

THE BIGGEST STORY CURRICULUM



April
Gospels

1st - 3rd Grade : Red Check Marks

4th - 5th Grade: Green Check Marks



STORY 81

Everyone Leaves Jesus

MARK 14

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Read Mark 14.
- Pray for God's help. Ask for the Spirit's help in understanding the passage and for the Lord to open the children's eyes to see who he is what he has done, and how they should respond to him.
- Study the lesson plan below. Use these sections as suggestions. Think of ways to teach it in your own voice.

1

Read

THE BIG PICTURE

Help children see how this story connects with the other lessons. Build anticipation by introducing the setting and the significance of what is about to happen in this week's story. {5 minutes}

2

Teach

At least three times Jesus told the twelve that he would be betrayed, be arrested, suffer, and die. They heard him, but they didn't understand him. Even after the Passover meal, where Jesus used the bread and cup to point to his death, the twelve couldn't yet grasp why Jesus's blood would have to be poured out for the forgiveness of sins. They wouldn't really understand who Jesus was and what he was doing that Passover Week until after his resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The twelve didn't understand Jesus, but one of the twelve did something worse than misunderstand. He betrayed Jesus. Judas! Even though Judas was one of Jesus's closest friends and traveled with him for three years, he loved money more than he loved Jesus. And he was paid thirty pieces of silver from

the Jewish leaders to betray Jesus. How terrible! The Jewish leaders wanted Jesus so they could kill him. How totally terrible! Judas betrayed Jesus because Jesus wasn't the king he was looking for; the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus because he was claiming to be the Son of God. Today's lesson focuses on how Jesus's enemies went after him and how his friends turned against him.

TELL THE STORY

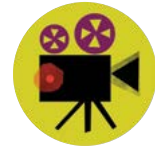
Share the story in one of these three ways. {5–10 minutes}



Read the
Bible passage
together



Read from
The Biggest Story
Bible Storybook



Play *The*
Biggest Story
video

TEACH THE STORY

Retell the story with an emphasis on what it says about God and about us. {10 minutes}

Big Truth
Jesus was
betrayed and
denied by his
friends and
handed over to
his enemies.

Have you ever had a friend stop wanting to be friends with you? It doesn't feel very good. The last hours of Jesus's life must have felt a bit like that. Actually, he must have felt much worse. Can you imagine a close friend handing you over to be killed? Can you imagine your other closest friends leaving you to die alone? It's hard to imagine, but that's what Jesus experienced.

After the Passover meal, Jesus took Peter, James, and John to the garden of Gethsemane. It was very late—and still dark. Everyone was exhausted. Jesus was super sad because he knew many terrible things were ahead for him. He wanted to be with his closest friends on earth and to spend time praying to his Father in heaven. There, in the garden, Jesus prayed for his sufferings to be taken away: "Abba, Father," he prayed. "Remove this cup of pain and death from me. That is what I want. But I pray for what you want, not what I want" (see Mark 14:36). Jesus prayed that prayer three times, and three times he returned to find his friends asleep. Snore. Snore. Snore. They couldn't even stay awake when Jesus needed them the most. How sad for Jesus. Suddenly, in the distance, they saw torches. It looked like a small army was approaching. It was Judas, leading a



Story

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Mark

14

mob with swords and clubs. “The hour has come,” said Jesus. “The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners” (14:41).

Judas greeted Jesus with a kiss. That kiss of betrayal was the sign to the mob that this was the man to arrest. At once Jesus was arrested and brought back to Jerusalem for a trial. A bunch of people lied as they testified against Jesus, and the Jewish leaders declared, “Guilty!” The saddest thing, though, was not that his enemies lied, but that his friend Peter lied. Peter, who was standing outside, was asked three times if he knew Jesus. And three times he said, “I do not know the man!” Just then, a rooster crowed. He denied Jesus, just as Jesus said he would. Peter cried and fled. The morning had come. Jesus would have to journey to the cross alone.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Show how the story points to Jesus and his rescue mission as the Snake Crusher.
{5 minutes}

Peter’s last recorded words in the Gospel of Mark are his lies about not knowing Jesus. Imagine saying you didn’t know who Jesus was when he was your closest friend, when he personally called you to follow him, when you heard him teach great truths, and when you witnessed him cast out demons, cleanse a leper, restore sight to the blind, raise the dead, walk on water, and feed thousands of people with a few scraps of food! Peter cried after he denied Jesus. He cried because he was sad and sorry. He let fear get in the way of friendship (and faith!). Peter’s tears that early morning would be wiped away in two days. He would repent of his sin, return to Jesus after the resurrection, and be a great leader in the early church. He would preach the gospel and perform amazing miracles. And he would learn that Jesus came to die for sinners like him. Life has a way of exposing just how sinful we are. Even Peter wasn’t righteous or courageous enough to follow Jesus perfectly. He was a sinner; we are sinners. He needed a Savior; we need a Savior. Jesus was Peter’s Savior, and he is our Savior! Praise God for that good news.

DISCUSS THE STORY

Discuss the story in smaller groups. {10 minutes}

- 1. QUESTION:** Why did the Pharisees want to kill Jesus? Why did Judas betray him?

3

Engage

Memory Verse
For our sake he
made him to be
sin who knew no
sin, so that in him
we might become
the righteousness
of God.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

TAKEAWAY: Most people didn't have eyes to see who Jesus really was.

2. **QUESTION:** After the Passover meal, where did Jesus go and with who? Why did he want his friends with him? What was he there to do? Was he looking forward to being crucified?

TAKEAWAY: Although Jesus knew he came to die, he needed help to face the suffering and death.

3. **QUESTION:** Did anyone stay with Jesus when he was betrayed by Judas and arrested? What did his closest friends do? How do you think he felt?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus was betrayed and denied by his closest friends.

4. **QUESTION:** How did Peter feel after he denied Jesus? How do you feel when you disobey God? Who did Jesus come to die for? What should we do when we sin?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus died to save sinners like Peter and you and me.

ACTIVITIES

Download coloring pages and activity pages from TheBiggestStory.com, or choose from the following activity suggestions. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Silent Speed Ball

Supply List: none



Have children stand in a circle. Tell them they must be silent the entire game. Give one child a ball, and have her pass it to someone else in the circle. The child who catches the ball must then quickly pass it to another child in the circle (and so on). If a child makes a sound, fails to catch the ball, drops the ball after catching it, or throws the ball poorly (too short, over the head, etc.), he is out and must sit down. The last child standing wins. Tell children that when Jesus was arrested and put on trial, he was silent and did not defend himself.



Choose one child to be the “Rooster,” and put a blindfold on him or her. Have the remaining children put their thumbs under their arms and strut around the room like a rooster repeatedly saying, “Cock-a-doodle-doo!” Have the Rooster use the children’s voices to find and tag someone. Whoever is tagged becomes the new Rooster. Remind children that Peter denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed.

3rd–5th

Option 1: Scatterball

Supply List: ball

Before Class: Gather supplies.

Have a leader hold a ball in the middle of the room. Have all children place a hand on the ball. (If the group is large, have another leader hold an additional ball.) When the leader shouts “Scatter,” all children must run away from the ball while the leader tosses the ball straight up in the air. When the ball drops to the floor, any child can grab it and yell “Freeze,” and everyone freezes. She is not allowed to run with the ball, but she can pivot on one foot to throw the ball at someone. If someone is hit by the ball, he is out and must sit where he was hit. Then everyone else repeats these steps with the new leader throwing. If someone catches the ball, the person who threw the ball is out and must sit, and the catcher is the new leader. The last child standing wins. Remind children that Jesus’s disciples scattered when he was arrested.

Option 2: Rooster Tag

Supply List: blindfold

Before Class: Gather supplies.

Choose one child to be the “Rooster” and put a blindfold on him or her. Have the remaining children put their thumbs under their arms and strut around the room like a rooster repeatedly saying, “Cock-a-doodle-doo!” Have the Rooster use the children’s voices to find and tag someone. Whoever is tagged becomes the new Rooster. Remind children that Peter denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed.

CRAFTS

Choose from the following craft suggestions depending on time, age ranges, and group size. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Stained Glass Cross

Supply List: clear contact paper, permanent marker, yarn, scissors, masking tape, colored tissue paper, hole punches

Before Class: Gather supplies. With permanent marker, draw a cross onto clear contact paper and cut it out. Cut tissue paper into small pieces for the stained glass. Cut yarn into 6-inch pieces for hanging. Make a sample craft.

Set colored tissue paper, yarn, and hole punches on tables. Use tape to hold the cross in place, so the child can peel off the backing and begin putting tissue paper on it until it is completely covered. Have children untape the cross from the table and punch a hole through the top for hanging in a window. Remind children that Jesus loves them so much that he died on the cross for their sins.

Option 2: Fingerprint Cross

Supply List: washable paint, paper plates, markers, paper, baby wipes

Before Class: Gather supplies. Make copies of a large cross template (one per child). Place a small amount of different colored paints on paper plates (one per child). Make a sample craft.

Set markers on tables. Give each child a cross paper, and instruct children to write “Jesus died for me” above the cross. Give each child a plate with paint. The children should dip one finger in the paint, then make a fingerprint inside the cross. Have them continue to make fingerprints with different colors of paint until the entire cross is filled. Have children clean their fingers with baby wipes as needed. Remind children that Jesus loves them so much that he died on the cross for their sins.

a brass fastener to attach a paper plate with the one-fourth section removed to the top of their full-sized plate. Encourage children to retell the story using the story wheel.

3rd–5th

Option 1: Passion of Christ Story Wheel

Supply List: paper plates (two per child), brass fasteners, colored pencils, scissors, glue

Before Class: Gather supplies. Cut a one-fourth-sized wedge out of half the paper plates (without cutting to the very center). Make a sample craft.

Place supplies on tables. Have each child take a full-sized paper plate and draw two perpendicular lines through the center to divide it into four equal sections. Have children draw the following scenes in sequential order (one per section): Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane, Judas betraying Jesus with a kiss, Jesus being arrested, and Peter denying Jesus. Finally, have children use a brass fastener to attach a paper plate with the one-fourth section removed to the top of their full-sized plate. Encourage children to retell the story using the story wheel.

Option 2: Paper Plate Rooster

Supply List: paper plates, brown watercolor paint, paintbrushes, cups of water, googly eyes, red feathers, scissors, pencils, red and yellow construction paper, glue

Before Class: Gather supplies. Fill small cups with water. Make a sample craft.

Place supplies on tables. Have each child paint a paper plate brown. When it is dry, instruct them to fold it in half. Have children design and cut out red wattles and yellow beaks from the construction paper. Next, children can make rooster faces on one end of the paper plate by gluing on the wattle, beak, and googly eyes. Finally, have them glue a couple red feathers on the opposite end of the plate to form the rooster's "tail." Remind children that Peter denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed.



Visit TheBiggestStory.com for downloadable coloring pages, activity pages, and craft templates for this lesson.



Story

81

Mark

14



STORY 82

The Snake Crusher Is Crushed for Us

MARK 15

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Read Mark 15.
- Pray for God's help. Ask for the Spirit's help in understanding the passage and for the Lord to open the children's eyes to see who he is what he has done, and how they should respond to him.
- Study the lesson plan below. Use these sections as suggestions. Think of ways to teach it in your own voice.



THE BIG PICTURE

Help children see how this story connects with the other lessons. Build anticipation by introducing the setting and the significance of what is about to happen in this week's story. {5 minutes}



All four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—describe how Jesus suffered and died. They don't all record the birth of Jesus (as important as that was!), and they don't all record the same teachings or miracles of Jesus. But all four spend a lot of time talking about the sufferings and death of Jesus. In fact, all four slow down the story once Jesus gets to Jerusalem for the Passover. In Mark's Gospel, for example, he summarizes thirty-three years of Jesus's life (including his three years of ministry) in the first ten chapters. But the last week of Jesus's life gets six whole chapters. Talk about slowing down—six chapters to cover seven days! Why does he do that? Why spend so much time telling us about the

Last Supper, Jesus's betrayal, Jesus's arrest and trial, Jesus's sufferings before the cross, and finally Jesus's terrible death on the cross? The reason is that the cross matters. The cross stands at the center of the Christian story. The cross is where the Snake Crusher was crushed for us.

TELL THE STORY

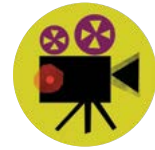
Share the story in one of these three ways. {5–10 minutes}



Read the
Bible passage
together



Read from
The Biggest Story
Bible Storybook



Play *The*
Biggest Story
video

TEACH THE STORY

Retell the story with an emphasis on what it says about God and about us. {10 minutes}

Big Truth
The Snake
Crusher was
crushed for us.

Good Friday is one of the most important days in the whole of history, a day Christians set aside to remember Jesus's death. But why is it called Good Friday and not Sad Friday? It certainly was a *sad* day. Jesus was sentenced to death, beaten, and nailed to a cross. So sad. But it was so *good* too—extremely, awesomely, amazingly good! It was good because through Jesus's sacrifice we are forgiven. It was good because the Snake Crusher finally crushed Satan by being crushed on the cross for us.

Here's the story of that sad but good day. After the rooster crowed, the wicked Jewish leaders delivered Jesus over to Pilate, the Roman governor in Jerusalem who would decide whether Jesus lived or died. Pilate questioned Jesus, and he was convinced that Jesus was innocent. So he tried to release him. He brought out two prisoners—Jesus and Barabbas. Barabbas was a rebel and murderer. "Since it is your Passover feast celebration, I'll set one prisoner free," Pilate said to the crowd. "Do you want this rebel or this so-called ruler—Jesus, King of the Jews?" Pilate thought that they would free Jesus. But no! They shouted for Barabbas. "What!" Pilate said. "What then shall I do with Jesus? He hasn't done anything wrong." Then, they shouted, "Crucify him" (Mark 15:13). What! Why? Wow! Pilate preferred to please the crowds than release innocent Jesus, and so he "delivered him to be crucified" (15:15).



Story

82

Mark

15

The Roman soldiers took off Jesus's clothes and whipped him. (How painful!) Then they mocked him by placing a purple cloak on his body and a crown of thorns on his head. (How cruel!) Then they pretended to worship Jesus by kneeling before him, spitting on him, and saying, "Hail, King of the Jews" (15:18). (How blasphemous!) After all that, Jesus carried his cross beam to Calvary, the place where they crucified criminals. Along the way, Jesus fell a few times. The cross was heavy, and Jesus's body was weak from the beatings. A man named Simon was asked to help him carry the cross. Then, when he arrived, the soldiers put the cross beams together, nailed Jesus to it, and lifted him up between two thieves. People taunted him ("Save yourself, and come down from the cross," 15:30) and mocked him ("Come down . . . that we may see and believe," 15:32), but Jesus had a different plan. Instead, he "uttered a loud cry and breathed his last" (15:37). Then, the earth shook, the sky turned black, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. God accepted Jesus's sacrifice! Indeed it was a Good Friday.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Show how the story points to Jesus and his rescue mission as the Snake Crusher.
{5 minutes}

Who is the Snake Crusher? Why is Jesus called that? That name goes back to one of the earliest promises in the Bible, when God said to the serpent who deceived Eve in the garden of Eden, "Because you have done this, there will be a long and great struggle between you and Eve's offspring until the day when a child is born from her family who will crush your head once and for all" (see Gen. 3:14–15). Jesus is that child. Jesus is the Snake Crusher. He's the son of Mary and the Son of God. But what is surprising in our story is that the Snake Crusher is crushed. Although he had never sinned, he was punished by God for all the sins of the world. Why? So we wouldn't have to be punished. Jesus was crushed so we don't have to be crushed. He took the punishment for us. That's why it was a Good Friday.

And the Snake? He will still be crushed just as it was promised. But that's a story for another day.

DISCUSS THE STORY

Discuss the story in smaller groups. {10 minutes}

- 1. QUESTION:** What do we call the day Jesus died? Why do we call it good when it's the day he died?

3

Engage

TAKEAWAY: The day Jesus died can be called Good Friday.

2. **QUESTION:** According to the Bible, what is God's punishment for sin? Who has sinned? Jesus never sinned, so why did God punish him on the cross?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus became sin for us and took the punishment we deserved.

Memory Verse

He himself bore
our sins in his
body on the tree,
that we might die
to sin and live to
righteousness. By
his wounds you
have been healed.

1 PETER 2:24

3. **QUESTION:** Who was the Snake Crusher? Why was he crushed for us?

TAKEAWAY: The Snake Crusher was crushed as the punishment for our sin.

4. **QUESTION:** When Jesus died, what happened to the curtain in the temple? If the curtain kept people from the Holy Place where God met with the high priest, what do you think it means that the curtain was torn when Jesus died?

TAKEAWAY: When Jesus died, we were given access to God.



STORY 83

Jesus Lives

LUKE 24

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Read Luke 24.
- Pray for God's help. Ask for the Spirit's help in understanding the passage and for the Lord to open the children's eyes to see who he is what he has done, and how they should respond to him.
- Study the lesson plan below. Use these sections as suggestions. Think of ways to teach it in your own voice.

1

Read

THE BIG PICTURE

Help children see how this story connects with the other lessons. Build anticipation by introducing the setting and the significance of what is about to happen in this week's story. {5 minutes}

2

Teach

God's ways are not our ways. If we were to write the story of our salvation, would we have the glorious Son of God born of a young teenage girl and laid in a manger? Would we have him grow up in the small town of Nazareth? Would we have him ride into Jerusalem on a humble donkey? Would we have him suffer? Be mocked and mistreated? Carry a cross to Calvary? Be crucified between two criminals? No, we might write something like the Son of God flew down to earth riding in a golden chariot with six white horses pulling him, sixty million angels flying around him, and when everyone on earth saw him, they fell down before him. We might also write that he lived happily ever after with everyone in his holy (and huge!) palace in the holy city on the holy mountain. But God couldn't do that because he is just and must punish our sin. Fallen people aren't

fit to live happily ever after with him. Which is why God's Biggest Story is so different. It is upside down, different than we'd expected. Jesus's death was different than we'd expect—and so was his resurrection! His resurrection was unexpected but super important. So *listen up* as we talk about Jesus *rising up*!

TELL THE STORY

Share the story in one of these three ways. {5–10 minutes}



Read the
Bible passage
together



Read from
*The Biggest Story
Bible Storybook*



Play *The
Biggest Story*
video

TEACH THE STORY

Retell the story with an emphasis on what it says about God and about us. {10 minutes}

Big Truth

Jesus rose from
the dead—just like
the Old Testament
said he would.

Jesus predicted that one of the twelve would betray him. That happened. He predicted that Peter would deny him. That happened. He predicted that twelve out of twelve would forsake him. That happened. He predicted that he would suffer and die. That happened. And he predicted that in three days he would rise from the dead. Did that happen? It sure did!

On Friday Jesus died. So dark and sad. On Saturday his body lay in the tomb. Totally dark, sad, and silent. On Sunday, however, as the sun rose in the sky, the Son of God rose from the grave. The first to witness this miracle of miracles were a few women. They didn't expect Jesus to be alive. We know this because they brought spices to the tomb. Dead bodies don't smell so good, so they wanted to make Jesus's body smell better. But when they arrived at the tomb, they found that the huge stone in front of the tomb was rolled away and Jesus's body was not there. Surprise of all surprises! Just then, another surprise. Two angels stood before them in dazzling white clothes and announced, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you . . . that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise" (Luke 24:5–7). Only then did they remember.



Story

83

Luke

24

After the women spoke with the angels, they ran back to tell the other disciples. The disciples thought they were crazy, but Peter and John ran to the tomb to see for themselves. When they got there, they looked inside and saw Jesus's grave clothes but not his body. Jesus was indeed alive! They ran back and told the others, but at this time "they did not [yet] understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead" (John 20:9). It took a few appearances from Jesus (where they both saw him and touched him!) and his own teaching on the Old Testament for them to understand and believe the amazing news.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Show how the story points to Jesus and his rescue mission as the Snake Crusher.
{5 minutes}

One day after Jesus's death, two of his followers were walking away from Jerusalem when Jesus walked up to them and asked what they were talking about. They didn't recognize him. So they shared how their "chief priests and rulers delivered [Jesus] up ... and crucified him" (Luke 24:20). They said they "had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel" (24:21). They also shared how the women went to the tomb, found it empty, and saw angels "who said that he was alive" (24:23). But they didn't believe all this. That's why they were walking away. Jesus stopped them and said, "Why are you so dumb?" Well, he didn't say it exactly that way. He said it this way, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (24:25–26). Then, starting with Genesis and ending with Malachi, he taught them from the Old Testament about himself. "It was written," Jesus said "that I should rise from the dead and that the good news that sins are forgiven should be preached to all the nations" (see 24:46–47). Jesus rose from the dead, just like the Old Testament said. Those two followers understood and believed. And that is the good news we should believe too!

DISCUSS THE STORY

Discuss the story in smaller groups. {10 minutes}

1. **QUESTION:** What are some surprising things about how Jesus came to earth to save us? Why do you think God's ways are so different than our ways?

TAKEAWAY: God's ways are not our ways.

3

Engage

Memory Verse
“Death is swallowed
up in victory.”
“O death, where is
your victory?
O death, where is
your sting?”
1 CORINTHIANS 15:54–55

2. **QUESTION:** Did Jesus’s followers expect him to rise from the dead? How do you know they didn’t? Why should they have expected him to rise? How did Jesus explain to the two men why he had to die and rise?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus rose from the dead, just like the Old Testament had said.

3. **QUESTION:** When the women told the disciples that Jesus was alive, did they believe them? What convinced them?

TAKEAWAY: The disciples didn’t believe that Jesus was alive until they saw him with their own eyes.

4. **QUESTION:** Did Jesus only appear to a couple of people? Why did he appear to so many? Why was it important that so many people actually saw Jesus with their own eyes after he rose again?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus appeared to hundreds of disciples after his death so they could be his witnesses to all nations.

ACTIVITIES

Download coloring pages and activity pages from TheBiggestStory.com, or choose from the following activity suggestions. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Alive Tag

Supply List: none

Have children line up along one wall. Identify a “safe zone.” Choose one child to be “It” and to stand in the middle of the room. On “Go” have “It” stand completely still (as if dead or asleep) while the other children walk quietly around him, whispering, “Are you alive?” Whenever “It” wants, he can yell out “I’m alive!” and tries to tag as many children as possible before they get to the safe zone. Anyone “It” tags becomes “It” also. Have all children who are “It” spread out in the room. The game continues as before, but now the original “It” yells “We’re alive” when it’s time to run and tag people. Play continues until one child remains. That person becomes “It” for the next round. Remind children that the disciples thought Jesus was still dead even though Jesus had risen from the dead!



Option 2: Empty Tomb Relay

Supply List: paper, plastic eggs, buckets

Before Class: Gather supplies. Cut out small squares of paper and draw a cross on each one. Place cross papers inside plastic eggs. Fill buckets with cross-filled eggs and one empty egg (one per team). Place buckets on one side of the room.

Divide children into teams, and have them line up opposite a bucket. The first child on each team must jump down to her team's bucket and open an egg. If the egg has a cross in it, she must close the egg (with cross paper inside), return it to the bucket, and run back to tag the next person, who repeats the process. The first team to find and return the empty egg wins. Remind children that Jesus's tomb was empty because Jesus rose from the dead!

3rd–5th

Option 1: In the Tomb, Out of the Tomb, Bridge

Supply List: masking tape

Before Class: Gather supplies. Use masking tape to make a line down the center of the room.

Have children stand with one leg on each side of the line. Explain that the way they are standing will be called “bridge.” Identify one side of the line as “in the tomb” and the other side as “out of the tomb.” A leader calls out “in the tomb,” “out of the tomb,” or “bridge,” and children jump with two feet to the side or position that is called. If a child jumps to the wrong side or position, he is out and must sit to the side. The leader continues calling out the phrases in random order, calling out more quickly the less people there are in the game. The last child standing wins. Remind children that Jesus's death and resurrection provided a way for us to be with God.

Option 2: Pop! Relay

Supply List: balloons

Before Class: Gather supplies. Inflate balloons (one per child and a few extra).

Divide children into teams, and give each child a balloon. The first person on each team must run with her balloon to the opposite side of the room, pop her balloon by stomping on it or sitting on it, and run back to tag the next person in line, who repeats the process. The first team to have all players complete the

race wins. Remind children that the empty balloons are like the empty tomb the women found when they went to take care of Jesus's body. Jesus is alive!

CRAFTS

Choose from the following craft suggestions depending on time, age ranges, and group size. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Jesus Wins Trophy

Supply List: paper, tape, glue, scissors, a variety of supplies (toilet paper rolls, cardstock, cardboard, pom-poms, craft sticks, aluminum foil, etc.)

Before Class: Gather supplies. Print papers that say “Jesus won over sin and death!” (one per child). Make a sample craft.

Place copies and remaining supplies on tables. Have children use the provided supplies to design a trophy. After constructing a trophy, the children should cut out “Jesus won over sin and death” and attach it to their trophies. Remind children that Jesus won over sin and death!

Option 2: “He Is Risen” Handprint

Supply List: paper (white, green, brown, yellow), glue, scissors, crayons

Before Class: Gather supplies. Make copies of a semicircle “hill” on green paper and a cross on brown paper (one per child). Make a sample craft.



Place copies and remaining supplies on tables. Instruct children to trace both their hands on yellow construction paper, to cut the tracings out, and to glue them to the top of a piece of white paper (overlapping the palms to form the rays of a sun). Children will then cut out a green semicircle hill and glue it under the handprints. Finally, have them cut out a brown cross and glue it on top of the hill (it will also cover some of the “sun”). Instruct the children to write “He is risen!” on the hill.



Option 1: Jesus Wins Trophy

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Before Class: Gather supplies. Print papers that say “Jesus won over sin and death!” (one per child). Make a sample craft.

Place copies and remaining supplies on tables. Have children use the provided supplies to design a trophy. After constructing a trophy, the children should cut out “Jesus won over sin and death” and attach it to their trophies. Remind children that Jesus won over sin and death!

Option 2: “He Is Risen” Banner

Supply List: string, 11" x 17" construction paper, markers, colored pencils, glue sticks, sequins, stickers, tape

Before Class: Gather supplies. Cut string into 3-foot pieces (one per child). Make a sample craft.

Place string and remaining supplies on tables. Instruct children to write “He is risen!” in the middle of a large piece of construction paper. Next, they can decorate their banners using the provided supplies, leaving room at the top. When completed, help children fold the top of their banner over a piece of string, using tape to secure it. Have children tie the ends of the string together for hanging. Remind children that Jesus conquered sin and death when he rose from the dead!



Visit TheBiggestStory.com for downloadable coloring pages, activity pages, and craft templates for this lesson.



STORY 66

The Happy Meal That Kept on Going

MARK 6

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Read Mark 6.
- *Pray for God's help. Ask for the Spirit's help in understanding the passage and for the Lord to open the children's eyes to see who he is what he has done, and how they should respond to him.*
- *Study the lesson plan below. Use these sections as suggestions. Think of ways to teach it in your own voice.*



THE BIG PICTURE

Help children see how this story connects with the other lessons. Build anticipation by introducing the setting and the significance of what is about to happen in this week's story. {5 minutes}



God loves his people. And he shows his love in many different ways. One way he shows his love is by providing food. Food? Yes, food! The garden of Eden was filled with the freshest fruits. Adam and Eve could eat from all the trees but one. That's a lot of mangoes, cherries, olives, almonds, and coconuts. Then, in the wilderness, God provided daily bread from heaven. It must have tasted wonderful. Finally, the promised land was called a land flowing with milk and honey. Imagine how yummy a honey milkshake would taste after wandering through the dry desert.

So, when God's people thought about the coming Christ, they pictured someone who would save them from sin, sickness, and even death and the devil. But they also thought about food! They believed with the coming of the promised king would come some meals so satisfying they would fill you with joy—true happy meals! So, it is no surprise that when the promised King came, he showed God's love to God's people in ways they expected: healings from his hand and all the food they would ever need.

TELL THE STORY

Share the story in one of these three ways. {5–10 minutes}



Read the
Bible passage
together



Read from
*The Biggest Story
Bible Storybook*



Play *The
Biggest Story*
video

TEACH THE STORY

Retell the story with an emphasis on what it says about God and about us. {10 minutes}

Big Truth
Jesus is the
bread of life.

Have you ever said, “I’m starving!” We all say that from time to time when we’re really hungry. But we aren’t really starving to death. What is the longest amount of time you’ve gone without food? Have you ever skipped breakfast, lunch, and dinner? If you did, you still wouldn’t be starving, but you sure would be hungry.

One day, there were lots of hungry people gathered around Jesus. Jesus tried to get away from the crowd for a few hours so he and his disciples could rest and grab a bite to eat. They took a boat to the other side of the lake to get a break. But the people just followed them on land, so when Jesus and the twelve landed onshore, they were surrounded. But Jesus—being so compassionate—wanted to care for the people. He did so by teaching them and providing food for them.

Regarding the food, however, there was a minor problem. Well, major problem! There wasn’t any. Or, there wasn’t much. As the sun was setting, Jesus



Story

66

Mark 6

turned to his disciples and said, “Give them something to eat” (Mark 6:37). They looked for leftovers. There weren’t any. Then, they questioned Jesus, “That makes no sense. We can’t feed all these people. It would cost us thousands of dollars.” There were five thousand men there, plus lots of women and children. It would be like feeding a crowd in a huge basketball stadium. Jesus had an idea. He asked his disciples, “How many loaves do you have?” (6:38). They had none, but as they asked around, Andrew found a boy who was willing to share his five loaves and two fish. “What good are these two fish burgers?” someone might have asked. “Such a small amount of food can’t possibly feed this huge crowd.” Jesus had another idea. He took the bread and fish, said a prayer, and then something amazing happened. As the disciples started to feed the people, the five loaves and two fish turned into ten, then the ten into thousands. There was so much food that everyone ate and was totally stuffed. There were even twelve baskets of bread left—twelve, like the number of apostles and the tribes of Israel. The people were amazed and thought, “Maybe Jesus is the prophet and king we have been waiting for” (see John 6:14, 15). Maybe he is that and more!

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Show how the story points to Jesus and his rescue mission as the Snake Crusher.
{5 minutes}

What do we need more than food? That’s a tough question because we all know we need food to live. When Satan tempted Jesus, he said, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread” (Matt. 4:3). That wouldn’t be a temptation if Jesus just ate from the all-you-can-eat fish and bread buffet near the Sea of Galilee. But that was not the case. He’d had no food for forty days. He was starving. Really starving! And because of that, the Snake Crusher’s answer to the serpent was surprising. He said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). Another time in Jesus’s ministry (actually right after he fed these five thousand), he said something just as surprising. He said, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst” (John 6:35). Wow, what a claim! Wow, what a wonderful promise. What do you think? Do you believe in Jesus? Have you come to him for everything you need, even eternal life?

3

Engage

DISCUSS THE STORY

Discuss the story in smaller groups. {10 minutes}

1. **QUESTION:** What's the longest you've ever gone without eating? When you're really hungry and tired, how do you act toward other people? How did tired and hungry Jesus act when the crowd surrounded him and the disciples?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus is compassionate and cares for our needs.

2. **QUESTION:** Where have we seen God provide food in the Bible? How much food would it take to satisfy five thousand men, plus women and children? How much food was Jesus given to feed that many people? And what was he able to do with it that no one else could? Why?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus, the promised King, provides food that satisfies.

3. **QUESTION:** How did Satan tempt Jesus when he was starving? What did Jesus tell Satan was more important than food? What do you and I need more than food? If Jesus is the bread of life, what should we do to be satisfied by him?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus is the bread of life and anyone who comes to him and believes in him will be satisfied.

Memory Verse

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

JOHN 6:35

ACTIVITIES

Download coloring pages and activity pages from *TheBiggestStory.com*, or choose from the following activity suggestions. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Fishing for Food

Supply List: dowel rods, string, magnets, scissors, paper clips, cardstock, paper lunch bags

Before Class: Gather supplies. Make "fishing poles" by tying a string with a magnet to the end of a dowel rod (one per team). On cardstock, print and cut out pictures of five loaves and two fish (one set per team). Attach a paper clip to each picture.

Divide children into teams and give each team a paper lunch bag. Across the room, set fishing poles and the sets of fish and loaves. On "Go" the first person



on each team runs down, grabs a fishing pole, “catches” one item, takes it off the fishing pole, and runs back to drop it into the team’s bag. The next child repeats the process. Play continues until a team has five loaves and two fish in their bag, winning the game. Remind children that Jesus multiplied one boy’s food to feed thousands.

Option 2: Fishy Relay

Supply List: large bowl, spoons (one per team), goldfish crackers, bowls (one per team)

Before Class: Gather supplies.

Fill a large bowl with goldfish crackers and place it in the center of the room. Divide children into teams. Give each team a spoon and a bowl. On “Go!” the first person on each team takes the team’s spoon, runs to the large bowl, scoops out some goldfish, and carefully returns to his team to drop the goldfish into the team’s bowl. Any crackers that fall off must be left on the floor. The spoon is then passed to the next person in line, who repeats the process. Play continues until all goldfish are gone from the large bowl. The team with the most goldfish in their bowl wins.

3rd–5th

Option 1: Lunch Bag Relay

Supply List: paper, scissors, clothespins, tape, chairs (one per team), paper lunch bag (one per team)

Before Class: Gather supplies. Print and cut out pictures of five loaves and two fish (one set per team). Tape each picture to a clothespin.

Divide children into equal-sized teams and give each team a set of fish and loaves clothespins. Next to each team, set an open paper lunch bag on the floor next to a chair. On “Go!” the first child on each team kneels on the team’s chair and drops one clothespin from eye-level into the team’s bag. The child must drop all seven clothespins into the bag successfully before tagging the next player. If she misses, her teammates hand her the clothespin to try again. Play continues until all children on one team successfully complete the challenge, winning the game.



Option 2: Fishy Relay

Supply List: large bowl, spoons (one per team), goldfish crackers, bowls (one per team)

Before Class: Gather supplies.

Fill a large bowl with goldfish crackers and place it in the center of the room. Divide children into teams. Give each team a spoon and a bowl. On “Go!” the first person on each team takes the team’s spoon, runs to the large bowl, scoops out some goldfish, and carefully returns to their team to drop the goldfish into the team’s bowl. Any crackers that fall off must be left on the floor. The spoon is then passed to the next person in line, who repeats the process. Play continues until all goldfish are gone from the large bowl. The team with the most goldfish in their bowl wins.

CRAFTS

Choose from the following craft suggestions depending on time, age ranges, and group size. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Beaded Fish

Supply List: pipe cleaners, beads

Before Class: Gather supplies. Make a sample craft.



Set supplies on tables. Have each child choose a pipe cleaner. Have children thread 24 beads onto the pipe cleaner. Have children fold the pipe cleaner in half and twist the ends together at the end of the beads to form a fish shape.

Option 2: Torn Paper Picture

Supply List: paper, construction paper, glue sticks

Before Class: Gather supplies. Make copies of a paper with five loaves, two fish, and the Memory Verse on it (one per child). Make a sample craft.

Set construction paper and glue sticks on tables. Give each child a printed paper. Have children tear the construction paper into small pieces and glue them onto the pictures of loaves and fish. Remind children that Jesus multiplied one boy's food to feed thousands.

3rd–5th

Option 1: God Provides Mobile

Supply List: cardstock, scissors, yarn, clear tape, crayons

Before Class: Gather supplies. On cardstock, print pictures of five loaves and two fish (one per child). On cardstock, print copies of the Big Truth and cut them out in strips. Cut varying lengths of yarn (seven pieces per child). Make a sample craft.

Set tape, scissors, crayons, and cut yarn on tables. Give each child a fish and loaves paper and a Big Truth strip. Have children tape the ends of the Big Truth strip together to form a circle. Have children color and cut out the five loaves and two fish, then tape each one to the end of a piece of yarn. Attach the yarn pieces to the Big Truth circle to make a mobile. Add a piece of yarn to the top for hanging.

Option 2: Jesus Provides Basket

Supply List: paper, paper lunch bag, colored pencils, glue sticks, scissors

Before Class: Gather supplies. Print a paper with five loaves and two fish. Make a sample craft.

Give each child a printed paper and a paper lunch bag. Set remaining supplies on tables. Children should cut the bag so it stands about 6 inches high, then color it to resemble a basket. Write the verse “And they all ate and were satisfied” (Mark 6:42) on the basket. Have children use the part of the bag they cut off to make a handle and then attach it to the top of the open basket. Have them color and cut out the five loaves and two fish and place them in their baskets.



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Mark 6