

Lent 5

The Resurrection



Key Scriptures: Matthew 27:62-28:15

Big Idea: Jesus is alive – only those who believe will be set free.

Teaching Points:

+ Jesus rose with great power.

Even though the disciples didn't understand what Jesus meant when he said he would rise again on the third day, some of the Pharisees seemed to understand. They asked Pilate to order the tomb guarded and sealed until the third day. But a wax seal and a Roman guard couldn't stop Jesus. Imagine the soldiers' shock as the earth began to shake and an angel bright as lightning rolled the stone away and sat upon it (Mat. 28:2). What a glorious moment – death was defeated! The guards were so afraid that they shook and fell to the ground. The angel spoke to the women who had come, telling them that Jesus had risen from the dead just as he said!

+ Only those who believe will be set free.

Some of the guards returned to the chief priests and reported to them everything that had happened. They told the chief priests about the earthquake, the angel, with the bright light, the rising of Christ, and the visit of the two women who met and conversed the Lord. The soldiers heard all of this and the chief priests heard their report and yet neither the soldiers nor the chief priests believed. Instead the chief priests hatched a scheme to keep the guards quiet. They spread the very rumor they were trying to stop, that the disciples had stolen the body. The soldiers accepted the money and agreed to lie (Mat. 28:12-15). This shows us that you can know the facts of the gospel and still not really believe. Today people read the story of Jesus rising from the dead, but like the religious rulers and soldiers, they refuse to believe. This leaves us with the so important question; "Do you believe?"

Gospel Connection:

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Jesus is no longer in the tomb! This is one of the most critical parts of the gospel. Paul said it like this: "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith in vain... If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins." (1 Cor. 15:13-14, 17)

Paul goes on to say in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 that Christ is the "first fruits" (the first to be raised) and that we will also be raised. If Jesus had died but not risen again, we would all be lost. The resurrection is not an add-on to the cross. It is an integral part of the gospel message without which that gospel would have no power!

Object Lesson

Sin and Salvation (K-2)

Supplies:

- + large mats or sheets of paper (*can find in Grace's resource room*)
- + paper cross from the wall

Place the two mats on the floor (*or use pieces of paper.*) Choose one mat to represent people and another to represent God. Have your children stand on the "people mat" and leave the "God mat" open. As you talk about how people were created to be close to God, move the God mat close so your children can easily step back and forth between the two mats.

When you mention sin and our separation from God, move the God mat far enough away that your child can't jump to it, representing our inability to fix what sin did to our relationship with God. To illustrate how Jesus' death and resurrection paid the penalty for our sin, create a "bridge" between the two mats using pillows or paper and let your children walk freely across.

Here's an example of what you could say:

When God created men and women, we were in a close relationship with Him. (Make sure mats are close together.) However, when sin was introduced into the world, it created a big gap between us and God. (Move mats apart.) No matter what we try to do, we cannot fix the gap that sin created between us and God all by ourselves. (Have your children try to jump to the empty mat.) God sent His son Jesus – who never sinned – to come and pay the penalty for our sins. Jesus' death on the cross repaired the gap that sin created between God and us. (Connect the two mats with your "bridge.") When we ask Jesus into our hearts, we are forgiven of our sins and can enjoy a relationship with God. That's what we celebrate at Easter!

Forgiveness and New Life (3-5)

Supplies:

- + a dirty old penny
- + 1 tsp. of salt
- + a cup
- + ¼ cup of vinegar

Have your kids combine the vinegar and salt in the cup. Get them to drop the dirty penny into the cup and let it sit for about five minutes. After the time has passed, you should find a clean, shiny penny at the bottom of the cup.

Use this as an opportunity to share with your children how the penny illustrates sin in our lives. The dirty penny represents our sin-filled lives. When we ask Jesus into our hearts and receive forgiveness, He washes away our sin and we're made "new" – just like the penny! You could give students a dirty coin and ask them to try to get it clean on their own accord. They won't be able to. Then show them how we need Jesus to wash us clean, that's the only way to be reconciled with God.

Remember to take time and

Pray

Lent Meaning/Description:

Today is the fifth and final week of our remembrance time of Lent.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

John 3:16-17

Celebrate! Jesus IS alive!