

THE QUESTIONING

OPENING

Magistrate: We are here today to try to decide what has happened in Jerusalem during the past few months. A man named Jesus of Nazareth was accused of blasphemy and was crucified two months ago outside the city at Golgotha. His followers are making claims that this executed criminal has not only risen from the dead but has also ascended into heaven. These claims on several occasions have caused large crowds of people to reject Jewish customs and Roman laws. What is worse, some say that the claim that this Jesus was the Son of God has caused others to blaspheme also. We are here to question witnesses of the recent events to find out what has truly happened.

MARCUS

Magistrate: On several occasions you have had the opportunity to hear the followers of Jesus speak. In any of these instances, did you ever hear them speak against God?

Marcus: They spoke blasphemy. They claimed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

Magistrate: Could you elaborate on these claims?

Marcus: They claimed that after Jesus was crucified, God raised him from the dead and appeared to many of his disciples.

Magistrate: Did they ever mention how Jesus accomplished this?

Marcus: They believed Jesus to be the true Son of God with power over death.

Magistrate: Do you believe these claims to be true?

Marcus: Absolutely not. I find them ridiculous.

Magistrate: Marcus, did you on any occasion have the opportunity to see the man, Jesus, speak?

Marcus: No sir, I only heard stories about him.

Magistrate: What is the nature of those stories?

Marcus: Oh you know, things like raising the dead and giving sight to the blind. I heard the popular stories about healings and other such miracles.

Magistrate: Did you believe the stories?

Marcus: Of course not.

Magistrate: Why not?

Marcus: Only God can heal the sick or restore life.

Magistrate: If God had a son, do you believe he could also perform these kinds of miracles?

Marcus: Yes, I do. But God does not have a son.

Magistrate: If you saw someone perform these miracles with your own eyes, would you believe he was the Son of God?

Marcus: Yes, I would, but I haven't.

PILATE

Magistrate: Governor, it is my understanding and the understanding of the court that you are responsible for the death sentence of Jesus of Nazareth. Is this accusation indeed true?

Pilate: No, that accusation is only partially true.

Magistrate: Only partially? Do you share your role of governor with someone else?

Pilate: No. I did not find this Jesus guilty. Herod sent him to me.

Magistrate: Governor, is it standard procedure to punish Jews whom you find innocent?

Pilate: Actually, it is not standard procedure for me to release or condemn any Jew. This Nazarene was sent to me after he was tried by Herod.

Magistrate: Could you please tell me what offenses Herod found against Jesus?

Pilate: No offenses were found.

Magistrate: We have witnesses who testify that you addressed the crowd three times before sentencing Jesus to be crucified. Is this a standard procedure for sentencing an innocent man?

Pilate: No.

Magistrate: Why did you have Jesus of Nazareth brutally flogged?

Pilate: The Jews claimed that he committed blasphemy by claiming to be the Son of God.

Magistrate: Is it true that your own wife warned you against having "anything to do with that innocent man," for she had suffered a great deal that day in a dream because of him?

Pilate: Yes.

Magistrate: Is it not true that you were quoted as saying to the chief priests, the rulers and the people, quote "You brought me this man....I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death"? Did you indeed say this?

Pilate: (with head down) Yes.

Magistrate: Is it true, Governor, that you sentenced Jesus of Nazareth to death by crucifixion (after a brutal flogging) despite the fact that you found no truth to the charges against him?

Pilate: (stands up and yells) The people shouted to me "Crucify him! Crucify him!" They demanded that he be crucified and their shouts prevailed! "I am innocent of this man's blood!" I did what I had to do!

Magistrate: Did this Jesus claim to be a king?

Pilate: Yes, as a matter of fact, he did.

Magistrate: So he was rebelling against the emperor, correct?

Pilate: Well, not exactly. He said his kingdom was not "of this world." I don't think he was after the emperor's job.

MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS

Magistrate: Are you the mother of Jesus, the one his followers call the Son of God?

Mary: I am.

Magistrate: How much of the crucifixion did you see?

Mary: He was my son! Of course I was there when he carried his cross. I wanted to embrace him so much. He was so badly beaten. He was covered with bruises, dripping with blood and sweat.... I could hardly even recognize him! Do you know what it is like to see your firstborn in so much pain?

Magistrate: No, I'm sorry. It must have been hard for you to see.

Mary: It was! My heart broke more and more each time I heard them pound the nails into his hands and feet—every time I heard him cry out. And did you know that as I stood near the cross, I looked up at my son hanging there, bloodied and bruised? He looked down on me with such love and compassion. He turned to look at John, his disciple, who was standing near me, and he said, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to John he said, "Here is your mother." You see, even in his greatest time of need, his focus was to see that the needs of the people around him were being taken care of.

Magistrate: That sounds intense.

Mary: Yes, it was.

Magistrate: Did you see Jesus die?

Mary: Yes. Jesus had said, "I am thirsty," and someone lifted a drink to him. Then, when he received the drink, he said, "It is finished," and bowed his head and took in one last breath. Then I saw the soldiers come and break the legs of the men who were crucified next to him, but when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was dead. One of the soldiers pierced his side. When he did this, blood and water started to flow out of his body. My son was dead.

Magistrate: So there is no doubt in your mind that he was dead?

Mary: No, not one. My son died right before my eyes.

Magistrate: Did you ever see Jesus again?

Mary: Yes. I went with Mary Magdalene to the tomb where my son was buried. Suddenly the earth shook violently, and the Lord suddenly appeared before us. Fear overwhelmed us. We looked at the soldiers who were guarding the tomb. They were so afraid that they shook and became like dead men. The angel of the Lord came to us and told us to not be afraid and that Jesus was no longer in the tomb, but that he had risen from the dead! Then he told us to go and tell his disciples. We ran to tell them. We were so scared and yet so filled with joy. On the way we heard someone say, "Greetings." When we looked, we saw him. It was Jesus! Both of us were amazed—we had seen the power of the Lord Almighty.

Magistrate: What did you do?

Mary: At first, I could not believe my eyes. Then he showed me his hands and side!

Magistrate: Are you absolutely sure that it was Jesus?

Mary: (emphatically) I think I would know the face of my own son. YES! I am sure that it was Jesus, the Son of God!

NICODEMUS

Magistrate: Nicodemus, could you please tell me what your title is?

Nicodemus: I am a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish ruling council.

Magistrate: What was your relationship with the deceased, Jesus of Nazareth?

Nicodemus: I helped Joseph of Arimathea in the preparation of his body for a proper burial according to Jewish customs.

Magistrate: I seems rather strange that you, a member of the Jewish ruling council, would have anything to do with the Nazarene, especially since he made such so-called blasphemous accusations. Were you forced to assist in the burial?

Nicodemus: No, your honor. I volunteered my services.

Magistrate: So, you actually witnessed the death of Jesus? Are you sure you buried the man? Did you actually wrap the body, or did you just watch Joseph of Arimathea?

Nicodemus: I actually wrapped the body of Jesus myself.

Magistrate: Are you sure that he was dead and not just unconscious?

Nicodemus: I am sure. His body was stone-cold, and there was not an bit of life left in him.

SIMON OF CYRENE

Magistrate: Simon, are you acquainted with the followers of Jesus of Nazareth?

Simon: I have met some of them.

Magistrate: On what occasion?

Simon: At the crucifixion of Jesus Christ!

Magistrate: So you actually witnessed the crucifixion?

Simon: Oh yes! I even helped Jesus carry his cross up to Calvary.

Magistrate: How did that come about?

Simon: He was so weakened from the beatings he had received that he fell down a few times. I was ordered by the Roman centurions to help him.

Magistrate: Did you feel this was necessary?

Simon: Definitely! The man was in so much pain and so weak...there was no way he would have made it on his own.

Magistrate: So did you actually witness the crucifixion?

Simon: Yes, I stayed until the end.

Magistrate: Can you confirm that Jesus Christ truly died?

Simon: Absolutely, there is no doubt in my mind.

BARABBAS

- Magistrate: State your name.
 Barabbas: Barabbas.
 Magistrate: Are you familiar with the man, Jesus Christ, whose followers claim rose from the dead?
 Barabbas: I am.
 Magistrate: How did you know him?
 Barabbas: Well, I can't say I really knew him, but before his crucifixion we were prisoners together.
 Magistrate: What crime were you imprisoned for?
 Barabbas: I had taken part in a rebellion.
 Magistrate: Were you found guilty?
 Barabbas: I was convicted but then released.
 Magistrate: Can you tell me why?
 Barabbas: Yes, Jesus and I were both awaiting sentencing, but because of the feast, one of us was to be released.
 Magistrate: You were the one chosen. Do you know why?
 Barabbas: Not really, the crowd knew of my guilt. I was, after all, a notorious prisoner.
 Magistrate: If the crowd knew of your guilt, and they asked for your release, then Jesus must have really been guilty.
 Barabbas: I don't think so. I think the crowd was just excited by some of Jesus' enemies.
 Magistrate: Do you believe Jesus was guilty of anything?
 Barabbas: No. It was obvious his charges were made up.
 Magistrate: How was this obvious?
 Barabbas: They had no evidence. Pilate even tried to get out of sentencing him, but the crowd insisted.

THOMAS

- Magistrate: What do you do for a living?
 Thomas: I am a fisherman.
 Magistrate: Tell me, Thomas, what was your relationship to these men who followed Jesus?
 Thomas: They are my brothers.
 Magistrate: You mean that all of you share the same mother and father?
 Thomas: No, I mean we all share the same belief.
 Magistrate: And what belief is that, Thomas?
 Thomas: The belief that Jesus was crucified, buried and then raised from the dead.
 Magistrate: Thomas, have you always had this belief?
 Thomas: No, I did not. In fact, after Jesus had been buried, several of the others told me, "We have seen the Lord."
 Magistrate: And when they reported this to you, did you believe it?
 Thomas: No, I thought they were either still grief-stricken or just plain out of their minds. I knew that Jesus had performed many miracles, but I still had my...apprehensions as to whether or not he was the Son of God. I even told them that unless I saw the nail marks in his hands and put my hand into his side, I would not believe it.
 Magistrate: So, Thomas, what brought you to the belief that Jesus rose from the dead if you were not convinced that Jesus had power over death and were not even sure that he was the Son of God?
 Thomas: Well, about a week later the disciples...
 Magistrate: Wait, explain who the disciples are, if you can.

Thomas: Well, the disciples are followers of Jesus Christ. Several of us have been with him from the very start of his ministry three years ago.

Magistrate: Okay. Please continue.

Thomas: As I was saying, it was about a week later when all of us were gathered at John's house. We were just about to discuss the sightings of Jesus by the other disciples, when all of a sudden, we hear a voice among us saying, "Peace be with you!"

Magistrate: Did you recognize the voice?

Thomas: Yes, I am certain it was Jesus Christ.

Magistrate: How can you be certain? Isn't it possible it was some Jew playing a joke on you "Christians"?

Thomas: Well, there could not have been anyone else in the room because we made sure all the doors were locked because of the fear of persecution from the Jews.

Magistrate: Still, Thomas, how can you be sure it was not just another disciple?

Thomas: (becoming emotional) Because I touched him. I put my hand in his hand...in the very hand that still bore the holes where the stakes had been driven. (sobbing) And then I put my hand into his side, and I knew this was the very man I had seen crucified a week earlier. Like I told you before, counselor, I am CERTAIN it was Jesus Christ.

PETER

Magistrate: Can you tell me your full name?

Peter: Simon Peter.

Magistrate: Simon Peter, you were a friend of Jesus Christ also. Is this not true?

Peter: I am thankful, proud and unashamed to say that it is indeed true!

Magistrate: Peter, some have charged that you followers of Jesus have blasphemed God by believing and stating that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that he was raised from the dead. What is your response to this charge?

Peter: If this is a charge, the other disciples and I are guilty as charged. We are guilty of believing and teaching that Jesus is the Son of God, that he was raised from the dead in order to forgive us of our sins.

Magistrate: How long have you believed that Jesus is the Son of God?

Peter: For a good while. Even before Jesus was crucified, I testified in the region of Caesarea Philippi before the disciples that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Magistrate: And why was this your testimony?

Peter: Because I had witnessed firsthand the many miracles he performed.

Magistrate: What miracles were these?

Peter: He fed thousands of people with only a few fish and bread. I've seen him walk on water, heal a paralytic, heal two demon-possessed men...shall I go on?

Magistrate: No, I think I get the idea. But how do we know that these miracles were not just hoaxes?

Peter: I have never seen or heard of a man before or since who has performed the miracles of Jesus. I knew he must be the Son of God.

Magistrate: Well, Peter, isn't it true that on the day of the crucifixion, you denied ever knowing Jesus—not once or twice, but three times, before several Jews who spotted you in the courtyard?

Peter: (head down) Yes, I did.

Magistrate: Well, why would anyone who believed so deeply that Jesus was the Son of God turn around and deny even knowing him?

Peter: At the time, I feared for my life because I knew they were going to crucify Jesus. I guess I didn't really understand or believe his power over death.

Magistrate: What was it that has convinced you now?

- Peter: Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came running to John and me. She shouted, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" John and I went over to the tomb, and I went in.
- Magistrate: What did you see when you went in?
- Peter: I only saw strips of linen and the burial cloth, folded up by itself.
- Magistrate: How can you be certain that other disciples, or Jews for that matter, had not stolen the body from the tomb?
- Peter: Because he appeared to us several times, the first at John's house and one other time when we were fishing.
- Magistrate: Tell the court about the time that you saw him when you were fishing.
- Peter: It was John and me, as well as several other disciples, and we had been out fishing all night to no avail. Suddenly, early in the morning, a man stood on the shore. We could not recognize him.
- Magistrate: What was the man on the shore doing?
- Peter: He called out to us and asked if we had any fish. We told him no.
- Magistrate: How did the man respond?
- Peter: He told us to throw our nets on the right side of the boat and we would catch some. We did, and we caught so many fish in our nets that we were unable to haul them into the boat!
- Magistrate: So who was this man standing on the shore?
- Peter: Well, I still wasn't sure, and then I heard John say, "It is the Lord!" When I heard this, I jumped into the water to see for myself, and the other disciples followed in the boat. When we reached the shore, we sat and had breakfast with him.
- Magistrate: You mean to tell me that you and the other disciples had breakfast with a man you didn't know?
- Peter: I knew who he was. In fact, we all knew.
- Magistrate: Who was he?
- Peter: It was Jesus.
- Magistrate: You say that with a lot of certainty. How can you be so sure?
- Peter: Because after we finished eating, Jesus and I talked. He asked me if I loved him more than these. In fact, he asked me three times. And three times I told him yes..."Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."
- Magistrate: I have no further questions.

CLOSING

- Magistrate: I think these are all the witnesses we will call today. We have certainly heard enough to begin to make a judgment as to what happened here in Jerusalem concerning this man, Jesus of Nazareth. I will leave it to you to decide for yourselves. Was he a blaspheming criminal who died and stayed dead? Or was he actually the Son of God, who was crucified, raised from the dead and then ascended to God in heaven?

CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION

LESSON TEXT

John 20:1-30; Acts 2:32;
2 Peter 1:16

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will recognize that the accounts of Jesus' crucifixion in the Gospels are actual historical accounts.
- The students will consider the testimony of reliable witnesses of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.
- The students will explain one fact they learned about Jesus' death and resurrection to someone this week.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For the teacher:

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world
- extra Bibles
- stopwatch

Reproducible Pages:

- "The Questioning," special 6-page insert, 10 copies for the teacher (copy front and back)
- Page A, 1 copy for each student

LESSON PLAN

Getting Ready

Faithful Instruction
Teacher Focus
Teacher Tips
Preclass Activity: Preparation for the Play
Starting Up
Welcome and Singing
Opening Prayer
Victories
Good News from the Kingdom

Getting into God's Word

Scripture Study
Activity: "The Questioning"

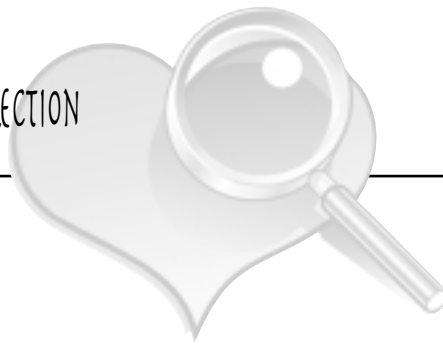
Getting It to Others

Scripture Memory: Acts 2:32
Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
Conclusion

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact."

Acts 2:32



FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

TEACHER FOCUS

Pray before preparing the lesson. Read and meditate on John 18:28–19:16. “If you were on trial for being a disciple of Christ, would they have enough evidence to convict you?” This quote makes for a great bumper sticker, but can you honestly answer “yes” to the question? Would there be enough facts that show your daily commitment? How strong are your convictions about Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection? Could you give reasons for your faith?

Read also John 20:1-30, Acts 2:32 and 2 Peter 1:16.

TEACHER TIPS

In this lesson, you will help your students relive the sentencing, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ by presenting a “questioning” held by a magistrate (government official) two months after the resurrection of Jesus. Because the play is quite long, you will need to assign parts and allow the students to practice during the Preclass Activity. Think about assigning the longer speaking parts to some of your better readers, in order to help the play move along smoothly and to prevent embarrassment for any student. Notice that the role of the magistrate is the one with the most lines. Note also the following: (1) the play is six pages long, and (2) you need to give a copy to the Supplement teacher.

PRECLASS ACTIVITY

PREPARATION FOR THE PLAY

The students will practice their parts for the play and will arrange the room for the “questioning.”

MATERIALS USED

Reproducible Pages:

- “The Questioning,” special 6-page insert, 10 copies for the teacher (copy front and back)

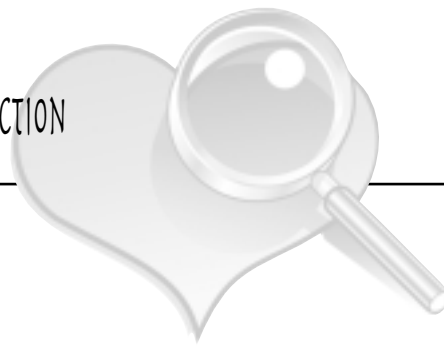
PREPARATION

Look through the play ahead of time, and assign the parts, choosing strong readers for the more major roles. See the list of parts below:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Magistrate (government official) | 6. Simon |
| 2. Marcus (fictional opponent) | 7. Barabbas |
| 3. Pilate | 8. Thomas |
| 4. Mary | 9. Peter |
| 5. Nicodemus | |

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Assign nine students the parts you have selected for them, and give each of them a script (“The Questioning”).
2. Have those nine students with speaking parts go to a separate area of the room to practice their lines. (Have several teachers with the group, if possible, so that the students may each read their lines with a teacher. Several readings will go on at the same time to speed the process.)
3. Tell the remainder of the students that they will be the crowd. Have them arrange the room as a “hearing room” for the “questioning”: a sort of judge’s bench for the magistrate, a witness stand for those who will give testimony and a designated area for the crowd.
4. After the students have run through their lines once, call everyone together to begin class.



STARTING UP

WELCOME AND SINGING

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

OPENING PRAYER

Who would like to say a prayer to start today's time together? Let a few students lead the prayer. Encourage the students to mention missing students, special church activities, illnesses and to be especially thankful for the chance to be together.

VICTORIES

Take the time to have the students share about the challenge they were given at the end of last week's class. *Did everyone complete their challenge? How did it go? What fears did you face as you met the challenge to put the lesson into practice? How did everyone do with having consistent quiet times? Who would like to share something they learned this week?*

Praise and encourage all the students' efforts, especially noting any area of significant growth. Offer help and suggestions so they can have even more victories in the coming week.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE KINGDOM

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world

INSTRUCTIONS

Now let's take a few minutes to share "Good News from the Kingdom." Be excited as you read about what is happening around the world. Have a globe or map ready, pointing out the location as you share. Remind your students that the kingdom of God is worldwide and the victories of our brothers and sisters on other continents can inspire us and spur us on.





SCRIPTURE STUDY

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles

Have the students open their Bibles to John 20:1-31. Select several volunteers to read the passage divided into the following segments:

1. Verses 1-9
2. Verses 10-18
3. Verses 19-23
4. Verses 24-31

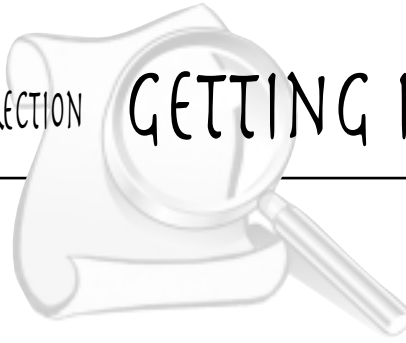
Allow the entire passage to be read before asking the following questions:

- *Who was the first person Jesus appeared to after his resurrection? (Mary)*
- *What was Mary's response? (She was very excited. She cried out.)*
- *Where did Mary go after seeing Jesus? (to the disciples to tell them what she saw)*
- *How did the disciples react to Jesus when he appeared to them? (They were overjoyed.)*
- *Do you think the disciples would have believed that Jesus raised from the dead if they hadn't seen him for themselves? (It would have been harder to believe. Think about Thomas and his reaction!)*

Let's imagine that two months after Jesus was crucified, a magistrate held a "questioning" in which he asked questions of some of the eyewitnesses of Jesus' teaching, death and resurrection.

NOTE: The Scripture Study portion is brief because of the length of the play. The play will present many Biblical truths to reinforce the previous reading.





ACTIVITY

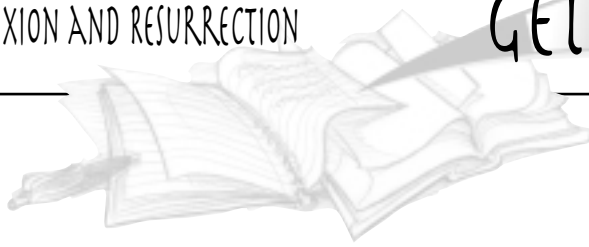
"THE QUESTIONING"

The students will present a play in the form of a questioning that will help them to understand the events surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have the students turn to 2 Peter 1:16. Call on a volunteer to read it aloud.
2. Discuss:
 - *What does it mean that Peter and others were "eyewitnesses" to Jesus' teaching, his death and his resurrection?*
 - *How does it affect you to know that the person who wrote this letter was an actual eyewitness?*
 - *Does it help you to believe what he says?*
3. Tell the students that the next activity will remind them of what people witnessed during the time of the death and resurrection of Jesus.
4. When all the actors are in place, begin to read (present) the play.
5. At the end of the play, allow the crowd to deliberate on the eyewitness accounts and discuss the matter among themselves as the remainder of the class observes:
 - How did they respond to the testimony given by the witnesses?
 - Are they convinced by what these eyewitnesses shared?
 - Did they see how passionate the followers of Jesus were?
 - Were they believable?
6. Give direction and input, and ask questions to clarify.
7. End this section by re-reading 2 Peter 1:16 and by reading the memory verse (Acts 2:32). Tell the students how grateful we should be for actual eyewitness accounts that help us to also come to believe in Jesus and his death, burial and resurrection.





SCRIPTURE MEMORY

"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact."

Acts 2:32

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- stopwatch

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read the verse aloud once to the class.
2. Assign one word in the memory verse to each of fifteen students. If you do not have enough students for the verse, use your assistants to complete the verse.
3. When you say "Go," instruct the students to put themselves in the correct order.
4. Using a stopwatch, see how quickly they are able to put themselves in order.
5. Reassign words and play another round.
6. Play as many rounds as time allows.
7. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page A (Memory Verse).

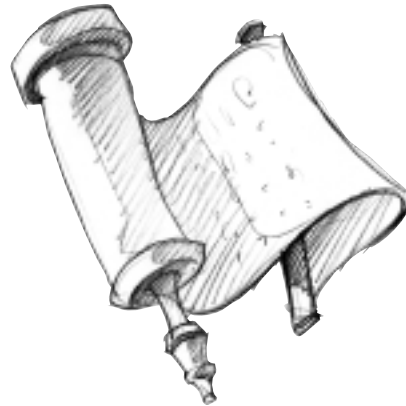
WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you explain to them the challenge for the week.

This week, the students are to share with someone a fact that they learned about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They can then invite the person they are sharing with to the next class to learn more about Jesus.

CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer. (Be sure to give a copy of the play to the Supplement teacher.)



WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Share something you have learned about Jesus' death and resurrection with someone this week. Invite that person to church so they can learn even more!

CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION

LESSON TEXT

Matthew 26:47–28:10

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will recognize that the accounts of Jesus' crucifixion in the Gospels are actual historical accounts.
- The students will consider the testimony of reliable witnesses of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.
- The students will explain one fact they learned about Jesus' death and resurrection to someone this week.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For each student:

- pen or pencil

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles
- markers/colored pencils
- 12 sheets of paper, 8½" x 11"
- tape

Reproducible Pages:

- Page B, 1 copy for each student

LESSON PLAN

Getting Ready

- Faithful Instruction
 - Teacher Focus
 - Teacher Tips
- Preclass Activity: Who's Who?
- Starting Up
 - Welcome and Singing
 - Opening Prayer and Review
 - Great News Sharing

Getting into God's Word

- Scripture Study
- Activity: Crucifixion Timeline

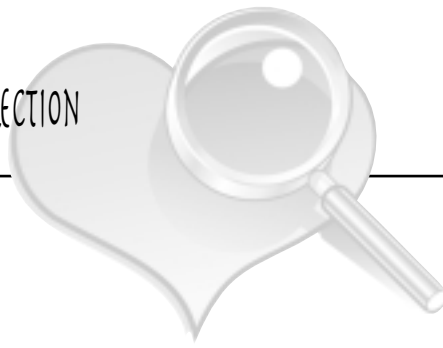
Getting It to Others

- Scripture Memory: Acts 2:32
- Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
- Conclusion

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact."

Acts 2:32



FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

TEACHER FOCUS

Read and meditate on Matthew 26:47-28:10. At any point during this trial Jesus could have collapsed under the pressure and denied his identity. He could have pleaded for mercy and freed himself from his impending anguish and suffering. Close your eyes and try to imagine yourself in this passage. What would be your breaking point? Imagine how the apostles felt upon seeing Jesus for the first time after his resurrection. As you plan this lesson, keep in mind that you are providing the students with evidences that will assure them that the death and resurrection of Jesus is not a matter of faith alone. It is a historical fact.

TEACHER TIPS

Your students have already acted out a play ("The Questioning") to emphasize that there were eyewitnesses to the life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. These eyewitnesses wrote the Biblical accounts or told others who wrote accounts. Ask them to review with you what they learned as they read through the play and acted out their parts. Generally, your students should have stronger convictions that the death and resurrection are not just "nice stories," but truly historical events that changed our eternal lives forever. Make sure you get a copy of the play ("The Questioning") from the Core teacher so you can know what the students did in the last class and can build upon it.

To again reinforce these concepts, you will read Matthew's account of these events with your students. As the passage is read aloud, have your students imagine being there during the events. Ask them how they might have reacted to the proceedings and how they might have chosen to share these things with others.

PRECLASS ACTIVITY

WHO'S WHO?

Students will be reminded of eyewitnesses to various aspects of the life of Jesus.

MATERIALS USED

For each student:

- pen or pencil

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles

Reproducible Pages:

- Page B, 1 copy for each student

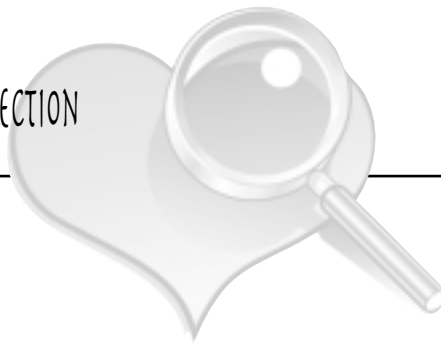
INSTRUCTIONS

1. As the students arrive, give each a copy of Reproducible Page B (Who's Who?) and a pen or pencil.
2. Have the students work individually to match the identifications with the correct Biblical figures.

ANSWER KEY:

1. M	6. F	11. D
2. L	7. J	12. C
3. G	8. A	13. I
4. N	9. K	14. E
5. H	10. B	

3. When all the students have completed the worksheet, review the answers, going back to the scripture passages to clear up any confusion that may exist.



STARTING UP

WELCOME AND SINGING

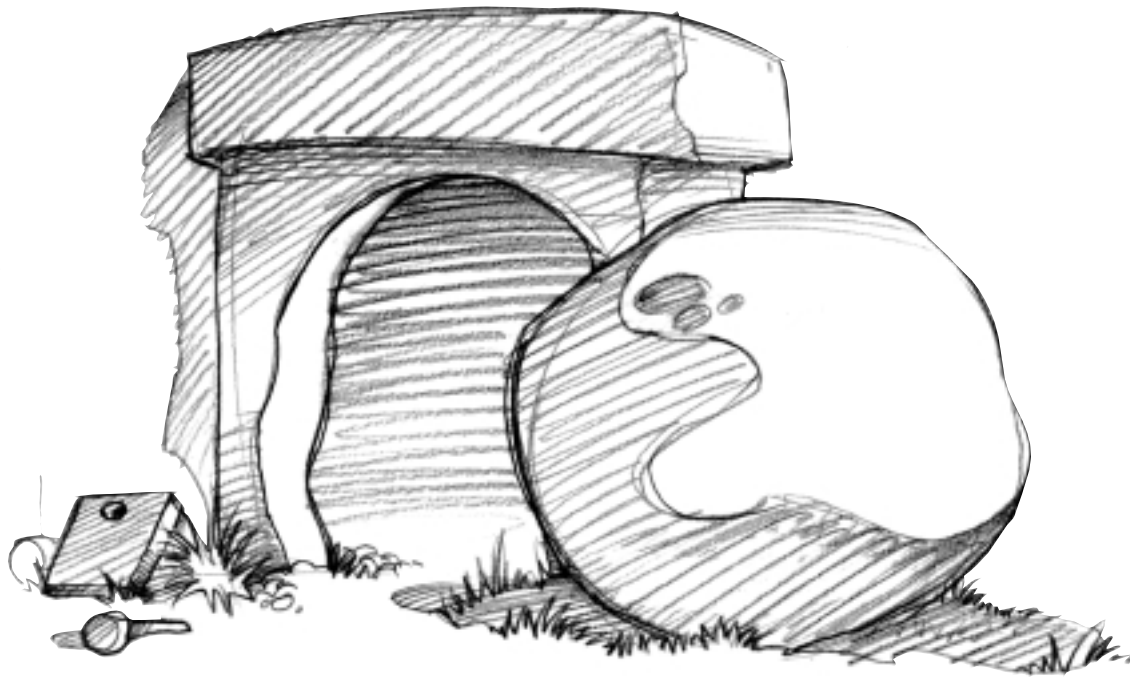
Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

OPENING PRAYER AND REVIEW

- Open with one of the students thanking God that he loved us enough to send Jesus to die for our sins.
- Have one student recite the memory verse for this lesson: Acts 2:32.
- Have a student briefly review the previous lesson (Core Lesson).

GREAT NEWS SHARING

Allow several minutes for the students to share great news about their lives. This could be about a family member who became a disciple, someone healed from an illness, someone studying the Bible, great grades, etc. Remind the students to be brief so that as many as possible can share.





SCRIPTURE STUDY

Begin by asking the students to respond to the play ("The Questioning") that they did in the last class.

- *How have your convictions grown by what you experienced through the play?*
- *Did you learn anything you did not know prior to reading the play?*
- *Were you able to share these things with someone this week?*

Ask the students to take out their Bibles and turn to Matthew 26:47–28:10. Select many students to help you read through the account. Read through slowly, encouraging the students to imagine themselves at the proceedings. Tell them to ask themselves the following questions:

- *How would you feel?*
- *Would your faith have been strengthened or weakened?*
- *How would you explain what you had seen and heard to others who had never heard of Jesus?*



ACTIVITY

CRUCIFIXION TIMELINE

Students will draw the different happenings in the life of Jesus around the time of his death and resurrection. They will place these on a timeline to get a better idea of the order in which the events happened.

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- markers/colored pencils
- 12 sheets of paper, 8½" x 11"
- tape

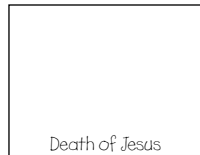
INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide your class into twelve groups. (If you have fewer than twelve students, give several assignments to each student. If you have more than twelve students, divide as evenly as possible.)
2. Give each person/group a sheet of paper.
3. Assign to each person/group one of the events in Jesus' life starting from his arrest in Gethsemane. (See list below.)

- A. Arrest in Gethsemane
- B. Before the Sanhedrin
- C. Peter Disowns Jesus
- D. Judas Hangs Himself
- E. Jesus Before Pilate
- F. Soldiers Mock Jesus
- G. Crucifixion
- H. Death of Jesus
- I. Burial of Jesus
- J. Guard at the Tomb
- K. Resurrection
- L. Ascends to Heaven



4. Ask the person/group to write at the bottom of their sheet of paper the event they were assigned. (See diagram below.)



5. Then ask them to draw a picture of the event above the writing.
6. Give the students about ten minutes to complete the assignment.
7. Call all the students back together and have them tell the other students about their pictures.
8. After all the students have had an opportunity to share their work, have one student from each group line up with their picture in the order that the events happened.
9. Ask the students who are sitting to look in their Bibles to help the others find the correct order.
10. Have the students tape their pictures on the wall in the correct sequence.
11. Walk through the entire timeline when all the students have finished to reiterate what happened.
12. End this section with a prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus to suffer and die for each one of us. Thank Jesus for loving us enough to suffer and die for us.





SCRIPTURE MEMORY

"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact."

Acts 2:32

INSTRUCTIONS

Ask for volunteers to recite the verse aloud to the class, allowing as many students as possible to have a chance to say the verse in front of the class.

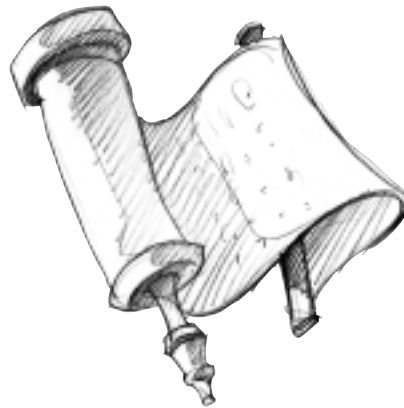
WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you remind them of the challenge for the week.

The students were to share what they have learned about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ with someone. There were also to invite that person to church to learn more about the life of Jesus.

CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer.



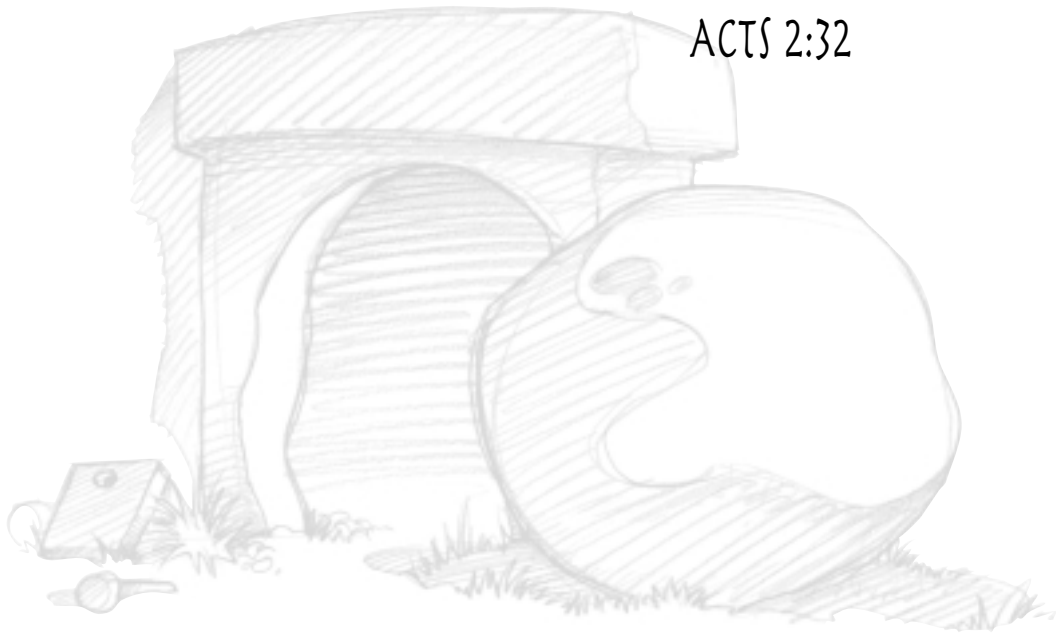
WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Share something you have learned about Jesus' death and resurrection with someone this week. Invite that person to church so they can learn even more!

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"God has raised this Jesus to life,
and we are all witnesses of the fact."

ACTS 2:32



WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Share something you have learned about Jesus' death and resurrection with someone this week. Invite that person to church so they can learn even more!

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WHO'S WHO?

Eyewitnesses of the Life of Jesus

Directions: Match each of the following names with the description on the right. Place the letter of the correct description in the space provided. Scriptures are provided for reference if needed.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Lazarus _____ | A. handed Jesus over to be crucified |
| 2. Barabbas _____ | B. blinded on the road to Damascus |
| 3. Thomas _____ | C. asked Pilate for the body of Jesus |
| 4. Gamaliel _____ | D. helped to prepare Jesus' body for burial |
| 5. Mary Magdalene _____ | E. healed with mud |
| 6. Mary (mother of Jesus) _____ | F. gave birth to her son in a manger |
| 7. John _____ | G. doubted Jesus and demanded proof |
| 8. Pontius Pilate _____ | H. first person Jesus appeared to after resurrection |
| 9. Peter _____ | I. physical brother of Jesus |
| 10. Saul _____ | J. disciple who wrote one of the gospels |
| 11. Nicodemus _____ | K. denied Jesus three times |
| 12. Joseph of Arimathea _____ | L. prisoner set free by Pontius Pilate |
| 13. James _____ | M. raised from the dead by Jesus after four days |
| 14. Blind man _____ | N. advised the high priest to free the apostles |

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. John 11:17, 38-44 | 8. John 19:16 |
| 2. John 18:38-40 | 9. John 18:15-17, 25-27 |
| 3. John 20:24-28 | 10. Acts 9:8 |
| 4. Acts 5:34-39 | 11. John 19:39-40 |
| 5. Mark 16:9 | 12. John 19:38 |
| 6. Luke 2:5-7 | 13. Mark 6:3 |
| 7. John 21:24 | 14. John 9:1-7 |