

Fun Family Activities to reinforce the story

From 1 Corinthians 15:1-26, 51-57

Key Verse:

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 15:57

The Point:

We can rejoice since the risen Christ will destroy death forever.

Making Connections:

The Power of God's Love

Spiritual Practice:

Fellowship



Background for Adults and Older Kids:

Making Connections

In our last lesson we read Paul's description of faith, hope, and love in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. Today's lesson picks up later in Paul's letter as he describes the importance of believing in and practicing resurrection.

Story Summary:

Death, the Last Enemy

Often when we encounter teaching on resurrection the focus is on the future, on the time of our physical death and what will happen next. Not only is this conceptually difficult for children to understand, it is also a fairly narrow understanding of the concept itself. Jesus' teachings often focused on this day, this moment, encouraging us to live as free, transformed people in the here and now. We do not have to live in fear of death because we understand that we are sustained and empowered by God's eternal love, now and in every moment.

Paul's argument is that we live boldly, with courage and strength. We are not to live as those cowed by our fear of what will happen in the future, but confident in God's promise in our life as it is right now. We are to live not as though resurrection is something that will come, but something that has already happened and will continue happening.

The Point

We can rejoice since the risen Christ will destroy death forever.

Jesus' resurrection shows us death is subject to God's power. From a strictly human perspective death seems to be an inescapable fate, from which we instinctively cringe in fear. But Jesus' life reminds us that even this great power has no real hold on us. Not only does death hold no power over us, but in God's hands it actually becomes a tool to give us healing and new life. The freedom Jesus experienced and expressed to his disciples has been given to us as well.

Spiritual Practice: Fellowship

The topic of death in today's text is intense, but can also be a cause for celebration. Fellowship has the power to bring comfort and hope to those who are troubled, afflicted, or at a loss for ways to act. Gathering in times of sorrow and of joy is a sign of deep and meaningful fellowship.

Set the scene for this lesson for younger kids:

The story today is not in our Spark Story bible for younger kids. These activities will help them understand the main point of the story.

Plant a Seed

Provide a sand table or sand box, some gardening toys, and various types of dried corn and beans. Allow kids to spend time planting their "seeds" together. Plant real seeds in cups or in your garden if you have them. How do the seeds change when they are planted in the ground? What do they need to grow? (good soil, sunshine and water)

Beautiful Cross

Provide kids with copies of the Cross that is attached along with decorating supplies, so they can create their own beautiful cross. The cross reminds us of Jesus and how he helped people!

Help Center

Provide kids a variety of toys connecting to the helping professions—toys from doctor sets, firefighter gear, teacher supplies, and gear for police officers (though no weapons). Give the kids a chance to play both at requesting help and offering it. Talk about what each of these helpers do for others. Do you have anyone in your extended family that is a nurse, doctor, teacher, firefighter, etc.? Make a card thanking them for helping others!

Making Something New

Introducing the power of transformation.

You will need:

† Play dough

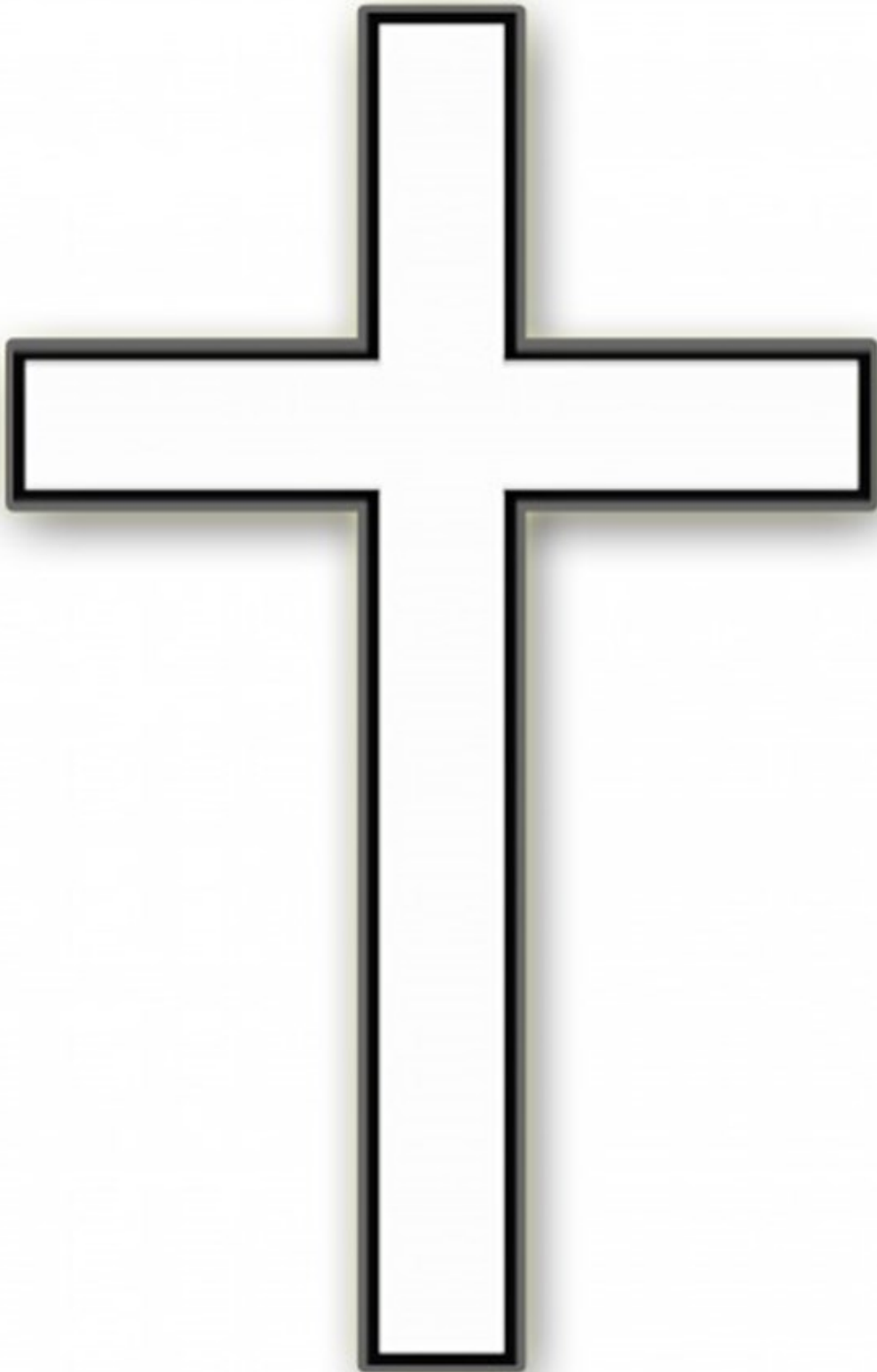
Today we are talking about things that change shape. What are some things you can think of that change shape? *[Water which changes to ice and to steam, air which takes the shape of balloons or bubbles, fruits which can be eaten raw or made into jelly or baked into pies, etc.]*

1. Show the play dough or clay. **This is one of my favorite things that change shape. What is this?** *[Play dough or clay.]* **You can do almost anything with play dough. You can roll it out to make it long and skinny, or flatten it out to make it look like a pizza. You can cut it into fun shapes or make it into round little balls. What do you like to do with play dough?** Allow all answers.
2. **We can change play dough into all different forms, but one thing stays the same: it is still play dough, right? It can be something old and something new at the same time! Our lesson today is about resurrection. Do you know what that word means?** *[Something that is dead comes back to life.]* **Jesus was resurrected, or brought back to life, and that taught us a lesson. We are like this play dough, and like Jesus. We grow up and go through lots of changes, but no matter how much we change, inside we are still ourselves. Even when we die, God promises that we will keep living in another way.**

Let's do this next activity before we read our Bible Story.

Beautiful Cross

Create a symbol of worship.



Living a Big Life

Play a game about things that fill us with God's love—and things that do not.

You will need:

- † Bible
- † Activity Sheet with smile and frown faces
- † Craft sticks
- † Scissors
- † Glue or tape

Make one copy of Activity Sheet for each person. If you have younger students, cut out the circles in advance and have the kids glue them on the craft sticks.

1. **Today we are going to play a game called “Living a Big Life!” A big life is one in which we are filled up with God's love. What might a big life be like?** *[To live in a way that feels free and happy, to feel connected and loving to others, to feel confident that all is well.]* **Our hearts feel good when we are living a big life, or when we are living our best lives. But what does it feel like to live a small life—a life in which we do not feel God's love that much?** *[To be fearful, to feel unloved and alone, to hold a grudge, to judge someone harshly and treat them badly.]* **When we do not feel God's love we can feel our hearts hurting inside us. We feel weak and broken.**
2. **I am going to read activities and you will decide if it is something you would find in a big life filled with God's love or in a small life where it is hard to feel God's love. If you think it is a big life activity, hold up the smiley face side of your paddle. If it is a small life activity, hold up the frowning face side.**
3. List several different activities, allowing people to respond to each one and then give them a chance to explain their decisions. Possibilities include playing with friends, fighting with a brother or sister, whining about not getting dessert, being kind to someone who is shy, caring for a pet, staying angry at someone who hurt your feelings, praying a thank you to God for all the great things in your life. When you have exhausted your ideas give your family members a chance to come up with their own.
4. **You had some really good ideas of what it means to live a big life filled with God's love and a small life where it is hard to feel God's love. Sometimes it might feel hard to have a big life, especially when things do not go the way we want. But our lesson today tells us that God can take everything in our lives, even the things we do not want, and turn them into something new and wonderful.**

The story today is not in the Spark Story Bible, or in other children's Bibles. Find 1 Corinthians in your Adventure Bible, or in your family Bible. Find Chapter 15, and start reading with verse 1-26, then verses 51-57. For younger kids, just read verses 51-57. Remind the kids that this is a continuation of the letter that Paul wrote to the people of Corinth that we read the beginning of last week about Love.

God can take even the worst small-life days and make them really, really big!

Living a Big Life

Play a game about things that fill us with God's love—and things that do not.



Painting Rocks:

Resurrection is about making something new again.

Find some rocks outside and wash them off. When they are dry, paint them with bright colors- put encouraging messages on them or fun pictures. Put them outside around your step, or around a tree for others to see! It will make them smile!



Closing Prayer:

Dear God,

We thank you for the lesson of resurrection, which shows us that new life begins right now, when we give you our hurts and fears. We thank you for freeing our hearts from fear and anger, and for filling them with love and joy. The kingdom of God begins in us, right here, right now! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.