

Junior Soldiers

Unit 11 : Lesson 4

Let's Celebrate!



PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand that we can celebrate today (and any day) because Jesus overcame a huge challenge at Easter—he defeated death and beat the Devil and established himself as the ruler of the world. Yay!

‘The women were frightened and yet very happy, as they hurried from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and greeted them. They went near him, held on to his feet, and worshiped him.’

Matthew 28:8-9

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20

1 Corinthians 15:1-28

There are many lessons that can be taught based on the events of the first Easter, and many ‘angles’ that can be used to approach Easter, each revealing a different truth for Christians. This lesson focuses on the victory that Jesus won at Calvary and that we share in that victory.

Generally the winner walks away from a fight! So it may be difficult for the children to understand how Jesus died and was victorious. The victory, of course, was in his resurrection. Jesus was sent by God to save the world, and when he died on the cross and was placed in the tomb Satan may well have danced in delight. However...a few days later Jesus was back. Satan had done his darndest—he’d killed God’s Son—but not even that stopped Jesus. Jesus conquered death and Satan was defeated.

This lesson can be used in conjunction with one of the other Easter lessons, Unit 7 Lesson 10, or they can both be done as standalone lessons.



What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- Resources for the 'minute to win it' challenges that you choose
- Plain crown templates or cardboard to cut out your own
- Stickers, textas, crayons, pencils, coloured paper, foil, jewels, beads, glue, foam letter or shape stickers etc.
- Scissors

For 'Tying In'

- Blank Sheet of A4 or A3 paper
- Drawing implements – textas, pencils, crayons etc

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards for each child.



Connecting In

'Minute to win it' challenges...

Choose some 'minute to win it' challenges from the website (<http://au.tv.yahoo.com/minute-to-win-it/games/>). It would be good to choose some activities that will not be too difficult for your children to succeed at, so that they can know the joy of winning, show their winning face and shout out 'Winner'. Make sure that all children have the chance to play a game; you might like to have a couple of children doing the activity at the same time.

Link: 'We have all had a chance to play some 'minute to win it' games. How does it feel when you win something (*give the children opportunity to respond*)? We are going to talk today about how Jesus might have felt when He rose from the dead—when he overcame death. (*Get the children to share what they think Jesus might have said when he rose from the dead.*) I hope that you will be reminded of Jesus being a winner and overcoming death when you win things and overcome challenges. And remember that not only did Jesus beat death, but he wants to be our friend forever.

Crowns...

You will need some cardboard or pre-cut crown templates, stickers, textas, crayons, pencils, coloured paper, foil, jewels, beads, glue, foam letter or shape stickers, scissors etc. for this activity. Give the children the opportunity to create their own crown and decorate it.

Link: Who wears a crown (*give the children opportunity to respond: king, queen, prince, princess, royalty, someone in charge*)? Today we have made a crown to remind us that Jesus is in charge. When Jesus overcame death He was given all the power and authority to be in charge of everything—you might say 'king of the world'. Queen Elizabeth II is in charge of England and 54 other members of the Commonwealth of Nations, including Australia, and there are many other kings and queens around the world who are in charge of their country or kingdom, but none quiet like Jesus. Jesus is king of everything and has been given the power and authority to rule over all the Earth, and that's amazing!' (*You might like to get the children to write or add letters to their crown to say 'Jesus = King of the World'.*)



The Main Thing

Who likes to win?

Who likes to win? Maybe you like to win a game, at sport, in a race, on the PlayStation or Xbox.

I wonder if you have ever watched the face and actions of someone who wins. Maybe you remember seeing some of the expressions and actions of the athletes from the Olympic games, or when a tennis player wins their match, or when a bowler takes a wicket in cricket or a soccer player gets a goal.

Perhaps you have got a strike when ten pin bowling and you have done 'the strike dance'.

Maybe it has not been that you have won something, but it certainly feels like it when you overcame a challenge or finished a major task and it felt like a win.

I am sure that you have all experienced this and seen others that have experienced it too. I wonder if that is how Jesus would have felt when he rose from the dead after three days. I wonder what His face would have looked like or what He would have said when he came out from the tomb...

(Get a couple of people to show their facial expressions and what they think Jesus would have said/yelled.)

Let's all have a go—you're Jesus, conquering death and coming back to life and bursting out of the tomb—on the count of three: one, two, three...

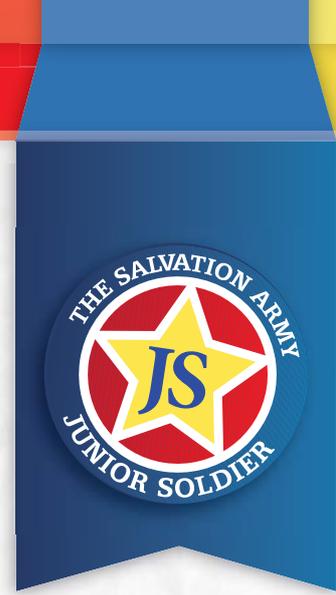
Well, today as we think about Easter we can celebrate because Jesus overcame a huge challenge—he overcame death and defeated the Devil and established himself as the ruler of the world. He has full authority. No-one is more powerful than him and yet he wants to be your friend. I would like you all to help me with some actions so that we can all remember and celebrate this fact.

Show the actions that you would like them to help you with; make sure that all adults and children are participating.

- Chaos: wave your arms around in the air madly and say 'boogity boogity' over and over again, fast.
- Overcame death: arms in muscle man pose like Mr Universe and roar 'Aaaggh!' like a giant.
- All authority: one arm punching the sky (can add a jump too if you like) saying, 'He's the King of the World!'
- BFFs: high-five the person next to you and say 'You're my BFF' (Best Friend Forever).

Okay, as I read the passage I want you to be listening for those words (Chaos, Overcame death, All Authority and BFF); when you hear the words I want you all to do your action and make the sound.

'When God created the world, it was perfect. But when Adam and Eve chose to sin, into the world came **chaos**. Even though God tried to warn people to obey and honour him, they seemed to prefer the **chaos**. Finally, God sent his own son, Jesus to help people. But Satan wasn't very happy about this, he liked **chaos**. When Jesus died on the cross, Satan was happy, but three days later, Jesus rose from the dead: he **overcame death**. Yes, he **overcame death**. Did I mention that Jesus **overcame death**? Okay. When that had happened, Jesus told his followers that **all authority** had been given to him and he could give **all authority** to his followers to do miracles and wonders in his name. Jesus wanted to be **BFF** with his disciples and he wants to be **BFF** with you, too!'



Tying In

I wonder...

Each child will need a blank sheet of paper either A4 or A3 and some drawing implements.

Using the paper and drawing implements provided think about one of the following questions and ponder what sort of expression Jesus might have had. Create an image that shows what you think in regards to the following.

- I wonder what Jesus looked like when He overcame death... when he won... and was given ALL the power... (*draw this*)
- I wonder if Jesus was excited when He came out of the tomb... (*draw this*)

'You know, Jesus was indeed victorious at Easter, but he wasn't thrilled because of how clever or strong or tricky or amazing he was—he was thrilled because he had fulfilled the mission that God gave him on Earth, he was thrilled because Satan was defeated, and he was thrilled because all of us now have a new hope. We share in his victory!'

Let's Celebrate...

'As we finish today let's celebrate in prayer.'

Get all the children to stand in a circle and think about how they would feel if they had just won something or overcome something amazing. Ask them to come up with an action and a phrase that celebrates who Jesus is and what He did for us at Easter, e.g. Jesus you are amazing! Jesus you are king of the world! etc.

Take turns going around the circle and showing their action and phrase—ask all the other children and leaders to copy the action and phrase and then move onto the next person.

Finish by saying 'Thank you, Jesus' together.



Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Review the message...

Provide each child with the outline of the actions and the story that you used today in the lesson. Encourage them to repeat the message a couple of times throughout the week with their family so that they can celebrate the good news together. Pray at the end, thanking and celebrating how Jesus has rescued us.

At Easter we celebrate because Jesus overcame a huge challenge—he overcame death and defeated the Devil and established himself as the ruler of the world. He has full authority. No-one is more powerful than him and yet he wants to be your friend. Do some actions to help remember and celebrate this fact.

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Read the passage below and do the actions together.

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