



The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Matthew 28



LESSON GOAL

Students will tell their friends and family about Jesus' resurrection.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- The angel showed the women that Jesus was alive
- Jesus rose from the dead as He promised
- Some trusted in Jesus after He rose from the dead. Some did not.
- Jesus told His disciples to tell the nations about Him.

KEY VERSE

"[Jesus] is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." —Matthew 28:6

APPLICATION

- Sing praise to the risen Savior.
- Obey Jesus as Savior and Lord.
- Tell people who don't know Jesus about His death and resurrection.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... you shall teach them to your children.” —Deuteronomy 11:18–19

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here that will aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Introduction

Following the crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus’ body. Joseph and Nicodemus (John 19:39) prepared His body and placed it in Joseph’s unused tomb. Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of Israel. There were 71 members, with the High Priest at the head. Joseph was one of these religious leaders who had become a disciple of Christ. Nicodemus was a Pharisee. He had come to Jesus in secret to speak with Him regarding salvation, and Jesus explained to him that he must be born again, not of water but of the Spirit. The Bible indicates that Nicodemus also came to faith in Christ.

The placing of Jesus in an unused tomb fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:9, which says, “And they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.” Waiting by the tomb and watching Jesus’ burial, were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James. Joseph of Arimathea rolled a stone against the opening and then went away.

The chief priests and the Pharisees wanted to make sure that Jesus’ disciples did not fabricate His resurrection, so they secured and sealed the tomb with Pilate’s permission. Roman guards were placed outside the tomb to protect it from grave-robbing disciples. Everything that was humanly possible was done to prevent the resurrection of Christ. But rather than stopping Jesus body from being stolen it provided witnesses and an even more spectacular demonstration of Christ’s resurrection.

Jesus Is Risen (Matt. 28:1–8)

Early Sunday morning, after the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb to bringing spices for Jesus’ burial. As they approached the tomb there was a great earthquake and an angel of the Lord came down from heaven. He moved the stone that covered the tomb, then sat on top of it. The sight of this angle must have been spectacular. He is described as having a countenance like lighting and that his clothes were as white as snow. At this sight the guards who were watching over the cave shook for fear and became like dead men.

As the women arrived at the tomb they saw the angel sitting on the stone. The angel of the Lord told the women not to be afraid and to look and see that Jesus had risen. The stone had been moved not so that Jesus could leave the tomb but so that others could go in to see that He was in fact gone. The angel then told the women to go and tell the disciples what had happened. Hearing this news the women hurried back to the disciples. They were full of fear and joy because of the news that they had heard.

The power of Christ's resurrection was demonstrated with undeniable evidence. During Christ's resurrection, saints were raised from the dead. They went into Jerusalem and testified of the reality of Jesus' resurrection and gospel (Matt. 27:52–53).

Jesus Appears to the Women (Matt. 28:9–10)

As the women hurried to tell the disciples the good news, Jesus appeared to them on the road. He greeted them warmly and casually. The women recognized Him and worshiped Him at His feet. The reality of their Savior's resurrection had hit them and they could do nothing else. Jesus again repeats the angel's message that they were to give a message to the disciples to leave for Galilee and He would see them there.

These events not only are not only amazing on a physical level but they also are evidences to other important facts. It is evidence that God's Word is true. All Jesus' words were accomplished just as He predicted. It also shows that Jesus is truly the Son of God and that He controls both life and death. The resurrection is evidence that salvation is complete and that the church has been established. And finally, it is evidence that there will be a future judgment for unbelievers but that believers will spend eternity with Him in heaven.

The Soldiers' Bribery (Matt. 28:11–15)

As the women hurried to tell the disciples of Jesus' resurrection, some of the soldiers also hurried to tell the chief priests what had happened. These soldiers, which could have been as many as twelve, were placed there under Pilate's order and could have been killed for their failure to guard the tomb. The soldiers told the chief priests what had happened. All of these events would have been undeniable evidence from a group of Roman soldiers but instead of believing in Christ, the chief priests bribed the soldiers to change their story. They were told to say that it was the disciples who came and stole the body during the night. It is likely that these soldiers would have been executed at once for their failure if this news were to reach Pilate's ears. But the chief priests said that if that were to happen that they would win him over and protect their lives. The soldiers went out and did as they were instructed. The message that Jesus' body was stolen was propagated by the soldiers throughout the land among the Jews.

Even though the religious leaders had known about Jesus' claims to rise from the dead on the third day, they would not believe. Although they had heard the first hand accounts of the unbiased soldiers, they would not believe. No miracle, not even Jesus' resurrection brought these religious leaders to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Gives the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16–20)

After hearing the news, the disciples followed Jesus' instructions to go to Galilee to the mountain where they had been instructed. Before this final instruction of Jesus, Jesus had spoken with the disciples on several occasions. Thomas had seen the Lord (John 20:26), and after an enormous catch of fish the disciples recognized Jesus. Even after seeing Jesus, some still doubted (Matt. 28:17–18a) and others worshiped.

Before giving any instruction Jesus states, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." Jesus' time of suffering was now over. He had been completely submissive to God's will and was about to be exalted in heaven. He had absolute sovereignty over everything in heaven and on the earth. He had the power to send and to equip the disciples as they went out and spread the gospel.

Based on that authority, Jesus sent the disciples out into the world. He called them to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...” Jesus called His disciples to evangelize, bringing unbelievers around the world to Christ and then to disciple those who would believe.

Jesus ended the Great Commission with one last encouragement, saying, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” They had nothing to fear, for Jesus, the omnipotent Savior, was with them and without His power they would have no strength in themselves to accomplish these commands. This promise of power is for the believer until Jesus returns again to judge and rule in His earthly kingdom.

Summary

After Jesus was buried it looked to the disciples that there was no hope. They had heard His promises but had not believed them. Early Sunday morning the Marys went to the tomb to anoint Jesus’ body. When they arrived there was an earthquake and an angel came down from heaven to open the tomb. The soldiers who were guarding the tomb were very afraid and were like dead men. The angels told the women not to fear but to see that Jesus had arisen as He had said. They instructed them to go back and tell the disciples what they had seen. On their way back the women saw Jesus. He told them to tell the disciples to go to Galilee and He would see them there. They followed Jesus’ instructions and met on the mountain. Jesus told them that all authority had been given to Him and that they were to go into all the world and share the good news with everyone. They were also to baptize and teach those who believed. Before leaving Jesus encouraged them by telling them that He would be with them to the end of the age.

Application

When a person leaves on a long trip his last words are what resound in the ears of those who remain. Christ’s last moments on earth were indelibly marked on the minds of His disciples. He instructed the believers to go, baptize, and teach. Christians are not to wait for the world to come to them but rather to go into the world, bringing the gospel and making disciples.

Jesus’ followers saw the power in His life, death, resurrection, and ascension. They were given one last instruction before Jesus left earth to return to His Father in heaven. The application of Christ’s commands is just as relevant to believers today. Jesus said, “...go and make disciples of all the nations and baptize them... teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...” Disciples of Christ are called to share the good news of Christ’s death and resurrection with the lost of this world. They are not only to evangelize the lost but also to disciple them. Although this command may come with many trials and persecutions, believers are reminded that God will be with His children, even to the end of the age. The resurrection is the cornerstone of the gospel. It is the foundation that the believer’s faith is built.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

*"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth."
—Psalm 78:1*

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Who did the people want Pilate to release, Barabbas or Jesus?
Barabbas.

What did they want Pilate to do with Jesus?
They wanted Him to be crucified.

In what ways did the soldiers mock Jesus?
They scourged Jesus with a whip, placed a crown of thorns on His head, spat at Him, and beat Him. They mocked Jesus by sarcastically calling Him the King of the Jews.

How was Jesus killed?
He was crucified on the cross.

When the people saw Jesus on the cross, what did they do?
They mocked and insulted Him.

What were the signs that accompanied Jesus' death?
The veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, there was a great earthquake, rocks were split open and tombs of saints were broken open (who would later testify).

Who was in control of Jesus' death?
God.

Why did Jesus die on the cross?
Jesus died so that anyone who trusts in Him can have forgiveness of sins and eternal life.



Ongoing Big Book

During the resurrection lessons, create a big book with one new page a day. Project the coloring pages to the wall using an overhead projector. Trace the picture onto poster board. Have the students color the pictures and then put them into the book. Use the Big Book to review all of the lessons on Resurrection Sunday. (Note: Some copy centers can also enlarge copies onto poster board.)



Now the Good News

Tell the children that you are going to share some wonderful news with them. Play a game of telephone by whispering, "Jesus Christ is risen" into a child's ear, and have him pass it along until the last child gets to announce the news in a regular

voice. In today's lesson, we will learn about Jesus Christ rising from the dead and how He commanded us to spread the news.



Still in Your Sins

Place a small plastic tarp on the floor. Bring in a small bucket of water and put in a number of drops of black food coloring. Stir it until the water is very black. Then, put an inexpensive doll or action figure into the water. Tell the students that the black water stands for sin. We are like the doll in the water. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Each sin is worth an infinite time in hell. It takes more than just someone else dying for us. It takes someone who is good enough and great enough that he can pay for many people's sins. Jesus died for sin (Rom. 5:8). He proved that He was good enough and great enough to pay for all our sins by dying and rising again. Read 1 Corinthians 15:17. If He did not rise from the dead, we would still be in our sins, just like the doll in the bucket of black water.



Impossible for Man, Accomplished by God, Version 1

Bring various objects of different weights to class. Have your children try and lift the various objects. Some will be easy, some very difficult, and some that only a few in the class will be able to actually pick up. One object should be too heavy for any of them to be able to move. Explain that there are many things we can do and accomplish, and some people can do more than others. However, the resurrection was something so great that it could be done only by God. By raising Christ from the dead, He testified to His power, His victory over sin and death, and He gave us hope.



Impossible for Man, Accomplished by God, Version 2

Take a picture of a man and tear it into tiny pieces. Place the pieces in a plastic bag. Explain to the students that the Jews desired to destroy Jesus and so He was hung on a cross and died. Ask the children if it would be possible for any of them to put his hand in the bag and pull the picture out whole and perfect (possibly have some try to do it). But, that is exactly what God did. Have an identical, untornd picture hidden against the side of the bag. Pull this picture out, to their amazement. Explain that this is only an illusion, a trick, but that God actually raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him a new, glorified body. That is much more amazing!



5

Resurrection

Read to the children 1 Corinthians chapter 15:1–19. Ask them to answer these questions. Who saw Jesus after He rose from the dead? Why is the resurrection important?



Only God Can Do That

Bring in a dead branch to class. Have the children take turns telling the branch to grow flowers or leaves. You may even tell them to talk louder because the plant may not have heard. Tell the class that once things are dead, men cannot bring them back to life. Only God can do that. Today we are going to hear about somebody rising from the dead. Can you guess who rose from the dead? Yes, Jesus did. God raised Him from the dead.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done." —Psalm 78:4

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use alongside the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done right from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Two of the most important things about Jesus' life are His death and resurrection. God had promised throughout the Bible that Jesus was going to come and die for our sins. The Bible speaks of a Messiah, who would save God's people from their sins. It is also important to know that God will also prove that He kept this promise by having Jesus come back from the dead. This resurrection proves the power of God and that He keeps His word.

Joseph of Arimathea was a follower of Jesus and loved Jesus very much. On the night of Jesus' death, he decided to go to Pilate, the governor, and ask for permission to bury Jesus' body. Pilate said yes, and Joseph took Jesus' body to a tomb he had bought. Joseph was a very wealthy man and could afford to buy an unused tomb for Jesus. A tomb is a type of cave with a large stone that rolled over its opening. Joseph, along with Mary Magdalene and another Mary, carefully wrapped Jesus' body with clean linen and placed it in the tomb.

The next day, the chief priests and Pharisees, who hated Jesus, also went to Pilate and told Pilate of Jesus' promise to resurrect or to rise three days after his death. The Pharisees were afraid that Jesus would keep His promise. They wanted to make sure this resurrection did not happen. The Pharisees did not believe that Jesus is God and had the power to come back from the dead. They tried everything in their power to make Jesus break His promise. So, they made a plan. With Pilate's permission, they sealed the tomb and placed guards to watch over it. The Pharisees thought this was enough to keep Jesus from fulfilling His promise.

On the third day, which was the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, who helped Jesus in the tomb, came back. Suddenly there was a great earthquake! The ground started shaking, and there was a loud roaring noise. It must have scared the women a lot! It certainly terrified the soldiers who were sent by the Pharisees to guard the tomb. You can imagine how frightened they must have been. But, they were even more frightened by the angel who appeared before them. It was the angel who had caused the earthquake. God had sent the angel down to roll away the stone and break the seal. The angel was very beautiful, with flowing white robes and was so bright, the Bible said he looked like lightning. The soldiers were so scared that they fell to the ground as if they were dead.

The angel then turned to the women and told them not to be afraid. But he also told them something they did not expect at all. He said that Jesus was not in the tomb! The women peered into the tomb and sure enough, Jesus was not lying where they had placed Him.

The angel then commanded the women to share the good news with Jesus' disciples that He had kept His promise and had risen from the dead. The women were so happy that they left right away and told the disciples about what they had

learned. The soldiers, who had fainted at the sight of the angel, got up and also left the tomb to tell the story. But instead, they went to the chief priests who had hired them. When the chief priests heard that Jesus had risen from the dead, they gave the soldiers money to lie. They told the soldiers to say that Jesus did not rise from the dead but that the disciples had come in the middle of the night and stolen his body. The soldiers obeyed the chief priests.

But Jesus had kept His promise, and He is alive. Jesus appeared to His disciples on a mountain and gave them one last command before He left to go to heaven. He told them to share the good news they had learned and to tell everyone around the world that what Jesus said is true and that God had sent His son to die for our sins, but also that Jesus came back from the dead and kept His promise. He then gave another promise to His disciples. He said that they should never be afraid of anything because Jesus will always be with them.



Lesson Questions

What did the Pharisees do to try to stop the resurrection of Jesus?
They sealed the tomb and placed guards by the door.

What happened when Mary and Mary came to see Jesus' body?
There was an earthquake and an angel appeared and rolled away the stone door.

What did the angel tell the women?
He told them that Jesus was not in the tomb. He had risen.

What did Jesus command His disciples before He ascended to Heaven?
Jesus told them to share the good news of salvation.

What did Jesus promise the disciples?
Jesus promised He would always be with them.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book® Flash-A-Cards®

Use appropriate A Beka Book® Flash-A-Cards® with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannel Graph

Use appropriate flannel graph pieces with the lesson.



Empty Tomb Set

Reenact the story of the resurrection. Paint several pieces of butcher paper to make a wall-size mural of a tomb. You can purchase a 4' x 8' piece of Styrofoam at a local hardware store to make the shape of the stone that was in front of the tomb. Dress several of the children as characters, and reenact the story as you teach.



A Boxed Tomb

Wrap a doll in cloth and place it in a box. Close the box and seal it with packing tape. Post a guard, either by drawing men onto the box or other dolls. This will help the children visualize how the chief priests and Pharisees made the tomb secure (Matt. 27:66). Be sure to emphasize that it is impossible for the doll to get out without a miraculous display of divine power.



Praise and Worship

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today

Isn't He Wonderful

Jesus Loves the Little Children

He Arose

Jesus was buried, a stone covered door.

(hold hand flat, then place fist on flat hand)

The apostles thought they'd see their Lord no more.

(run fingertips down cheeks and make a sad face)

But an angel came with a great earthquake.

(make ring overhead with fingers, then shake fists violently)

The guards at the tomb did fear and shake.

(hold fists at sides and shake arms)

The angel's message, "Jesus Christ Rose!"

(make ring overhead with fingers, then place hands at sides of mouth)

Christ was alive from His head to His toes.

(spread hands out, then touch head, then touch toes)

Christ's commission to us—teach the good news,

(touch palms, then hold hands like a book)

And remember forever, I will be with you.

(touch temple, then place hand over heart)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments." —Psalm 78:7

Choose ideas from this section that review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Like Air

After presenting and teaching the Great Commission, this presentation helps with the explanation of Jesus being with us always. Invite children to take a deep breath and then let it out. Breathing is what keeps you alive, keeps your bodies working. But did you see the air that you breathed? No, but it is there (given by God). And you breathe all the time, when running, when asleep, and when alone. In a similar way, we cannot see Jesus, but He is always with us (He promised and it is His attribute of omnipresence). God the Son asked God the Father to send God, the Holy Spirit, to be with us, to guide us, to comfort us, and to convict us when we sin.



All the Cookies

When it is snack time, give one child all the cookies. Ask that child to share the cookies with everyone in the class. Compare sharing the cookies with sharing the good news. Talk about Jesus Christ and His instructions in the Great Commission to go and tell other people. Ask children who they can tell about the story today.



Spread the Good News

Supplies: construction paper squares, crayons, stickers, tape

Directions: Give each child a square of construction paper and have him cut a round edge on one corner (You will have to cut the round edge for younger students.). Let him decorate one side of the paper with crayons and stickers and be sure to write, "Christ Is Risen." Then, fold the paper into a megaphone shape and tape closed.



Tomb, Tomb, Resurrection

Use this variation of the popular preschool game duck, duck goose to reinforce the idea of Jesus rising from the dead. Have the children lay down in a circle. Have one child walk around the circle, touching the heads of the children, saying, "tomb, tomb, tomb" as he goes. Have him touch one child's head and say "resurrection." The child will get up and chase the first child around the circle. The first child must race to the open part of the circle and lay down before he gets caught.



"Burial and Resurrection Scene"

Materials: copies of "Burial and Resurrection Scene" craft page, construction paper, scissors, glue, and crayons

Directions: Color and cut out the pieces from the "Triumphal Entry Scene" craft page and glue them to a blank piece of construction paper.

Coloring Pages

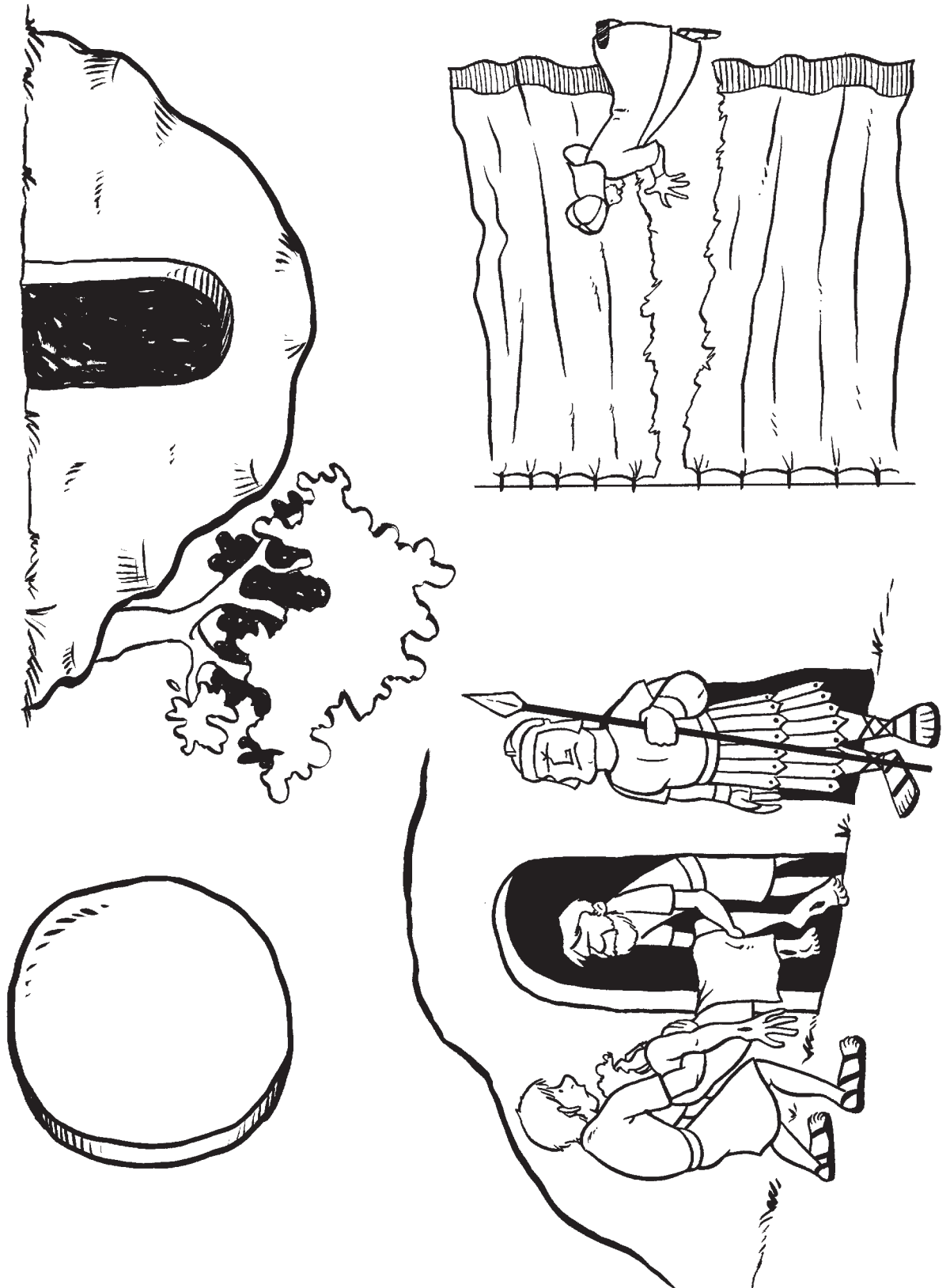
Give each child a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of this lesson. He/she can color the pages in class or take them home to color.

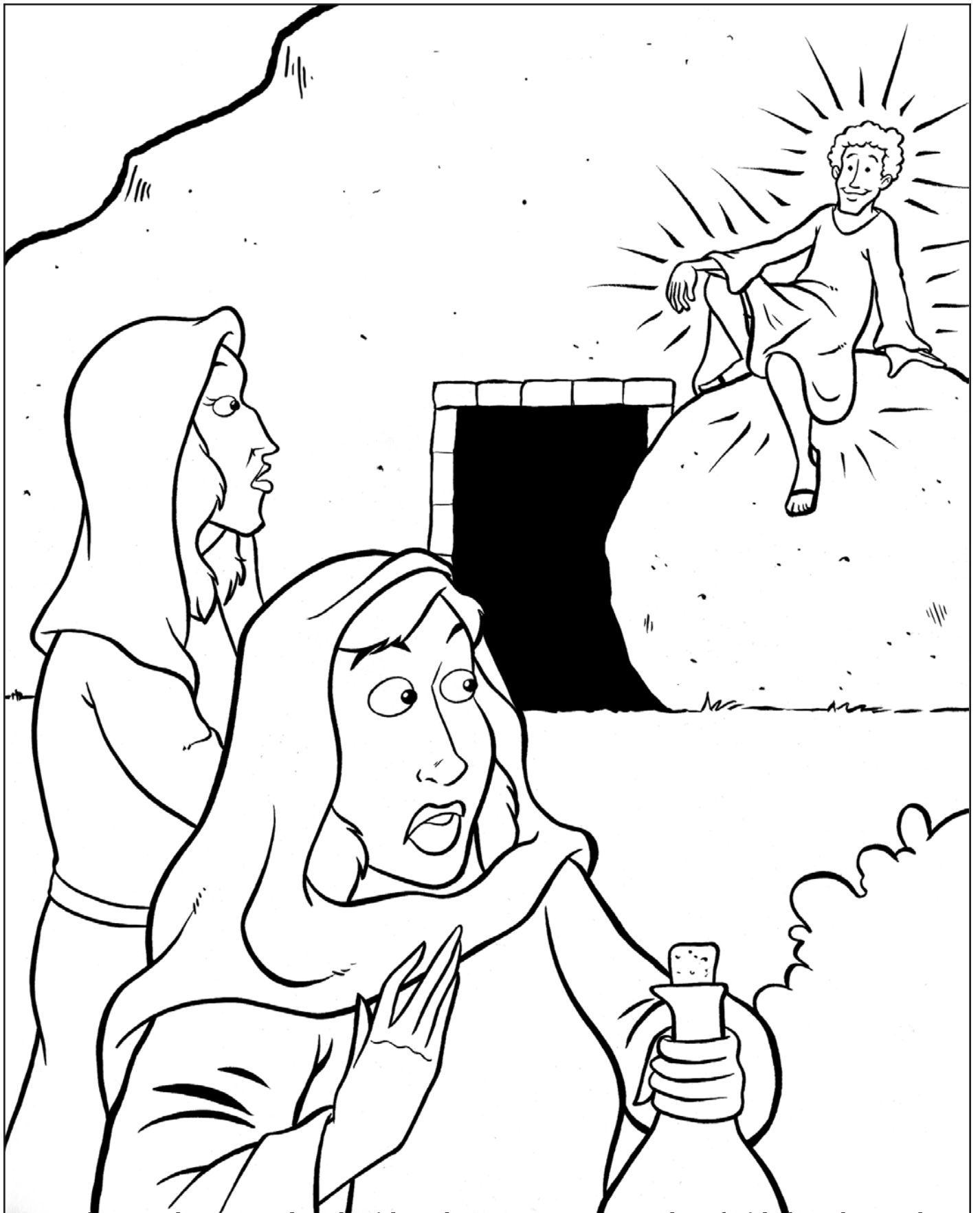


MEMORY VERSE

"He is not here; for He is risen, as He said." —*Matthew 28:6a*

Burial and Resurrection Scene





“But the angel answered and said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.’” —Matthew 28:5–6



“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.’” —Matthew 28:10

