

BACKPACKERS

2007



TEACHING MATERIAL

Name:

Scriptures quoted from the International Children's Bible, New Century Version (Anglicised Edition)
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Overview of the Teaching Material

This year at Backpackers we are using four Bible stories to illustrate the memory verse. In previous years Group Leaders, in particular, have felt that there has not been sufficient time during the course of the four days to do more than just learn the memory verse so this year we thought we would redress that balance.

I also gave consideration to looking at an Old Testament character this year. However, when I learned from one Group Leader that she had two children in her group who didn't know who Jesus is, I came straight back to the Gospels! Coming to Backpackers may be the only opportunity some children get to hear the wonderful news about Jesus and it would be very wrong to deny them that chance. I realise that other children will know these stories extremely well (children of leaders for example!) but hopefully you can encourage those children in your groups to help you tell the story and talk to the other children about what they are learning each day.

The memory verse for this year is:

Jesus said "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14 verse 6

Please make sure you learn it in this version.

The four passages we will be looking at are:

DAY 1 - THE WAY - Zacchaeus - Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus probably had everything money could buy and a lot in the bank as well. But when he met Jesus he realised that the way he lived his life wasn't the right way. The right way to live his life was following Jesus.

DAY 2 - THE TRUTH - The Wise and Foolish Builders - Matthew 7:24-29

It is only by building our lives in accordance with the truths of Jesus's teaching that we grow to be more like Jesus and are able to withstand the difficult things that happen to us.

DAY 3 - THE LIFE - Jesus raises Lazarus - John 11: 1-45

No one else except Jesus could bring Lazarus back to life and it is only through making Jesus King of our lives that we can have eternal life.

DAY 4 - NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME - Cross and Resurrection - Matthew 28:1-15

Explanation of the death and resurrection of Jesus and how that makes it possible for everyone who repents of their sin to be a friend of God.

Each day's Bible Study leaflet includes a challenge to the children about a choice they need to make:

- Day 1 - Will they follow Jesus's way or not?
- Day 2 - Will they build their lives on Jesus and His teaching or not?
- Day 3 - Do they believe, as Martha did, that Jesus was the resurrection and the life?
- Day 4 - Do they want to make Jesus the King of their lives?

If the answer to this question is yes, I've encouraged them to talk to one of their Group Leaders so that you can help them understand more fully what it means to be a Christian. I've also included a short prayer of commitment that you can pray with them if appropriate (P4). If you prefer you can always take them to one of the Encouragers who will probably have more time to talk to them. But before you do this, do ask the child if they are happy with this.

Please also read, read, read and read again the four passages until you can recount the stories by heart - it really helps when you come to look at the stories in your group. And take time to study them for yourselves too - don't just accept what I've written! As you study the passages ask yourselves these questions:

- What is the passage saying?
- Why is it saying it here?
- What are the surprises?
- Is this event referred to elsewhere?
- What should I do as a response?

Then you can look at a commentary if you wish!

Each of the four passages we will be looking at is included in the material (the version is the Children's New Century Version which we use at Backpackers). Please do your preparation using this version to ensure that we are all using the same.

I could not have prepared this material without the help of several people and my particular thanks go to Margaret Faulkner, Rebecca Gorst, Gill McNab and Heather Pugsley.

Finally, if you have any questions please do contact me either by phone on 01494 776385 or email on maggie.wigmore@googlemail.com.

Jesus said "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14 verse 6

This verse comes near the beginning of John's account of the events leading up to the arrest, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. In chapter 13 Jesus shares the Passover meal with His disciples and washes their feet. He also talks about His impending death and tells them that one of them will betray Him. He also tells Peter that he will deny that he knows Jesus three times.

All this talk of betrayal, denial and death clearly leaves the disciples upset and chapter 14 opens with Jesus saying, "Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. And trust in me." Chapters 14, 15 and 16 form a long discourse of encouragement from Jesus as He seeks to reassure them not only about the immediate future but also about the time after Jesus has returned to heaven. Chapter 17 is a record of Jesus's prayer committing His disciples to the care, love and protection of His Father. And with chapter 18 we are straight into the events leading to Jesus's death and resurrection.

But back to chapter 14. Jesus tells His disciples that He has to go so that He can prepare a place for them in His Father's house. And He tells them, "You know the way to the place where I am going." But Thomas says to Him that they don't know where He is going so how can they know the way. And it is in answer to this question that Jesus gives the reply that is our memory verse.

At the end of this first section of Jesus's sermon He tells His disciples, "I tell you the truth. He who believes in me will do the same things that I do. He will do even greater things than these because I am going to the Father" (v12). By this Jesus means that the things we do will be greater because we do them in the light of Jesus's death and resurrection. Before His death Jesus's words and deeds were not always easy to understand, their meaning was hidden - even His disciples had trouble understanding - but after His resurrection everything becomes clear. We now know why Jesus came to earth and everything we do and say is done in the light of that knowledge.

What a wonderful encouragement to us as we go into Backpackers week to know that "if you ask for anything in my name, I will do it for you" (v13) and what we do will be greater because we have the knowledge and understanding of why Jesus came to earth.

Let us take encouragement as the disciples must have done from Jesus's words at the end of His sermon, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD" (16:33).

THE WAY

AIM: To help the children understand that Jesus is the only Way

The story of Zacchaeus takes place as Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem for the last time. In the previous chapter (18:18-30) Luke records Jesus's encounter with the 'Rich Ruler' who became very sad when Jesus told him to sell his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor. And this prompts Jesus to say, "It will be very hard for rich people to enter the kingdom of God!" (18:24). But a few verses later when asked by the crowd, "Then who can be saved?" (18:26), Jesus replies, "God can do things that are not possible for men to do!" (18:27). And now at the start of chapter 19 Jesus meets another very rich man - but what a different outcome this encounter will have.

Zacchaeus was well placed to accumulate wealth. Jericho was a major customs centre and Zacchaeus is described in verse 2 as a 'very important tax collector' (of 'chief tax collector' in other translations). As a tax collector he would have been employed by the Romans. As long as they got the taxes they set, the tax collectors were allowed to collect whatever sum they wanted and pocket the difference - hence Zacchaeus being both wealthy and hated. Zacchaeus had obviously saved up considerable funds as he was able to pay back four times the amounts he had cheated people of (v8).

Zacchaeus is determined to see Jesus. I think it is safe to assume that he has heard of Jesus and probably heard about the miracles He has done and may be some of His teachings. But did Zacchaeus want Jesus to see him? Whether he did or not, Jesus clearly wanted to see Zacchaeus and more than that he wanted to stay at his house (v5).

The Holy Spirit was obviously at work in Zacchaeus's life. We don't know whether the amazing change was due just to the fact that Jesus stopped under the sycamore and invited Himself to Zacchaeus's house or whether it came about because of what they talked about. Whatever it was, the Holy Spirit convinced Zacchaeus that he was living his life completely the wrong way and Zacchaeus turned his life around and because of this Jesus was able to say, "Salvation has come to this house today" (v9).

V8 - "...I will pay that person back four times more" - this was a far greater amount than the restitution specified in Old Testament law (cf Leviticus 5:16 and Numbers 5:7).

Jesus was going through the city of Jericho. ²In Jericho there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a wealthy, very important tax collector. ³He wanted to see who Jesus was, but he was too short to see above the crowd. ⁴He ran ahead to a place where he knew Jesus would come. He climbed a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus. ⁵When Jesus came to that place, he looked up and saw Zacchaeus in the tree. He said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down! I must stay at your house today.”

⁶Zacchaeus came down quickly. He was pleased to have Jesus in his house. ⁷All the people saw this and began to complain, “Look at the kind of man Jesus stays with. Zacchaeus is a sinner!”

⁸But Zacchaeus said to the Lord, “I will give half of my money to the poor. If I have cheated anyone, I will pay that person back four times more!”

⁹Jesus said, “Salvation has come to this house today. This man truly belongs to the family of Abraham. ¹⁰The Son of Man came to find lost people and save them.”

- What do we learn about Zacchaeus from verses 1-4?
- What did Jesus say to Zacchaeus?
- How did that make Zacchaeus feel?
- What did the people watching feel?
- How do we know that Zacchaeus wanted to change the way he lived?
- What did Jesus say had happened to Zacchaeus that day?
- What does 'salvation' mean?
- What does verse 10 mean? ('The Son of Man' was a title Jesus used of Himself)
- Just as Jesus challenged Zacchaeus to change the way he lived and follow Jesus's way, so He challenges us today. What choice will you make - Jesus's way or your way?

OPEN DOOR

Site Tour - Follow the Leader

Getting to Know You games (see separate sheet)

Decorate folders (A) - with stickers, felt tips, copies of memory verse etc

Decorate wooden clothes pegs (Y) - with names ready for pinning up art work or coats

WAY IN

Colouring in sheet (Y) - sheet 1B

Memory Verse Code - (R,G) - sheet M1

Spot the Difference (Y,R) - sheet 1C

Memory Verse Leaf (A) - sheet 1D (colour and stick on folders - don't use yet if you want to use the memory verse code!)

Words (G,B)

A-Z (B)

Buzz (G,B)

Cheat 1 (R,G,B)

Cheat 2 (G,B)

STORY

Read story from 'Backpackers' Bible or a children's Bible (Y,R)

'Meet Zacchaeus' - story with puppet (sheet 1E) and chocolate money (Y) - sheet 1F

Act the story out using cardboard box for booth, play money or chocolate coins, chair for tree (A) - roles - Jesus, Zacchaeus and the crowd. Get the children to mime the story as you read from the Bible. Get the crowd to react to what they see happening.

Bible Study leaflet (G,B) - sheet 1A

RESPONSE

Backpackers Logo (A)

Fill in the missing words (R,G) - sheet 1G

Pop up Zacchaeus (Y,R) - sheet 1H

Zacchaeus in the tree (Y,R) - sheet 1I

Celebrate the change in Zacchaeus by icing biscuits and having a party (Y,R)

Bus (Y,R) - sheet 1J

Paper plates with magazine cut outs of food (Y,R) - sheet 1K

Paper chains (Y,R)

Ice Cube Race (A)

Put Jesus in Your Heart (A)

Five steps to being a friend of Jesus (G,B)

Stepping Stones (A)

What Did Jesus say? (R,G) - sheet 1L

Where Am I Going? (R,G,B)

The Peace Game (A)

Wordsearch (R,G,B) - sheet 1M

Crossword (R,G,B) - sheet 1N

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Helicopters (A) - sheet M2 (These work like seeds from the sycamore tree)

Tree Book Mark with Memory Verse (Y,R,G) - see page 30

PRAYER

Prayer Banner - sheet P1 - first section

Prayer Tree - Have a large drawing of a bare tree and pre-cut sycamore shaped leaves. Children to write or draw prayers on them and glue onto the tree - sheet P2

Response Prayer

Please help us to pray regularly,

Father God, give us your strength and power.

Please help us to read and understand your Word,

Father God, give us your strength and power.

Please help us to follow your way,

Father God, give us your strength and power.

Please help us to draw closer to you,

Father God, give us your strength and power.

Please help us to tell others about your love,

Father God, give us your strength and power.

In every part of our Christian life,

Father God, give us your strength and power. Amen

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ACTIVITIES/GAMES

Follow the Leader - to link in with today's them of 'The Way' you could:

- nominate someone (probably a leader to start with) to play the part of Jesus and get the children to copy you exactly as you lead them round the site (hopping, skipping, giant steps, pigeon steps, etc)
- pretend to be a tour guide with a map and opened umbrella, making announcements as you go round
- pretend to be a traffic policeman with white gloves and using hand signals to direct movement

Words - how many new words can the group make from the letters of 'tax collector'

A-Z - make a list of people in the Bible starting with Adam and ending with Zacchaeus

Buzz - Choose a number from 1-6 (say "3"). The first child says "1", the next "2". You must say "Buzz" on the number "3" and any subsequent number divisible by 3 (eg 1, 2, Buzz, 4, 5, Buzz). If anyone forgets or gets it wrong, they are out and the next person must say what should have come next in the sequence. Play this a few times, but finish on the number 4 and link to the story (Zacchaeus promised to pay back 4 times the amount he had cheated from people).

Cheat 1 - All the group sit on the ground - a random pattern is best with at least an arm span between them. One player is 'It'. 'It' tags any seated player at random and runs away. The player must get up and try to tag 'It' who dodges in and around the seated players. The chaser **MUST** follow 'It's' movements exactly. If he deviates everyone shouts 'cheat!' and the chaser must sit down. 'It' then tags another player. If 'It' is caught, the chaser takes over as 'It'.

Cheat 2 - This is a variation on the card game. You need two packs of cards, shuffled and divided between players. The aim is to get rid of all of your cards. A turn consists of placing any number of cards face down onto a central pile. Each player must declare what they are putting down (eg, two 5s). If you can't play, or simply if you feel like it, you can play any cards you want, but you must always declare it as though it were a valid play. ie. you put down a five, and declare "one queen." If a player declares a play and you think (or know) that the cards they put don't match the cards they declare (ie. you have all the queens and they declare "one queen"), you should call out "cheat!" Any player can do this regardless of whose turn it is. The cards are then checked - if your call is correct, the accused picks up all the cards in the central pile, and play passes to you. If your call is mistaken, you pick up all the cards in the central pile, and play continues starting with the player clockwise from the accused. First to get rid of all cards wins. Remember, with two packs of cards, there will be eight of each number.

Backpackers Logo - Look at the logo and remind your group that the Backpackers name originated from the idea that we are on a journey carrying all we need for survival in our backpack. The logo shows us following Jesus, who is the Way to the Father.

Paper Chains - Jesus written on one paper chain and every child writes their name on other chains. Link them all together - they are following Jesus.

Ice Cube Race - You will need two good size ice cubes per team. Divide the group into two teams. The teams race to see who can melt the ice first by rubbing the cubes in their hands, taking turns. If it is not a hot day you could put the cubes into a bowl of lukewarm water to avoid hands getting too cold. Link to Jesus melting Zacchaeus' hard heart.

Put Jesus in your heart - Give each child two pieces of paper 3" square and a straw. On one square draw and colour a red heart. On the other write JESUS (you could pre-prepare these for smaller children). Staple or glue the two pieces of paper together with the straw up the middle (to form a square lollipop). Place the straw between the palms of your hands and roll it back and forth making the straw and paper spin one way and then the other. As you watch the paper you will see that the word Jesus seems to be in the heart. Talk about how to put Jesus into your heart.

Five steps to being a friend of Jesus - Each child needs a sycamore leaf shape (see template on sheet 1). Notice that a sycamore leaf has five points. Zacchaeus did five things:

1. He went to where he could see and hear Jesus.
2. He came when Jesus called him.
3. He welcomed Jesus into his life.
4. He gave to the poor.
5. He repaid what he had cheated.

This week, the children have come to where they can see Jesus (Backpackers) and hear him (by reading the Bible and listening to those who know Jesus well). Will they welcome Jesus into their lives? If they want to, what things might they have to do (or stop doing)? Each child to write these things on each point of their leaf.

Stepping Stones - Divide group into two teams and give each child two sheets of newspaper. Mark out a start and finishing line. They must get to the finishing line by using their sheets as stepping stones. One person must get to the finishing line before the next one starts. Anyone who falls or steps off a "stone" must go back to the start, as should anyone who tries to cheat by sliding the paper along. The first team across the finishing line wins. Link to theme "Jesus is the Way". We can only reach God through Jesus. Anything else on its own (being good, going to church) is as useless as trying to cross real water using newspaper stepping stones. (This would also be a good game for Day 4).

Where Am I Going? - One player moves out of earshot while the rest agree on a destination eg a country or a place (swimming pool, park). Either, the first player then asks about this place that can only be answered with a 'yes' or a 'no'. Or, the first player points at a player and asks "Where am I going?" and they reply with a clue.

The Peace Game - Everyone stands in front of the leader. Explain that everyone must copy the leader's actions instantly! The actions will flow rapidly from one to another, so they must watch carefully in order to keep up with the movements. The leader begins by performing some energetic actions, eg windmilling arms, miming driving fast, waving frantically - all actions must be arm actions that flow into each other. Gradually, the pace of the actions slows down, the arms wave more slowly overhead, the fingers make waves and ripples, with the occasional slightly faster move thrown in, but overall the actions slow down. Now the leader makes the arms move slowly and sleepily up and down in calming movements, ending with the whole body and head dropping forwards and arms slack at the sides. If you wish, you could end with the whole body swaying gently and subsiding to the floor - invent your own movements until you are carrying everyone along with you. This game can be used at any time to calm your group down if they need it! But it is included for Day 1 because of the link to following.

THE TRUTH

AIM: To help the children understand the importance of building their lives on the truth of Jesus and His teaching

This short parable comes at the end of Matthew's record of the Sermon on the Mount. Those listening to Jesus's teaching in this Sermon would have found what He said very radical turning as it did many of their world's ideas up side down. In 5:17-20 Jesus explains that He hasn't come to abolish the Law but to fulfil it, to take it further. For example, it is not just murderers that are liable to judgement but also those who get angry with another person, adultery isn't just sex outside of marriage but looking with 'lustful intent' at a person of the opposite sex.

In the final part of His Sermon (7:13-27) Jesus gives three challenges to test our wholeheartedness as followers of Jesus, to test whether Jesus really does have first place in our lives. Firstly, in verses 13-14 we are challenged to 'enter by the narrow gate'. Secondly, in verses 15-23 we are challenged to make sure that being a follower of Jesus brings about a real change in the way we live ('good fruit'). And thirdly, in verses 24-27 Jesus challenges us to make sure we are building our lives on Him and His teaching.

Jesus likens the building of our lives to building a house - it is the foundations that are most important. To the observer both the houses in this parable would have looked the same. It was only when the storm came that the difference became clear.

Such torrential rain storms would be well know by Jesus's hearers as Palestine is known for this type of storm when dry wadis would be turned into raging rivers. So how you built your house was vital.

Jesus is making it absolutely clear that there are only two ways we can build our lives - either on Him and His teaching or not. Jesus and His teachings are true and will never let us down. All other religions and philosophies are built on sand and, even if they appear not to let people down in this life, ultimately they will because when Jesus returns to judge the world they will be seen for the sham they really are.

What Jesus is saying is uncompromising - it does matter what you believe. Jesus would never agree that as long as you are sincere it doesn't matter what you believe in. He is quite clear that there is only one route to God and that is through Him.

So how do we build our lives on Jesus? By hearing AND obeying. We have to study the Bible and put in to practice what we learn from it. It is only by believing in Jesus and building our lives on the truth of His teachings that we will grow to Christian maturity and withstand the difficult times in our lives.

Jesus is not saying that it is what we do that will earn us salvation. It is what we do that demonstrates our faith. If we truly believe and trust in Jesus we will obey Him and that obedience will be shown in our works.

Jesus said, ²⁴“Everyone who hears these things I say and obeys them is like a wise man. The wise man built his house on rock. ²⁵It rained hard and the water rose. The winds blew and hit that house. But the house did not fall, because the house was built on rock. ²⁶But the person who hears the things I teach and does not obey them is like a foolish man. The foolish man built his house on sand. ²⁷It rained hard, the water rose, and the winds blew and hit that house. And the house fell with a big crash.”

²⁸When Jesus finished saying these things, the people were amazed at his teaching. ²⁹Jesus did not teach like their teachers of the law. He taught like a person who had authority.

- What was the difference between the two houses?
- When did this difference become obvious?
- What do you think this parable means?
- How was Jesus' teaching different from the other teachers of His day?
- What does 'He taught like a person who had authority' mean?
- Just as Jesus challenged those listening to Him to build their lives on believing and obeying Him, so He challenges us today. What choice will you make - will you build your life on Jesus and His teachings or not?

WAY IN

Colouring Sheet (Y) - sheet 2B

Find Your Way (Y,R) - sheet 2C

Memory tray with building articles on (A)

Wise Builders work sheet (Y,R) - sheet 2D

Rainstorm (R,G)

House of Cards (G,B)

Wise and Foolish (G,B)

STORY

Story with actions (Y,R) - read the story from the Bible getting the children to do the appropriate actions each time they hear these words:

- built - use fists as building blocks, one above the other
- rain - wiggling fingers coming down
- water rose - flat hands lifting up
- winds - blow hard
- crash - loud clap

Read the story from the Bible using two houses - one firmly made and well attached to a piece of flat stone and the other made by leaning the sides together and resting in a tray of sand. When you pour water on the two houses, the first should stand firm while the second will be washed away and should collapse.

Two Houses - Retell the story using an acetate sheet - see Two Houses below. Alternatively this can be done by the children

Bible Study Leaflet (G,B) - sheet 2A

RESPONSE

Building Game (Y,R,G)

Fill the Gaps (R,G) - sheet 2E

Match the House (Y,R,G) - sheet 2F

Free Play (Y) with sand and water trays or play dough or Duplo or junk

Stones (Y,R) - paint stones and write on them 'Jesus is my rock'

Two Houses (Y,R,G)

Difficult things (A) - chat to the children about the things they find difficult and help them understand that Jesus is always there to help them. He will never let them down.

Build your life with Jesus as the foundation (G,B)

Quick Draw (G,B)

Crazy Buildings (A)

Wordsearch (R,G,B) - sheet 2G

Crossword (R,G,B) - sheet 2H

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Build a House (R,G,B) see page 30

PRAYER

Prayer Banner - sheet P1 - second section

Prayer House - Draw a house on a large piece of thick paper or material. Cut out some brick shapes from red paper. Get the children to write or draw their own prayers on the bricks and then stick them on the house.

Building bricks - Either have a number of small boxes (cereal packets etc) to represent bricks or cut brick shapes out of paper. Get the group to write on some of the bricks the qualities which someone should have if they are following Jesus. On the remaining bricks write those things which you would be trying not to do. Build a house with the positive bricks and leave the negative bricks in a pile as rubble. (If using paper bricks, make a poster). Pray using the bricks (help us to be like this/help us not to be like this). Include some time when they can pray about things which are bothering them, either aloud or in their heads.

Response Prayer

Lord Jesus, when I'm at home,
Be at the centre of my life.

When I'm at school,
Be at the centre of my life.

When I'm alone,
Be at the centre of my life.

When I'm with friends,
Be at the centre of my life.

When I'm working,
Be at the centre of my life.

When I'm relaxing,
Be at the centre of my life.

In everything I do,
Be at the centre of my life. Amen

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ACTIVITIES/GAMES

Rainstorm - Sit in a circle. The leader rubs hands together slowly. The person to the right copies, then the next person and so on until the action has passed round the circle. The leader then changes the action to snapping fingers. This action passes round the circle. The leader then changes to slapping thighs. The fourth time round the leader stamps feet. This should sound like rain getting harder and harder. You can then quieten the storm by reversing the sequence.

House of Cards - In pairs. Give each pair 15 playing cards. See which pair can build a house of cards first (three pairs on bottom row).

Wise and Foolish - Have some pictures of road signs. Talk about what they mean and what they do (help people to use roads wisely). Invent some foolish meanings (eg "men at work" sign is often said to be "man trying to open umbrella" or "no cars or motorbikes" is "low flying bikes")

Two Houses - permanent colour pens, washable pens, spray water bottles, sheets of high gloss paper or OHP acetates with a line drawn down the centre to make two sections. It can get quite messy so something waterproof to cover the table is a good idea and some protection for the children might also be useful! Get the children to draw a house in each half of their sheet - one using a permanent pen and the other with a washable pen. Then let them spray their pictures. One should start to dissolve and wash away but the other will stand firm. Talk to them about the story as they work or get them to tell you the story. **Hint!** - do a trial run so you know it works with the pens you've got.

Building Game - Get the children to work in pairs. Give each pair a matching set of Lego/Duplo bricks. Build a house earlier but don't let the children see it. Give the children instructions to build a house the same as yours. Then compare houses - are they well built? Will they withstand the storm?

Build your life with Jesus as the foundation - Draw an outline block of flats (see diagram) with JESUS on the foundation stones. Get the children to think of rules for living which begin with the letters of JESUS (ideas only given below).

| | | | | |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ust welcome Jesus into your life | very day give thanks | ay sorry for wrong things | nderstand that you are forgiven | pread the good news about Jesus |
| J | E | S | U | S |

Quick Draw - You will need large sheets of paper and felt pens. Divide the group into two teams and get one member of each team (the artist) to turn away while you hold up a piece of paper with the word of the object they must draw. The teams then give instructions to their artists on how to draw this object but without naming it. The artists have to guess what they are drawing.

Link - hearing and obeying.

Crazy Buildings - Two versions, same objectives:

- Tabletop game - you will need a selection of small flat objects eg CD cases, matchboxes, tablemats, books, plastic boxes, paper plates - anything that is suitable for piling up and falling down.
- Floor game - you will need a selection of fairly large objects eg cardboard boxes, books, plastic crates, cushions, large soft toys

The members of the group take it in turn to select an object and place it on the pile to see how tall a building they can make.

Talk about the importance of good foundations.

THE LIFE

AIM: To help the children understand that Jesus can offer us eternal life because He has authority over death

The story of the raising of Lazarus comes just before John begins his narrative of Jesus's death and resurrection. In this passage Jesus shows that He has power over death by bringing Lazarus back to life. His own death and resurrection take this authority to fulfilment by showing that He has defeated sin and death for ever. This is confirmed by Jesus's statement in verses 25 and 26 - Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will have life even if he dies. And he who lives and believes in me will never die."

It is clear from the Gospels that Lazarus, Martha and Mary were close to Jesus and special to Him. John tells us that it was Mary who anointed Jesus with perfume in chapter 12:1-3. It may well be true that if Jesus hadn't delayed His arrival at Bethany, Lazarus may not have died and it must have been hard for the disciples and Mary and Martha to understand this delay. However, John makes it very clear to us his readers that Jesus deliberately delayed His departure so that by bringing Lazarus back to life He would:

- Bring glory to God and, because He and His Father are one, glory also to Him (v4)
- Help the belief of the people who witness this miracle (v42)

This passage gives a clear invitation from Jesus to accept His offer of life. By accepting this offer, dying to ourselves and putting Jesus first in our lives not only do we enjoy His promises for this life but we can also look forward confidently to a wonderful eternity with Him after we die.

'Jesus cried' (v35) - Jesus wasn't a hired mourner. Even though He knew He would bring Lazarus back to life, He still feels the pain of Mary and Martha just as He feels our pain today. 'His tears at the moment authentically expressed the emotion of His heart' (The Message of John - Bruce Milne p164).

In verses 33 and 38 we read that Jesus was very sad and troubled ('deeply moved' in other translations). The Greek word for 'deeply moved' actually means great anger. Jesus is angry at the evil of death and at Satan who has the power of death. It is Satan that He has come into the world to destroy.

So as Jesus approaches the tomb of Lazarus, He cries because of the deep grief of Martha and Mary but He is also enraged by the power of Satan.

'Four days' (v17) - It seems that Jews believed that the soul of a dead person 'hovered' around the body for three days after death in the hope of gaining re-entry. On the fourth day when signs of decomposition appeared it went away. The first three days of Jewish mourning were always the greatest and most intense while the dead person was still present to see the sadness of family and friends. Jesus arrived on the fourth day when the soul had left the body and decomposition had set in. So by bringing Lazarus back to life after four days, Jesus was demonstrating His complete authority not only over death but also over the process of death. Lazarus was fully restored even though his body would have begun to decay.

There was a man named Lazarus who was sick. He lived in the town of Bethany, where Mary and her sister Martha lived. ³So Mary and Martha sent someone to tell Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.”

⁴When Jesus heard this he said, “This sickness will not end in death. It is for the glory of God. This has happened to bring glory to the Son of God.” ⁵Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶But when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days. ⁷Then Jesus said to his followers, “Let us go back to Judea.”

¹¹After Jesus said this, he added, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep. But I am going there to wake him.” ¹²The followers said, “But Lord, if he can sleep, he will get well.” ¹³Jesus meant that Lazarus was dead. But Jesus’ followers thought that he meant Lazarus was really sleeping. ¹⁴So then Jesus said plainly, “Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there so that you may believe. But let us go to him now.”

¹⁷Jesus arrived in Bethany. There he learned that Lazarus had already been dead and in the tomb for four days. ²⁰Martha heard that Jesus was coming, and she went out to meet him. But Mary stayed at home. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But I know that even now God will give you anything you ask.” ²³Jesus said, “Your brother will rise and live again.” ²⁴Martha answered, “I know that he will rise and live again in the resurrection on the last day.” ²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will have life even if he dies. ²⁶And he who lives and believes in me will never die. Martha, do you believe this?” ²⁷Martha answered, “Yes, Lord. I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God. You are the One who was coming to the world.”

²⁸After Martha said this she went to her sister Mary. She said, “The Teacher is here and he is asking for you.” ³²Mary went to the place where Jesus was. When she saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³Jesus saw that Mary was crying and he felt very sad in his heart. ³⁴He asked, “Where did you bury him?” She replied, “Come and see, Lord.” ³⁵Jesus cried.

³⁸Jesus came to the tomb. The tomb was a cave with a large stone covering the entrance. ³⁹Jesus said, “Move the stone away.” Martha said, “But, Lord, it has been four days since he died. There will be a bad smell.” ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”

⁴¹So they moved the stone away from the entrance. Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you heard me. ⁴²I know that you always hear me. But I said these things because of the people here around me. I want them to believe that you sent me.” ⁴³After Jesus said this, he cried out in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴The dead man came out. His hands and feet were wrapped with pieces of cloth, and he had a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, “Take the cloth off him and let him go.”

- Jesus gives two reasons for the death of Lazarus - what are they?
 - Verse 4
 - Verse 15
- What did both Martha and Mary say to Jesus?
- What did Jesus mean by His reply to Martha in verses 25 and 26?
- Do you think Martha really believed that Jesus could bring Lazarus back to life (verse 39)?
- Why did Jesus cry (verse 35) when he knew He would raise Lazarus from the dead?
- Why did Jesus pray before He commanded Lazarus to come out of the tomb (verse 41 and 42)?
- Jesus' challenge to Martha in verses 25 and 26 is the same challenge for us today. Write your name in the gap and think about your answer to the question. What choice will you make?

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will have life even if he dies.

And he who lives and believes in me will never die. _____, do you believe this?"

WAY IN

Colouring Sheet (Y) - sheet 3C

Waiting (R,G,B)

Amazing (G,B)

Body Building (G,B)

STORY

Read story from a children's Bible or 'Backpackers' Bible (Y,R)

Act out the story using a pop up tent covered in a dark sheet for the tomb or cover your table with a blanket and set under the table to listen to the Bible story or, if you have access to a parachute, sit under that.

Children read the story (Y,R,G) - sheet 3D. Cut up sheet so that each child has a few lines. Give them out randomly and allow them a few minutes to practice their lines. Then ask the children to get themselves in the right order (for the younger children this will mean sorting themselves alphabetically and for the older children the letter markers can be cut off so that they have to use the Bibles to find the correct order). Once everyone is in order, the children can read the story. This could be done after they have had the Bible story read to them.

Bible Study Leaflet (G,B) - sheet 3A

The Bible Study Leaflet doesn't contain all the verses from this chapter as that would be too long a passage to study. However, because I don't really like picking and choosing which verses to include and which to leave out, I have also produced a leaflet with the whole chapter on so that the children can take that home and read it all if they wish - sheet 3B

RESPONSE

Lazarus Thaumatrope (Y,R) - sheet 3E

Play dough tombs (Y,R) on paper plates, with characters

Toilet Roll 'Mummies' Quiz (A) - sheet 3F

Names in code (R,G,B) - sheet 3G

Who Says? (R,G,B)

Hot Seat (G,B)

Think About (G,B)

Place Race (R,G,B)

Are You Sleeping? (A)

Wordsearch (R,G,B) - sheet 3H

Crossword (R,G,B) - sheet 3I

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Wonderful Whizzers (A) - Sheet M3

PRAYER

Prayer Banner - sheet P1 - third section

Prayer Bandages - Use long thin strips of paper or cloth. Get children to write prayers along the strips. Focus on numinous prayer (full of awe) and prayers for suffering/healing/comfort.

Response Prayer

Lord, we can tell you our joys

And you always listen.

We can say a big thank you

And you always listen.

We can tell you our worries

And you always listen.

We can ask for help

And you always listen.

We can share our news

And you always listen.

We can say 'I'm sorry'

And you always listen.

Thank you, Lord, that you always hear our prayers.

Amen

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ACTIVITIES/GAMES

Waiting - Offer children a sweet, but say they can have one now or wait and get two later.

(Longitudinal studies on pre-school children have shown that those who choose to wait grow up to be more successful than those who don't.) Sometimes waiting makes something better such as enjoying the anticipation (more sweets!) or the satisfaction of achieving something. Explain that today's story is about Jesus delaying doing something so that he could bring glory to God through the witnessing of a miracle.

Amazing - Get the group to think of words of surprise and wonder (wow, amazing, awesome). Make a giant poster, or individual sheets to go up round the walls of the tent.

Body building - You need two outline body shapes (draw round two of the children). Divide your group into two and stand them in line behind the body shape. Give each person a picture of an organ (or the word), ranging from simple (eye) to difficult (kidney). They need to place the body part in the right part of the body to give their body life. If they get it wrong, they go to the back of the line, but get to swap their body part. The team that completes their body first wins.

Toilet Roll 'Mummies' Quiz - divide the children into two or three groups (you will need five lengths of bandage for each group (strips of toilet paper could be used). Ask the groups in turn to answer a question and if they get it right, they get a piece of bandage. The winners are the first group to get a full set of bandages and wrap up one of their team! The younger children may just enjoy bandaging each other up (make sure they leave noses uncovered and that the 'mummies' are able to walk)!

Who Says? - Write out the following names of characters: Martha, Mary, the Jews, Jesus, Me. Cut out speech bubbles and write on the following quotations:

- It is for the glory of God.
- Come and see, Lord..
- I am the resurrection and the life.
- Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died.
- I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God.
- Lazarus, come out!
- The Teacher is here and is calling for you.
- I want them to believe that you sent me.

Children have to match the quotation to the appropriate name.

Which of the quotations might they match with their own name?

Hot Seat - Ask for volunteers to role play Mary, Martha, Jesus, a disciple. The other members of the group should ask them questions about how they feel about the events in the story.

Thinkabout - Jesus asks the people in this story to understand that God is constantly in control. Things do not happen at random for those who believe. Ask the group to think of times when they have been impatient or frustrated that things have not happened as they wanted. Sometimes we find it hard when our prayers seem not to be answered. We need to learn that sometimes the answer will be "not yet" and trust that God knows what is best for us.

Place Race - Have five large sheets of paper (flipchart size) on the ground as far as possible, labelled "Mary, Martha and Lazarus' house", "Judea", "Jerusalem", "Bethany", "River Jordan". These are the places in the story. Call out the names for the children to run to the right place. Add more challenging instructions, such as "hop to Judea", "walk backwards to Jerusalem". Last one to get there is out (or, to keep everyone playing, keep a tally of who is last each time and the winners are those who have never been last).

Are You Sleeping - You will need a blanket and a clearly defined playing space. The group hold hands in a circle with one member of the group as the 'sleeper' either lying or crouching under the blanket in the middle of the circle. The rest of the group walk in a circle around the sleeper chanting:

'One, two, three!

'One, two, three!

Are you sleeping?

Can't catch ME!

On the shout of 'Me', the children in the circle loose hands and run away while the sleeper jumps up, throwing off the blanket and tries to catch one of them. They must stay within the defined playing space. The child who is caught is the next sleeper.

If you wish, this game can lead into a discussion about the Bible story:

- How did you feel when the sleeper threw off the blanket and jumped up? Although you were expecting this to happen it could still feel a bit scary as you walked round and waited for it.
- How do you think Lazarus's family and friends felt when he came out of the tomb? It must have been a real shock, even frightening.
- How do you think they felt when they realised that Lazarus was alive again? They wanted to tell everyone about what they'd seen.

NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME

AIM: To help the children understand that it is only because of Jesus's death and resurrection that we can be God's friends

This is the first of two accounts of Jesus's resurrection appearances recorded by Matthew. Matthew records that soldiers were guarding the tomb to prevent Jesus's disciples stealing the body (27:62-66) and they got the shock of their lives! There was an earthquake and then an angel came and rolled away the stone from the entrance of the tomb. It seems likely that by the time the two Marys arrived at the tomb the guards had recovered from the shock and gone to report to the authorities.

Like the other three Gospel writers, Matthew reports that the first people to see the empty tomb and the risen Lord Jesus were women. At a time when women couldn't even give evidence in a court of law it is ironic that it is women who are the first witnesses of the resurrection. No one would have made this up - it must be true. 'The angel opens the tomb, not to let Jesus out, but to show the women that He is no longer inside' (The Message of Matthew - Michael Green p313).

The angel reminds the women that Jesus said He would rise from the dead and invites them to look inside the tomb. Then he instructs them to go and tell the disciples what has happened and to tell them to go to Galilee.

Verse 8 tells us that the women were afraid but also very happy. Clearly they had no problem in believing that Jesus really had risen from the dead. And this is confirmed when Jesus appeared to them and their reaction is to worship Him. Jesus confirms the instructions given by the angel and the two women go on their way to tell the disciples.

The resurrection of Jesus is at the very heart of the good news of the Gospel. Quite simply there would be no good news without the resurrection. By rising from the dead Jesus has defeated the power of Satan for ever. And this should, like the women, cause us to worship and to pass on the news to everyone we meet. How can we keep silent when we have the most exciting news in the world to share?

The day after the Sabbath day was the first day of the week. At dawn on the first day, Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary went to look at the tomb. ²At that time there was a strong earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven. The angel went to the tomb and rolled the stone away from the entrance. Then he sat on the stone. ³He was shining as bright as lightning. His clothes were white as snow. ⁴The soldiers guarding the tomb were very frightened of the angel. They shook with fear and then became like dead men. ⁵The angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus, the one who was killed on the cross. ⁶But he is not here. He has risen from death as he said he would. Come and see the place where his body was. ⁷And go quickly and tell his followers. Say to them: 'Jesus has risen from death. He is going into Galilee. He will be there before you. You will see him there.'" Then the angel said, "Now I have told you."

⁸The women left the tomb quickly. They were afraid, but they were also very happy. They ran to tell Jesus' followers what had happened. ⁹Suddenly, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings." The women came up to Jesus, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them. "Don't be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go on to Galilee. They will see me there."

- What did the angel do?
- What was the reaction of the soldiers who were guarding the tomb?
- What did the angel say?
- Why did the angel invite the women to look inside the tomb?
- What was the reaction of the women?
- Even before they saw Jesus, do you think they believed He had risen from the dead? Why?
- What was their reaction to Jesus when they saw Him?
- What did Jesus say to them?

After all you've learned about Jesus this week at Backpackers, the choice for you today is:

Jesus - deal or no deal?

Do you want to make Jesus the King of your life?

If you do, please talk to one of your Group Leaders. They will be able to help you understand more fully what it means to be a Christian and they also have a prayer which you can use to ask Jesus to become King of your life.

WAY IN

Colouring Sheet (Y) - sheet 4B

Friendship bracelets (A)

Early in the Morning (G,B)

Hunt for Jesus (Y,R,G)

STORY

Read the story from a children's Bible or the 'Backpackers' Bible using the pass the parcel method either in pictures or words to tell the story (Y,R).

Resurrection Scene (Y,R) - the children could work in two groups for this activity. Each group will need:

- a piece of card or tray to act as a base
- a tomb (upturned spread tub with hole cut out for entrance)
- a stone (piece of thick card or play dough)
- six people (angel, two women, two guards, Jesus - made from pipe cleaners or play dough)
- other things could be added to make more elaborate scenes eg bits of foam for bushes, twigs stuck in play dough for trees, pebbles, etc

Read the story from the Bible getting the children to change the scene when necessary.

Bible Study Leaflet (G,B) - sheet 4A

RESPONSE

Free painting (Y,R)

Blow Bubbles (Y,R,G)

Paper Hats (Y,R,G) - sheet 4C

Easter Story Board Game (Y,R) - sheet 4D

Memory Game (R,G,B)

Don't Be Afraid (R,G)

Fear and Joy (G,B)

Stress Balls (R,G,B)

Rewrite the Rules (G,B)

Whizz Quiz (R,G,B)

Spread the Word (G,B)

Have You Heard? (G,B)

Stepping Stones (A)

Wordsearch (R,G,B) - sheet 4E

Crossword (R,G,B) - sheet 4F

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Jigsaw (A) - see page 30

PRAYER

Prayer Banner - sheet P1 - fourth section

Prayer chain - Think about people who work to share the gospel: church leaders, missionaries, Backpackers leaders etc. Write names of people/organisations on paper chains and link them together.

Response Prayer

Lord, we have not seen you with our own eyes,

Help us to believe in you.

We have not walked through Galilee with you,

Help us to believe in you.

We have not watched you perform amazing miracles,

Help us to believe in you.

We have not seen the scars in your hands,

Help us to believe in you.

But we have read your story in the Bible,

Help us to believe in you.

We have heard others talk about knowing you,

Help us to believe in you.

And we want to love you in our hearts,

Help us to believe in you. Amen

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ACTIVITIES/GAMES

Happy Crosses - you will need thick paper, glue, glitter, bright card, marker pen

1. Beforehand, cut cross shapes from the card, trimmed to fit the paper
2. Let the children cover the paper with glue and sprinkle glitter all over the page. Shake off excess on to a newspaper.
3. Give each child a cross and show them how to fix it to the centre of their glitter paper.

This leads into the first Together Time when Jesus' death will be talked about and then links into the group time when we'll be looking at the Resurrection. They are 'Happy Crosses' because they are empty as Jesus rose from the dead.

Early in the Morning - Take your group somewhere away from the bustle. Sit in silence with eyes closed for one minute. What sounds do people hear? Can they think of other sounds they might hear if it were very early in the morning? Has anyone been to the Easter morning Sunrise Service in Lowndes Park? Think about what it was like for the two women going to the tomb on that first Easter morning.

Hunt for Jesus - Use a small plastic figure to represent Jesus, or write the name "Jesus" on a small piece of card. The children sit in a circle. One child stands away from the group while the object is hidden on another child's person (eg tucked into a sock). For younger children, they can help the seeker by clapping softly and getting louder as the seeker gets nearer. Link to looking for Jesus in the wrong place.

Blow Bubbles - Say sorry for the wrong things we do with each bubble

Easter Story Board Game - the children could play in teams or several copies of the board could be made so the children can play in smaller groups. You will need dice and counters.

Memory Game - In today's story Jesus' body was missing from the tomb and now in this game the children have to identify which item is missing from the tray. Place a dozen items on a tray and give the children a minute to memorise them. Then cover the tray with a T-towel and discreetly remove an item. Get the children to say which item is missing. You could use items that relate to the stories throughout the week eg a leaf, money, bricks, bandages, things from the resurrection scene, etc. For the older children you could use key words from today's story.

Don't be afraid - Get the children to tell you times when they have felt afraid. Make a list of the possibilities (darkness, being alone, strange noises, being lost, bad news, bad dreams etc) Get them to walk around a designated area at random and when you call out one of the fearful situations, they must freeze, petrified to the spot. They can only be released when your other leader says the words 'But Jesus said, "Don't be afraid."'

(NB petrified comes from the Greek word *petros* and literally means turned to stone. It is the same word Jesus used when naming Peter *The Rock*)

Fear and Joy - Talk about occasions which make people feel fear and joy all at once (first date, first day at school, being on "Any Dream Will Do"). Remind children that Jesus is always there and offers us peace. If you have Year 6 children in your group, pray about them starting a new school in September.

Stress Balls - Buy some small square sponges and give one to each child. On it they write in felt pen, Jesus said "Don't be afraid". In times of worry or stress, they can scrunch the sponge up (like a stress ball), then watch as it unfolds to reveal the message.

Rewrite the rules - Take a well known game eg musical chairs, but change the rules slightly. How hard is for the children when they're not sure what's going on? How confused must the two Marys have been when they found Jesus' body gone?

Whizz Quiz - Have a set of questions based on the bible stories from the whole week. Two leaders need a copy each. Divide the group into two. Tell the groups that Jesus left his disciples with the challenge to pass on the good news to the whole world. Stand the teams a little way away from the leaders. Each team sends one person to one leader, who asks a question. If the person gets it right (keep asking questions until they do), they run back to their team and grab another person. Both go to the leader for another question. When one gets it right they both go back to the team for another person. They should keep holding hands throughout. Keep going until all the team has been collected.

Spread the Word - Divide the group into 3: group 1 to spread the word; group 2 to stop the word being spread; group 3 to receive the word. Write down a longish word (follower, resurrection, salvation) and give it to group 1. The object of the game is for group 3 to guess what the word is before group 2 rob them of their lives. They have 10 lives. Groups 1 and 2 take it in turns to throw a dice. Every time a member of group 1 throws a 6, a member of group 3 may ask if a given letter is in the word (as in Hangman). Every time group 2 throws a 6 or makes an incorrect guess, group 3 loses a life. The idea is to see if group 3 can receive the word before they have lost all their lives. Play a few rounds so that groups swap roles.

Have You Heard? - Two teams sitting opposite each other. One team comes up with some bad news, eg "Have you heard the bad news? There was an earthquake in our town last night!" And the other team has to counter that with some good news eg "Yes, but the good news is there's no school today. It fell down!" A point is scored each time the team comes up with some good news but if they can't the other team win a point. After a while swap roles.

At the end of the game one of the leaders says "Have you heard the bad news? We're all sinners and we're going to die!" Then ask your group if they can tell you the Good News (prime another leader just in case they can't!). You are hoping for a reply along the lines of "The Good News is that Jesus has died in our place and we are forgiven and are alive in Him - forever."

This game obviously links in with today's teaching on the Cross and Resurrection and also the memory verse.

Stepping Stones - see Day 1

GETTING TO KNOW YOU GAMES

1. Each person thinks of a word to describe themselves which begins with the initial letter of their first name eg I'm Ann and I'm athletic OR I'm Ann and I like apples. Go round in a circle with each person repeating everything that's been said so far and adding their own name on. If you're really clever you can make up rhymes (eg I'm Fred, I love my bed)
2. Spell out the name of each child using their bodies to form letter shapes.
3. Get in a long line in alphabetical order of first names.
4. Throw up a ball or beanbag calling out "Anyone who has a brother/Anyone who likes cornflakes" etc. All those described try to catch the ball.
5. Divide your group into 2. Stand them opposite each other about 15 feet apart. The first person from side 1 runs to the first person in side 2, grabs their hand and calls "(name), we want you". Both then run back to the first side and grab the next person, calling "(name), we want you". This continues until all have been collected. They must hold hands all the time. Put your most energetic children at the front - they will have to run the most.
6. You will need a ball of string. Players sit in a circle. The first player holds the ball of string and says something about him/herself (hobbies, school). Keeping hold of the end of the string, they then throw the ball to someone across the circle, who also says something about themselves. Continue this until everyone has had a go. The string criss-crossing is a symbol of friendship and linking together.
7. Getting acquainted. For older groups. Each person gives 4 facts about themselves concerning their home, family, school and hobbies. Three of these facts must be true, one a complete lie! The others then have to guess which was a lie.
8. Begin with the whole group standing in a circle, facing outwards, with one child standing in the centre. This child says, "I've lost a friend!" and taps another child on the shoulder. That child must say, "What does it look like?" The child in the middle then begins to describe another child e.g. "He's wearing a green T shirt". When the child recognises who is being described he shouts "That's Joe!" (or whoever). The named player then runs round the outside of the circle with the guesser chasing. He must get back to his place without being tagged. If he does, he becomes the next person in the middle.
Players can run either way round the circle, but cannot change direction.
9. If I were an animal I'd be ... Children to say what kind of animal matches their personality eg dogs are friendly, loyal; cats do what they like; sheep like to follow others; ants are hard workers; elephants stamp around making lots of noise
10. Mirror Image. In pairs try to copy each others actions like a mirror image
11. Large cheap plain ball and permanent marker pen. Sit children in a circle and roll the ball to each child in turn and let them write their names on it. Could also ask them to say something about themselves (eg which school they go to). The ball can then be used for other games and at lunch times.

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

Code - sheet M1. This must be used on **Day 1** (once they have heard the memory verse, it is no longer fun to do!)

Helicopters - sheet M2 - a good one for **Day 1** as the helicopters work like seeds from sycamore trees

1. Cut out each helicopter and cut along the centre line of the tail.
2. Attach a paperclip to the nose.
3. Fold one of the tail pieces forward and the other back along the dotted lines.
4. Drop the helicopter from a good height and watch it spin to the ground.

Tree Bookmark (Day 1) - Cut out a tree shape in card for each child and use a hole punch to stamp holes around the top of the tree (the leafy part). Cut green wool into pieces long enough to thread through the holes. Get the children to thread the wool through the holes and tie ends together (instead of using a needle wrap a piece of masking tape around the end of each piece of wool to make it easier to thread). Get the children to write the memory verse on the tree or print out the verse and get the children to stick it on.

Build a House (Day 2) - Write the individual words of the memory verse on pieces of paper or card. You will need two sets, one for each leader. Divide your group into two teams. Groups to stand some way away from the leaders. They take it in turns to run to their leader, collect one word and return to the group. The winning team is the first to collect and sort the memory verse into the correct order, building it into the shape of a house. Alternatively you could use small cereal packets to write each word on, so that they can build a 3D house. You could make it harder by making them answer a question before giving them a "brick".

Wonderful Whizzers - Sheet M3 (**Day 3**) - Cut a circle each about 10cm in diameter out of thick card. Decorate the circle on both sides with a bright and colourful design and write the words of the memory verse on one side. Make two small holes in the centre of the circle, approx 2cm apart. Thread about 60cm of thin string or embroidery thread through the holes and tie the ends together to make a loop. Hold the end loops of the thread around your index fingers and twirl the spinner so that the thread becomes twisted. Then pull the thread taut and watch the spinner unwind at speed.

Jigsaw (Day 4) - Write the memory verse on the reverse of a large greetings card or other picture. Cut the picture into 10 or 12 pieces. The group has to put the message back together on a piece of stiff card (eg cereal packet). Then cover the jigsaw with another piece of card and flip it over. They will then be able to see the picture. Link to Jesus's followers piecing together information about him, until they were finally able to understand after the Resurrection that he is God.

Colouring Sheet - sheet M4

Rearrange the words to form the memory verse - sheet M5

Pairs game - For this you will need some small (business card size) pieces of paper or card. There is a photocopiable sheet at Resource sheet , or you could write each word of the memory verse on a separate card (use lower case letters). Make two sets. Place the cards face down on the table or blanket. Each child takes it in turn to turn over two cards. If the cards match, they keep the pair. At the end put one set into the correct order to reinforce the memory verse.

Balloons (for older groups) - Write each word of the memory verse on a slip of paper, roll each one up and put each in a balloon before blowing up the balloon. Children have to burst the balloons, retrieve the bits of paper and lay out the words in order.

Washing line - Write each word on an A5 piece of paper. Tie a length of string between two chairs and have enough clothes pegs ready to attach words to the line. You now have three choices of activity:

- a. Give each child a couple of words and ask them to peg them up in the right place.
- b. You peg all the words in the wrong order and they have to rearrange.
- c. You peg every other word and ask the children to fill in the gaps.

Once the verse has been pegged out correctly, get them to repeat several times, taking away some of the words each time so that they end up reciting from memory.

Quiz - Divide into two teams. Ask questions about the day's bible story. The prize for a correct answer is a word (or sequence of words) from the memory verse. The ultimate winner is the team with the whole memory verse.

Relay - Divide into two teams. Put the words at one end of your area and the children at the other. They take it in turns to run up and collect the words, one at a time. The rest of the group puts the words in order. First team to finish with words in correct order wins. You could make this harder by making an obstacle course.

PRAYER BANNERS

Last year each colour group produced a magnificent Prayer Banner with prayers written or drawn by each child on the theme of the day. This year, instead of producing large banners, there are several ideas for making prayer banners in your groups. There are ideas for prayers each day as well as three ideas for making a banner you can add to each day:

- Banner with section for each day - sheet P1
- Prayer Tree - write or draw prayers on paper leaves each day - sheet P2
- Prayer House - write or draw prayers on paper bricks each day

RESPONSE PRAYERS

As with last year, there is prayer included for each day which has a response so that all the children are able to join in even if their reading isn't too good. As well as including the prayer in the Teaching Material, I have also put the prayers in a leaflet so that the children can keep them to use on their own - sheet P3.