



**APRIL THEME**

**GOOOOOAL!**

**BIBLE STORY**

John 18:12—20:23

Spark Story Bible |

The Day Jesus Died pg. 476-481

The Empty Tomb pg. 482-487

The Comeback | Jesus is Crucified,  
Buried and Resurrected

The Day Jesus Died + The Empty Tomb

**BOTTOM LINE**

I can put others first because Jesus  
put me first

**MEMORY VERSE**

“Don’t do anything only to get ahead.

Don’t do it because you are proud.

Instead, be humble. Value others  
more than yourselves.”

Philippians 2:3, NirV

**LIFE APP**

**Humility** | Putting others first by  
giving up what you think you deserve

**BASIC TRUTH**

I should treat others the way I want to  
be treated, and with God’s help...

I can!

**FOR LEADERS ONLY**

**GOD VIEW:** the connection between **HUMILITY** and God’s character, as shown through  
God’s big story

**This WEEK:** We’re excited to celebrate Easter as we spend time in **John 18:12–20:23**.  
We’ll start with Jesus’ trial and end with celebrating the resurrection. The religious  
leaders are up in arms because Jesus has claimed to be God. Doesn’t matter that it’s  
TRUE; they’re still ready to dish out the ultimate punishment. And Jesus chose to give  
up everything and take that punishment, so that no one else has to.

**Bottom Line:** I can put others first because Jesus put me first. It cost Jesus everything  
to put us first. He gave up his life, so we could be with God forever. As we respond to  
God and his gift of salvation, we can follow Jesus’ example and put others first.

**SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION**

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to  
experience today’s story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might  
visit your group for the first time. Take a moment to thank Jesus for the immense  
sacrifice he made for us on the cross. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you and your few  
a Christ-like humility and the strength to put others first continuously. Pray that kids  
would be encouraged to be like Jesus and put others first because Jesus put us first...  
first!

**•• EARLY ARRIVER IDEA**

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Invite kids to tell a story about the greatest thing they’ve ever won, either as an  
individual or as part of a team.

**•• GIVE AWAY MORE**

**What You Need:** Tape, copy paper

**What You Do:**

- Divide your kids into two teams.
- Put a tapeline down the middle of your table and instruct teams to get on opposite  
sides of the line.
- Give each person a piece of paper and tell them to wad it up into a ball.
- Pile the paper balls on the line.
- Tell the kids they will compete to see who can “give more” by throwing the paper  
balls to the other team’s side of the line.



- Give them the hint that it is a bad strategy to throw at the other players who can quickly throw the paper balls back. Maybe they should throw the balls where the other team would have to go retrieve them.

**What You Say:** “In this game you were trying to win by putting the other team first more than they put you first. And if you ran out of paper balls, you had to wait until the other team put you first before you could put them first! Anybody confused yet? **[Transition]** Today in Large Group Worship/WoW Family Worship we are going to hear/we heard about someone who put us first in the ultimate way.”

*[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Large Group Worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]*

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## GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

•• **WORTH SAVING?** *(application activity/review the Bible story)*

**What You Need:** Index cards, markers

**What You Do:**

- Give each kid two index cards and a marker.
- On one card, instruct the kids to write something they have lost. *(It doesn't have to be something currently lost—just anything they've lost in the past.)*
- On the other ask them to write something they currently have or own that they would give up in order to get back the lost item.
- Collect the “lost” cards and the “give up” cards in separate piles and mix the cards up.
- Randomly draw a card from the lost items pile and a card from the give up pile. The randomness should give you some serious and some funny combinations.
- Ask the kids if the lost item is “worth saving” by giving up the other item.
- You can let them vote by moving from one side of the room to the other or by standing up versus sitting down.
- If you end up with a particularly “contentious” pair of items, let kids have a friendly debate about the merits of giving up one item to gain the other one back.

**What You Say:** “What have you lost that you would give anything to get back? Right after Jesus died, it seemed to the disciples that Jesus had given himself up for nothing. But they would come to realize that Jesus gave himself up for us. That shows us how much Jesus loves us and how important having a relationship with us is to God. It also shows us that Jesus doesn't just command us to try harder. That's not what being a follower of Jesus is about. Jesus promises to be with us and help us follow his example. He will help us to value putting others first when the world tells us to value only success. Jesus will help us give up what we deserve in order to put others first. He can help us do that because that is exactly what he did for us. **[Make It Personal]** *(Talk about a time when you gave up something you deserved or felt like you deserved in order to put someone else first.)* **[Bottom Line]** I can put others first because Jesus put me first.”

•• **HOW FAR WILL YOU GIVE?** *(application activity)*

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Explain to kids what numbers 1-5 represent

- 5. Complete strangers.
- 4. Kids you see at school but don't know very well.
- 3. Your friends.
- 2. Your family members.
- 1. Yourself

- Read a list of items (*suggestions below*) and tell kids to think about who they would be willing to give that item to.
- They should pick the group of people that represents the farthest they would go to give that item away and hold up the corresponding number of fingers. For example: If they would be willing to give the item to a stranger, they would also be willing to give the item to a classmate, but they should hold up 5 fingers because it represents the farthest "proximity."
- Make up your own list of items that your kids would be familiar with in their lives. Here are a few suggestions: a soccer ball, a sandwich, a bottle of water, an ice cream cone, a lollipop, a piece of gum, a hat, a shirt, a pair of really cool shoes, a brand-name coat, a coat they've outgrown, a video game, a board game, a book, a smartphone, an iPod®, 1 dollar, 5 dollars, 20 dollars, a place to sleep.

**What You Say:** "What we will give up for people is directly related to how much we love them. All of you would be far more likely to give something to people you love more, such as your family and friends. This should tell us two things about the Easter story. One is that it should tell us how much Jesus loves us. Jesus was willing not just to give us some 'stuff' like what was on that list. He gave his life for us. He did that because of his amazing love for you and for me.

"The second thing it should show us is how we can put others first. It isn't by trying hard. Trying harder won't get you to put strangers first by giving them what they need. You can only do that if you respond to Jesus' love for you, by letting his love fill your heart and cause you to love others in the same way he does. When we let Jesus fill our heart with his love, we will give to the stranger not because we should or because we are forced to, but because Jesus' love causes us to want to put them first. **[Bottom Line] I can put others first because Jesus put me first.**"

•• **KNOCKED OUT** (*memory verse activity*)

**What You Need:** "Memory Verse" cards, 3 ping pong balls, 8 cups, tape

**What You Do:**

- If you think your kids need to be reminded of the verse, do a quick review of it.
- Tape one memory verse card to the bottom of each cup.
- Arrange the cups, upside right, on the table in random order, with plenty of space between each cup.
- Hand a ping pong ball to three kids sitting next to each other.
- They should each stand a few steps back from the table and try to get their ball in a cup.
- Remove the cups that have a ball in them. Turn the remaining cups upside down so that the verse cards are showing (*leave them in random order*). The kid sitting next to the ball throwers has to try to say the verse from memory using only the remaining cards as a reminder.
- Set the cups and cards up again, but in a new shape: a square, a spiral, an egg, or anything you can think of.
- Continue playing so that everyone has a chance to throw and/or attempt saying the verse.

**What You Say:** "Our memory verse can help us learn to show humility by giving up what we think we deserve. When we put others first in life we will often find that we are operating without part of what we were counting on, just like part of these cups got taken away. But we can rely on Jesus to be there with us and to help us as we put others first, no matter the cost. **[Bottom Line] I can put others first because Jesus put me first.**"

**Discussion Questions**

- What's your opinion about how disciples might have reacted to Jesus when he gave up his life?
- How do you think you would have responded if you were one of the disciples, keeping in mind that you didn't yet have an understanding

