



Faith Adventures Youth Resource

Embedded in Faith Adventures: Children Together, this youth resource is intergenerational in nature and designed to foster God-connection in church, home and beyond.

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link:
<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

Titus 3: 4-8 Life Everlasting

Theme: What difference has Easter made?

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know before we begin?

When preparing this material, and deciding which Bible translation to use, the writing team take into account many different things – language, style and use of pronouns amongst them.

The version chosen for today’s passage does attribute God with male pronouns (you can only substitute ‘He’ with ‘God’ so many times!) so be aware if this is likely to be an issue with your group – and, as always, feel free to look at other translations to see if they might suit your situation better.

The CEV version also sets the reading out more like a psalm, whilst other translations have it as a more narrative piece. We found this useful in this instance for allowing specific themes to be highlighted within the passage.

One of those themes is that God loves us whatever we do. This might lead to the question: if grace means we don’t have to do good deeds to win God’s favour, why do good deeds? This might lead to a broader discussion about ‘why do anything nice for anybody?’ and the answer to that question can be applied here.

It is always worth noting that, because of Jesus’ death and resurrection, we view God in a different way to how we perceive God in the Old Testament.

If your group did not meet last week and have not followed the Easter story through from Palm Sunday, consider using last week’s resource this week instead, with the final Easter Sunday station included, as the resurrection is meaningless without the crucifixion.

This week's passage does not give the account of the resurrection, however it focuses on the outcome of the crucifixion and resurrection. Using the activity with the Easter Box, the stories on video, and discussion, you will be tying together the story of the resurrection with the theme of grace. Ensure you feel confident with the resurrection story in advance of this session by reading it in your Bible or by watching one of the videos recommended in this session.

Together

Let's start our time with God and each other well

If used in a mixed-age group, then young people can support younger ones in using the gathering prayer in Faith Adventures: Children Together. If used in a youth group, you could use this opening prayer or encourage young people to open the session with a prayer of their own.

All mighty God,

Be with us as we learn more about you through stories and people in the Bible.

Help us to walk in your way and follow your path.

Be with us as we make decisions that affect our lives, and the lives of those around us.

Amen

Games

See this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together for suitable games for this theme.

Experience

Research different versions of this reading on <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

Watch: This is Amazing Grace by Phil Wickham
<https://youtu.be/zwXyLZaYsYo?si=S2uYUZjxLiRh2lu> AND
Amazing Grace by John Newton (a Heavy Metal version)
<https://youtu.be/8pJGeFHvS-l?si=8ozhT5c3h4HVHIOF>

Questions for discussion

Watch the YouTube video and listen to the lyrics of the songs.

- Are there any lyrics that stand out to you? Why?
- What do you think the first song means when it says "you would bear my cross"?
- The second song was written in 1772 by John Newton who had been a slave trader and later became an abolitionist. How do you think he might have felt about grace?
- The second song is probably one of the most widely known and recorded songs in the world. Why do you think this might be?

- Which of the songs do you prefer? (If any)

Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the theme

You may wish to use the explore section from this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together to guide your exploration of the theme this week.

You will need the boxes that were made last week. Ensure some spares are available for anyone who has forgotten theirs or was not there. *If your group did not meet last week and have not followed the Easter story through from Palm Sunday, consider using last week's resource this week with the final Easter Sunday station included, instead of this one, as the resurrection is meaningless without the crucifixion.*

Revisit the story of Holy Week from Palm Sunday to the crucifixion and see how much of the story can be remembered using the items in their boxes as prompts. Are there any other bits of the Holy Week story you can fill in? Use an internet search or your Bible to fill in any gaps in the story.

The final stage in making the box last week was to put a question mark on the lid, wondering what happened next and looking at what Jesus told his disciples would happen. Today we're celebrating something amazing – find out what the group know about the resurrection story.

Use a large print-out (A3 or A2) of this week's passage. This is a letter written by Paul to one of the young believers called Titus and it explains what Paul believes is the difference that Jesus' death and resurrection makes for everyone who believes in Jesus. Pick out and highlight or decorate all the ideas Paul shares. Which is your favourite?

To represent the amazing gift of Easter, provide bright wrapping paper or silver/gold paper, ribbons, and heart shaped tags. Each person can then take their box and wrap it up like a present so that it looks amazing.

Modern parables

This section includes references to TV programmes, films, books, TED talks, TikTok etc aimed at this age group that will have been widely seen, or where a clip is available to use as a stimulus for discussion. You may also enjoy the picture book recommended for Faith Adventures: Children Together and explore the relevance of the story to the theme of the session in more depth – young people and adults are often well tuned in to the deeper meanings in materials aimed at younger people and the authors are often very aware of the adults reading the books to or with younger ones.

Despicable Me 2 – Lucy leaves for Australia

https://youtu.be/p95ZRN3gXVw?si=eX_xgZY0itl-I-Fg

Questions

- What do you think Gru's motivation was for doing good deeds at the beginning of the clip? Is he as motivated to help when he isn't happy?
- What motivates you to do good things for other people?
- Why do you think it is important to do good things, as a Christian?
- What difference does the resurrection make to us and our relationship with others?



Talking together: Going deeper

- If you do good deeds and don't believe in Jesus, does it still count?
- Can you believe in Jesus and God's grace and not do good deeds?
- It was the women that loved Jesus who first saw him after the resurrection but the men did not believe them. Why do you think this was?
- I wonder how long it took for Jesus to heal after the crucifixion?
- Knowing what the world is like now, do you think Jesus still believes that what he went through was worthwhile?
- How might Jesus' death and resurrection make us right with God? What do you understand from this? (Don't worry – many people struggle with understanding this one!). Does it matter?

Conversation starters

- Which is most important – the crucifixion or the resurrection?
- Do you think it is right that God loves everyone the same, regardless of how they behave?

Express

How do we respond to what we've discussed and express our faith personally?

Praying together

Prayer Respond to the theme by writing or saying a short prayer. Alternatively use the creative prayer from Faith Adventures: Children Together for this session, or use the prayer activity below.

Alternatively light a candle and play some music while you listen and talk to God together.

Spoken Prayer After each section of prayer, allow a time of quiet or a space where your group can name prayers aloud – use the response in bold to close the space before moving onto the next section.

Dear God,
We pray,
For situations in the world that confuse and concern us.

[Pause]

Hear our prayers

We pray,
For those who are suffering and full of sadness.

[Pause]

Hear our prayers

We pray,
For our beautiful world – that it is cared for and respected.

[Pause]

Hear our prayers

We thank you,
For the joy and hope we can find in you,
And for the promise of a fresh start.

Amen

Responding together

This is an opportunity for a social justice challenge, some research, craftivism, or a craft or STEM activity. You may have a specific activity chosen but free choice is also an option. Here are some suggestions for this week's theme. See Faith Adventures: Children Together for a craft and a STEM activity which may also be appropriate. Choose whatever will work best for your group.

Faith in Action – research

Research somebody who does good deeds inspired by their faith. What did/do they do and why did/do they do it? People like Bear Grylls, Dolly Parton, Dan Walker, as well as the more obvious ones like Mother Teresa **OR** Find someone in your church community who does good deeds because of their faith and talk to them about it.

Sacrifice

When people put themselves through difficulties/pain such as running a marathon, what might be their motivation? Is the motivation the same for everyone? When you do a sponsored activity to raise money for charity, why not just donate some money instead? Have a think about this and then compare which charities are important to each individual in the group and why.

Challenge

Discipleship doesn't stop when you walk out of the church door – it is a part of everyday life. Take a challenge with you and try to make it part of your week.

You may think of your own suggestion of what you as an individual or a group might do in the coming week in response to what you have explored today? If not here are some suggestions:

- Use one of the “conversation starter” questions or the question below to talk with someone of a different generation or from a different setting and share your questions, thoughts, insights together. **What does Easter mean to you?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT, [Resources \(jpit.uk\)](http://Resources.jpit.uk) Commitment for Life cforl.co.uk
- Remembering Jesus' sacrifice when he died and rose again for us, what might you sacrifice to make things better for someone else?

Thank you for exploring the Titus passage with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing children.youth@urc.org.uk or by sharing it on https://bit.ly/FACT_FB