

April 21, Easter Day, Believing

Acts 10:34-43, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26,
John 20:1-18

Note to the Teacher

This Easter Sunday, we are going to look at the story through our lens of emotions. How does it make us feel? What emotions do we discover in the text itself, and how does it speak to us in our lives today?

Time Description of Activity

10 min 1. Ice Breaker: Jelly bean Icebreaker

Pass around a bowl of jelly beans and have each student take a handful, but instruct them not to eat them quite yet. Have a list of questions that correspond with each color, and have the students go around answering the questions that correspond with the colors of jelly beans that they took. Below is a list of question possibilities. You may have to change them up a bit to match the color of the jelly beans that you have.

- Red: What is your favorite Easter memory?
- Green: What is your least favorite Easter memory?
- Yellow: What is your favorite kind of Easter candy?
- Purple: What is your favorite church tradition during Lent/ Easter?
- Orange: What is your favorite part of Easter dinner?
- White: What is the weirdest thing you ever found in an Easter egg?

5 min 2. Read Scripture

Have the students take turns reading the following scriptures out loud for the group.
Acts 10:34-43, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26, John 20:1-18

15 min 3. Discussion

Discuss the following questions;

- What do these verses have in common?
- What do they have to say about how we should feel on Easter or because of the resurrection of Jesus?
- What did it take for Mary to realize and believe that it was Jesus that she was talking to?
- What does it say about our own relationships with Jesus?
- What does Jesus' death and resurrection mean to you personally?
- How does your own beliefs about Jesus and His resurrection change the way that you live your life?

20 Min 4. Activity and Discussion

Clean Belief:

Items needed: Large clear glass bowl, white fabric, small sheet of thin clear plastic, pitcher of water, iodine or food coloring, bleach, glass container to place bleach, spray starch

Prep: Cut out a cross shape from the white cloth. This has to be submerged in the water, so make sure you cut it to the appropriate size for that. Then cut another cross shape (the same size) from a piece of thin clear plastic. Use a paperclip or staple the two crosses together, so that the cloth retains its shape when wet. Spray the cloth cross with the starch and leave to dry.

Say Something Like:

“In our culture, sometimes Easter becomes all about our belief in a bunny who brings us candy and treats on Easter morning, or it becomes focused on Easter eggs and Easter dinner with our families. While none of these are bad things, as followers of Jesus we know there is much more to it than that. Our belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus, that we celebrate at Easter is foundational to our faith lives.”

Do This:

Fill the bowl halfway with water and place the cross inside. As you do this, say something like, we believe that, though we may sin and sometimes make a mess of things, (add several drops of iodine or food coloring to the water in the bowl), and it is those very sins that held Jesus on the cross, (lift the cross slightly out of the water so students can see the color change), we hold firm to the belief that Jesus’ paid the price for our sins and His blood will wash us clean as snow. (Pour bleach from container into the bowl. The color should disappear from both the water and the cross). This is the hope that we have in the resurrection, forgiveness for the ways we mess things up and a promise for an eternal life. This is the good news of not only Easter Sunday, but every day! Yes, Jesus was crucified and died on the cross, but He was resurrected, and because of that we can have eternal life!! And even though this is something we collectively believe, it is also something that is deeply personal for each one of us. Just like Jesus called Mary’s name, He calls each of our names. All we have to do is to trust and believe.

Discuss:

How does it make you feel to know that Jesus did this for you?

Is there anything that is hard for you to believe about Jesus’ death and resurrection?

Reflection:

Allow each student to take some time in quiet reflection and prayer, to consider those things that might hold them back from full belief in Jesus and the hope of Easter, and encourage them to give those things up to God and to let go of them. This might be a good place in the lesson to provide journals or paper and writing utensils for students who may like to write or draw out their prayers.

Close in the manner that is typical for you. Consider taking joys/concerns from the students, then ask for a volunteer to close in prayer.

50 min

NEEDED RESOURCES:

Bowl of Jellybeans
Large clear glass bowl
white fabric
small sheet of thin clear plastic
pitcher of water
iodine or food coloring
bleach
glass container to hold bleach
spray starch

Optional:
Writing Utensils
Paper or Journals