



Thank you for following the link to the answer sheet for **A Jesus Easter**. The answers for this family devotional are below. If you want to have more copies of this sheet, you can download the pdf by searching for **A Jesus Easter** on our website:

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## DAY 1

### GOD'S FIRST PROMISE

#### EXPLORE

Who lied to Adam and Eve? (verses 3-4)

*The serpent*

What did God promise about the serpent? (verses 14-15)

*God promised that the serpent would crawl on his belly and eat dust his whole life. God promised that the woman's descendants would always be enemies with the serpent. The serpent would always be Jesus's enemy and the enemy of all God's children.*

#### ENGAGE

Adam and Eve were probably sad and afraid after they sinned. How do you feel after you sin?

*Adults, encourage children to share honestly. To get the conversation going, recall a time when you were tempted to blame others for what you did wrong and then realized your need for Jesus and forgiveness.*

What is sin?

*Sin is trying to find happiness without God.*

When you feel you can't beat sin, how does God's promise of Jesus help you?

*Temptation is not the end of the story. Jesus came to win against the serpent. Jesus gives God's children love for God that is greater than love for sin. He also gives us power over sin. When we do sin, Jesus helps us repent and confess our sin to God for his forgiveness.*

Why is God's promise to send Jesus the best-ever promise?

*Jesus is God's promise to save us from the serpent and his lies. Jesus can make us God's child in his forever family.*

## DAY 2

### SAFE FOREVER

#### EXPLORE

Describe the world at the time God spoke to Noah. (6:11-13)

*The earth was corrupt (which means broken or rotten) and full of violence because of the people's sin.*

God flooded the whole earth with water. Afterwards, what promise did God make to Noah—and to us all? (9:15)

*Never again will all life be destroyed by a flood.*

#### ENGAGE

How is the flood a rescue plan that both comforts and warns us?

*God's judgment in the flood comforts us. We know that God always upholds justice. He will make right every wrong and punish all evil in our world. With perfect justice, he sent Jesus to pay the price for his children's sin. God's judgment in the flood also warns us. Those who are not yet God's child are warned to turn from sin and trust in Jesus. God mercifully forgives our sins and withholds the judgment we deserve.*

Does God let evil go on forever?

*No! God will not let evil and rebellion continue. God created us to be like him. But people ignore God. People did not want to live in close friendship with God. When people want their own way, God allows them to go their own way. But one day God will bring evil to an end entirely.*

What truths about God do you see in this story?

*God is faithful to rescue his children. God is trustworthy: the flood came just as he promised. God is just: he cannot ignore sin. God is merciful: he forgives the sins of his children and withholds the judgment they deserve. God is the powerful Creator.*

How is God the real hero of this story?

*Many people think Noah is the hero of this story. Noah was not perfect or sinless but he did love and trust God. Because of his love and trust, Noah is described as righteous, blameless, and faithful. God, the real hero, is just and gracious. God rescued Noah from judgment because God is gracious to save those who seek him with their mind and heart.*

### DAY 3

## GOD PLANS HIS FAMILY

#### EXPLORE

What did God tell Abram to do? (verse 1)

*To leave his country, his people, and his father's household to go to the land God would show him.*

What did God promise Abram? (verse 2-3 and 7)

*I will make you into a great nation / I will bless you and make your name great / You will be a blessing / I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you / All peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*

#### ENGAGE

Do you think Abram was afraid to follow God? What fears keep some people from trusting God?

*Abram may have feared the same things we do—not having all the answers or details; thinking of what we may have to give up or leave behind; fearing that God may reject us or that we don't have enough faith. Yet God often brings us to the end of our comfort and ability to understand. We can trust him because of who he is.*

Why do you think Abram was not afraid to follow God?

*In verse 4 we learn that Abram did not delay. Abram went as the LORD had told him. He trusted God and his promises.*

What promise is God calling you to believe, by faith?

*Adults, get the conversation going. Recall a time when you felt scared about following God. What Scripture did God help you remember that gave you courage and strength to do his will?*

Many people will be in God's family. Would you like to be?

*God's love is his greatest gift. Jesus paid for God's gift to us with his life. Would you like God to help you believe? You can ask him to help you believe the truth that we are his children because of what Jesus has done for us.*

### DAY 4

## SPEAKING GOD'S WORD

#### EXPLORE

Describe how Moses and the LORD spoke to one another. (verses 7-11)

*Moses went to the tent of meeting. All the people watched as Moses went out to the tent. The pillar of cloud stayed at the entrance of the tent. The LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.*

What help did Moses need from the LORD? (verses 12-13)

*Moses asked the LORD to let him know who God planned to send with him. He asked the LORD to teach him more so that he might know God and find favor with him.*

#### ENGAGE

What makes Jesus better than any other prophet?

*Jesus is God (Hebrews 1:1-3). Moses was faithful as God's prophet but Jesus is faithful as the Son over God's house (Hebrews 3:1-6; Colossians 1:15-17).*

How is Jesus different from Moses?

*Moses was a prophet but Jesus is God himself.*

What makes the Bible different than any other book?

*Some may look at the Bible as good advice or wise sayings but the truth is that it is the very words of the living God.*

How do we hear Jesus's words?

*Jesus speaks to us as we read the Bible.*

### DAY 5

## FRIENDS WITH GOD

#### EXPLORE

Who did God choose to be priests? (verses 12-15)

*God chose Aaron and his sons to be priests for his special family Israel.*

How did Aaron and his sons get ready to serve God as priests? (verses 12-15)

*They washed with water and dressed in sacred clothes. Aaron was set apart from the others (consecrated) as High Priest.*

#### ENGAGE

What happens when we believe the lie "live for yourself and be happy"?

*We live in the lie that happiness is being and doing what we want. But this leads to selfishness and sin. We were made for God and are only truly happy when we enjoy a relationship with him. Life with Jesus means doing whatever he wants—even when it means changing our plans.*

What makes us truly happy?

*True happiness is loving God, living for him, and enjoying a friendship with him forever.*

What in this lesson helps you love God more?

*Responses will vary. Encourage personal sharing by sharing something personal.*

Who is the Lamb of God?

*Jesus.*

## DAY 6 GOD'S CHOSEN KING

### EXPLORE

Who did God say would build a house for him? (verses 12-13)

*God said David's son would build a new house for God. He was talking about Solomon, David's son who became king after him. But he was also talking about Jesus, David's son's, son's, son's... son.*

How long will a king from David's family rule? (verses 13, 16)

*Forever! David's son's, son's, son's... son is Jesus. Jesus is God's forever king.*

### ENGAGE

How might knowing that God has good plans for you change what you want?

*Our plans and goals will always be too small. God has plans for us that are bigger than what we think we want. Through prayer, by his Spirit, God guides us into plans that are bigger than we can imagine. God lets us be in on his forever plans that only he is able to accomplish through us. We can ask God to guide us into his plan for our life—and he will!*

How was God's plan better than David's?

*God planned for Jesus to come and rescue all God's children forever.*

How will you pray for your family and friends?

*How about starting a family prayer list?*

What friend will you pray for today?

*Pray together for all the friends you listed. Perhaps more will come to your mind and heart as you pray.*

## DAY 7

### HARDSHIP AND HAPPINESS

#### EXPLORE

How did God's special family (Israel) respond to his warnings? (verses 15-16)

*They mocked God's messengers, despised his words, and scoffed at his prophets.*

Name at least four hardships God used for the good of his children. (verses 17-20)

*The Babylonians fought against them. King Nebuchadnezzar took all the treasures of the temple of God. Babylonian armies set fire to God's temple and the palaces. They broke down the wall surrounding Jerusalem.*

#### ENGAGE

Have you ever gone through a struggle that helped your love for God and others to grow? What happened?

*Adults, get the conversation going with your own experience with God. Talk about how you see God's bigger, deeper work in you through a trial you are facing. God loves us too much to leave us as we are. He is committed to our good—growth in faith and Christlike character.*

How does God show his love to us when we struggle?

*He speaks to us through his word, hears our prayers, and shows us his love. He uses our struggles for our good. He makes us more like Jesus.*

When you struggle, how does it help you to know that God's own Son suffered?

*It helps us to know that our suffering does not mean God does not love us. God did not spare his own Son but gave Jesus up for us all. Now we know that God will give us every good thing he promised (Romans 8:32). Jesus suffered in every way we do (yet without sin) and knows how to help us when we suffer. It is always foolish to turn away from God in our struggles. God can be trusted with what we cannot control or understand.*

What does this lesson help you know about God?

*God in his wisdom knows what is best for us. He warns us for our good. God is at work in every trial to grow our faith and make us more like Jesus.*

## DAY 8

### THE TREE STUMP

#### EXPLORE

Describe the new "branch" (really a person) that will come from the old stump. (verses 1-5)

*This branch (Jesus) will bear fruit; the Spirit of the LORD will be with him; he will have wisdom and understanding; he will be a counsellor; he will be strong; he will have*

knowledge and fear of the LORD; he will be righteous in judgment; and he will be faithful.

What will the world be like when this “branch” rules over it? (verses 6-9)

*King Jesus will rule! This world will not have sin or death or the serpent. We will have hearts that want to obey God whatever he says. And we will live with God in his beautiful new world forever.*

## ENGAGE

Why might our sin make us doubt that God will keep his promises to us?

*It's easy to think we are too bad for God to love us. We wonder why God would want us as his child. We think that trials mean God has given up on us.*

Who will be the King of God's beautiful new world?

Jesus

How does today's lesson help you have hope?

*It's easy to think God would not want me in his family—I haven't been good enough. But God keeps his promises because of who he is—not because of who you are. All God's children who trust in Jesus as their Rescuer are promised life forever with God.*

What does Jesus make new?

*Jesus will make a beautiful new world. He makes our minds new, so that they will never believe the serpent's lies again. He makes our hearts new, so that they will be ruled by Jesus. All God's goodness to us will last forever.*

## DAY 9

### THE SUFFERING SERVANT

#### EXPLORE

How is God's servant described? (52:13 – 53:3)

*He grew up as any human being would grow. His appearance was not special. He was hated and rejected. He would be disfigured and marred beyond human likeness. In all his ways, God's servant acted wisely. He would be raised and highly exalted.*

What do people think about God's servant? (53:4)

*People say his suffering is a punishment from God.*

#### ENGAGE

How is God's plan to forgive us different than “just be better”?

*Discipline and behavior modification often produce right behavior but leave our heart untouched. We all struggle to obey every day. How good to have a Rescuer who forgives us and gives us the desire and strength to obey! As Jesus helps us turn from our sin (repentance), he helps us love him more than our sin.*

Who is God's servant?

Jesus.

What is the best response to God's loving plan and Jesus's amazing love?

*To confess our sin to God and ask his forgiveness is our right response. Something like: “Father God, I see now that my heart loves what I love more than I love you. Please forgive me. I realize that I deserve the punishment for my sin against you. Jesus, thank you for taking my punishment and dying in my place. Now I'm free to live for you. Please help me to do that.”*

How did Jesus's life and death serve us?

*Jesus lived the perfect life for us. His innocence meant he could take our punishment to give us forever forgiveness.*

## DAY 10

### THE HERO OF HEAVEN

#### EXPLORE

List at least five phrases about how people will rejoice when Jesus returns. (verses 10-12)

*Sing to the LORD a new song; raise their voices; rejoice; sing for joy; shout from the mountaintops; give glory to the LORD and proclaim his praise.*

What four things will Jesus our Hero do? (verse 13)

*He will march out like a champion or like a warrior; he will be passionate in all he says and does; he will triumph over his enemies.*

#### ENGAGE

Next time you struggle with sharing your beliefs with friends, how can it help you to remember that Jesus is real and a hero?

*We tend to shrink back, wondering what our friends will think of us. Jesus was brave for us. He is stronger and bigger than anything we are afraid of. If Jesus lives in us, we don't need to be afraid. When we are afraid, he gives us courage to speak and live for him.*

How is Jesus different than a superhero?

*Jesus is real; superheroes are make-believe.*

With what people or in what situations do you find it hardest to live for Jesus? What do you need from Jesus to live for him?

*Think of situations with friends when it is hard to speak about Jesus. When your friend or sibling is doing what they want, why is it hard to obey God? Ask God to show you who to speak to, write a letter to, or help out. Ask Jesus to give you the courage and boldness to tell and live the truth. How about writing a prayer right now?*

What is courage? Will you ask Jesus for courage to live for him?

*Courage means not giving in to fear but saying and doing the right thing. We look to Jesus, who was courageous*

for us. He makes us brave too. Pray together for Jesus to give us courage and boldness to live for him.

## DAY 11

### AN ORDINARY-LOOKING KING

#### EXPLORE

Jesus (the true light) came into the world to give God's special family (Israel) forever life. What did they think of him? (verses 9-11)

*The whole world was made through Jesus, but God's special family did not accept him. He was different than the Messiah they expected. And so they did not welcome him.*

What did God give to everyone who received and believed in Jesus? (verses 12-13)

*The right to become God's child.*

#### ENGAGE

What does it mean to be God's child?

*Adam and Eve were created to live as children of God. Sin broke that relationship with God for them and everyone. God helps us see our sin and repent. He helps us trust Jesus to rescue us from sin's power and punishment. As we confess our sin and receive Jesus as our Rescuer, God makes us his child forever. We enjoy our oneness with him.*

Who shines light into our hearts?

*Jesus.*

Why do you think we need God's help to believe Jesus is our Rescuer and King?

*Sin blinds us to the truth about Jesus. The Bible says our hearts are dead to God (Ephesians 2:1-3). You can ask God for faith to trust Jesus as your Rescuer. Faith is a gift from God. Through faith, God opens our hearts to believe and receive Jesus as our Rescuer.*

How do we become God's child?

*God gives a place in his family to anyone who believes in Jesus as their Rescuer from sin.*

## DAY 12

### MARY'S GIFT

#### EXPLORE

How do Judas's words about Mary's gift show us what he loves? (verses 4-6)

*Judas's words show us his love for money. He tried to cover up his own love of money by pretending he cared for the poor.*

How does Mary's gift show us what she loves? (verses 3 and 7-8)

*Mary's costly gift showed the greatness of her love for Jesus. Nothing in life could make her as happy as Jesus made her.*

#### ENGAGE

God wants to change not only what we think and do, but most of all, he wants to change what we love. Why, do you think?

*Just to get you started: Sin is not just big, bad things we do. Sin is what breaks our hearts so we love ourselves most of all. The problem? We can't ever make ourselves truly happy, no matter how hard we try. Jesus came to fill our hearts with his life. His life in us fills us with the greatest love of all—true love of our Father God. What we love determines what we think, say and do. Jesus's love in us gives true purpose—a life that glorifies God.*

Why did Mary pour perfume on Jesus's feet?

*Mary believed Jesus was her Rescuer and gave him her most costly gift. She loved Jesus with all she had.*

What does it look like to live your life for Jesus?

*To live for Jesus means to give our life to him—our hands, feet, eyes, tongue, mind, and heart. To explore this, try the following activity. Draw two hearts. Label one heart "Self" and the other heart "Jesus". Write in the "Self" heart words to describe a life that loves self. Write in the "Jesus" heart words to describe a life that loves Jesus. Discuss what you discover about true happiness. Will you ask Jesus to help you love him?*

Who gives us true happiness—forever?

*Jesus.*

## DAY 13

### A PEACEFUL DONKEY

#### EXPLORE

Many people went out to see Jesus on his way to Jerusalem. What did they shout? (verse 13)

*"Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!"*

What was written long before about Jesus riding a donkey? (verse 15)

*The prophet Zechariah said, "Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king comes to you ... riding on a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9).*

#### ENGAGE

Why do you think peace with God is what we need more than anything? How does Jesus make a way for us to enjoy this peace?

*Our sin robs us of our greatest joy: peace with God.*

*Without a relationship with our Creator, we are lost, and life is without purpose and meaning. Without the right-ness of Jesus covering our sin, we will take the right anger of God for sin ourselves. More than anything else, we need Jesus's right-ness to cover our sin. Jesus saves us completely from the penalty of sin. God has no punishment left for his children. We will enjoy the presence of our Father, forever.*

How did the people want Jesus to help them?

*The people hoped Jesus would use his power to fight the Romans who made life hard for them.*

Who do you know who you would like to have peace with God?

*Ask God to bring a friend, family member, or neighbor to mind, then ask him to get their heart ready to hear the good news about Jesus. Ask God to show you the right time to share the truth about Jesus so they can become God's own child too!*

What did Jesus give the people (and us) that was better than they wanted?

*Peace with God.*

## DAY 14 JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

### EXPLORE

Why did Jesus make all the money changers leave the temple? (verse 13)

*God's word says that his temple is a house of prayer, not a shopping mall.*

How did the religious leaders react when they saw the wonderful things Jesus did? (verse 15)

*The religious leaders were angry.*

### ENGAGE

What helps you the most about knowing that Jesus makes your heart his home?

*Responses will vary. Talk about the beauty of a close relationship: how Jesus helps us understand and apply God's word; how he shows us a way out of temptation; how he guides us in paths of righteousness, and comforts us with his nearness; etc. How will you help each other be more aware of Jesus's nearness? Remember that he loves you and wants to meet with you. You don't have to have all the right words. He hears your thoughts.*

What was God's temple supposed to be for?

*God's temple was a place for people to meet with God.*

What things help us enjoy our closeness with Jesus? Tell about a time when you felt close to him.

*We enjoy our closeness with Jesus when we remember his love for us. He helps us know he is close to us when we talk*

*to him like we do our best friend. We feel close when we know he made us—he hears what we think.*

Who is God's temple today?

*Jesus is God's true temple and he makes our hearts his home. All God's children are his temple.*

## DAY 15 BETRAYAL!

### EXPLORE

Who was looking for a way to get rid of Jesus? (verse 2)

*The chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, because they were afraid of the people.*

What did they agree to give Judas if he would help them? (verse 5)

*They agreed to give him money.*

### ENGAGE

What lies did Judas believe that impacted the choices he made?

*Judas believed money would make him happy. Judas believed the lies that he told himself about what is right, instead of believing the truth of God's word.*

What were some of Judas's wrong choices?

*Judas chose to love money more than God. He believed his feelings more than God's word. He betrayed Jesus for money.*

How does knowing the truth about God and Jesus impact the choices you make?

*Responses will vary; encourage personal reflection. You could ask, How is God helping you understand the lies you have believed?*

How did God use Judas as part of his plan?

*Judas acted in an evil way when he betrayed Jesus. He was guilty. But God worked out his plan for Jesus through Judas. At the cross, Jesus crushed the serpent's lie and opened the way for God's children to live with him forever.*

## DAY 16 THE LAST SUPPER

### EXPLORE

Who did Jesus eat his last Passover meal with? (verse 14)

*The twelve apostles who were all around the table with him.*

How are the cup and the bread a picture of Jesus?  
(verses 19-20)

*Jesus said the bread is his body given for us; the cup of the fruit of the vine is his blood poured out for us.*

## ENGAGE

How does being God's child impact the way you live?

*Life as God's child is always satisfying. It involves repenting; loving people who are hard to love; helping friends even before I help myself; obeying Mom and Dad; listening to teachers; reading the Bible and praying; attending church and encouraging others at church; sharing the truth about Jesus with my neighborhood friends. Life as God's child is fulfilling and truly satisfying!*

What does Jesus want us to remember about him?

*We remember that Jesus's blood saves us from the forever sadness of loving our own way. His broken body fills us with his life and gives us strength to obey God.*

How do you see Jesus's life in you—helping you to change and live a truly happy life?

*Start by sharing what choices we all face each day—what to wear, watch, say to our friends, and do with our time. Do you think Jesus would like to make any changes to your choices? Discuss why change is sometimes slow. How can you help each other remember to ask Jesus for help?*

What does it mean to know Jesus and live for him?

*To know Jesus is to have a relationship with him—to become his child.*

*Is your child God's child? You may sense the Holy Spirit at work in your child's heart to believe and receive God's gift of new life in Christ. Lead your child in a short prayer to thank God for sending Jesus to live for us and die for us. Your child may be ready to ask Jesus to forgive his or her sin and live for him. Pray for a genuine response.*

## DAY 17

### FAITH THAT NEVER FAILS

#### EXPLORE

What did Peter say when Jesus warned that all the disciples would run away? (verse 33)

*"Even if all fall away ... I never will."*

What did Peter say when Jesus said he would disown him three times? (verse 35)

*"Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you."*

#### ENGAGE

How can you help a friend who doubts if they are God's child?

*The strength of our faith rests on God's love and God's truth. Has your friend trusted in Jesus as their Rescuer? God says that all who trust in Jesus are God's children in his*

*forever family. Doubts will fade when we realize we will still wrestle with sin. But we also see Jesus giving us strength to make us more like himself. God's children confess their sin more quickly so that we can enjoy our close friendship with God.*

Who rescues us from sin?

*Jesus.*

Peter learned that he needed Jesus's help. What help do you need to ask Jesus for?

*What sinful habits will you ask Jesus to help you overcome? Even if you can't think of a specific situation you need help with now, write a prayer in advance—expecting to use it in the near future! To get you started: turn back to Jesus and ask for help to believe the truth. "I love you, Jesus. You are my Rescuer. Please help! I do not know what to think or how to do what is right. I will wait for you to show me the way and give me strength to do what is right."*

Do we hold on to Jesus or does he hold on to us?

*No matter how strong our faith is, we always need Jesus. He holds on to us (John 10:28-29).*

## DAY 18 IN THE GARDEN

#### EXPLORE

What did Jesus tell his disciples to do? (verse 40)

*Jesus told his disciples to pray that they would not sin when they were tempted.*

When Jesus faced temptation, what did he ask his Father? (verse 42)

*Jesus asked if his Father would find a way to rescue us other than the cross. Through prayer and the Holy Spirit, Jesus then said, "Not my will, but yours be done."*

#### ENGAGE

Next time you are tempted to be afraid, angry, lie, cheat, be greedy, or (fill in the blank), how can knowing that Jesus gives us all we need in every temptation help you?

*Open the conversation by asking what temptations we all face. Then ask, What makes temptation so hard? Temptation is hard because our hearts want to find happiness our own way instead of in Jesus. But we can beat temptation by reminding ourselves that Jesus is better. Jesus gives us help to overcome temptation. If we ask for his help, we know he will always give it (1 Corinthians 10:12-13).*

Who was tempted in every way we are, but never sinned?

*Jesus.*

When your friends are tempted, how could you use what you know about Jesus to encourage them?

*Pray for good, honest conversation. Pray for opportunities*

to encourage others to know Jesus's strength to trust and obey God when they are tempted by the message of the latest movie, social media or music.

How does Jesus help us obey our Father God?

*He gives us understanding of our enemy, our weaknesses, and the power of God's help through his word, his Spirit, and prayer.*

## DAY 19 THE PLAN UNFOLDS

### EXPLORE

What signal did Judas give to the armed crowd who came to arrest Jesus? (verses 48-49)

*Judas kissed Jesus and called him "Rabbi".*

How was Jesus's plan different than his friend's plan? (verses 51-54)

*Jesus's friend planned to fight with weapons. Jesus didn't need his friend to fight. He planned for the Scriptures to be fulfilled. Jesus knew God planned the cross to free us from the serpent's lie.*

### ENGAGE

How does understanding that the Bible tells one story and not lots of different stories help you?

*The Bible tells one story of God's plan for Jesus and his beautiful new forever family. This helps us trust God's love for us and his all-powerful character. Only God is great enough (and loving enough) to carry out his great big plan!*

Name at least one promise in the Bible that Jesus came to fulfill.

*Jesus is the Rescuer God promised (Genesis 3:15). Jesus is the true Prophet God promised (Deuteronomy 18:15). Jesus is the King God promised (2 Samuel 7:12-13). Jesus came to give us the forgiveness God promised (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

## DAY 20 THE COURTROOM

### EXPLORE

Who thought they were good enough to judge Jesus? (verse 66)

*The chief priests and the teachers of the law—that is, the religious leaders.*

What did Jesus tell the religious leaders about himself? (verses 67-70)

*Jesus told them he is the "Son of Man [who] will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God". When the leaders asked, "Are you then the Son of God?", he replied, "You say that I am".*

### ENGAGE

Sometimes we have a hard time thinking of sins to confess and asking for forgiveness. Why do you think this is?

*We often only see what we want to see about our attitudes and actions (i.e. we have blind spots); pride in our hearts makes us defend ourselves; we want to justify our actions instead of admitting our sin. We can ask God to help us see our blind spots. We can ask God to give us willing hearts to love his truth more than our sin.*

Who is the real judge—the religious leaders or Jesus?

*Jesus.*

Take a moment to think quietly: are you trying to carry the sadness of any sin alone? Will you confess this to Jesus and receive his joy-filled forgiveness?

*Allow everyone to think quietly on their own. Adults may spark some conversation with personal examples.*

What does Jesus give to all who confess their sin?

*His forgiveness.*

## DAY 21 PONTIUS PILATE

### EXPLORE

Who wanted Jesus to be judged by Pilate? (verse 35)

*The Jewish people and chief priests.*

Why did Jesus come into the world? (verse 37)

*Jesus came into the world to tell us the truth and be the truth for us.*

### ENGAGE

What are some lies you hear about God today? What truth about Jesus needs to replace these lies?

*Responses will vary. Examples might include that Jesus is just a good teacher or a moral example, or that there's more than one way to God. Clarify that Jesus is the way, truth and life—no one comes to the Father except through Jesus.*

Who was Pilate?

*The Roman ruler over the Jewish people.*

How might you encourage friends, family, and neighbors with the truth about Jesus?

*Ask God for guidance and courage to talk with whoever he brings to mind. Ask your friend how you can pray for him or her. Write a card with your favorite verse. Invite your friend to go your church service or youth group.*

What if Pilate had believed God's truth—Jesus?

*King Jesus would have rescued him. Pilate would have become the Father's child in his beautiful family. Pilate would have entered God's forever kingdom.*



## DAY 22

### THE CRIMINAL WHO WENT FREE

#### EXPLORE

Why did Pilate want to release Jesus? (verses 13-16)

*Pilate examined Jesus and found he was innocent of the charges the religious leaders had brought against him.*

How did the crowd respond to Pilate? What happened as a result? (verses 23-25)

*The crowd insisted that Jesus be crucified and Pilate decided to grant their demand. Pilate released another prisoner instead.*

#### ENGAGE

When are you most tempted to sin? Why?

*Responses will vary. Help your child to identify areas of weakness in character and actions. When do you excuse yourself with thoughts of, "Oh that's just the way I am"? How can you help each other this week to depend on Jesus and live for him?*

Who gives us the real freedom we need?

*Jesus.*

When you know that Jesus sets us free to live for him, how does it change the way you think about temptation?

*Jesus understands us and can help us. As a child and as a man, Jesus was tempted to sin. Jesus knows what it is like to be tempted in every way that we are. He overcame every type of temptation we face with the gifts God gives every believer: God's word, prayer, and the Holy Spirit. He loves us and has the power to help us with every need. Even though Jesus never sinned, he understands and will give you strength to live for God.*

What is the real freedom we need?

*We need freedom from temptation and sin; freedom to live for Jesus.*

## DAY 23

### WEeping WOMEN

#### EXPLORE

How did the women following Jesus react when they saw his cuts and bruises? (verse 27)

*They mourned and wailed for Jesus.*

Who did Jesus tell them to cry for instead of him? Why? (verses 28-30)

*Jesus told them to cry for themselves and their children—not him. For a day of judgment was coming when they would wish they could hide.*

#### ENGAGE

How does this lesson help you know and love God more?

*Responses will vary; encourage individual responses. Help your children to think about God's love, mercy, and justice.*

What ruins our beautiful friendship with God?

*Our sin.*

Why are the truths about Jesus in this lesson both comforting and challenging?

*Jesus is both God's Judge and our hiding place. Which is he for you? Repentance is our right response to God. He is our Father, holy and right. You may sense God's readiness to ask your family: What sin is God revealing to you today and what will you do?*

Who will Jesus rescue?

*Jesus is the hiding place from hell for all God's children who trust him as their Rescuer.*

## DAY 24

### THREE CROSSES

#### EXPLORE

Why were the two men with Jesus going to be executed? (verse 32)

*The two men were criminals and hung on crosses to pay for their crimes.*

What truth about Jesus did one criminal know? (verse 40-41)

*He knew that Jesus did not deserve to be crucified. He had done nothing wrong.*

#### ENGAGE

What would you tell a friend who thinks their sin is too big for God to forgive?

*Jesus forgives everyone who repents and wants to love him more than their sin (Acts 3:19). God promises to forgive his children no matter what their sin.*

What differences do you see between the two criminals?

*One criminal knew he deserved his punishment. He believed Jesus was God's King and he wanted to be with Jesus in heaven. He asked Jesus to take him to heaven. The other criminal yelled at Jesus.*

How does it make you feel to know Jesus promises heaven to all who ask for his forgiveness?

*Think of all that Jesus is and what his promise of heaven means to you. Jesus is our beautiful, loving Rescuer. Our sin is a huge debt we cannot pay. Jesus paid this enormous debt for you with his life's blood. Use words that describe your heart response to Jesus: surprised, amazed, in awe, excited, happy.*

Are any sins too big for God to forgive?

No!

## DAY 25 THE CURTAIN TEARS

### EXPLORE

Describe what happened at the time Jesus died.  
(verses 44-46)

*It was about noon; it became dark until 3 p.m.; the sun stopped shining; the temple curtain tore in two; Jesus called out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit"; Jesus took his last breath.*

What did the centurion do and say when he saw Jesus on the cross? (verse 47)

*The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, "Surely this was a righteous man."*

### ENGAGE

If a friend paid for your ticket to a concert, you would thank them. But if you owed someone ten million dollars and a friend paid for you, you'd never stop thanking them! How does it make you feel to know Jesus fully paid the debt you could never pay so you could have the greatest gift you could ever have?

*Responses may vary. We can cultivate gratitude in our hearts through contemplating Jesus—all he is and everything he finished for us. What words describe your feeling of gratitude to Jesus?*

What does the torn curtain show us?

*Jesus's blood paid for our sin and the way is open for us to become God's child.*

Look back at Day 5. Why is Jesus a better priest than Aaron?

*Aaron could show God's children how to come closer to God. But only Jesus can heal our broken friendship with God.*

What did Jesus say when he finished paying for all your sin?

*"It is finished" (John 19:30).*

## DAY 26 THE TOMB

### EXPLORE

List everything we learn about Joseph in verses 57-60.

*Joseph from Arimathea was a disciple of Jesus. He asked Pilate for Jesus's dead body. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of a rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away.*

Who watched Joseph from the opposite the tomb? (verse 61)

*Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.*

### ENGAGE

After a friend who trusted Jesus dies, why do we still feel sad even though we know they are with Jesus?

*We miss them and may be lonely without their closeness. Our loneliness at their death makes us sad. We do not need to be ashamed of crying. Jesus was sad when his friend died (John 11:33-35).*

Who wrapped Jesus's dead body and placed it in his own new tomb?

*Joseph.*

What an awesome place awaits God's children! How can knowing the truth about heaven help you today?

*Talk about the death of a loved one and how everyone reacted differently to the grief. What questions about death does your child still have? Answer your family's questions with Scripture—John 14:2-3; Revelation 21:1-4; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:42-57. Pray for friends who need comfort after the death of a loved one.*

What is the reason we do not need to fear death?

*Jesus won the battle over death. We need no longer fear the punishment of sin and death. When God's children close their eyes on earth, they will open them to see Jesus in heaven.*

## DAY 27 BACK TO LIFE FOREVER

### EXPLORE

How was the women's reaction to the angel of the Lord different from the guards' reaction? (verses 4, 8)

*The women were afraid but reacted in faith—they believed the angel and did what he said. The guards were filled with fear, and fainted.*

As the women hurried away, who met them and what did he say? (verses 9-10)

*Jesus met them. Jesus told them not to be afraid and to go tell the disciples to meet him in Galilee.*

### ENGAGE

How can you be sure that Jesus is alive today?

*Over 500 people saw Jesus after his resurrection. For 40 days, Jesus talked and even ate with people. All his promises are true! Jesus is alive today. He lives in heaven. And by his Spirit he also lives in the minds and heart of all he has rescued from sin.*

Is Jesus alive today?

Yes!

When the women heard Jesus they knew he was alive! How does knowing that you are talking with a real live person help you to pray? What will you ask Jesus for today?

*Jesus is not an idea or force. As a person, he speaks to us by the power of the Holy Spirit living in us, through the Bible. When you pray, you don't need any special words. Just come to God through faith in Jesus and he will hear you. We can ask him to help us understand that he is a real live person. He gives us big thoughts about himself and ourselves. He quiets our fears with faith.*

What is it like for God's children to talk to Jesus?

*God helps his children talk with Jesus like we might talk to a best friend.*

## DAY 28

### THE PLAN REVEALED

#### EXPLORE

What did Jesus tell the two disciples about the Messiah? (verses 25-27)

*That the prophets spoke about how the Messiah would suffer before going to heaven. Jesus taught them—beginning with Moses and going through the prophets—what is said in the Scriptures about God's plan to rescue us through Jesus's life, death, and resurrection.*

When did the disciples know it was Jesus speaking to them? (verses 30-32)

*When Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and began to give it to them, God opened their eyes to see that it was Jesus. They also realized that as Jesus taught them from the Scriptures, God was at work in their hearts.*

#### ENGAGE

In heaven we'll hear Jesus speak to us face to face. How can we get to know Jesus today?

*We can get to know Jesus today by talking to him (prayer) and listening to him (reading his word).*

What one story does God's word tell us?

*God's word tells us that he always planned for Jesus to die and rise to new life to rescue us. Jesus rescues us to make us God's children in his beautiful new forever family.*

Describe what you think it means that the joy we will have with Jesus in heaven will be better than any happiness we've ever known.

*Responses will vary. Heaven will be one big WOW! Way better than God's garden for Adam and Eve. Jesus will give God's children real and perfect bodies like his. Sickness, quarrels, and death will never bother us again. We will love Jesus and each other fully.*

What will be the best thing about heaven?

*Everything good in this life is only a shadow of the amazing forever life God has planned for us. Living with Jesus and hearing him speak to us face to face will be the best of all!*

## DAY 29

### GOOD NEWS

#### EXPLORE

Compare what Jesus told his friends in verses 44-46 and what he told the two disciples in verses 25-31.

*In verses 25-31, Jesus explained how Moses and the prophets talked about him. Jesus told his friends that they were foolish and slow to believe what the prophets had said about how the Messiah would have to suffer. He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. To the two disciples, Jesus asked why they had doubts. His life, death, and resurrection fulfilled what was said in the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. Jesus opened their minds to believe.*

How would Jesus's promised gift help his friends? (verses 48-49)

*Jesus reminded them that they had witnessed his life, death, and resurrection. He would give them the Holy Spirit to provide the power they would need to tell others the good news of the gospel.*

#### ENGAGE

What does it mean to trust Jesus to help you talk with your friends about him?

*Everyone puts their trust in someone or something. Talk about what it means for us to trust our parents or for airplane passengers to trust the pilot. God knows we need his help always. Jesus loves us and he is able to do all things. Jesus knows we are often afraid. Yet, trusting Jesus always leads to true happiness. We can remember that he reached out to us when we were his enemies. We are to act wisely, but trusting God means we do take risks. We are to show his kindness and share the good news of Jesus. How else will people hear that Jesus is alive and they can trust him?*

What gift did Jesus promise to give his friends?

*Jesus promised to give his friends the Holy Spirit to help them tell others about him.*

What would you tell a friend who thinks God's children should keep quiet about their faith?

*God has a purpose for giving us friends. He puts us with certain people to speak and live the truth of the gospel. God uses our imperfect words and lives to bring people to faith in Jesus. Pray for God to help you admit sin and be quick to forgive. Being honest about our failures is often the best way to show the gospel to our friends.*

How does Jesus help us tell his good news?

*He gives us his Holy Spirit. He makes us willing to go where he sends. When we fear people, he strengthens us to trust him. He opens people's ears to hear the truth about Jesus. He gives people faith to believe in Jesus.*

## DAY 30

### EVERYTHING CHANGES

#### EXPLORE

Before Jesus went up into heaven, what did he tell his friends? (verses 4-5, 7-8)

*Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will give you power to be my witnesses close to home, away from home, and even in far-away places.*

After Jesus went up into heaven, what did the two men tell Jesus's friends? (verses 10-11)

*This same Jesus, who has gone up into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.*

#### ENGAGE

The Holy Spirit helps us learn to make wise choices. Sometimes that means giving up what we love for what we will come to love better—pleasing God. If we give up something we love, what message does that send to those around us?

*It means we have discovered something that is even more awesome and makes us happier than what we gave up!*

What is Jesus doing today?

*Today Jesus is alive in heaven praying for you and for God's beautiful family. He lives in all God's children through the Holy Spirit.*

When we receive Jesus as our Rescuer, the Holy Spirit puts his love into us. God's love gets us excited about helping our neighbor get what is best. How could you and your family show God's love to someone this week?

*Here are some ideas to get you started: invite friends to join you for family devotions or church; share your journal picture with your friend; take a sweet treat to them as a gift. How can our love for our neighbor look like the love we have for ourselves? Ask the Holy Spirit to give you strength to be his witness to your neighbor and watch what he does!*

Who is the Holy Spirit?

*The Holy Spirit is God. As God, the Holy Spirit can give us the new heart that Jesus promised us. We may not always feel close to God. But the Holy Spirit helps us taste heaven in God's word. The serpent keeps lying. But we begin wanting a closer closeness to our Father. And the Holy Spirit gives us more joy in pleasing God than in sin.*