

The Empty Tomb! (Easter Sunday)

Teacher Pep Talk: Congratulations! You get to teach children the greatest Bible story of all: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ! EASTER!!

There is no greater story of God's power and love, than the story of Easter: The day that the Lord, Jesus Christ, was raised from the dead! It is an unparalleled event in human history and is central to the core beliefs of Christianity.

Be sure to pray and prepare your heart to tell the story of the first Easter. The children will need to know this story forever!

REMEMBER: Whenever you teach children about the Crucifixion of Jesus, it is important to teach them about His Resurrection as well! The children need to know that Jesus is Alive!

To prepare to teach this lesson read over John 20:1-18. (*You may also want to review the passages in the other gospels regarding the events at the Empty Tomb, for example Luke 24:1-12.*)

You will Need: Paper plates (2 for each child), paper cups, scissors, and markers

Major Points: Jesus had died on the cross and had been buried in a tomb
That Sunday some women came to visit His tomb
The tomb was empty!
An angel said that Jesus was alive!
Mary Magdalene saw Jesus alive!
Jesus is alive!

Reference Verses: John 20:1-18

Lesson: The Empty Tomb

One day Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a tomb.

- What's a tomb? (Wait for answers. Listen carefully. Then give this answer if it hasn't been described already. *A tomb is like what we usually call a grave. It is where they bury a person's body after he/she dies. A tomb is usually a carved out place in the side of a hill and they often roll a stone in front of to close it.*)
- Tombs can be opened and closed by rolling the stone away and by putting it back.
- The stones in front of tombs are very heavy and they are hard to roll away!

That Sunday some women came to visit His tomb

- Often, when people die, their friends and family go to visit the grave. (Sometimes they pray, or weep, or bring flowers)
- Jesus had friends and family who missed Him
- On the Sunday after He died some women, who were friends and family members, came to visit Jesus' tomb.
- They came early in the morning, just after the sun was up

The tomb was empty!

- When they arrived, they found that the tomb was empty!
- The stone had been rolled away!
- They were so surprised!
- They expected to find Jesus' body there
- But it wasn't there!! Where was it??? They didn't know!

An angel said that Jesus was alive!

- A woman named Mary Magdalene stood in front of the tomb
- She was crying! Why do you think she was crying? (*She was upset. First Jesus had died and now His body was missing!*)
- She looked again in the tomb. This time she saw two angels sitting there where Jesus had been.
- The angels asked her "Woman, why are you crying?"
- "They have taken my Lord away, and I don't know where they have put him."

Mary Magdalene saw Jesus alive!

- Then Mary Magdalene turned around and saw Jesus standing there (*but she didn't recognize Him at first*)
- "Woman, why are you crying?" He asked her.
- Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."
- Then Jesus said to her "Mary."
- And then she recognized Him. She knew it was Jesus!!

Jesus is alive!

- Jesus was alive!
- Mary Magdalene ran and told the disciples: "I have seen the Lord!"
- Later that day the disciples saw Jesus too!
- Forty days later, Jesus went up to heaven to be with His Father
- Jesus is alive today and forever!

Let's pray and thank God that Jesus is alive forever!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that Jesus came and died on the cross for us!
Thank you that he was buried in the tomb.
Thank you that He was raised from the dead!
Thank you that Jesus is alive forever!
Amen

Suggested Activities:

The Empty Tomb Craft

This is a fun craft for children who are good with sharp scissors. If your students are younger, you will need to cut the paper plates for them. (It will still be fun for them! 😊)

- Cut the bottom third off of a paper plate, so that it has a long flat edge.
- OPTIONAL: On the top of the curved part of the plate write “The Tomb is Empty!” Or “Jesus is Alive!” Or “Happy Easter!”
- With a hole punch, punch a hole about 1/2 inch from the long edge in the center.
- Start at the punched hole and cut a larger hole 2-3” in diameter
 - (Don’t get too close to the edge!)
- Place a paper cup (or Styrofoam cup) through the hole, so that just the top of the cup sticks out from the front of the paper plate.
 - (If the hole is not big enough to let most of the cup through, cut some tabs around it to help enlarge it a bit.)
- Stand the paper plate up on its long edge.
- From another paper plate, cut a circle about 3 inches in diameter.
- Have the children draw on the 3” circle so that it looks like a big stone.
- Roll the “stone” in front of the cup opening.
- Roll the “stone” away from the opening to see the Empty Tomb!



Suggested Activities (continued):

The Story of the Empty Tomb – Easter Skit

This is a short Easter Skit for children 4-7 year olds. It relates the events recorded in John 20:1-18 (NIV). A Narrator reads the script and the children may (or may not) repeat the dialogue. Stage the skit in your classroom, deciding with the children where the empty tomb will be, where the angels will sit, and who will play which parts first. Allow the children to do the skit more than once and try out the various parts. Costumes, if you want to have them, can be as simple as large pieces of cloth draped across their shoulders, and tied at the waist. No props are necessary, but you may want to use a table covered with a white sheet to denote the Empty Tomb.

For fun, do the skit for parents or siblings! (*Happy Easter!*)

EASTER SKIT – The Story of the Empty Tomb

NARRATOR: Jesus had died on the cross just a few days earlier. All of His family and friends were sad. After He died, He had been buried in a tomb. His family and friends missed Him very much!

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene and some other women went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away!

Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she cried, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

ANGELS: Woman, why are you crying?

NARRATOR: "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."

MARY: They have taken my Lord away, and I don't know where they have put him.

NARRATOR: At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

JESUS: Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?

NARRATOR: Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”

MARY: Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.

NARRATOR: Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

JESUS: Mary.

NARRATOR: Now Mary recognized Him. It was Jesus! He was alive!

Mary Magdalene ran to tell the disciples the news: “I have seen the Lord!”

MARY: I have seen the Lord!

NARRATOR: Now all of Jesus’ friends and family were happy!

EVERYONE: Jesus is Alive! Happy Easter!

THE END