



LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

Do not be ashamed to say you believe in Jesus.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will be challenged to think of times when they have been embarrassed to talk about God with others and discuss how Peter's story can change that.

KEY PASSAGE:

Mark 14:32-42, The Garden of Gethsemane (Egg 4: Praying Hands)

Luke 22:63-65, Jesus Mocked and Beaten (Egg 5: Whip)

Matthew 26:69-75, Peter Denies Jesus (Egg 6: Rooster)

INTRO:

Last week we started cracking open a unique set of Easter eggs. These eggs are not filled with candy, but with items that remind us of the story of Jesus. We saw how Jesus came into Jerusalem a week before his death, riding on a donkey like a king coming in peace. We found a coin that reminded us of the betrayal of Judas, and a cup that reminded us of the love and obedience of Jesus.

Jesus chose to come and die for us because he loved us. He had the same free will you and I do, and he could have said no. It was never even a question for him. Jesus loved us, and he was willing to do anything to save us. But that doesn't mean it was easy for him.

Our first egg today has a pair of praying hands. Jesus went to a garden to pray right before his betrayal. The way Jesus prayed that night shows us how fearful Jesus was, right as everything was about to happen.

READ MARK 14:32-42

Jesus was overwhelmed with emotion. He knew what he had to do to save us, and he knew how brutal it would be. His disciples had no clue what he was about to face, and they could not imagine how he felt. Even as he cried and prayed his heart out, they were sleeping, completely unaware of what was about to go down.

If there was another way to save us, Jesus would gladly have taken it. He knew our only hope meant suffering, and he was willing to suffer.

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Our second egg contains a small whip. It's a reminder of just how bad things got for Jesus.

READ LUKE 22:63-65

Jesus was beaten with fists and with a whip. He had his clothes stripped away. He had a crown of thorns placed on his head. All night and all day, the men who guarded Jesus mocked him and laughed at him. They made fun of him for saying he was the King of the Jews and the Messiah. Jesus was humiliated and shamed publicly, but the greatest pain he felt didn't come from a whip or an unbelieving guard. It came from one of his own friends.

The third egg today has a rooster in it. I think many of you already know this story.

READ MATTHEW 26:69-75

Before the Garden, before Jesus' arrest, Peter vowed that he would never leave Jesus' side. But when Jesus was arrested, Peter feared for his life. He denied Jesus three times, just as Jesus predicted. He turned his back on Jesus, even as Jesus was preparing to die for him.

MAIN POINT:

Jesus was willing to be beaten, mocked, ridiculed, and made fun of for our sake. He never wavered, never ran and hid, never backed down. He did what was necessary because he loves us.

How sad that so many believers are so ashamed of the Savior who was unashamed of them. So many of us hide our faith. We live just as sinfully as our friends when we're not at church. We never share what we believe with anyone.

Jesus was unashamed of us. We should be unashamed of him. We should be Christians 24/7. We need to be willing to live our faith every day, not just on Sunday.

DRIVE IT HOME:

It's not easy to be a Christian in a non-Christian world. We all want to fit in. We don't want our friends to laugh at us or tease us about anything, much less our faith. It's so much easier to stay silent, to follow the crowd, and blend in.

We weren't saved so we would blend in. We were saved so we could carry the message of Easter to the world. The friends whose acceptance you desire, the ones you're afraid will mock you - Jesus loves them too. He wants them to know he can save them from their sins. How can Jesus save them if we're afraid to live for Jesus?

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This week, I want to challenge you to live out your faith in school. Be willing to stand out. Be willing to be made fun of. Be willing to be different. If someone asks you about your faith, don't be afraid to share it with them. Tell them you love Jesus, and then invite them to church to learn more. Jesus was unashamed for you. Do not be ashamed to say you love him!

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Give us the courage to proclaim our faith.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*