

EASTER



THINK ABOUT IT:

Why did Jesus die?

Introduction

Hold up the plastic egg and say, “We certainly see a lot of eggs at Easter time. Does anyone know why?” Allow for some answers. Say, “Since the purpose of the egg is to hold a new, little life, the egg has become a symbol of new life. At Easter, we celebrate the new life we have in Jesus because of what he did for us in his death on the cross and resurrection. Today you are going to hear that true story and put together your own Easter in an Egg so you can share the story with others and answer the *Think About It* question, ‘Why did Jesus die?’”

Message

1. Give each child an Easter in an Egg bag. Instruct them to leave everything in the bag and only pull out one thing at a time as it is mentioned in the story and place it in the egg. Start by telling them to pull their egg out and hold it in their hands. Then begin to read the story Easter in an Egg. Show the visuals at the appropriate time.

Easter in an Egg Story

Jesus had just finished a wonderful celebration meal with twelve of his best friends. It was a happy time, but Jesus knew that everything was about to change. His heart became so heavy that he went out to the garden of Gethsemane to talk to his God. Jesus knew he would soon be killed, so he asked God if there wasn't another way to save people from their sins. He prayed so hard that he began to sweat drops of blood. There was no other way. Suddenly, his friend, Judas, appeared with some priests and soldiers. Jesus knew when Judas greeted him with a **kiss**, he was really turning him over to the soldiers. The soldiers arrested Jesus because he said he was the Son of God. It was true; Jesus really was God's Son, but they didn't believe him. The soldiers took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor, but Pilate could not find a crime to charge him with, so he sent



SCRIPTURE

Matthew 27:12-66

Matthew 28:1-10

Romans 5:8



MATERIALS

- Bible for each small group leader
- Plastic egg
- Easter in an Egg bag for each child (bag containing a plastic Easter egg, Hershey kiss, cross, stone, heart, cotton ball)
- Visuals – Jesus betrayed, Pilate before the crowd, Crucifixion, Jesus' burial, Stone rolled away, Resurrected Lord, Ascension, Tomb and cross *
- CBA cross for each child *

* Available in the Member Toolbox



CBA s

- Prepare the CBA crosses as follows:
 - With the heart facing you, fold up the prayer (two folds).
 - Next fold in the A, then B, then C flaps so you have a square with the C on top.
 - You may use a paper clip to secure the square until ready for use.
- Have questions about the CBAs? See page 10 for more information.



IDEA!

The CBAs are the most important part of small group, so start there if time is short and go back to the verse and questions as time allow.



EXTRA TIME

Celebrate with the children who have committed or recommitted their lives to Jesus. Encourage them to tell an adult about their decision. Invite them to seek out an Easter service at a nearby church.

him to King Herod. King Herod couldn't find a reason to charge Jesus either, so he sent him back to Pilate.

The people were getting angry. They shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate was afraid of the crowd, so he gave in to them and turned Jesus over to be hung on a **cross** and killed. The soldiers whipped Jesus. They spit on him and made fun of him. They made a crown of thorns and pushed it down on his head until his blood ran down his face. The Bible says Jesus was beaten so badly, he was hardly recognizable. Then they made him carry a big, heavy cross on his back to a place called Golgotha. The soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross by hammering big nails through his wrists and feet. There were two thieves crucified on either side of Jesus that same day. One of the thieves looked at Jesus and said, "We deserve to die, but Jesus hasn't done anything wrong. Jesus, take me to Heaven with You." Jesus said that he would. He asked God to forgive the people who were killing him. Then the sky got dark even though it was the middle of the day, and the earth began to quake. Jesus called out, "It is finished," and died.

A kind man named Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus' body down off the cross and laid him in a cave called a tomb. The soldiers rolled a huge **stone** in front of the cave so no one could get in or out. Then they stood guard at the tomb because they were afraid someone would steal Jesus' body and then say that he rose from the dead. Three days later, the earth shook again. An angel appeared and rolled away the stone. The soldiers fainted like dead men because they were so afraid. Jesus walked out of the open tomb. He had risen from the dead just like the Bible said he would. For the next 40 days, many of his friends and followers saw him and talked to him. Then Jesus called them together and told them he would be going back to Heaven, but this time he would be preparing a place for them. He said he would live in the **hearts** and lives of anyone who believed in him. He also said they should tell others about him since one day he would be coming back to take everyone who believes in him to Heaven. Then Jesus disappeared into the **clouds**.

2. When the story is finished, say, "In small group you will learn more about why Jesus died, and discuss the choices you will make knowing what he did for you."



Dig Deeper in Small Groups

1. Read Romans 5:8.
2. Ask, “Why did Jesus die for us?” (*we are sinners*)
3. Ask, “Why is it important to know that Jesus died for us while we were sinners?” (*Most people would die for someone that loved them, but Jesus died for people who didn’t know Him or care about obeying Him.*)
4. Say, “Jesus sees you as worthy to die for, worthy to save, and worthy to love, no matter what you have done. Look again at the heart you put in your egg. What is it to help us remember?” (*that Jesus loves us, and he will be a part of our lives if we believe in him.*)
5. Use the CBA cross as a visual to explain the CBAs.
 - Say, “The Bible tells us a lot about how God gives us faith. We’re going to use the acronym CBA to help us remember the important parts.”
 - Open to show the ‘C.’ Open the ‘C’ flap and say, “C stands for Confess. Everyone needs to confess that you have sinned and made bad choices.”
 - Open the ‘B’ flap and say, “B stands for Believe. Believe that Jesus died for the forgiveness of your sins.”
 - Open the ‘A’ flap and say, “A stands for Ask. Ask God to forgive your sins and ask Him to be part of your life forever.”
 - Show the question and say, “So, how does God give me faith? The verse John 3:16 explains what faith in Jesus means.” Read the verse (in the heart). Take a few minutes to explain the concept of salvation further if clarification is needed and answer any questions the children might have.
 - Open the prayer flap to reveal the prayer (and the cross made when the visual is fully open!). Lead the children in prayer, encouraging them to pray with you if they’d like to affirm their decision to follow Jesus.

*“Dear God, I’m sorry for my sins.
I believe Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of my sins.
I want to follow you.
Please forgive me and be a part of my life forever.”*