

Sunday Home Sessions – Spring/Summer 2020

**29<sup>th</sup> March 2020: A Dark Night in the Garden** ( The Garden of Gethsemane – Luke 22, Mark 14, John 8)

### **HOW TO USE THIS MATERIAL:**

This is designed to be a straightforward session that you can do with your children in about 15mins at home. It will start with a Bible story from *The Jesus Storybook Bible*, and then there will be a suggestion for a simple craft activity and/or an easy game to play. The session rounds off with a suggested prayer you can pray together, and some discussion questions you can use, either at the time or later in the day/week.

Before we go onto the suggested session plan, please have a quick read of the **parents' overview** below. This includes a single-sentence summary of what we are learning (**big idea**) and some **Bible story background**, to help you get familiar with the story we'll be looking at.

### **PARENTS' OVERVIEW:**

**Big idea:** Jesus was going to die on the cross to take our punishment for turning away from God.

**Bible story background:** On the night before Jesus died on the cross, Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, and what He said shows us more of what He was going to face on the cross:

1. We all deserve to be punished for our part in messing up the world – and Jesus was going to take that on Himself.
2. We all deserve to be rejected by God, because we have rejected Him, and losing God (the source of *all* goodness and joy) is the worst punishment imaginable – and Jesus was going to take that in our place too. That's why, just this once, God is silent when Jesus cries out to Him in prayer.

When the soldiers arrive to arrest Jesus, He doesn't resist. And He doesn't even try to defend Himself against the malicious accusations levelled at Him in the sham trial He has to endure. Instead He allows Himself to be sentenced to death, knowing that it was *God's* plan to rescue us.

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**SESSION IDEAS:**

Bible story:

- Read the story, “A Dark Night in the Garden”, from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* if you have a copy, OR
- Watch an animated reading of the story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7j-O4wonvg0> (just the section from 0:00:00 to 0:05:29)

**Craft activity:**

Make a collage of things that remind us that, because Jesus took our punishment, we haven’t lost God or His love! Start with as big a bit of paper as you can (or several smaller bits), and build up a picture using one or more of the suggestions below. You could even do this over a number of days or weeks, and keep it up on your wall to remind you of God’s goodness at work in the world.

- Go through a newspaper or magazine and cut out pictures and headlines that remind us of good things going on in the world
- Go online and print out pictures of good things we can enjoy, even when we’re stuck at home
- If you’re feeling creative, why not draw some pictures of your favourite things?
- To start with, you could just make as long a list as you can, of all the good things you have

**A simple prayer you can pray together with your child:**

*“Father God,*

*Thank You so much for sending Jesus to die for us. Thank You for planning all that to save us.*

*We’re sorry for the wrong things we have done to others, and for turning away from You.*

*Thank You that Jesus was prepared to be punished instead of us for all the wrong we do in the world, and for ignoring and rejecting You as our King. Thank You that, because Jesus was separated from You, we will never need to be apart from You.*

*Amen.”*

**A couple of simple questions to chat through with your child afterwards:**

1. What was the worst part about Jesus dying on the cross?
2. Why did Jesus let them arrest Him and sentence Him to death?

**If you have extra time:**

Why not listen, or even sing along, to the song *Jesus, When You Died*? You can find a video with lyrics here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YwU5uFqFe0>