

John 20:1-18

Aim of lesson

To establish the fact of the resurrection of Jesus, and its significance for us.

Background study

Acts 17:30-31; 1 Corinthians 15:1-26; 1 Thessalonians 4:14 and 16.

Suggested outline of lesson

The bewildered disciples

Describe the feelings of the disciples following the crucifixion. Jesus, whom they expected to become king, was dead. They were distressed, bewildered and in despair. Peter was filled with remorse, Judas had taken his own life, and the women were heartbroken. The children may begin to understand this feeling of emptiness. Some of them may have experienced the loss of a grandparent or family pet, and found it hard to accept that they will not come back.

On the resurrection morning

It is suggested that you should not attempt to resolve the problems of the sequence of events in the comparative accounts, but should draw positive teaching from the one gospel record.

In great distress, Mary came before dawn to anoint the body of Jesus. It was all that was left for her to do for him. Imagine her grief and panic when she thought that someone had stolen the body. Describe and compare the interesting reactions of Peter and John when they visited the tomb. The fact that the disciples were shocked to find the tomb empty may seem surprising since, on several occasions, Jesus had told them that he would rise on the third day. However, his unexpected death had driven from them all hope. Mary, in particular, was so distracted and absorbed in her own grief that she failed to recognize the man standing near her. Possibly she could not see clearly through her tears, and her sobs may have prevented her from hearing. Then, from the depths of despair, she was elevated to a state of overwhelming joy. Mary would treasure the memory of that moment for the rest of her life. This is the climax not only of this story but of the whole gospel message. It may be fitting to refer again to the children's own experiences and to stimulate their imaginations in order that they may, in some measure, identify with Mary's feelings of joy at the reappearing of her beloved master. It is up to you to convey the wonder of this, the greatest miracle of all time. Point out the unique

Relevance to the children's lives

Isn't it exciting to know that Jesus, who died so long ago, is alive now? We have never seen him, but how we hope that, one day, we shall.

fact that Jesus would never die again. It is also the assurance to us of a life after death (1 Thessalonians 4:14 and 16).

No doubt Mary wanted to hold on to Jesus, but Jesus gently restrained her, and sent her to declare the good news. How different she now felt as, bursting with excitement, she hurried to find the disciples

Worksheets

Year 2: The grid should reveal these words from John 20:17-18. 'Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them that I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary of Magdala went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!"'

Year 4: Jesus said to his disciples:

				P	E	T	E	R		
D	I	S	C	I	P	L	E	S		
				A	N	G	E	L	S	
				C	L	O	T	H		
		L	I	N	E	N				
		T	O	M	B					
G	A	R	D	E	N	E	R			
				W	O	M	A	N		
		C	R	Y	I	N	G			
				T	E	A	C	H	E	R
		W	H	I	T	E				
M	A	R	Y							
		L	O	R	D					
		R	U	N	N	I	N	G		

Prayer

Dear Lord God, we praise you and thank you for bringing Jesus back to life. Please help us to be more like him and so be chosen to live with him for ever. Amen.

Memory verse

"We believe that Jesus died and rose again" (1 Thessalonians 4:14).