceptable to God for others? Suppose He had sinned? In that case, He would have been dying for His own sin rather than the sins of others. Did He sin or was His atonement valid? Three days passed. Christ arose. This, His claim was established. God has shown by the resurrection that Christ was sinless and that He has accepted His Son's atonement."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Http:\www.xenos.org" *Christian Principles*, Unit 1, Week 10: Christology.

<sup>2</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *The Incomparable Christ: The Person and Work of Jesus Christ*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1952, 1971, p. 211.

<sup>3</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *The Incomparable Christ: The Person and Work of Jesus Christ*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1952, 1971, p.80-81.

Defense of the resurrection is essential to the Christian as its historicity is debated by those who would strip the followers of Christ of intellectual integrity. In fact, support for the resurrection of Jesus is extensive. One great scholar asserted, "I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort..., than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead."<sup>4</sup>

In preparation to teach this lesson, read and reflect on 1 Corinthians 15. Then reflect on the following: "Of necessity, the likeness of His death is followed by the likeness of His resurrection. To speak alone of the likeness of His death—of bearing the cross, and of self-denial—gives a one-sided view of following Christ. It is only the power of His resurrection that gives us strength to go on from that likeness of His death... Being dead with Christ refers more to the death of the old life to sin and the world which we abandon. Risen with Christ refers to the new life through which the Holy Spirit expels the old. To the Christian who earnestly desires to walk as Christ did, the knowledge of this likeness of His resurrection is indispensable.... here get the answer as to where we must find strength to live in the world as Christ did.

"... our Lord's life, before His death, was a life of weakness.... sin had great power over Him. It also had power over His disciples, so that He could not give them the Holy Spirit, or do for them what He wished. But, with the resurrection, all was changed. Raised by the almighty power of God, His resurrection life was full of the power of eternity. He had not only conquered death and sin for Himself, but for His disciples also, so that He could, from the first day, make them partakers of His Spirit, His joy, and His heavenly power."<sup>5</sup>

**Additional Reading:** Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, chapter 10; Frank Morison, *Who Moved the Stone?*; Norman L. Geisler, *The Battle for the Resurrection*; George Eldon Ladd, *I Believe in the Resurrection of Jesus*

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<sup>4</sup> Wilbur M. Smith, *Therefore Stand: Christian Apologetics*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965, p. 426; quoted in Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, San Bernadino: Here's Life, 1979, p. 191.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew Murray, *Like Christ*, Whitaker House, 1983, p. 161-162.

## LESSON PLAN

<b>PRAYER</b>	Pray for the children <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• w/your team before class.</li><li>• during the week.</li></ul> Pray simple short prayers with the children.
<b>LESSON</b>	<b>Instructions:</b> Use the laminated figures and the story bibles to tell the story. <b>Main Points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jesus knew God sent him to earth to die to pay for everyone's bad choices.</li><li>• Many people did not want to believe that Jesus was their friend so they killed him</li><li>• Jesus died on the cross</li><li>• BUT God had brought him back to life-</li><li>• <b>Jesus is Alive</b> - now we can be his friend</li></ul>
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>Creative Play</b> <b>Instructions:</b> Have a few children at a time use the laminated figures to re-enact the story.  Jesus paid for all our bad choices when he died on the cross. Jesus is not dead – he's alive so we know he paid for our bad choices and we can be friends with Jesus forever. We can be his friend just by asking.