



Use Week of:

Unit 26 • Session 4

Jesus Was Arrested

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Matthew 26–27

STORY POINT:

Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.

KEY PASSAGE:

Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

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LEADER Bible Study

The Pharisees and other Jews in Jerusalem did not like Jesus. He didn't play by their rules (Matt. 12:1-14), He claimed to be God (John 8:58-59; 10:22-33), and He extended salvation beyond the Jewish people (Luke 4:27). So they plotted several times how they might kill Him.

The events leading up to His death did not surprise Jesus. Each step was part of God's established plan. (See Isa. 53:10; Acts 2:23.) But knowing God's plan didn't lessen Jesus' suffering as He was betrayed by His friends, arrested, falsely accused, and beaten. As you teach kids about the arrest of Jesus, help them understand the gravity of the events.

First, Jesus wanted to do God's plan. Jesus came to earth to rescue people from sin. He was committed to doing the Father's will. (Matt. 26:39,42) When Judas showed up with a crowd, Jesus didn't run. He didn't even allow Peter to stand in His defense. (Matt. 26:52) Jesus willingly gave Himself up for us because He loves us. (Eph. 5:2)

Second, Jesus was betrayed and arrested even though He did nothing wrong. The Jews tried to find a legitimate reason to kill Jesus, but they couldn't find one. (Matt. 26:59-60) Jesus did what we failed to do; He perfectly obeyed the law. His arrest was not just. The trial was not fair. But this had to happen. Only a sinless, perfect sacrifice could take away sin. (Heb. 9:11-14)

Finally, Jesus is who He says He is. After Jesus' arrest, the high priest asked Jesus if He was the Son of God. Jesus affirmed that He is. (Matt. 26:64) The high priest accused Him of blasphemy (speaking against God), but Jesus always told the truth.

Jesus felt the pain of betrayal and the agony of His imminent suffering and death. He came to do His Father's plan no matter what in order to bring salvation to the world.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Was Arrested

Matthew 26–27

Jesus came with His disciples to a garden called Gethsemane (geth SEM uh nih). He said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” **Jesus took three of His disciples into the garden, and Jesus**

became very sad and troubled. Jesus told the three disciples to stay there, and He went a little farther. **Jesus fell facedown and prayed, “Father! If it is possible, spare Me from this. But I want to do Your plan.”**

Jesus came back and found the three disciples asleep.

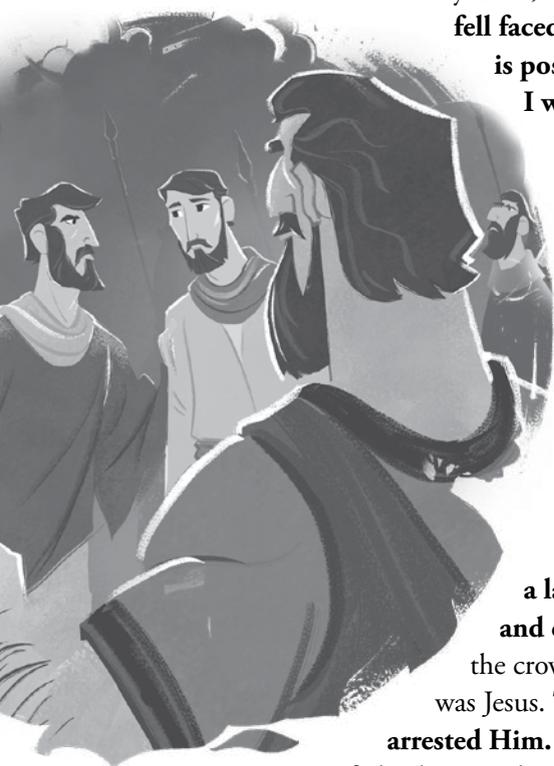
He asked Peter, “Couldn’t you stay awake with Me for one hour?” **Jesus went away and prayed a second time.**

Then He found His disciples sleeping again. He said, “Are you still asleep? Get up, for it is almost time. Someone is going to betray Me.”

Suddenly Judas arrived with a large crowd carrying swords and clubs. Judas kissed Jesus so the crowd would know which man was Jesus. **The men grabbed Jesus and arrested Him.**

Peter pulled out his sword to fight the men, but Jesus told Peter to put away his sword. Jesus said, “Isn’t this what God planned all along?” **Jesus’ followers ran away, but Peter stayed nearby to watch.**

The men who arrested Jesus led Him to the house of Caiaphas the



high priest. The religious leaders wanted a reason to kill Jesus, but they couldn't find one. The high priest asked, "Do You have anything to say? Are You the Messiah, the Son of God?"

Jesus replied, "Yes, that's right."

The high priest said, "Ah ha! He has spoken against God." **Caiaphas and the religious leaders did not want to believe that Jesus is God's Son. They said Jesus was lying, but Jesus was telling the truth! The crowd said, "He deserves to die!"** They spit in Jesus' face and hit Him.

A servant saw Peter and asked, "Aren't you one of Jesus' disciples?" "No, I'm not!" Peter said. Twice more as Peter watched what was happening to Jesus, someone asked him if he was a follower of Jesus. Peter lied. "No!" he said. "I don't even know Him!"

The next morning, the religious leaders decided how they would kill Jesus. Then they took Him to Pilate, the governor.

Christ Connection: Jesus knew that His death was God's plan to save people from sin. Jesus' friends turned against Him and He was arrested and put on trial, but Jesus followed His Father's plan in order to bring salvation to the world.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Act it out:** Recruit adult volunteers to act out the roles in the story. If available, dress in Bible times clothing and use props. Tell the story as the narrator while volunteers act it out.
- **Vary your voice:** Change the way you speak as you read dialogue for each person or use adult volunteers to help you with the story by assigning them to "voice" a person in the story while you act as the narrator.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Arrested

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26–27

STORY POINT: Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to tell about a time they were grounded or put in time out.

SAY • When we break rules, there are usually consequences. That may mean being in time out or losing privileges. Adults who break the law may be arrested or put in jail. Today we will hear about a time Jesus was arrested, even though He never did anything wrong or against the law.

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Spot the Differences” activity page. Challenge the kids to find the seven changes between the two versions of the Bible story picture.

SAY • Great job examining that picture to find the changes. Some were really hard to see. Today we will learn about the time Jesus was arrested. However, no matter how hard Jesus’ enemies looked at His life, they couldn’t find any sins; Jesus is perfect and never sinned!

- “Spot the Differences” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Red light, green light

Invite the kids to stand along one wall. Select one kid to stand at the opposite wall, facing away from the rest of the group. When she says “green light,” the other kids may move across the room to reach her. When she says “red light,” she may turn around to try and catch kids who are still moving. Any kid caught moving on a red light must return to the starting position.

SAY • If you broke the rules of that game, you had to start over. It is difficult to play a game like red light, green light perfectly. It is impossible to live our lives perfectly. We all have sin. The only exception is Jesus, who never sinned. Today we will learn about a time Jesus was arrested even though He did not do anything wrong.

OPTION 2: Paper chains

Help the kids make paper chains by connecting looped strips of paper together like links. Provide time for kids to slip their hands into the links at the ends of their chains to pretend they are handcuffs. Allow the kids to break free of their chains, if they wish.

SAY • If you are actually going to arrest someone, you need much stronger chains than these! Today we will hear about a time Jesus was arrested. Jesus is God’s Son, so the only way any chains could hold Him is if He allowed it to happen. Why would Jesus allow His enemies to arrest Him? We’ll learn more soon.

**LOW
PREP**

• tape (optional)

• strips of paper
• tape

Tip: Be sensitive to kids whose parents or family members may be imprisoned.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• gavel

[Leader enters wearing a long black robe and carrying a gavel.]

LEADER • Hi, everyone. My name is Judge *[your name]*, and this is my courtroom. I hope and pray that each of you won't have to see the inside of a courtroom unless it is for something educational like a field trip or joyful like an adoption. I don't really get to handle adoptions though. My courtroom hears mostly criminal cases.

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

Criminal cases start out with an arrest. When the police have evidence that seems to suggest a certain person may be guilty, they can get a warrant, which means they have permission to arrest the person and take him or her to jail. But that's the beginning of the process. The accused is allowed to hire a lawyer or the government will provide one. The lawyer helps the accused person come up with a plan to show they are not guilty. As you might imagine, the whole

process can get very complicated very quickly, but that's the general idea of how things work.

Speaking of arrests, our Bible story today is about the time Jesus was arrested. Normally, you can't be arrested unless you've broken the law, but Jesus' enemies didn't want to treat Him fairly; they only wanted to get rid of Him.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Jesus is God's Son, so no one could have arrested Him without His allowing them to. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him** because He knew it was part of God's plan to save us. *What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.* Through those actions, Jesus made the way for us to be declared righteous by God. Jesus took on our sin at the cross and God gives us Jesus' righteousness. When Jesus rose again, His resurrection proved His sacrifice was enough.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

· Giant Timeline

LEADER • The week before Jesus' death was kind of like an emotional roller coaster. At the start of the week, **people welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their King.** But soon, His enemies were plotting to kill Him. Their first plan to catch Him saying something wrong didn't work. **Jesus spoke with wisdom and authority.** Then Jesus shared a special Passover meal with His followers. **Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.** That's where we pick up.

- Bibles
- “Jesus Was Arrested” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 26–27. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Was Arrested.”

LEADER • Have you ever known the right thing to do but been afraid to do it? In a way, that’s what Jesus felt as He prayed in the garden the night He was arrested. Jesus knew God’s plan, and He wanted to obey. But obeying God’s plan meant being hurt, made fun of, spat on, hit, and killed. Jesus asked God for another way, but He was committed to God’s plan.

Even in the middle of this difficult time, Jesus put God’s glory above His feelings. When the men led by Judas came to arrest Jesus, He did not fight back. He did not even let Peter fight back. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.**

The Jewish Scriptures explained how to have a trial if you thought someone had broken a law. The religious leaders threw all that out when it came to Jesus. They didn’t care about fairness or justice; they just wanted Jesus dead. What they didn’t know is that God was using their evil plans to work out His wonderful one.

The Old Testament is filled with stories of hard, scary, and sad situations happening to people. Each and every time, God used the sad things to do something beautiful and glorious. God used Job’s suffering to show His power and sovereignty. God used Joseph’s slavery to save his whole family from a famine. God used Esther’s forced marriage to protect His people from Haman. And now, God was preparing the saddest and most unfair thing ever to

make the way for us to be saved.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus knew that His death was God’s plan to save people from sin. Jesus’ friends turned against Him and He was arrested and put on trial, but Jesus followed His Father’s plan in order to bring salvation to the world.

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 26, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about Jesus’ sinless life. Guide them to discuss what we should do when we have sinned.

• “Unit 26, Session 4”
Questions from Kids
video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Play the “Why Olympics?” missions video. Then ask kids which Olympic events they enjoy watching most.

• “Why Olympics?”
missions video

LEADER • We’ve been learning about missionary Eric Liddell, who won a gold medal at the Olympics in 1924. Missionaries today still look for ways to share the gospel during the Olympic games. In fact, Christians from all over the world go to the Olympics because they can meet people from many countries at one event. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him** and crucify Him because He wanted people all over the world to be saved.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Philippians 2:8. Then sing the key passage song.

LEADER • **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.** He is God the Son, and no one can do anything apart from

• Key Passage Poster
• “He Humbled Himself
(Philippians 2:8)”
song

God's allowing it to happen. Jesus' death on the cross wasn't unexpected. It was the high point of God's plan all along. Our key passage reminds us that Jesus was obeying God the Father. He died because that was the way to give God the most glory and make the way for people to live with Him forever.

Sing (4 minutes)

• "Jesus Saves" song

LEADER • Jesus is our Savior. Let's sing praises to Him because of who He is and what He did for us. Sing together "Jesus Saves."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Father, thank You that Jesus was courageous in the face of great difficulties. Thank You that He perfectly obeyed Your plan to save us. Help us obey You out of love. Help us be bold in the face of scary times. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- index cards
- pen

Write each word or phrase of the key passage on a separate index card. Invite volunteers to say the key passage from memory. Praise each kid's effort and encourage all the kids to continue working on the key passage. Then, distribute each card to a kid. Ask the kids to arrange themselves in key passage order and sit down. Then say the key passage with each kid standing when his word or phrase is spoken.

SAY • Jesus chose to lay down His life so that we could live with God forever. Jesus is the Son of God, and He obeyed God perfectly, even going to the cross. **Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him.** Jesus willingly laid down His life.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Matthew 26. Encourage the kids to use the table of contents to find Matthew. Remind them that Matthew is the first book of the New Testament. Ask a volunteer to provide the names of the book before and the book after Matthew. (*Malachi, Luke*) You may allow a strong reader to read a few verses from Mathew 26.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. What did Jesus pray in the garden? (*“Let this cup pass from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will,”* Matt. 26:39)
2. Which disciple betrayed Jesus and how? (*Judas, with a kiss; Matt. 26:47-49*)
3. How did Jesus respond when the high priest told Jesus to say if He is the Messiah? (*Jesus agreed, Matt. 26:64*)
4. Why do you think Peter denied knowing Jesus? *Guide kids to discuss the fear Peter surely felt. If the religious leaders had arrested Jesus, what would stop them from also arresting and punishing Jesus’ followers? Peter was focused on his own physical well-being and comfort, not on Jesus.*
5. When might we feel tempted to pretend we don’t know Jesus? *Guide kids to discuss the pressure the world will put on them to disobey God. Remind them that Satan is always working to convince people to worship things or people other than God. It may feel easier or more comfortable to ignore Jesus, but we are called to boldly preach the gospel to all.*
6. What is something difficult or scary that God may ask you to do? *Guide kids to think through situations they may face now or in the future. Remind them that no matter what situations we face, we always have hope for the future. Someday Jesus will return and destroy all evil, fixing the world for us to live with God forever.*

SAY • Jesus allowed His enemies to arrest Him. He knew that God’s plan would be painful, scary, sad, and very difficult. He obeyed anyway and went to the cross to take the punishment we deserve. He is our Savior.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

- flashlight
- tissue paper
- tape

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.



OPTION 1: Torch pass prayer

Make a simple Olympic torch by taping tissue paper around the top of a flashlight. Show the torch to kids and ask if they have seen the Olympic torch on the television. Encourage kids to spread out in the room. Assign a volunteer to hold the torch and say a prayer aloud for missionaries who shared the gospel in Japan and the people who heard the gospel. After she prays, ask her to pass the torch to a friend. Continue until every kid has had a chance to hold the torch and pray.

SAY • Every four years, the world holds the Olympic Games. Before the games start, a relay race carries the torch to the location where the games will happen, and a much larger torch is lit with the small one. At the 2020 Summer Olympics, missionaries in Japan created a prayer guide that went with the places where the Olympic torch would be. We can be a part of God's mission on earth when we pray for missionaries and those who hear the gospel.

LOW PREP

- plastic cup
- music

OPTION 2: Pass the cup

Invite the kids to sit in a circle. Give one kid a plastic cup. While you play music, the kids will pass the cup around the circle. When you stop the music, whoever is holding the cup must say the big picture question and answer, story point, or key passage from memory.

SAY • In the garden, Jesus prayed that God would spare Him from dying on the cross. Even so, Jesus knew that there was no other way for us to have forgiveness and eternal life. Jesus obeyed God even though it was difficult and scary. **Jesus allowed His enemies**

to arrest Him. Jesus wanted to obey God and glorify Him, even though it meant death on the cross.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- paper
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.