



The Night Before



THE MISSION AIM

A look at the events leading up to Jesus' death and His response to them.



KEY VERSE

1 Peter 2:23: "When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly."



Pre-Mission Activity



Supplies Needed

- Two or three hard boiled eggs
- Two or three spoons large enough to carry the eggs
- Paper
- Markers (for relay and poem)

Directions

SAY: Today we're going to start talking about Easter and we have an egg relay for you.

DO: Put the recruits in one line (or more than one if several kids are already there). Have the first person in line carry an egg on a spoon to an end point where there is a piece of large paper where they can write or draw something that represents Easter to them. When they are done, they put the egg back on their spoon and run back to the rest of the group. Give each person at least two chances to go and add something to the list. After the game, gather the list up and bring the recruits together in a circle.

SAY: Great relay recruits. Let's take a moment to discuss what you have on your chart here.

DO: Share what they have written.

SAY: Does anyone have any Easter traditions that you do as a family or that we do as a church that you can share with us?

DO: If there is still time, have the recruits create a JESUS acrostic poem with each letter of Jesus representing a word that describes Him i.e. J – Just, E – Ever caring, S – Saviour, U – Unending, S – So wonderful.



Mission Uplink 1



Have ready YouTube playlist: "Season 2 – The Easter Story Episode 1: The Night Before"

Play "The Easter Story (S2) Episode 1 (1/3)". Episode begins with the *Ready to Serve* theme song, followed automatically by the MISSION # 1 VIDEO. Pause the video when the MISSION # 1 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 1.

If using PPT for video, have *Easter-Episode_1-The_Night_Before.pptx* ready and play slide one. Pause on the MISSION # 1 CARD so you and your recruits can complete Mission # 1.



Mission #1



Supplies Needed

- 12 plastic eggs (or 12 paper eggs); using the Egg Template create two sets of eggs numbered 1-six; in each egg place the instructions from the template (see attachment pages 6 and 7)
- Two baskets (or other containers to hold the eggs)



Mission Assignment

SAY: As Michael said, Jesus knew what was going to happen. He came to Jerusalem for that very purpose. He knew He was going to be arrested and put on trial. He knew that His friends wouldn't stand up for Him and that He would be killed. He was having dinner with His friends and yet He knew that one of them would hand Him over to His enemies, that He would go on trial and that He would die. Wow! All of that is hard to imagine. Let's find out what our first mission is to see if we can better understand all that was happening...drum roll please... Mission # 1 (reading mission card from satellite uplink) "Recruits, take some time to discover what Jesus must have been thinking and feeling before His arrest."

SAY: What must it have been like to be in His shoes? I'm going to number each of you with a one or two.

DO: Put the kids into two groups based on their number. Have a leader or older recruit for each group. Have the groups sit in a circle around their individual "Easter Basket" of eggs. Have each group open the eggs from their basket one at a time and do the tasks that are listed there as they go through the eggs. (See the Egg Template on pages 6 and 7).

SAY: Well, how did it go? What did you discover?

DO: Have the groups summarize briefly the story that they were reading and some of the feelings Jesus had (see the ideas in parentheses on the Egg Template)

SAY: Like Peter and Simon I don't know that I've really thought about how difficult it must have been for Jesus to share supper with His friends, knowing that He would soon die and that one of His friends would betray Him. And then to think that when He was pouring out



If you have a small group, just have one basket and place all the eggs together. If you have a very large group and the leaders to do it, have four or six groups operating at the same time with the two sets of questions.



His heart in prayer, His best friends couldn't even pray with Him because they were so tired and so focused on themselves. Despite the fact that this was a brutally difficult time for Jesus He persevered and went through what must have been a horrible journey to the cross. We sure have been challenged already haven't we? Let's head back to the team and continue our journey with them as they come to understand Jesus' journey to the cross.



Mission Uplink 2



YouTube: Play "The Easter Story (S2) Episode 1 (2/3)". Pause the video when the MISSION # 2 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 2.

PPT: Click to advance to next slide. Pause video when MISSION #2 CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete Mission # 2.



Mission #2



Supplies Needed

- Eight or nine battery operated candles (or flashlights) if possible
- Script "Jesus' Journey to the Cross" – two readers to read (see attachment pages 8 and 9)
- Permanent markers
- A boiled egg for each recruit (have some extras on hand just in case some break) OR a plastic egg for each recruit
- Paper
- Tape to post references on the wall i.e. 1 Peter 2:23



Mission Assignment

SAY: There really is much to remember isn't there? So much that Jesus did for us. Let's look at Mission #2 to see how we can journey to the cross with Jesus and find out how He responded to the events leading up to His death. **Drum roll please,** (reading mission card from satellite uplink) "Look at how the journey to the cross must have been painful for Jesus and yet at how kindly and graciously He responded."

SAY: We're going to spend some time journeying with Jesus right now. I'm going to put you into two groups. Group A your leader will be _____ (Reader for "A" in the script) and Group B your leader will be _____ (Reader for "B" in the script). **As your leader reads, use your body to move in place and to act out what you hear. As soon as your reader stops choose one of the positions you were in and freeze until your reader starts again. Let's give it a quick try for our first scenario.**

DO: Divide the recruits up and have each group stand on a different side of the room. Give the first set of readings a go to practice the process.



SAY: I think we're ready. Let's continue with the second event in Jesus' journey to the cross.

DO: Continue with the readings until the end.

SAY: Wow! Jesus sure put up with a lot and He really didn't try to stand up for Himself or bully His way out of things. I don't know if I could have done that. Speaking of that, that reminds me of our key verse for today. I need everyone to look up 1 Peter 2:23. Let's read that together.

DO: Have the recruits read it. 1 Peter 2:23: When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.

SAY: There are some tricky words there but what this is saying is that "When they made fun of Jesus, He didn't do anything, He didn't talk back, He didn't fight back, He didn't bully them, instead, He trusted God, His Father to care for Him." That's amazing isn't it? I want us to remember this verse because it really shows us how much Jesus loves us and chose to die for us even though it was very difficult and painful. To help you remember, we are going to write the reference on our Easter eggs here (Or write the reference on a slip of paper if you're using plastic eggs). So just write "1 Peter 2:23" on your egg (or on the paper for your egg).

DO: Hand out hard boiled eggs or plastic eggs and give the recruits a moment to write the reference down on their egg with a Sharpie.

SAY: We have journeyed a lot today. Let's get back to the team and find out what is happening with them as they are journeying too.

DO: Have the recruits keep their eggs for now.



Mission Uplink 3



YouTube: Play "The Easter Story (S2) Episode 1 (3/3)". Pause the video when the FIELD MISSION CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete the Field Mission Project.

PPT: Click to advance to next slide. Pause video when FIELD MISSION CARD appears on screen and remains as you and your recruits complete the Field Mission Project.



Field Mission Project



Supplies Needed

- Bibles
- Quiet music
- Eggs and permanent markers from previous segment if using boiled eggs; if using plastic eggs some slips of paper and pencils for writing on and placing in the eggs
- Cross for kneeling at; could be a paper one on the wall
- Basket for eggs at the cross



NOTE
Today's PRAYER HUDDLE is incorporated into the Field Mission Project.



Mission Project

SAY: Let's take a moment to quietly read our last mission together, (reading mission card from satellite uplink) "Find out what happened to the disciples and think about what it takes to follow Jesus." What Jesus did was real. He really went to the cross and died for you and for me. It says in John 19 that Joseph and Nicodemus went and buried Jesus, so we know that He was dead. It seems like it's all finished doesn't it? But the story is far from over. Let's take a moment to find out what happened to the disciples, Jesus' friends after He died.

SAY: Look up John 20:19.

DO: Read John 20:19a.

SAY: Did you hear that? The poor disciples all gathered together after Jesus had died, they had the doors locked and they were afraid of the Jews. After all, the Jews had killed Jesus and people knew that they had hung around Him. While Jesus was being arrested and beaten, we hear of Peter being asked if he was Jesus' friend and Peter totally denied it. Even before Jesus actually died, the disciples were running away and denying Him. I have to say, that I probably would have done the same thing. It must have been frightening. But, the Bible tells us in Philippians 2:5-8 that we should have the same attitude as Jesus. Jesus allowed the soldiers to arrest Him and to crucify Him because He loved us. We aren't likely to be called on to die for our faith, but if we have Jesus' attitude then we shouldn't be ashamed of our faith either. We should stand up for Jesus and tell others that we love Him. That is not always easy. Even the disciples had a hard time with it so we totally need the strength of God to stand up for Jesus.

SAY: Let's follow Michael's lead and take a moment to pray right now. Let's thank Jesus for what He's done, to tell Him that we love Him. You see the Bible says in Romans 5:8, "...that God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." He chose to die for us to forgive us our sins. We can also spend some time asking the Holy Spirit to help us stand up and let people know that we have chosen Jesus and that He really did die on the cross for our sins. You will notice that we have the cross here today. It's the symbol of Jesus' sacrifice for us. As the music plays, take a moment to pray and use your egg (or paper if using plastic eggs) to write or draw words of thanks to Jesus for what He's done for you and to tell Him that you love Him. Draw or write something that you find really hard to do in your relationship with God. Maybe it's telling others about Jesus at school or choosing not to do what your friends are doing when you know it's wrong. If you are comfortable, bring your egg to the cross and put it gently in the basket here as a symbol that you believe in Jesus and in what He has done for you. While at the cross, tell Jesus that you love Him. If you are not ready to do that, it's okay. Just spend time quietly at your seat while others are praying.

DO: Pray over the recruits as they pray. Repeat any of the above ideas as the music plays as a reminder of what to do. If anyone doesn't choose to come to the front, don't make a big deal of it.

SAY: Well recruits, it's been a tough day. It's hard to think about all of the pain and suffering Jesus had to deal with at the cross but He needed to do it for us. Let's close today off in prayer.

DO: Pray and give the recruits their eggs to take home as a reminder of the prayers that they have prayed.



Egg Template

In each Easter basket have plastic eggs with the numbered ideas in them. Number the outside of the eggs and have the recruits open them in order. You don't need to write out the parts in parenthesis that just gives your leaders some sample responses.

Basket 1 – The Lord's Supper (Group 1)

1. Read Matthew 26:17-30.

2. That was quite a mouthful, wasn't it? Basically, Jesus was having supper with his best friends, the disciples. As He was eating supper, He knew that this would be the last time they'd be together like this, because he was going to be arrested and killed. But the disciples had no idea.

How do you think Jesus was feeling during supper?

(sad, disappointed, hurting for his friends who wouldn't understand what was happening to him, happy as he shared valued time with his friends)

3. The Jews ate the Passover to remember when God saved them from slavery in Egypt. The disciples knew all about Passover, and how they ate special foods, like lamb, flat bread and wine to remember how the angel of death "Passed over" their homes, but destroyed the Egyptians. Jesus knew these special foods represented Him – they showed how he would die to save the world from death.

4. The next part talks about how someone having dinner with them would betray Jesus. That means that they would turn Jesus over to his enemies. Turns out it was Judas, one of his friends, one of the guys who had hung around with him all the time. Judas was going to betray Jesus to his enemies.

5. Wow! How do you think Jesus was feeling then? One of his closest friends was going to turn him over to his enemies.

(disappointed, scared, sad, hurt)

6. So, this whole Last Supper was maybe not the party that we sometimes think. It wasn't just a group of friends enjoying each other's company and some good food. Let's go share what we've learned with the other group.

Basket 2 – The Garden of Gethsemane (Group 2)

1. Read Matthew 26:31-46
2. Wow! All of Jesus friends were going to desert Jesus – to run away and leave Him all alone. It said so in the Bible long ago. But even though Jesus already knew that his friends would desert him, he also knew that he loved his friends, and that he would see them again.
3. So Jesus took all his friends to be with him as he went to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. His prayer was that he wouldn't have to die, but that there could be another way to save His people. His prayers were desperate, but he also knew that he would do whatever God the Father asked of Him.
4. Why do you think Jesus was praying? How do you think he felt? Who would you take with you if you knew it would be your last few hours? Where would you go?
(Jesus really didn't want to be killed, He was scared, He was desperate for God the Father to come through with a different plan, He must have felt so alone)
5. As Jesus is in the Garden literally praying for His life, the disciples He brought with him, his very best friends fell asleep.

Now how do you think Jesus felt? His best friends are asleep while he's crying out to God to save Him.
(alone, desperate, broken-hearted, fearful, scared)
6. Wow! This is sounding pretty stressful. Let's go back to the group and find out what group 1 discovered.

Jesus' Journey to the Cross

(2 part response based on Matthew 26:47-68; Matthew 27:11-50; Luke 23)

If possible, turn the lights out and light the room with battery operated candles or flashlights. Divide the recruits into 2 groups, A and B. Have a leader read part A and, if possible, a different one read part B. Have the reader read the parts in brackets so the recruits can act them out. Each one has a freeze position at the end. That group will stay in position until their turn comes up again. So one group will be moving while the other is frozen. After each event has been read, turn off one of the candles so that by the end the room is very dimly lit.

A - Arrest/Betrayal

What was happening? While Jesus was speaking to His friends in the Garden, Judas, His so-called friend brought a large crowd of people armed with swords and clubs (draw your sword). When He kissed Jesus, the men stepped forward grabbed Him and arrested Him (pretend to grab Jesus). Though His friend Peter tried to protect Him Jesus reminded him that violence was not the way to do it (strike your sword). In the end all of His friends ran away, leaving Him with His enemies (running position and 3-2-1 Freeze).

B – What did Jesus do? He responded by encouraging His friends, (give a high five to someone nearby) and reminded them that He had God the Father who could send a massive number of angels to rescue Him, that God was in control (fly like an angel and 3-2-1 Freeze).

A - Chief Priest Trial

What was happening? Jesus was dragged to the Chief Priest (pretend to drag someone across the floor). There He was questioned like crazy and finally the high priest pointed at Him and said, "Tell us, if you really are the Son of God." (Point and 3-2-1 Freeze)

B – What did Jesus do? He truthfully answered "yes" (nod your head) and then the priest called out, "Liar, He should die!" Then those around Him spit in His face; hit Him and made fun of Him (point and pretend to laugh). But Jesus did not fight back, He simply told the truth! (Finger on your lips and 3-2-1 Freeze)

A - To Pilate

What was happening? The Chief Priest and his people decided that Jesus should be put to death so they tied Him up (tie up Jesus), led Him away (pretend to take someone by the hand and drag him/her) and handed Him over to Pilate, the governor. Pilate asked Jesus more questions about whether He was the King of the Jews, and said that he was ready to trade a criminal for Jesus. The crowd raised their hands and yelled, "Release Barabbas! Kill Jesus!" (Arms up in the air and 3-2-1 Freeze)

B – What did Jesus do? He just answered that He was the King of the Jews and as people made fun of Him and screamed at Him (make a silent yelling action) and yelled that He be killed, Jesus remained silent, knowing that God would look after Him (fingers on your lips and 3-2-1 Freeze).

A - Herod

What was happening? Pilate really couldn't find a reason to arrest Jesus so He sent Him off to Herod. When Jesus got there Herod was so excited (dance in excitement) because He hoped to see one of Jesus' miracles. Herod asked so many questions (point your finger). He and his soldiers made fun of Jesus by dressing Him in robes for a king and then he sent Him back to Pilate (put a fake crown on your head, stand tall and proud and 3-2-1 Freeze).

B - What did Jesus do? He shook His head (shake your head "no") and didn't perform any tricks like Herod had wanted. He remained silent. (Fingers to your lips and 3-2-1 Freeze)

A - Scourging, Brutalized by Guards, Walk to Calvary

What was happening? Through the process Jesus was hit and beaten with sticks, called names and then made to begin the long journey uphill to Golgotha (pretend to hit with sticks). He had to carry a huge wooden cross and even then people were yelling at Him and calling Him names (pretend you have a huge, heavy cross on your back). Thankfully they got someone to help Him carry the cross in the end but the heaviness must have been brutal (fall to the ground and 3-2-1 Freeze).

B – What did Jesus do? On the way he told the women not to cry for Him (shake your head “no” while wiping tears from your eyes). That it would turn out okay. He comforted them when they were so worried (give yourself or someone else a hug or side hug and 3-2-1 Freeze).

A - Crucifixion

What was happening? Jesus was nailed to the cross and hung there to die (make a cross with your arms and 3-2-1 Freeze).

B – What did Jesus do? He focused on getting someone to care for His mom, He talked to the prisoners beside Him and He died for us, separated from God (stretch out your arms and hang your head and 3-2-1 Freeze).