

Theme: Why Easter?

Memory Verse: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” Luke 19:10

Challenge Verse: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Bible Story: John 20

The Point: Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him

Introduction – New Life Drawings (5-8 minutes)

WHAT YOU NEED: some blank paper and markers

Talk about the fact that the springtime is the time when everything in the world comes up new, baby plants and animals, etc. Play a game similar to “Pictionary” where kids draw something from springtime for the rest of the group to guess.

SAY: “Spring is great and exciting as you watch new life appearing everywhere. **Let’s go to large group and hear about the only way that you and I can have new life.**”

Take your group to Large Group Time.

Large Group (25-35 minutes)

Welcome

Welcome kids to large group. Remind them that for the last 4 weeks you've been learning about Jesus' death in our place and why we celebrate Easter and that today is the last day of the series and is a day of celebration.

Have kids share with you about their family's Easter celebrations.

Worship Time

"In the last few weeks, we've seen how God sent His only Son to the world to redeem His people and bring them back into a relationship with Him. Last week we saw the Roman soldiers put Jesus, the Son of God Himself, on the cross, where He died a painful death separated from His Father because of the sins of all the people. Our story ended with Jesus being placed in a tomb, and the disciples being confused how the One they had waited for, the One they had put their hope in had died. I said last week that today we'd hear the end of the story, but before we hear the rest of the story, let's sing a song that reminds us of the story from last week."

Power of the Cross

"That song reminded us that Jesus Christ became sin for us. He took our place when He died on the cross and because He came back to life 3 days later, we can have a new life through Him. John 14:6 reminds us that Jesus is the only way, the only truth and the only way to have life. Let's sing a song that reminds us of that truth now."

The Life

Study God's Word

consider enlarging a picture of the tomb or putting up a tent in your room and covering the opening with a large round piece of cardboard that can easily be rolled back to reveal that it's empty inside.

Last week our story ended on a sad note. Can someone remind me what we talked about last week? Right, we talked about Jesus dying on the cross. We talked about how Jesus came to earth to die. We talked about how He came to earth to take the punishment that we deserve because of sin. And as the story ended, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Jesus' body and put it in a tomb.

People were confused. The disciples and others who followed Jesus didn't understand what had happened. They believed Jesus was the King, they believed He was the Messiah, they believed He was the Rescuer sent to earth to rescue all of God's people. They didn't understand that He could only rescue them by dying in their place. They didn't understand that He would rescue them by dying as the perfect sacrifice for their sins.

Our story for this week starts out early in the morning on the third day after Jesus died.

Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. She went there with other women. They went to anoint Jesus' body with spices which was normal when someone died, but they hadn't been able to do it because it was the Sabbath day and touching a dead body would make them unclean.

When they got there, they saw that the stone had been rolled away.

So, Mary went running to Simon Peter and John, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

At this point, what do you think Mary is thinking? Do you think she thinks that Jesus is alive? It sounds like she thinks someone has stolen Jesus' body.

Peter and John started running toward the tomb. John ran faster than Peter and got there first.

John looked in at the strips of cloth lying there but did not go inside the tomb. He just looked in and saw the empty tomb, but Simon Peter got there and rushed right into the tomb. They both saw the strips of cloth and the cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself. These cloths had been wrapped tightly around Jesus' body and now they were folded neatly in the tomb. The cloths were proof that someone didn't steal Jesus' body. If someone took His body, they wouldn't have unwrapped Him and left the cloths neatly folded.

No, it was as if Jesus woke up, unwrapped Himself, folded the cloth and walked out of the tomb.

But I wonder if Peter and John understood and believed what had happened yet? They had seen Jesus raise Lazarus and Jairus' daughter from the dead, so they knew He had power over death, but could they possibly believe that the man they had seen die 3 days earlier was now alive?

In John 20:8, John says that when he saw the strips of cloth, he believed. But, in the very next verse he says that they still didn't understand that this is what Jesus had been telling them and what God's Word had been teaching them.

What didn't they understand you ask? They didn't understand that Jesus had to come back to life to conquer the power of death. **Jesus died so that the price would be paid for our sins. He died so that we could be forgiven if we turn away or repent of our sins and turn to Him, but He had to come back to life, so that we too can live, so that we can live forever with Him.**

If we keep reading in John 20, we see that Peter and John left the tomb and went home, but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. She was sad and confused. As she cried, she bent over to look into the tomb

and saw two angels dressed in white and sitting where Jesus' body had been. What do you think the angels looked like? Luke 24 describes them as two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning).

The angels asked her, "Why are you crying?"

Mary said, "They have taken my Lord away, and I don't know where they have put him." Mary's answer tells us what Mary was still thinking at this point. She still didn't believe what had happened. She still thought that someone had taken Jesus' body.

But Mary turned around and saw Jesus standing there. Well, she saw someone standing there but she did not realize that it was Jesus. Why do you think she didn't know it was Jesus? Maybe it was still dark. Maybe He looked different. Maybe because she only looked briefly at Him. Or maybe simply because she didn't think it would be possible to see Jesus standing there.

Jesus said, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Mary thought he was the the gardener, and said, "Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

Jesus said, "Mary." When He said her name, she knew who He was. Back in John 10:2 Jesus had said that the Good Shepherd calls His sheep by name. John 10:5 says that the sheep know His voice. John 10:14 says that the shepherd knows His sheep and the sheep know Him.

Jesus called her by name, and she knew Jesus' voice.

Jesus told Mary to go and tell the disciples. And that's just what she did. She went with the news and said, "I have seen the Lord!" And Mary told them everything He had said to her. What amazing news!

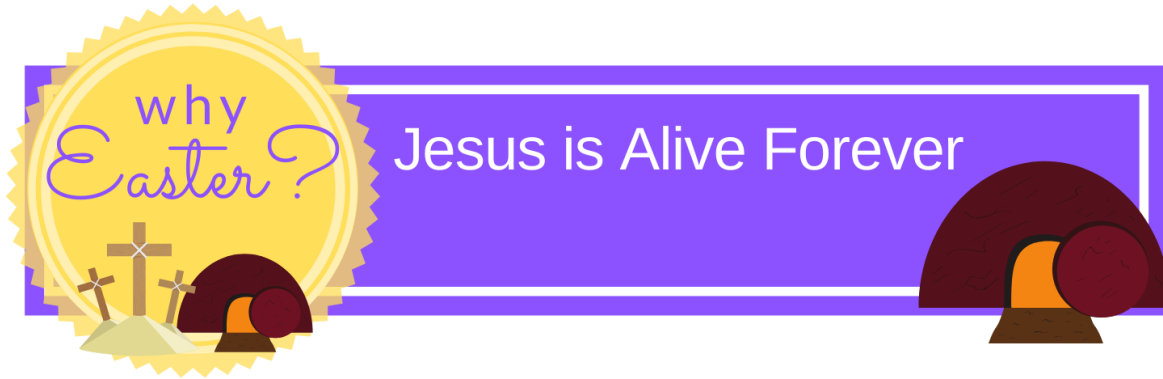
What an amazing story and the most amazing part of the story is that it's all true. Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth, lived a perfect life, died on the cross to pay the price for our sin and then on the third day He rose again so that we could live forever with Him. That is the Gospel. That is the good news that brings life. Before we go to our small groups, let's sing about that truth one more time.

Jesus Came to Save Sinners

Pray

“Let’s pray. Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to earth. Thank You for sending Him to die on the cross in our place. And thank You that Jesus came back to life to make it possible for us to have new life through Him. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.”

Dismiss kids to small groups.



Small Group (30 - 40 minutes)

Younger group – ages 5-8

Before the Session:

- **Easter Egg Hunt** – one set of egg card for every group 4-5 kids, one set of question cards per group, Bibles (at least one per group)
- **Empty Tomb/ Empty Egg** - 1 ½ large paper plates per kid, paper fasteners (brads) markers, colored pencils & Bibles
- **Jesus is Alive** – the eggs the kids made in the last activity
- **New Life Prayer** – the eggs the kids made

1. Easter Egg Hunt (Review)

WHAT YOU NEED: one set of egg card for every group 4-5 kids, one set of question cards per group, Bibles (at least one per group)

As kids come back from large group, be prepared to read the text of today's story (**Matthew 28:1-15**). Give them a moment to talk about what they heard in large group and to ask any questions that they may have about the Biblical account.

Then, spread the Resurrection story review eggs around at one end of the playing area. Small groups will gather up at the opposite end of the playing area.

Ages 5-6- -Small groups will send people one at a time to gather one egg each and bring them back to their small group areas. Once all the groups have their eggs, teacher will ask one question at a time and groups will look the verse up in their Bibles and then find the egg that answers the question and tape the question and egg together on the wall.

Ages 6-8- - with the eggs at one end of the room and the small groups lined up at the other end of the room, ask the questions one at a time to all of the groups together. After each question is asked, small groups should race to look up the verse and send someone to get the egg with the **correct answer** to the question. Continue until all questions have been answered and then go back into small groups.

SAY: “A lot of people have Easter egg hunts at Easter time, because Easter is in springtime and spring is all about new life. We had this egg hunt this morning as a reminder that new life takes on a completely new meaning in today’s story. The story we heard and reminded ourselves of this morning is the best news you will ever hear. The Bible reminds us of the truth that Jesus died on the cross taking the punishment that God’s people deserve and that **[THE POINT] Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him.** Each of you should choose one egg and place it in your Bible or somewhere you’ll see often to remind yourself of the new life that’s only possible through Jesus.”

[HEART TO HEART] *Talk with the kids in your group about what it means to have new life because of what Jesus did when He died on the cross and rose again. Be sure to be clear with the kids in your group that without Jesus we are all dead in our sin, but that through Jesus we can have a new life. Remind them that because of sin we all deserve to die, but that Jesus took our place on the cross so that we can live forever with Him.*

2. Empty Tomb/ Empty Egg (Memory Verse)

WHAT YOU NEED: 1 ½ large paper plates per kid, paper fasteners (brads) markers, colored pencils & Bibles

Hand each kid 1 ½ paper plates. Have them place the ½ plate over the whole plate so that it covers the top half of the plate. They should draw a line across the plate to know where the ½ plate ends. Then they can decorate the bottom ½ of the whole plate and the ½ plate to look like an Easter egg leaving the top ½ of the whole plate blank.

While they’re decorating their eggs, talk about what they may find inside an Easter egg. Help them attach the 2 plates together using a paper fastener (small group leaders will need to help kids with this), so that the egg can open to reveal the blank 1/2 plate inside. Use this empty egg as a reminder of the empty tomb. Then read or have one of the kids read a couple of these verses that remind us of the fact that Jesus rose again to bring new life to His people.... John 3:3, Acts 2:24, Acts 3:15, Romans 4:25, Romans 6:4, Romans 6:10, Romans 10:9, & 1 Peter 2:24, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Encourage the kids to write today’s challenge verse (**2 Corinthians 5:17**) or draw something in the blank space to remind themselves that Jesus is alive, and that they can have new life forever through Him.

SAY: “Jesus did an amazing thing when He died on the cross, rose from the dead, and came out of that tomb. He showed that not only does God have power over death, but that **[THE POINT] Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him.** Take your empty egg/ empty tomb reminders home with you and use them to remind your family that Jesus death and resurrection makes it possible to have real life and a new life through Jesus.”

3. Jesus is Alive

WHAT YOU NEED: the eggs the kids made in the last activity

Remind the kids in your small group what the women did when they found that Jesus had risen from the dead. They ran off immediately to tell the disciples. They had just heard the most amazing news ever. Jesus was alive again! Ask the kids what they would have done if they had been there on that Easter morning. Who would they have told and how would they have told them?

Talk about some of the details of the good news. Jesus is God's Son. He died to take our punishment and **[THE POINT] *Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him.*** Help the kids to see that just like the women went to tell the disciples what they had seen and heard, once we hear good news like this about Jesus we should run out and tell everyone we meet exactly what we know.

Play a **Good News relay game**. Have kids stand in a line (*do this in 2 groups if your group is large*). The student at the back of the line should think of some part of the good news (something you've just talked about, one of the verses you just read, etc.) and whisper it to the person in front of them who whispers it to the person in front of them until it gets to the front of the line. The person at the front of the line shouts out the good news. Once the good news has been shouted out, the kid from the back runs to the front and the whole thing starts over. Try to share enough good news with each other to make it to the opposite side of the room. Leaders should be prepared to help the kids think of things to say in case they can't come up with anything.

SAY: "The Bible tells us in Romans 5:8 that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. He took the punishment that we deserved, but the story doesn't end there. **[THE POINT] *Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him,*** and He's alive now and will live forever. The Bible tells us that we can live forever with God too if we (repent) turn away from the sin in our lives and believe in Jesus and follow Him. *When you go home this afternoon, show these eggs to your mom and dad and talk with them about what it means that we can have new life through Jesus.*"

Tip: *Be open to interest and questions on the part of the kids without pressuring them. Our job is simply to present them with the Good News as often as we can.*

[HEART TO HEART] *Tell how following Jesus has changed your life. Explain how you came to know that you needed a Savior because of the sin in your life, and what it means now knowing that Jesus took the punishment that you deserved so that you could be forgiven of your sin and have a relationship with God.*

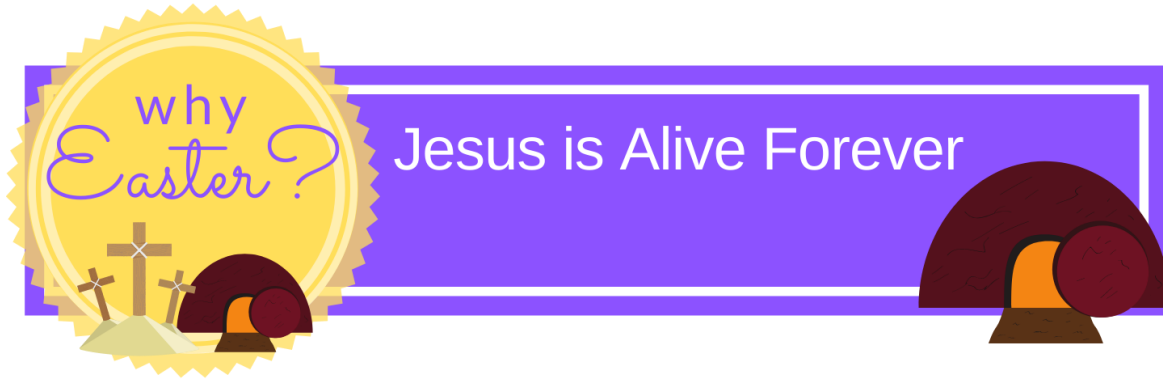
4. New Life Prayer

WHAT YOU NEED: The eggs the kids just made

Have the kids put their completed eggs on the floor in front of them. Pray for each of the kids in your group by name that they would better understand this new life and what it means to have a relationship with God through Jesus. Take some time as you prepare for this lesson to think of the kids in your group and what you can pray for them. Consider praying some of the verses you just read such as... John 3:3, "help Sam to understand that unless he is born again, he will not see the kingdom of God" or 2 Corinthians 5:17, "help Paul to understand that if he is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed

away; behold, the new has come.” By praying scripture for the kids, you are not only praying for them, but you are giving them a great lesson in using God’s Word to help them know what to pray for themselves and for others.

Conclude the session with a review and prayer.



Small Group (30 - 40 minutes)

Older group – ages 8-12

Before the Session:

- **Easter Egg Hunt** - one set of egg card for every group 4-5 kids, one question page per group, Bibles (at least one per group)
- **How Many Ways?** - Bibles
- **New Life Reminder** – some bright colors of tissue paper, plain paper, glue, scissors, markers, Bibles
- **New Life Prayer** - The butterflies the kids just made

1. Easter Egg Hunt (Review/ Scripture Search)

WHAT YOU NEED: one set of egg card for every group 4-5 kids, one question page per group, Bibles (at least one per group)

As kids come back from large group, be prepared to read the text of today's story (**Matthew 28:1-15**). Give them a moment to talk about what they heard in large group and to ask any questions that they may have about the Biblical account.

Then, spread the eggs around, face down, at one end of the playing area. Small groups will gather up at the opposite end of the playing area. When the teacher says go, groups will read the 1st question and reference and one member will race to find the verse in their Bibles revealing the answer to the question. Even if they know the answer to the question, they should still be encouraged to look up the verses in their Bibles.

The first runner will run to the eggs and search for the one with the correct answer and bring it back to the small group. Once back with the egg, they will read the next question and verse and the 2nd runner will go find the egg once the answer has been discovered. Play continues until all teams have collected all of their eggs. The first team to collect all their eggs is the winner.

SAY: “A lot of people have Easter egg hunts at Easter time, because Easter is in springtime and spring is all about new life. We had this egg hunt this morning as a reminder that new life takes on completely new meaning in today’s story. The story we heard and reminded ourselves of this morning is the best news and the best story you will ever hear. The Bible reminds us of the truth that Jesus died on the cross taking the punishment that God’s people deserve and that **[THE POINT] Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him.** Each of you should choose one egg and place it in your Bible or somewhere you’ll see often to remind yourself of the new life that’s only possible through Jesus.”

[HEART TO HEART] *Talk with the kids in your group about what it means to have new life because of what Jesus did when He died on the cross and rose again. Be sure to be clear with the kids in your group that without Jesus we are all dead in our sin, but that through Jesus we can have a new life. Remind them that because of sin we all deserve to die, but that Jesus took our place and took our place on the cross so that we can live forever with Him.*

2. How Many Ways? (Memory Verse)

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles

Challenge kids to be the first one to locate this week’s challenge verse (2 Corinthians 5:17) in their Bibles. When everyone has read the verse, say the verse together in each of these ways:

- In a whisper while tiptoeing around the circle
- Shouting while marching
- In slow motion while jogging in slow motion
- In a normal voice while walking backwards
- In a high-pitched voice while hopping on one foot
- Any other way you can think of

SAY: “This is such a powerful verse to remember because it reminds us of the change that is made in our hearts when we follow Jesus and the new life that we have through Jesus. It helps me to remember that **[THE POINT] Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him.** We celebrate Easter to remember that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and then came back to life again. This afternoon, sit down with your mom or dad and tell them this verse. Ask them to tell you what it means to them to know that Jesus died in their place and that He took the punishment they could never take, and that because of Him you can have new life.”

3. New Life Reminder

WHAT YOU NEED: some bright colors of tissue paper, plain paper, glue, scissors, markers, Bibles

Ask the kids in your small group what they can tell you about butterflies. Remind the kids that caterpillars go into a cocoon and a few days later come out as a new creation, a butterfly. Hand out the white paper and the tissue paper and encourage kids to draw and cut out a butterfly shape. Explain that they're going to decorate their paper butterfly with colorful tissue paper.

Before they color and decorate their butterflies with pieces of tissue paper, read and discuss the following verses about Jesus' resurrection and the new life that is only possible through Jesus....John 3:3, Acts 2:24, Acts 3:15, Romans 4:25, Romans 6:4, Romans 6:10, Romans 10:9, & 1 Peter 2:24, 2 Corinthians 5:17. Once you've read and discussed the verses, encourage kids to choose one of the verses and write it around the edges of their butterfly and then decorate the rest of their butterfly.

SAY: "Butterflies are an amazing example of God's creative power and an amazing reminder of Jesus' death and resurrection. When the caterpillar goes into the cocoon it's almost like Jesus dying and going into the tomb and when it comes out as a butterfly it's a new creation reminding us that **[THE POINT]** *Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him.* The Bible tells us that following Jesus means dying to our old selves and living again as new creations in Him as God changes us into the people He wants us to be. (you may want to use the word **sanctification** here...and explain that sanctification is God's process of recreating His people into the creations He designed us to be.)"

****FOR BOYS:** If you have a group of boys who won't want to make butterfly creations, go through the discussion about butterflies and read the verses, but skip the craft. Make sure kids get the comparison to Christ's death, burial and resurrection and understand that our sins were crucified with Christ and buried with Him so that we can live a new life with Him.

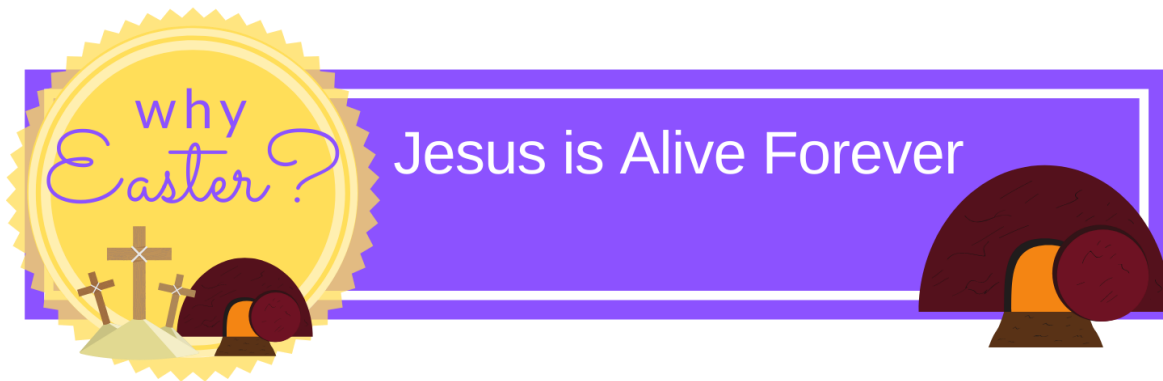
4. New Life Prayer

WHAT YOU NEED: The butterflies the kids just made

Have the kids put their completed butterflies on the floor or table in front of them. If you didn't make butterflies, draw a quick butterfly and put it in the middle of the group for the prayer time.

Give them a chance to say sentence prayers thanking God for the new life that's only possible through Jesus. Close by praying for each of the kids in your group by name that they would better understand this new life and what it means to have a relationship with God through Jesus. Take some time as you prepare for this lesson to think of the kids in your group and what you can pray for them. Consider praying some of the verses you just read such as... John 3:3, "help Sam to understand that unless he is born again, he will not see the kingdom of God" or 2 Corinthians 5:17, "help Paul to understand that if he is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." By praying scripture for the kids, you are not only praying for them, but you are giving them a great lesson in using God's Word to help them know what to pray for themselves and for others.

Conclude the session with a review and prayer.



Memory Verse: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke 19:10

Challenge Verse: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come." 2 Corinthians 5:17

John 20 reminds us that Jesus came back to life and now we can have new life with Him.

Day 1 – Read John 20:1-9

Work together as a family to act out this passage. Imagine what it would have been like for John & Peter when they looked in the tomb and saw the grave clothes folded neatly. What do you think they were thinking at that point? Verse 9 tells us that they still didn't understand that Jesus had to rise from the dead. Isaiah 53:11 & Psalm 16:10 might be the Scriptures that John is talking about in this verse. Read them and see what you think.

Day 2 – Read John 2:12-22

Not only did the Old Testament tell us that Jesus would rise again, but Jesus Himself had told the disciples (& others) that this would happen. Where do you see this truth in this story? Draw a picture of the resurrection and write John 2:19 somewhere on the page.

Day 3 - Read John 20:10-18

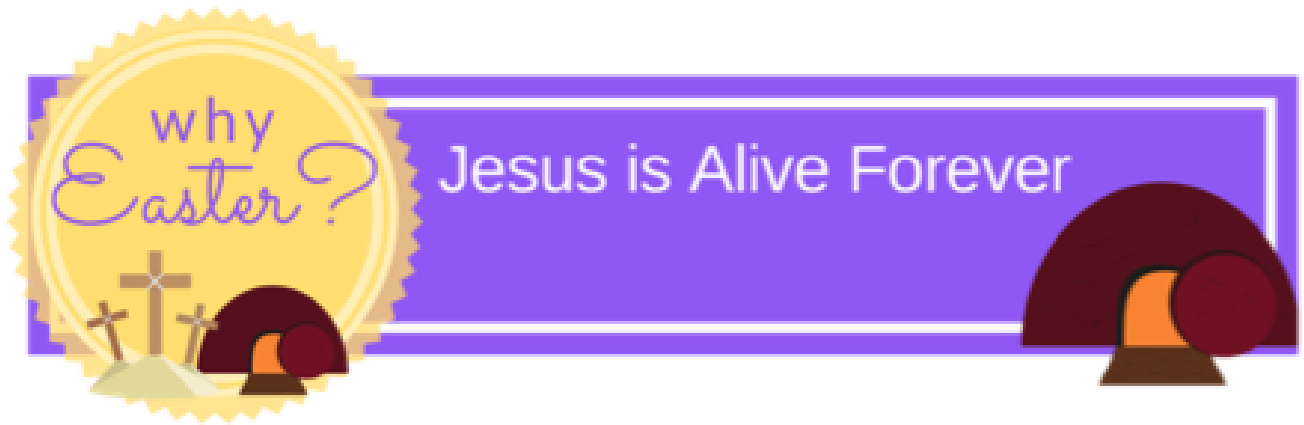
Imagine that you were Mary. Think about all of the different emotions that you would have felt at this time, grief, sadness, anger, confusion, joy, excitement, fear. Do you think the disciples believed her when she told them she had seen Jesus? How do we react when we hear that Jesus came back to life?

Day 4 - Read John 16:17-33

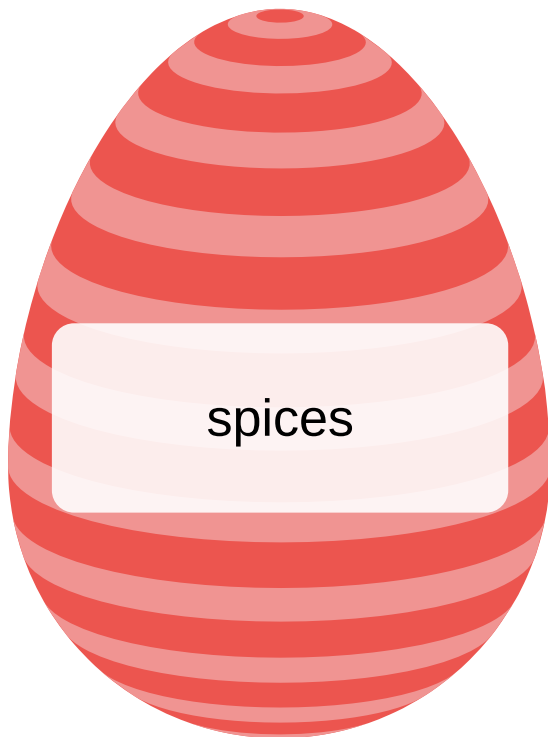
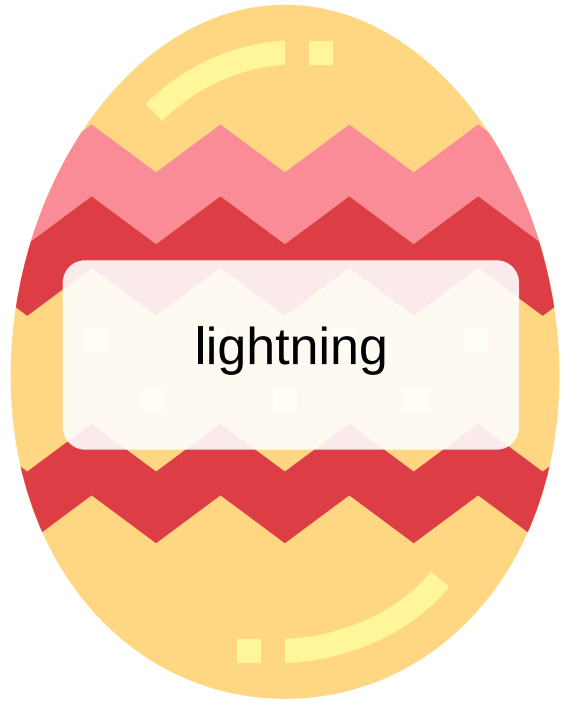
This is one of the last times that Jesus taught His disciples before He died on the cross. The disciples were sad because He's leaving them, but He leaves them with some hope. What does Jesus mean in verse 33 where He says that He has overcome the world? How did Jesus overcome the world? (hint....it has something to do with being alive).

Day 5 – Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-22

In these verses, Paul is teaching the church in Corinth why it was so important that Jesus came back to life. He reminds them that Jesus paid for our sin by His death and then teaches them that Jesus rose from the dead to break the power of sin. His death paid the price. His resurrection freed His people from the power of sin. Take a minute to stop and pray and thank God not only for Jesus' substitutionary death, but also for His life.



Week 5
Teaching Materials





Who went to the tomb early
Sunday morning?
(Matthew 28:1)



What did the angel
look like?
(Matthew 28:3)



What did the women
bring with them?
(Mark 16:1)



Who did the women tell that
Jesus had risen from the
dead?
(Luke 24:6)



What did the angel
tell the women?
(Luke 24:6)



Did the disciples believe
the women?
(Luke 24:11)

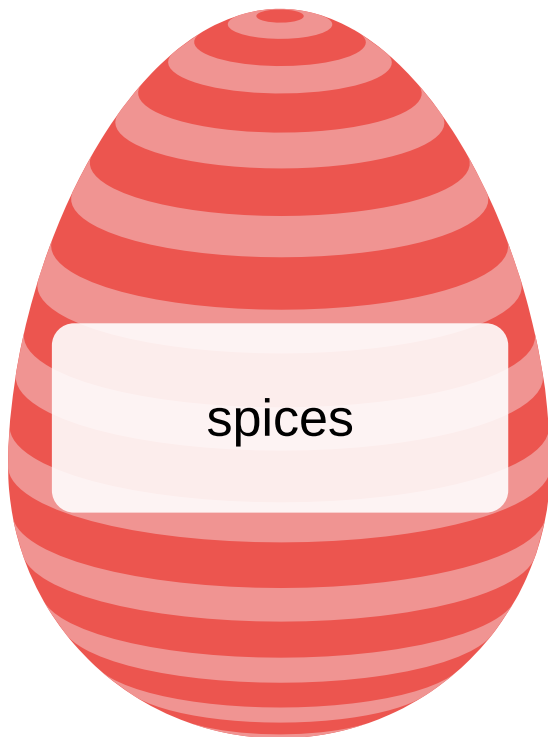
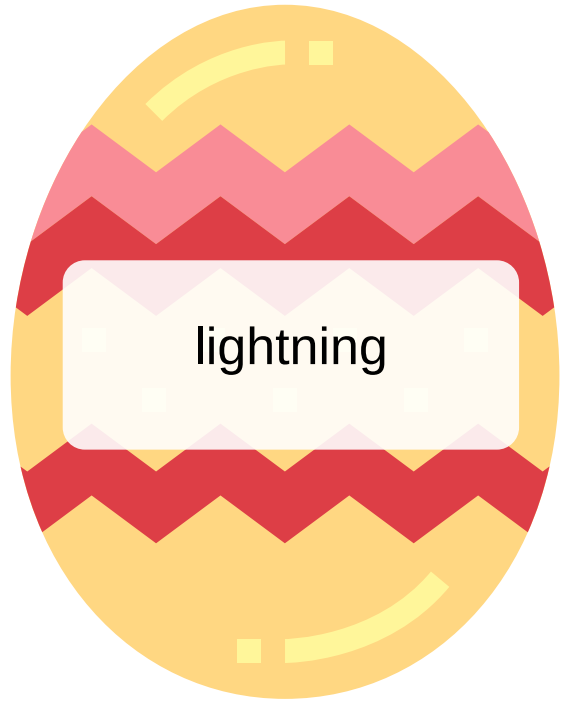


What was in the tomb when
the disciples looked in?
(John 20:5)



What did Mary notice when
she got to the tomb?
(John 20:1)









Who went to the tomb early Sunday morning?
(Matthew 28:1)



On what day did Jesus rise from the dead?
(1 Corinthians 15:4)



What did the angel look like?
(Matthew 28:3)



What did the angel tell the women?
(Luke 24:6)



Who did the women tell that Jesus had risen from the dead?
(Luke 24:6)



How many people saw Jesus after He rose from the dead?
(Luke 24:6)



What did the women bring with them?
(Mark 16:1)



Did the disciples believe the women?
(Luke 24:11)



What did Jesus say about the people who believed without seeing Him?
(John 20:29)



What was in the tomb when the disciples looked in?
(John 20:5)



What did Mary notice when she got to the tomb?
(John 20:1)



Why is the resurrection important?
(Romans 1:4)

