

Jesus Is Alive!

Easter Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Jesus really rose from the dead, just as He said, and in baptism we are buried with Him and rise to a new life.

Bible passage: Matthew 27:57–28:10 and Luke 24:1–12, 36–43. Students read Matthew 27:57–28:10 and Luke 24:36–43 out loud themselves.

Memory verse: "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." *Matthew 28:6 (KJV)* and "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." *Romans 6:4 (KJV)*

You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.

Before class: read Matthew 27:57–28:10, Luke 24 and Romans 6:3–6. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Would You Believe It? (5–10 minutes)

Name one side of the room "I'd believe it" and the other side "I'd need proof." Read each statement, and students walk to the side that fits. 1) Your mom says dinner is ready. 2) A friend says school is canceled tomorrow. 3) Someone says their dog did their math homework. 4) A classmate says a famous athlete is in the parking lot. After each one, ask: *What proof would you want?* Say: "When the women said Jesus was alive, the disciples wanted proof too. Today we will see the proof Jesus gave them."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: Matthew 27:57–28:10. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **when the even was come** (27:57): when evening came; **begged the body** (27:58): asked Pilate for it
- **hewn out in the rock** (27:60): cut out of solid rock; **sepulchre**: tomb
- **over against** (27:61): across from
- **the day of the preparation** (27:62): the day people got ready for the sabbath (Luke 23:54)
- **made sure** (27:64–66): made secure; **a watch**: a group of guards; **sealing the stone**: putting a seal on it so no one could move it without being found out
- **countenance** (28:3): face; **raiment**: clothes; **keepers** (28:4): the guards
- **All hail** (28:9): a greeting; **brethren** (28:10): brothers, meaning His disciples



Tell the middle part in your own words (Luke 24:1–12): Very early on the first day of the week, the women came to the tomb bringing the spices they had prepared (24:1). They found the stone rolled away, went in, and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus (24:2–3). Two men in shining garments stood by them and asked, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen" (24:4–6). They reminded the women that Jesus had said He would be crucified and rise again the third day, and the women remembered His words (24:6–8). Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James and other women told the apostles, but their words seemed like **idle tales** (made-up stories), and the apostles did not believe them (24:9–11). Peter ran to the tomb, stooped down, saw the linen clothes laid by themselves, and went away wondering (24:12).

Read out loud: Luke 24:36–43. Old words in this passage:

- **in the midst of them** (24:36): right in the middle of them
- **terrified and affrighted** (24:37): scared and frightened; **supposed**: thought
- **handle me** (24:39): touch Me; **a spirit hath not flesh and bones**: a ghost does not have a real body
- **meat** (24:41): food of any kind; **broiled** (24:42): cooked over a fire; **honeycomb**: honey still in the wax

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. The chief priests remembered Jesus said, "After three days I will rise again" (Matthew 27:63). Jesus' enemies remembered His promise. Why do you think His disciples struggled to believe it?
2. The leaders sealed the stone and set a watch (27:66). What does the empty tomb tell you about anyone or anything that tries to stop God's plan?
3. The angel said, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (28:6). Why do you think God invited the women to look for themselves?
4. Jesus said, "Handle me, and see" and ate in front of them (Luke 24:39–43). Why does it matter that Jesus rose in a real body, not as a spirit?
5. The women went from fear to great joy, and the disciples from doubt to belief. What doubts do people your age have about Jesus? Where can they find answers?
6. Jesus told the women, "Go tell my brethren" (Matthew 28:10). What makes it hard to tell your friends about Jesus? What would help?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in Romans 6:4: **buried with him by baptism into death** means that when we are baptized, all the way under the water, we are buried with Jesus and our old sinful life is put to death. **Like as Christ was raised up from the dead** means just as Jesus came out of the tomb alive. **Walk in newness of life** means live a brand-new life.

Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Matthew 28:6 this week; keep working on Romans 6:4 next week too.



5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "The empty tomb is the heart of the gospel. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey that gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and like Christ was raised from the dead, we rise to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."

Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. If Jesus is really alive, what difference does that make in my life this week?
2. What is one question or doubt I have about Jesus that I want to bring to God, my parents or my pastor?
3. Write a short prayer thanking Jesus for dying and rising again, and asking Him for courage to tell someone.

If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: like the women, "go tell." Tell one friend or family member that Jesus is alive, and show them Matthew 28:6.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again, just as He said. Thank You that He is alive and that we can have a new life in Him. Give us faith when we doubt and courage to tell others. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks "How do we know Jesus really rose?": answer honestly and gently from Scripture. The tomb was guarded and sealed (Matthew 27:66), yet it was empty (Luke 24:3). Jesus showed His hands and feet and ate in front of His disciples (Luke 24:39–43), and Paul writes that He was seen by more than five hundred people at one time (1 Corinthians 15:6). Encourage them to keep reading and keep asking.

