

LESSON 3

THE CRUCIFIXION

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Showed His Love by Dying for Us**SCRIPTURE:** [Matthew 27](#)**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Jesus is crucified on a cross to defeat sin and fix the relationship between people and God. His sacrifice demonstrates His amazing love for us!**WORD OF WONDER:** Jesus makes us new. —from [2 Corinthians 5:17](#)

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The climax (and turning point) of God's big story is the death and resurrection of Jesus, God's Son. Jesus became nothing and took on the nature of a servant, humbling Himself to death on a cross ([Philippians 2:6–8](#)).

WHAT?

Crucifixion was a horrible and painful process—a form of slow torture as the recipient suffocated to death. Jesus willingly went to the cross, submitting Himself to “the joy set before Him” as He endured the cross, so we could be restored to right relationship with God ([Hebrews 12:2 NIV](#)).

WHERE?

The crucifixion of Jesus took place outside the city gates of Jerusalem on a hill called Golgotha. Jesus would have been exposed up on that hill as He suffered. Jews from all over would have been in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover.

WHEN?

It is no coincidence that Jesus died at Passover—the time when all of God's people remembered God's salvation in the Exodus. Jesus died as a sacrificial lamb, ushering in a new and better exodus event: freedom from our slavery to sin and death.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Jesus died to fix the relationship between God and people, making the way for us to be with God. Jesus fulfills the promise God made after the first sin in [Genesis 3](#), reversing the curse of sin. Jesus is the only One who can defeat sin and death!

Play Stations

Greet the kids warmly and briefly explain the play stations to them. Invite them to play at any of the stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Play Dough Crosses and Hearts

Set up: Set out play dough, play dough tools, and cookie cutters. You could also add some items like beads or pom-poms to give the kids more with which to create and explore.

Play: Let the kids take turns creating a variety of play dough creations of crosses and hearts.

Play Station: Love Sensory Bag

Set up: Ahead of time, create the sensory bags. On the outside of each resealable plastic bag, draw a cross outline in permanent marker. Then add about eight ounces of clear hair gel and 10–15 heart-shaped plastic beads. Close the bag across the top and seal with clear packing tape.

Play: Encourage the kids to use their fingers to push the heart beads into the cross.

Play Station: Crucifixion Coloring Sheet

Set up: Ahead of time, print one copy per kid of the [coloring sheet](#) and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids could also add heart-shaped stickers to their pictures or draw someone they love

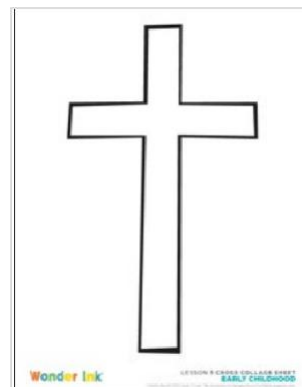
Faith

Craft: Cross Collage

Before the kids arrive, make one copy per kid of the [Cross Collage Sheet](#). Set out heart-shaped stickers or confetti. You may need some glue as well if not using items that are self-adhesive.

In our story today, we learned about how Jesus died on the cross. Why do you think He did that? Allow the kids to answer. Jesus showed His love for us by dying on the cross. What do hearts make us think of? Allow kids to answer. Yes, love!

We're going to make a cross collage to help us remember that Jesus showed His love on the cross by placing hearts all over our crosses. Encourage the kids to put heart-shaped stickers or confetti on their crosses, then set them aside to dry. You can also let the kids color their pictures with coloring utensils. **You can take your pictures home to remind you of the amazing love Jesus showed when He died so we can be forgiven!**



Game: Find the Heart

Ahead of time, prepare one paper heart.

What did Jesus do in today's story to show His love for us? Allow the kids to respond. That's right— He died on the cross so we can be saved and forgiven for our sins. That was one big way to show how much He loves us! Let's remember His love by looking for the heart. I'll give it to one person, and you'll all pass it around the room while you all walk around. When I say, "Freeze," everyone will sit down on the ground. The person with the heart will quickly sit on the heart before anyone sees, then we'll try to guess who is sitting on the heart.

Give the paper heart to one kid. Then tell all the kids to walk around the room and pass the heart from kid-to-kid without others noticing. Periodically call out, "Freeze" and encourage all the kids to sit down immediately. The one with the paper heart should discreetly sit on the heart. Then ask the kids to guess who has hidden the heart. When they find it, the kids can shout, "Jesus showed His love by dying for us!" Play several rounds.

Identity

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for loving us and sending Jesus to die for us.

Let's pray and talk to God.

God, thank You for loving us and sending Jesus. Thank You for forgiving our sins. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: Because of Jesus, your sins are forgiven, and you can have a relationship with God ... forever! May you always remember that Jesus showed His great love by dying for you, and in Him, you are made new!