



Jesus Dies and Is Buried

(based on Mark 15:33–[39], 47)

Jesus had come to Jerusalem about five days before, riding into the gates of the city on a donkey. When he got close to the town, people were standing by the road to greet him. They were so excited! They shouted, “Hosanna! Hosanna!” They waved branches and cheered, and some of them even threw their coats onto the road for the donkey to walk across.

That’s exciting, isn’t it?

But then, after Jesus got to the city, things started to change. Some of the people who loved Jesus stuck with him, but others turned on him. There were people who didn’t like Jesus, and they wanted to get rid of him. They schemed and plotted behind his back, and then Jesus was arrested. He was taken before Pilate to be judged, and the people turned against him. So Jesus was taken out to a hill and hung on a cross to die. It was a terrible punishment, especially because Jesus had done nothing wrong.

Jesus was hung on the cross in the morning, and right at noon, the whole land became as dark as night. The darkness lasted for three hours. Then at three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

That’s so sad, isn’t it?

The Bible tells us, “Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last breath. There was a Roman soldier there, who had watched everything that happened. When Jesus died, the soldier said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

This is a hard, sad story.

Nearby, three women who were friends of Jesus watched and waited. These women followed Jesus, and they provided for him. Only the women were still there; all the men had run away, even Jesus’ closest friends! Those women were pretty brave. They loved Jesus so much!

Finally, that evening, a man named Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked if he could take Jesus’ body and bury him. Pilate gave the body to Joseph, who wrapped Jesus’ body in cloth and laid it in a tomb that was like a cave, a space carved out of rock. Then he rolled a heavy stone in front of the tomb. Two of the women saw where Joseph put Jesus’ body.



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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read the story with your children—imagine and wonder about the events of that day.
- This is a difficult story to hear but an important one to know. Wonder together where God's grace is present. Some ideas might be the love of Jesus, the presence of his followers who stayed with him, and the care that Joseph of Arimathea took to bury Jesus.
- Wonder together how the different people in the story felt.



Responding to God's Grace

- Talk together about what to do when someone is grieving. How can we be present with that person?
- Watch the YouTube video “The Grieving Process: Coping with Death” (bit.ly/TheGrievingProcess, 4:13) about dealing with grief. Note that the video mentions “WellCast,” which is a program dealing with wellness and mental health.
- A big stone was rolled in front of Jesus' tomb. It wasn't like the tombstones that we usually see at graves, which say something about the person. What might you put on Jesus' tombstone to remember him? Draw a picture.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Make a cross. Some ideas might be to lash together two nails or two twigs, to color a cross, and to cut out a cross from cardboard or wrap it with yarn.
- Do an internet image search for “terra cotta Easter tomb.” Make an Easter garden with a stone rolled in front of the tomb (remember to move it on Easter day!). You can use grass, moss, or even green fabric or construction paper for a hillside. Be creative.
- Pray this prayer each day this week:

Dear God, while the story of Jesus' death makes me sad, I know you are always with me, and that this is not the end of the story! Amen.

Note: bit.ly web addresses are case sensitive.