



GLOSSARY

ASK: Ask a question that will help them to think about how this information makes a difference in the life.

SHARE: Talk about your own experience as a disciple of Jesus.

EXPLAIN: This is a piece of information that will help to explain the topic.

Why Did Jesus Die?

'Even when we were God's enemies he made peace with us, because his Son died for us. Yet something even greater than friendship is ours. Now that we are at peace with God, we will be saved by his Son's life.'
Romans 5:10 (CEV)

God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn its people. He sent him to save them!
John 3:16-17 (CEV)

Consider and Prepare

Jesus' death on the cross is very sad for everyone who loves him. It is most confusing and distressing for the little children who love Jesus; they see his gentleness, the way he loves children and cares for those who don't get noticed, and he silences the bullies. It is a real shock therefore, in a story-filled world where gentle heroes always win, to have a hero who dies (and still wins).

There are plenty of answers to the question "why did Jesus die?"

1. Because the Romans killed him on a cross.
2. Because the religious leaders of the time saw Jesus as a threat to the stability and security of the Jewish people and believed that killing Jesus would re-stabilise their nation.
3. Because Jesus willingly submitted to God's plan to bring the people of this world back to him that he gave up his life on the cross to save us all from our sin.

The most important answer for Christians is point 3. Because he was willing to save the whole world!

Chat

ASK: What are some of the rules in our/ your family?

ASK: What happens if you disobey one of these rules (These are called consequences)?

EXPLAIN: When we disobey a rule there are consequences or punishments. Rules are made to keep us safe and to help us to live well together with other people. The worst consequence of breaking rules is that people get hurt and friendships can be broken.

ASK: Can you think of a rule that helps to keep you safe?

SHARE: A rule that can help me to live well with other people is...

EXPLAIN: God has rules for us too. His rules were also made to keep us safe and to help us to live well together with other people. He gave us these rules because He loves us. When we disobey God's rules it hurts our friendship with Him. This means that we cannot keep living with Him forever - the consequence is death. Sadly, everyone disobeys God's rules sometimes.

ASK: How do you feel about that?

EXPLAIN: So, why did Jesus die? Jesus died because God wanted to make our friendship with Him right again! God had a plan to save the whole world. Jesus is God's son and he lived a perfect life. He didn't break any of God's rules! He didn't deserve death, but He chose to die so that God's plan could happen.

ASK: Do you know what God's plan was? [that everyone - should be saved]

ASK: What do you know about Jesus' death?

ASK: How do you feel about Jesus dying?

SHARE: Talk briefly about how you feel about the death of Jesus.

Activity

Find a map of the world (online or use an atlas), or grab a 3D globe and look at it together. Right now on the planet, there are over 7 billion people living in the world.

Read

John 3: 16-17

[Jesus said] God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.¹⁷ God did not send his Son into the world to condemn its people. He sent him to save them! John 3:16-17 (CEV)

EXPLAIN: Everyone will still die on earth but because of Jesus we can live forever with God.

ASK: How many of the people in the world does God love?

ASK: Who did God send Jesus to save? (all the people of the world - past and present).

EXPLAIN: The most important thing to remember is that God loved His son Jesus, and they both love everyone in the world. So God planned for His Son to die, and Jesus chose to follow the plan. Wow! So, even when Jesus died, God was still in control and Jesus was doing what God wanted Him to do.

Read

Even when we were God's enemies, he made peace with us, because his Son died for us. Yet something even greater than friendship is ours. Now that we are at peace with God, we will be saved by his Son's life. Romans 5:10 (CEV)

Activity

Plant some fast germinating salad seed to watch it grow. This can be done in any way that is practical for the child to watch it grow.

1. Put wet cotton wool in a plastic or glass jar.
2. Drop seeds into the jar and cover with water for 30 minutes. [At this point continue with the Little Chat and come back at the end of your journal time to complete the planting process.]
3. Cover the top of the jar with a clean filtering cloth like cotton or nylon - secured with a rubber band.
4. Drain the water out through the cloth.
5. Sit the jar in a sunny spot like a window sill.
6. Rinse the seeds in water every day and watch them grow.
7. If you like, you can eat them when they start to sprout and the leaves go green!

EXPLAIN: There's no easy way to explain how Jesus died and came back to life. Jesus did die, His friends, family and followers were very sad and afraid. And God raised him to life- we can read more in the Bible about how surprised and amazed everyone was- but God really did raise Jesus back to life! Jesus took the consequences for our disobedience and made our friendship with God right again forever!

When seeds go in the ground, we can't see them. It's like they have died, but when they begin to sprout, and make new life, they produce even more life than they had as seeds. Let's watch these seeds over the next week and see what happens.

Application

So now, because Jesus died and God raised him to life, we can have life forever! AND we can tell everyone this great message from God so that they can share in this life as well.

- What do you think about why Jesus died?
- Do you want to share in Jesus' new life? [respond if this is a decision for Jesus]
- Who would you like to tell first about the life Jesus offers them?

Prayer

What would you like to talk with Jesus about?

What are you happy about?

Is there anything that is making you feel sad?

What can you thank Jesus for?

Is there anything that you are sorry about?

Is there something that you would like Jesus to help you with?

Who would you like to pray for?

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for following God's plan to save the whole world! Thank you for offering us new life, eternal life with you. Help us to understand what you have done more each day, and help us Jesus, to tell the people of this world about you, because we know you love them all so much! Amen.

Journal

Draw a cross or an empty tomb or a symbol of life (seedling, tree, egg, baby) and write or trace the words, "Thank you Jesus".

Little Chats - Why Did Jesus Die?

Journal

Draw a cross or an empty tomb or a symbol of life (seedling, tree, egg, baby) and write or trace the words, "Thank you Jesus".

Prayer

Draw some pictures or write words to answer these questions:

What would you like to talk to Jesus about?

What are you happy about?

Is there anything that is making you feel sad?

What can you thank Jesus for?

Is there anything you are sorry about?

Is there something you would like Jesus to help you with?

Who would you like to pray for?

Dear Jesus, thank you for following God's plan to save the whole world!
Thank you for offering us new life, eternal life with you. Help us to understand what you have done more each day, and help us Jesus, to tell the people of this world about you, because we know you love them all so much! Amen.