



The Story of God | Death & Resurrection

Death & Resurrection | Story

Story from... Matthew 26-27; John 20

Everywhere Jesus went he had compassion on people and met their needs. He performed many miracles... he freed people controlled by evil spirits, healed deadly illnesses, and he even raised people from the dead!

Jesus continued to tell people that he could forgive their sins. This enraged the Jewish leaders - they saw this as the ultimate disrespect to God. They gathered together to plan how they could stop Jesus and have him killed. These Jewish leaders, called Pharisees, looked for many ways to trap Jesus, but he was always too wise for them. They were afraid to take Jesus by force, because he was surrounded by crowds of people who loved him.

During the Passover celebration, Jesus told his disciples that he would soon face death, but would rise from the grave to be with them again. He revealed that one of them would betray him that very night. Jesus knew that Judas was the one who would lead Jewish soldiers to him later when no one was around.

After the meal Jesus went to pray, for he knew that he was facing arrest and death. He prayed to God, *"Father, if there is another way besides my death, please let that happen. But I will do whatever you ask."* When he finished praying, Judas came to him and greeted him with a kiss. This was a sign to the Jewish soldiers that this was Jesus. The guards arrested him and drug him away.

Jesus was beaten and brought before the Jewish leaders for questioning. They asked him, *"Are you the Messiah, the Son of God?"* Jesus answered them, *"I am, and you will see me seated next to God in power and coming back on the clouds of heaven."* When Jesus said this, the High Priest tore his clothing in horror and said, *"Any man who claims to be God must be put to death."*

Then the Jews took Jesus to the Roman governor since they could not execute anyone without government approval. Roman guards brutally beat him and took him to the place where he would die called, "Skull Hill".

Like a criminal, Jesus was nailed to a wooden cross between two thieves. While hanging on the cross, Jesus cried, *"Father, please forgive them, they don't know what they are doing."* Then Jesus breathed his last breath and died. *(Pause)*

To make sure he was dead, a soldier pierced him with a spear and blood poured from his side. Jesus was buried on a Friday and a large stone was rolled over the entrance to the tomb. Guards were posted there to insure that nothing happened to his body.

On Sunday, some of the women who followed Jesus went to prepare his body for burial. However, when they arrived at the tomb they saw the stone rolled away and the soldiers were gone. Suddenly two angels appeared. They said, *"Why are you surprised? You are looking for Jesus, but he is not here, he has been raised from the dead."* The women went and told the disciples the amazing news. Some of them ran to the tomb and looked inside for themselves...

Jesus was not there!

I've told you a lot so far. Let me ask a few questions...

Death & Resurrection | Dialogue

Remember this is a dialog, not a quiz. The "answers" below each question are there to help you as a leader guide the discussion toward some key ideas.

Why did the Jewish leaders want to kill Jesus? Who did he claim to be?

(Play this out some) if he claimed to be God why would they not have been excited and happy that the Messiah had finally come? Why did they miss this?!

What were Jesus and his disciples celebrating when they had their last meal together?

The Passover

How does the Passover story we heard earlier remind you of Jesus' death?

The lamb had to be firstborn, male, and perfect.

Jesus was the firstborn of his mother Mary. We know this because she was a virgin.

He was male. He was perfect. But no man is perfect. We have seen this clearly.

Who is always good, right and perfect? God alone. Jesus was God.

Only God can pay the ultimate sacrifice for our sins!

The lamb's blood was shed. Jesus' was also shed.

The lamb was a substitute for the firstborn. Jesus gave his life in our place.

How could Jesus know that Judas was going to betray him?

Who has the power to know men's minds?

How did Jesus fulfill the prophet's predictions about the coming Messiah?

What do you remember?

... A virgin would give birth to him in Bethlehem.

... He would be from the line of King David, who was a descendent of Abraham.

... He will do no wrong, living a life without sin.

... He would be beaten and killed like a criminal.

... God will lay the punishment and guilt for all of our sins on him.

... His life would be made an offering for our sin.

... Because of Him, many will be made right with God.

Why did Jesus have to die?

As a substitute, in our place. God required that a life be given for the cost of sin and rebellion in each of our lives. God chose to accept Jesus' life as a payment in the place of ours.

How is Jesus being raised from the dead significant? What does it show us about him?

That Jesus is God and has power over life and death. Death was the result of sin, and Jesus conquered death showing us that he had also conquered sin! Now once again humans could have a way back to God and a life that would never end!

After hearing this story, do you believe that Jesus death was a substitute for the payment of your sins too?

Death & Resurrection | Additional Dialogue

What did you see for the first time in the story?

How did the story challenge or encourage you?

What questions do you have from the story? What do you wonder about?

How does this story affect your life?