

Extra Lesson

Value

Friendship

Teaching Tip

Good teachers consider the attitudes and emotions of their students about the topic when preparing the lesson. Easter is linked with holidays and chocolate in the minds of many. We don't want to take away what your students see as good, but rather add a deeper dimension, that can give hope and joy, particularly for those who don't enjoy holidays or chocolate.

Easter Lesson

John 20:1-18

Big Idea

At Easter Christians, celebrate that Jesus died and came alive again so that people can be friends with God.

Lesson Aim

To help students understand that their teacher has a personal relationship with God because of Jesus.

Learning Outcomes

The students will:

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|--------------------|---|
| Explorers | identify Jesus as a friend that you (their teacher) talk with, enjoy being with and care about. |
| Adventurers | explore what Easter has to do with friendship with God through the events of the first Easter. |
| Navigators | evaluate the events of Easter in relation to their own friendship with God. |
| Voyagers | assess whether or not the Biblical accounts of the Easter story are trustworthy. |

Lesson Notes

This lesson invites students to think about two aspects of Easter.

1. The events of the first Easter were extraordinary news to those who were there.
2. The meaning of those events is extraordinary news for people today.

This lesson tells the story of Jesus' death and resurrection through the eyes of Mary Magdalene who was the first to know that Jesus was alive after she had seen him die.

Death is a sensitive issue. Students must feel safe in our classes, so we tell the Easter story looking back, from the emotionally-safe standpoint of the resurrection. Be particularly careful in a multi-age group that your lesson is age-appropriate for the youngest ones. You may need to use the Explorers lesson.

The events of the first Easter brought the disciples hope that the new world that Jesus had announced was in fact, a stronger reality than ever. There would be no stopping it. Jesus had proven that he was stronger than even death.

As well as the events of that first Easter being extraordinary, Christian faith attaches extraordinary meaning to those events. In Unit 1, we learned that God made people to be in a special relationship with him. However, people turn away from God and in doing so break their friendship with him.

In a way that we can never fully understand, at that first Easter, the friendship with God was restored. Because Jesus died and was brought back to life, we can be friends with God forever. (Romans 5:8-10).

In the Explorers and Adventurers lessons the teacher's own friendship with God is key to the lesson. Think of all that Easter means to you and let the joy and hope that is yours because of your relationship with Jesus, be evident as you share.

Question

○ Introduction (3-4min)

Ask: What do you know about Easter? (*Accept responses*)

Link: Today we'll hear about the very first Easter.

○ Friends (3-5 min)

Display the Friends pictures from Easter_Exp.ppt or Easter_Exp.pdf.

Ask: Do you think these children are friends? Why?

Say: Friends talk with each other. Friends enjoy being together. Friends care for each other.

Ask: Do you think we can be friends with God? (*Accept responses*)

Say: The Bible says that God wants everyone to know him like a friend. I know someone who is friends with God - me!

Ask: Do you think I talk with God? Yes! I pray - that's talking to God.

Ask: Do you think I enjoy being with God? Yes! I'm glad my friend God is with me wherever I go, even though I can't see him.

Ask: Do you think God and I care for each other?

Say: Yes! I care about God and the Bible tells me that God cares about me too. Friends talk with each other. They enjoy being together. They care for each other.

Link: The Bible says that people can be friends with God because of the first Easter.

Explore

○ Mary's Story (3-4min)

Display Mary Magdalene from the PPT or PDF.

Say: This is Mary Magdalene. She's smiling because she's thinking of her friend Jesus and a day of amazing news. She already knew Jesus was a wonderful, caring teacher. She even knew that Jesus was powerful, but she hadn't realised how powerful. Now she knows. She knows that Jesus cares about her and she can talk with him and he will always be her friend. Mary wasn't always this happy. There was a day when soldiers came and took Jesus away and Mary was sad and worried. She didn't know then that Jesus let the soldiers take him away. Then Jesus died and people put his body inside a tomb, a cave. They rolled a huge stone across the opening so it would be safe inside. It was a very sad day. Now, we remember that day on Good Friday.

Then, on Sunday something amazing happened. Mary went back to that tomb and saw the stone was rolled away! How puzzling. She ran to tell her friends, Peter and John.

Peter and John ran to see. John looked in. No Jesus! Peter bent down and went inside. Definitely no Jesus! They ran off to tell their friends.

Ask: What would they tell them? (*Someone had taken Jesus' body away*)

Say: Mary stayed there crying. She bent down to look inside and saw something amazing. There were two angels dressed in white. 'Why are you crying?' the angels asked Mary.

Ask: What do you think she answered? (*Accept responses*)

Say: 'They've taken Jesus away,' she sobbed 'and I don't know where they've put him.'

Then Mary turned around and saw someone else. 'Who are you looking for?' the person said. 'If you have taken Jesus away, please tell me where he is,' Mary told him. Then the person called her name, 'Mary'. She knew straight away who it was – Jesus! And that's when she became happier than ever before. Her friend Jesus was alive again! What amazing news!

They had been together. They had talked to each other. They cared for each other. Jesus would always be her friend.

Discover

○ Debrief (2-3min)

Ask: What do you like best about this story? What is the amazing news that Mary is smiling about?

○ Song: Easter is Extraordinary (5-7min)

See Adventurers Easter Lesson.

○ Craft (7-10min)

Paste or tape the stone to the tomb scene. Children can decorate it with crayons and flower stickers.

Finish Off

Say: The Bible says that everyone can be friends with God because of the first Easter. A friend to talk with, enjoy being with and care about.

Learning Outcome

Explorers will identify Jesus as a friend that you (their teacher) talk with, enjoy being with and care about.

Resources List

- One Cut-out 'stone' for each student to fit across the tomb entrance, flower stickers, tape or paste (Discover)
- Easter_Exp.ppt (Question and Explore)
- Easter_Exp.pdf (Question and Explore)



Question

○ Easter Discussion (3-5min)

Discuss: What do you know about Easter?

○ Friends (3-5 min)

See Explorers Easter Lesson.

Link: Because of Easter I believe that we can be friends with God.

○ What Friends Do (3-5min)

Instruct the class to stand for YES, Sit for NO.

Friends help each other.

Friends ignore each other.

Friends talk with each other.

Friends spend time together.

Friends tell lies about each other.

Friends care about each other.

You are happy if your friend is sad.

You are happy if your friend wins.

Link: The Bible says because of Easter we can be friends with God.

Explore

○ Extraordinary News (5-6min)

Ask: What do you know about Jesus? (*Accept responses*)

Use Easter_Adv.ppt or Easter_Adv.pdf.

Say: Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He looked like an ordinary baby. But he had some extraordinary visitors. He grew up with his mother, Mary, like an ordinary boy. When he was about 30 years old, Jesus looked like an ordinary man but he started teaching about God, saying that God had sent him. He showed people that God was making this world right and good by healing sick people. He stopped a scary storm. It was extraordinary! The most extraordinary thing of all was when he came alive again after he was dead. That's what Christians remember at Easter.

This is Mary Magdalene. She loved Jesus and followed him. Jesus was her friend. Others didn't like what Jesus was saying and doing. They plotted to get rid of him. They told lies about him until he was put to death. Jesus' body was wrapped in strips of cloth and put in a tomb. The Bible records what happened, three days later on the first Easter Sunday.

Read John 20: 1-2.

Ask: What was Mary's extraordinary news that first Easter Sunday? (*The stone from in front of the tomb was rolled aside and Jesus' body was gone.*)

Read John 20: 3-8.

Ask: What did Mary's friends do when she told them? (*Ran to see for themselves*) What do you think Mary did next?

Read John 20:11-16

Say: Mary looked at Jesus and suddenly she understood. She knew why his body wasn't in the tomb. Jesus was alive! He was with her. Then Jesus said 'Don't hang on to me... Go and tell the others.'

Ask: What do you think Mary did?

Say: She ran to tell the others that Jesus was walking around, alive again and that he had talked with her. Now she could be his friend forever.

Discover

○ Song: Easter is Extraordinary (2min)

Say: What happened on the first Easter was not ordinary. It was extraordinary! Easter means something extraordinary too: The Bible says that because Jesus died on that first Good Friday, I can be friends with God, and you can too. That's worth celebrating!

Sing *Easter is Extraordinary* from the PDF or PPT to the tune of *Row, row, row your boat*.

○ Becoming Friends (1min)

Ask: How do we make friends with someone new? (Talk, spend time together, care for them)

Say: Whenever we feel we haven't cared about God and want to, we can pray something like:

'God I'm sorry that I don't always act like a friend of yours. Thank you that Jesus died so that I can be friends with you forever.'

Finish Off

Say: At Easter we remember that Jesus died and came back to life. The Bible says that people everywhere can be friends with God because of this.

Learning Outcome

Adventurers will explore what Easter has to do with friendship with God through the events of the first Easter.

Resources List

○ Easter_Adv.ppt
(Question, Explore and Discover)

○ Easter_Adv.pdf
(Question, Explore and Discover)



Question

○ Easter Discussion (3-4mins)

Ask: When I say Easter, what do you think of?

Say: There are lots of ways that people celebrate Easter. Today we're going to look at the events of the first Easter recorded in the Bible and what they can mean for us today.

Ask: Has anyone heard of 'Good Friday'? By the end of the lesson, everyone should be able to say why it's called 'Good Friday'

○ How Do You Fix a Broken... (3-4mins)

Prepare the cards from Easter_Nav.pdf and hide them in the room.

Explain that there are two types of cards hidden - broken items and 'fixers'. The aim is to get a pair. If someone finds a card with a broken vase they will call out, 'Broken vase' and try to find the person with the card showing something that could fix it. When you've found them, you both sit down.

Play until all the pairs are matched.

Say: Can everything be fixed? What about a broken friendship?

Link: The Bible says that the first Easter was about fixing people's broken friendship with God.

Explore

○ Mary Sees Jesus Alive (8-10mins)

Show Easter_Nav.ppt using the script from the PDF.

○ Extraordinary Meaning (3-4min)

Explain that Easter isn't just about what happened. It's also about what it means.

Say: The Bible tells us that when God first made people, they had a good friendship. God gave the first people one rule to follow – Don't eat the fruit of the tree in the middle of the Garden. The people had a choice - to do what God wanted or ignore God and do what they wanted instead.

Ask: Which did they choose? (*They did what they wanted, not what God wanted.*)

Say: Ever since then, people have done what they want and not what God wants, at least sometimes. That's a sure way to destroy a friendship.

Ask: Who is the only person to always do what God wants? (*Jesus*)

Say: On Good Friday, Christians remember that Jesus died. The Bible tells us that it was for all the ways that people have ignored and disobeyed God. Christians believe that when Jesus died, he fixed people's friendship with God. Now people can be friends with God forever.

Ask: Why do you think we call it 'Good Friday'? (*It was bad that Jesus had to die, but good that because of it people can be friends with God.*)

Say: On Easter Sunday, Christians remember that Jesus didn't stay dead! The Bible records that, because Jesus always did what God wants, that God raised Jesus back to life. And now anyone who trusts Jesus can be friends with God.

Discover

○ In The Bin (4-5mins)

Pass around some small slips of paper.

Invite the students to think about and write down something they're sorry about or a short prayer telling God that they're sorry for ignoring him.

Pass around a bin or container. Instruct the students to tear up the paper and put it in the bin.

Say: One of the great things about Easter is knowing that, because Jesus has made a way for us to be friends with God, we can say sorry to God and know that we're forgiven!

○ Easter Card (5-10mins)

Give students A4 paper to fold in four and design an Easter card showing that they understand about Jesus and Easter.

Finish Off

Say: Now you know the meaning behind why Easter is so important to some people and why we call it Good Friday. Jesus has made a way to fix our broken friendship with God by dying and coming back to life!

Learning Outcome

Navigators will evaluate the significance of the first Easter in relation to friendship with God.

Resources List

- Easter_Nav.pdf (Question and Explore)
- Printed and pre-cut Paired Cards (Question)
- Easter_Nav.ppt (Explore)
- Slips of paper and a bin (Discover)
- A4 pieces of paper for students to make an Easter card (Discover)

Question

○ Can You Trust This News? (3-4mins)

Show the Easter_Voy.ppt or Easter_Voy.pdf.

Say: I've seen some extraordinary things on my phone and I'm trying to figure out if I can trust them or not.

Ask: Can we trust this email? (*Show fake email*) Look at this address! I don't know who this person is!

Ask: Do you think we can trust this post? (*Show post*) Only one person saw it happen!

Ask: Do you think I can trust this? (*Show message*) It sounds almost too good to be true, but I think I can trust it. It's from my Mum – I trust her! It tells me who I can check with.

Link: Today we're going to look at messages from the Bible. They might seem almost too good to be true but I trust them.

Message 1 - Jesus is alive!

Message 2 - Because Jesus died and came back to life, people can be friends with God.

○ Most Trustworthy Occupations (3-4mins)

Say: A survey was recently done on what kinds of people Australians are likely to trust (<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-27/the-professions-australians-trust-the-most/11725448>).

See if you can guess what percentage are likely to trust these people?

Use the PPT to reveal the answers.

Ask: The people who did this survey were all adults. Do you think people your age trust these people?

Link: See the link in the activity above.

Explore

○ Mary Sees Jesus Alive! (8-10mins)

Use the PPT or PDF illustrations with *Mary Sees Jesus Alive!* script.

○ Revision (2-3mins)

Ask: Where was Jesus returning? (*To God in heaven*)

Say: I find it extraordinary that Jesus came back to life, but it's even better than that! When Jesus was talking to Mary, he said he was going to my Father and my God as well as your Father and your God! In coming back to life, Jesus was making a way for people to be in God's family, friends with God.

○ Easter Drama Script (5-6min)

Ask some volunteers to present the Easter drama based on John 20:1-18 which explores the name 'Good Friday'.

Discover

○ Can We Trust These People? (4-5mins)

Show the PPT or PDF.

Say: We can't speak to the people in the Bible account – they all died long ago. But I believe there are good reasons to trust these accounts.

Ask: Why should we trust the account about Mary? (*Allow students time to answer*)

Say: Here are some good reasons: Mary had seen Jesus die. Mary wasn't expecting to see Jesus alive – she said twice that she thought someone had taken the body.

Ask: Why should we trust the account about Peter and John? Here are some good reasons:

The Bible shows that Peter went from a coward to a passionate spokesperson for Jesus. What do you think might have made him change? (*He believed that Jesus was alive*). John actually wrote this account. He gives many details that only an eyewitness would know.

○ Easter Reflections (4-8mins)

Supply butcher's paper and crayons/felt pens.

Ask students which part of the Bible account stood out to them.

Encourage them to draw or write about it on the paper. Allow time for everyone to look at what others have done and, using sticky notes, put a tick or explanation mark next to anything that impacted them as well.

Finish Off

Say: Today we've been looking at the accounts of what people saw and heard at the first Easter. I trust the Bible accounts that Jesus is alive. I also believe that we can be in God's family; friends with God because of Easter!

Learning Outcome

Voyagers will assess whether or not the Biblical accounts of the Easter story are trustworthy.

Resources List

○ Easter_Voy.ppt
(Question, Explore and Discover)

○ Easter_Voy.pdf
(Question, Explore and Discover)

○ 5 copies of Voyagers Easter Drama Script (Explore)

○ Large Sheet of Butcher's Paper and pens / textas and sticky notes (Discover)



Question

○ Introduction (3-4min)

Ask: What do you know about Easter? *(Include that the Easter holidays has Good Friday and Easter Sunday)*

Link: We're going to work out why it's called 'Good Friday' even though it was a very sad day.

Explore

○ Extraordinary News (5-6min)

Ask: What do you know about Jesus? *(Accept responses.)*

Use Easter_Multi.ppt or Easter_Multi.pdf.

Say: Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He looked like an ordinary baby. But he had some extraordinary visitors. He grew up with his mother, Mary, like an ordinary boy.

When he was about 30 years old, Jesus started teaching about God, saying that God had sent him.

That was extraordinary! He showed them that God was working to make this world right and good, by making many sick people well. He even walked on water. It was extraordinary!

But the most extraordinary thing of all was when Jesus died and came alive again. That's what Christians remember at Easter.

This is Mary Magdalene. She was the first person to see Jesus alive again. She had loved Jesus and followed him. Jesus was her friend. Others wanted to get rid of him. They told lies and had Jesus put to death. Then, Jesus' body was wrapped in strips of cloth and put in a tomb. The Bible records what happened, three days later on the first Easter Sunday.

Read John 20:1-2

Ask: What was Mary's extraordinary news? *(Jesus' dead body was gone.)*

Read John 20:3-8

Ask: What did her friends discover? *(Jesus' body wasn't there.)*

Read John 20:11-16

Ask: What most extraordinary thing did Mary discover? *(Jesus was alive!)*

Say: Mary looked at Jesus and recognised him. Suddenly she realised why his body wasn't in the tomb. Jesus was alive! She ran to tell the others that Jesus was alive again and that he had talked with her. Now she could be his friend forever.

○ Extraordinary Meaning (3-4min)

Explain that Easter isn't just about what happened. It's also about what it means.

Say: The Bible tells us that when God first made people, they had a good friendship. God gave them one rule – Don't eat the fruit of the tree in the middle of the Garden! The people had a choice - to do what God wanted or ignore God and do what they wanted.

Ask: What did they do? *(They did what they wanted and not what God wanted.)*

Say: Ever since, people have done what they want and not what God wants, at least sometimes. That's a sure way to destroy a friendship!

Ask: Who is the only person to always do what God wants? *(Jesus)*

Say: On Good Friday, Christians remember that Jesus died. The Bible tells us that it was to fix the broken friendship. Because of Good Friday, people and God can be friends forever.

Ask: Why do you think we call it 'Good Friday?' *(It was bad that Jesus had to die, but good that because of it, people can be friends with God.)*

Say: On Easter Sunday, Christians remember that Jesus didn't stay dead! The Bible records that, because Jesus always did what God wants, God brought Jesus back to life! And now anyone who trusts Jesus can be friends with God!

Discover

○ In the Bin (4-5mins)

See Navigators Lesson.

○ Why Good Friday? (1-2min)

Ask the group to pair and share why Good Friday is called Good Friday.

Finish Off

Say: Now you know why Easter is so important to Christians and why we call it Good Friday. Jesus has made a way to fix the broken friendship with God by dying and coming back to life!

Learning Outcome

Students will explore what Easter has to do with friendship with God.

Resources List

- Easter_Multi.ppt (Explore)
- Easter_Multi.pdf (Explore)
- CEV Bible (Explore)
- Bin, paper strips and pencils (Discover)