

..walk with me..

LEADER'S GUIDE K-8 EASTER BOOK 2

# The Lamb of God



- Large and Small Group Sessions for Kindergarten-Grade 3 and Grades 4-8
- 2 Dramas
- Songs
- Complete Easter Program
- Crafts, Games, and Other Photocopiable Pages

**LEADER'S GUIDE K-8 EASTER BOOK 2**

# The Lamb **of God**



Grand Rapids, Michigan

Any questions or comments about this unit?  
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*Walk With Me*

Grades K-8

Easter, Book 2: The Lamb of God

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## Ways to Get Others Involved

You'll need the talents of many people in your congregation to make these two sessions come alive for your children. What a wonderful opportunity to involve adults and teens who usually don't take part in the teaching ministry of the church! Consider using volunteers in some of the following ways:

- *Drama Team.* You'll want to find actors to play the roles in the two dramas. Your middle school kids could take these roles. Or invite adults and older teens to prepare and present one or both of the dramas.
- *Sets Person(s).* Whether you want a very simple set with a few props for the dramas or a more elaborate backdrop and set, you will probably want to find one or more people who have visual gifts to plan and prepare these for you. If you plan to use any kind of lighting, you'll want to find a volunteer to manage that too.
- *Costume Gatherer.* Simple costumes will add a lot to the drama presentation. Look for a volunteer who'd be willing to work with others or alone to plan and prepare what the actors will wear.
- *Musicians.* Whether you plan to present an Easter program to the church and community or just to enjoy songs together as part of your opening worship on these two Sundays, you'll want to find someone with musical gifts to teach the songs to children, someone to play the accompaniment, someone to lead the singing.
- *Materials Gatherers.* Look for people who are willing to do photocopying, gather craft materials such as pipe cleaners, paper punch, stickers and so on, cut flags out of fabric—anything you might need to provide for teachers in the small groups as they work with children on specific projects during these two weeks.
- *Program Planners.* If you have the children present a program for the church and community, you'll want to appoint a planning committee several months ahead of time—people who will take responsibility for making some of the content decisions, schedule rehearsals, and make sure all the details are attended to.



# How to Use This Book

*“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”*

—John 1:29

As you prepare to share the joy of Easter with the children in your Sunday school this year, begin by taking a step back. Why? Because we can’t fully understand the power of Easter morning until we’ve stood at the cross. We can’t fully recognize what makes Easter so full of joy until we’ve seen the Lamb of God die for us—and then come to life again.

During this Lent and Easter season you’ll be teaching the children in your program about Jesus the Lamb—the one who takes away the sins of the world. Our hope is that through these sessions the children will come to know more about Jesus and will joyfully and gladly join in worshipping this suffering, saving, risen Lamb of God who loves each of us.

This book offers a variety of ideas and options for large group sessions, small group sessions, and an Easter program. Use the ideas and options that work best with your church school. Ideally, the large group session would take about 15-20 minutes, then the children would break up into their small group sessions that would last for about 30-45 minutes. You may also need to schedule an extra practice time or two if your church is planning on doing the Easter program.

**Finding time to do everything in this book may prove difficult, so choose what you think your group will be able to handle. You will need one copy of this book for each of your leaders. As the purchaser of this book, you are granted permission to photocopy the dramas and the patterns and activities on reproducible pages 47-53 and 78-94.**

## Getting Started

Because these materials suggest a different format and approach than the regular *Walk With Me* units, you’ll want to spend some extra time planning and preparing to teach these sessions. Although we realize that each church situation is unique, you may find some of the following suggestions helpful:

- In the early winter, appoint a small committee to read through this book and decide which of the many suggestions would work best for your church.
- After the committee makes its recommendations, recruit actors, song leaders, accompanists, and teachers as necessary.
- Recruit volunteers who are willing to gather materials for these special sessions. Give them plenty of time for this task (a month or two) since they will likely want to ask the congregation to save and/or gather some of the items.
- Schedule rehearsals for the drama team.
- If you’re planning an Easter program, schedule a large final rehearsal that includes drama, singing, recitation, and so on.

## Large Group Sessions and Easter Program

The large group session materials in this book contain a drama for each week and a list of songs to learn as a whole group. Each drama takes about eight minutes and requires eight to thirteen actors. Costumes and sets may be as simple or as elaborate as you like. (See suggestions on pages 10-11 and 30.)

You'll probably want to choose either middle schoolers or a team of adults or older teens to play these roles. Either way, be sure to schedule ample rehearsal time.

The dramas and songs can be used not only for the large group session but also for an Easter program. You'll find a sample program along with ideas for organizing and producing it on pages 75-77.

## Small Group Sessions

Small group sessions will give you the opportunity to help apply the story to the children's lives. If you are unable to present the story in a large group setting, you can still use the drama or another form of the story in the small group setting. It's a story you want children to hear!

Each small group session opens with a Hello step designed to catch the children's interest and get them thinking about the lesson's theme.

Next comes the Know step (telling the story). If the children have already heard the story in the large group session, you'll want to use this time to review the story with them. If you did not participate in a large group session, use either the drama or another interesting way to present the story to the children (see sessions for suggestions).

The Grow step will help children understand what the story means for their lives, and the Show step will guide them to respond to what they learned in this session.

The small group session includes many options for activities and crafts that leaders (or the committee you appointed earlier) should carefully consider well ahead of teaching these materials. **Once you've decided which crafts and activities to use, you may want to appoint two or more volunteers (possibly parents of children in the group) who will spend the time needed to gather materials, cut out patterns, and assemble all the materials you'll need.**

Above all, we hope you'll enjoy planning these Easter sessions. We trust that the Lamb of God will touch your life and the lives of the children. May you realize his great sacrifice and live a life full of thankfulness. Hallelujah, the Lamb is victorious!

## Scheduling Rehearsals

1. Let cast members know rehearsal times when you ask them to participate. Stress that agreeing to participate means making a commitment to come to all practices.
2. Schedule two to four well-planned all-cast rehearsals.
3. Request that all lines be memorized by the first rehearsal.
4. Build community at rehearsals. Pray, practice, and enjoy a snack together.
5. If you are presenting the dramas as part of an Easter program, use your final rehearsal to go through the entire program, including music, recitations, and so on.

## Tailoring Your Sessions to the Ways Children Learn

How do children learn? The answer to that question can be almost as varied as the children in your group. Some learn best through words. Others through music. Still others through nature or through movement.

Sessions in the *Walk With Me* curriculum try to respect the many ways children learn. *Walk With Me* sessions include a wide range of activities that speak to children with the following types of intelligence (based on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences). Within each session, the icons below highlight the learning styles represented by each activity. As you teach, you'll begin to get a sense for how the children in your group learn best. Children who are



### Word Smart

learn best through verbal activities (listening, reading, or speaking), including discussions, worksheets, writing, reading, storytelling, and word games.



### Number Smart

learn best by exploring patterns and relationships through activities such as problem solving, logical puzzles or games, making charts and graphs, or putting things in sequence.



### Picture Smart

learn best by visualizing concepts. These kids enjoy viewing maps, slides, pictures, videos, and diagrams; making jigsaw puzzles; and expressing their ideas with shape, color, and design.



### Body Smart

learn best by using their bodies, acting things out, using puppets, moving—anything hands-on.



### Music Smart

learn best through sound, music, and rhythm—playing musical instruments, writing their own songs and raps, listening to recordings, singing, and so on.



### People Smart

learn best through doing things with others, cooperating and working in small or large groups, role playing, conversations, brainstorming, and other interactive exercises.



### Self Smart

learn best by working independently through such things as writing in a journal, meditating, reading, and reflecting.



### Earth Smart

learn best through activities connected to living things and natural phenomena, through nature walks, examining plants and animals, nature experiments, and activities that focus on ecology.

—The ideas on this page are based on material from the following resources: *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* by Thomas Armstrong, © 2000, and a chart prepared by Donald L. Griggs, Livermore, California.

# Jesus Suffers for Us

## Scripture

Matthew 26:36-75; 27:11-31

## Memory Challenge

John 1:29

## Focus

Jesus, the Lamb of God, loves us so much that he willingly suffered for our sins.

## WORDSearch

### Think About It

It all seems to fit together now. It all makes sense. John the Baptist said it so clearly: “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” And yet it took a while for the followers of Jesus to really understand. The Passover Lamb . . . the lambs for countless burnt offerings . . . lowly shepherds the world over, constantly chasing after lost sheep. They knew all about sheep and lambs. They knew sheep got themselves into trouble, time and again. They knew sheep desperately needed a shepherd. They knew lambs foolishly fell into the same old traps. Think about it. Did they ever put it together that sheep and people shared a lot of traits? Did it ever dawn on them that lambs were lost without a leader? Was it because they were guilty—dead to right—or innocent as lambs, that sheep never said much in their own defense?

### Pray About It

Think about Jesus’ silent suffering and his sheer determination and resolve, fueled by love for his people. Pray that your students will come to understand that Jesus suffered for them in total submission to a loving Father and in total compassion for unlovable sheep like us.

Think about it. A godly father and his godly son walk up a mountain together to build a sacrifice. The father carries the fire and the knife. The son carries the wood. There is no lamb for the offering. Finally, the son speaks up: “Father, where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” The father answers, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And they walk on together. Soon the father builds an altar, arranges the wood, binds up his son, and lays him on the altar. The father reaches out his hand and takes his knife to slay his son. Have you ever thought about Isaac? Realizing he is the lamb, he utters no sound. No objection. No resistance. There is only silence. One question he asks. And then he submits in silence to the answer. He is the answer. He is the lamb. And he is silent.

Isaiah 53:7 says about a future Messianic King, a servant king, “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.” Only silence. Only suffering. Only submission. There is only the task at hand. There is only the will of God to follow. It is not a time for words but for silent submission and service. It is a time to suffer.

And then Jesus stands before Pilate, hours away from the slaughter, hours away from what must be done for the sheep in his father’s pen. Hours away from the greatest suffering ever endured. Part of his suffering were the accusations that were hurled upon him by the chief priests and the elders. But he says nothing. No word of defense. Was he guilty? Was he innocent? Say something.

### Tell About It

Help your children to see that the perfect and innocent Son of God became a sheep like us. Because he loves us so much, he endured awful suffering so that we don’t have to endure it. And join with them in praising and thanking the Lamb of God.



Pilate is dumbfounded by his silence. “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?” But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge. Like a sheep before her shearers, he remained silent. Like a lamb led to the slaughter, he stayed silent. Man, defend yourself!

And that’s just the point: a sheep doesn’t defend itself, doesn’t utter a sound. And that’s especially (and thankfully) true of an innocent Sheep about to die for guilty lambs— lambs that can’t defend themselves because their defense is full of holes. “Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” Our resurrection celebration means nothing without the silent, submissive, suffering of the Lamb of God for all of us sheep. The only One who *could* speak a word in his *own* defense instead, in love, kept silent, endured the nail holes in *our* defense, and suffered hell for it. He suffered it for us.

## Planning the Session

Presenting the stories of the suffering, death, and resurrection of the Lamb of God to a room full of kids from kindergarten through grade 8 is quite a challenge! How can you tell these stories in a way that will touch the lives of all these kids, from the youngest to the oldest, with the amazing love and power of our Savior?

The outline and suggestions that follow may help you plan and schedule the 15-20 minutes you have together. You’ll need to decide which suggestions would work most effectively for your group. Then set the plan in motion.

A possible schedule for your session might look like this:

- Singing (5-12 minutes)
- Drama (8-10 minutes)

If you are planning to use this book to help the children prepare and present an Easter program, you may want to use the large group session each week (in addition to other rehearsals, as needed) to help them prepare. You’ll find suggestions for program planning on pages 75-77.

The suggestions that follow assume that you are using this large group session to tell the story of Jesus’ suffering to children and young teens, preparing them to talk about and think about this story in their small groups.

## Singing

You may want to ask someone with musical gifts to lead the singing and teach new songs to the children during these two weeks. The tips in the “Introducing a New Song” box (p. 10) may be helpful to that person.

However, most of the songs you choose for these two sessions will likely be the well-known Holy Week and Easter songs that children know and love. The following songs (included on pages 54-74 of this book) are among those you may want to sing. They were selected for their ties to the themes of the drama and the Holy Week/Easter story.

*Note:* If you are planning to use these songs as part of an Easter program, you will probably want to start teaching them to the group already in early winter so that they know them well by the time you present the program.

- “You Are My All in All” (p. 54; CD, track 2)
- “Lamb of Glory” (p. 56; CD, track 3)
- “Lamb of God” (p. 57; CD, track 4)
- “Oh, How He Loves You and Me” (p. 59; CD, track 5)
- “There Is a Redeemer” (p. 60; CD, track 6)
- “Alive, Alive” (p. 61; CD, track 7)
- “Oh, How Good Is Christ the Lord” (p. 64; CD, track 8)
- “I’ve Been Redeemed” (p. 65; CD, track 9)
- “Hallelujah! Praise the Lamb” (p. 71; CD, track 10)

## Optional Songs

- “This Is How We Know” (p. 72; CD, track 11)
- “He’s Alive!” (p. 73; CD, track 12)
- “Alleluia! Alleluia! Give Thanks” (p. 74; CD, track 13)

### Introducing a New Song

The way you introduce a new song is crucial—be sure you know the song well and have thought through ways to introduce it. Here are a few ideas to keep in mind:

- Many kids learn mainly through rote and repetition. Listen to the CD or play the tune and encourage the kids to join in on a line or phrase at a time. You may want to start by teaching them a phrase that repeats often.
- Make up motions that go along with simple words, such as *love* or *Lamb*, to help them remember the words.
- Be enthusiastic! Model your love of singing instead of being concerned about your performance.

—Sherry Merz, *Walk With Me* Music Editor

## Drama

Rehearsing and presenting a drama can be a fun and rewarding experience—both for the actors and for the people who view the drama. For this week’s drama, “The Suffering Savior,” you will need thirteen or more actors (depending on how many extras you include). You’ll want to find a team of actors, either teens or adults, and begin working with them early. This could be a wonderful opportunity for your middle school group to prepare and present something for the younger children. (See the tips for scheduling rehearsals on page 5.) You’ll also want to begin thinking about the costumes and props—and maybe ask someone to help you gather the things you will need.



**If you don’t have enough actors, look for ways to combine parts or assign two parts to one person, using a shirt, a hat, or a piece of fabric to signal the role change.**

### Costumes

Plan early for costumes, but remember that they don’t have to be fancy. The following suggestions are only that—suggestions. Use what you have available and what you can find to create your own scene. Here are some general principles to remember:

- Using a variety of fabrics and trims with different textures and patterns can create interest.
- Cut-off legs of nylons work well for securing headpieces for boys. For girls, try a plastic comb attached to a light fabric.
- You can easily use bathrobes to create Middle Eastern costumes. Or check for “Bible times” costumes in Butterick and Simplicity pattern books and find some volunteer sewers in your congregation who will create an assortment of these simple costumes for you.

Here are some specific suggestions for gathering costumes for this drama:

- Jesus should wear a white or cream-colored robe.
- All others should wear drab, earth-tone robes, if possible.
- The sign holder can wear contemporary clothes.

### Props

As with costumes, you can do as much or as little with props and lighting as you’d like. In most cases the following simple props are all you need to make your presentation effective:

- Crates for sitting on
- Sign: “Later That Night”
- Pile of wood for pretend fire

- Crowing rooster sound (CD, track 1). You'll need to make arrangements for the rooster sounds from the CD to come through the sound system of your auditorium.

## **Small Groups**

After the drama, children will meet in small groups. If your teachers for the regular season are present for these two weeks, it would probably work best to have children meet with their groups as usual or to combine several groups together. Note that we have only included two session plans—one for children in kindergarten-grade 3 and another for children in grades 4-8. Each leader will need to adapt the plan to the needs of his or her children.

# 1

Small Group Session: Kindergarten-Grade 3

## Jesus Suffers for Us

### Scripture

Matthew 26:36-75; 27:11-31

### Memory Fun

John 1:29

### Focus

Jesus, the Lamb of God, loves us so much that he willingly suffered for our sins.

### WORDSearch

See Large Group Session (p. 8).



# HELLO

Happy or Sad

 Self Smart

 Picture Smart

#### Goal

Think about what makes us happy or sad.

#### Time

5-10 minutes

#### Materials

Paper plates, two per child  
Markers/crayons  
Happy/sad faces (reproducible page 80), optional  
Paste or glue (optional)



As the children arrive, give each of them two paper plates. On the first plate ask them to draw a happy face. On the second plate, ask them to draw a sad face.

When each child has created the two faces, quickly invite them to respond to situations like the following by holding up one of their faces (add situations appropriate to the lives of your kids!):

- You fall off your bike and scrape your knees. How do you feel?
- Your mom gives you a big hug and says, "I love you." How do you feel?
- Your friend breaks your new game. How do you feel?
- You get a new puppy. How do you feel?
- Your teacher smiles and says, "Good work!" How do you feel?
- Someone is mean to you on the playground. How do you feel?



**You may want to have samples of the two types of faces prepared so the children have a clear idea of how to visualize these emotions.**

**If you are working with very young children, you may want to photocopy the patterns from page 80 and simply have children paste them on the plates.**


Tell the children they will have a chance to use their paper-plate faces as they listen to the story today. Explain that it's the same story they heard (and saw) in your big group session today, and you want them to think carefully as they listen to the story about how Jesus and his friends were feeling.

## Band-Aid Time Self Smart Picture Smart Body Smart

Option to step 1

<b>Goal</b>
Think about times when we've been hurt or sick.
<b>Time</b>
5 minutes
<b>Materials</b>
Variety of first aid items: Band-Aids, gauze, adhesive tape, first-aid cream, ace bandages, empty medicine bottle

As each child enters the room, hand him one or more of your first aid items. When all the children have arrived, draw them into a circle and invite them to tell you when and where they might use the item(s) you've given them. Have they fallen and needed a Band-Aid for a skinned knee? Had a cut on their hand or finger? Felt sick and needed to take some medicine? Give the children a chance to tell about times when they've needed some of these items.




**If you've brought a variety of Band-Aids, you may want to invite each child to put one on her hand or knee as a reminder of times when she was hurt.**

Tell the children that we often get hurt because we're going too fast or not being careful enough. Sometimes we ride our bike too fast, jump from a high place, don't tie our shoes, and so on. Tell them our story today is about a time when Jesus was hurt and sad. But Jesus wasn't hurt because of something *he* did. He suffered because of something *we* did—so we wouldn't have to suffer. He loved us that much.

## **KNOW** Self Smart People Smart Body Smart Word Smart **We Are There**

<b>Goal</b>
Describe different ways that Jesus suffered for us.
<b>Time</b>
10-15
<b>Materials</b>
Small snack (optional) Sad/happy faces from step 1



**If you used the option to step 1, you may want to make up a set of sad and happy faces for each child, using the pattern from page 80. Or have them use their real faces to indicate these emotions.**

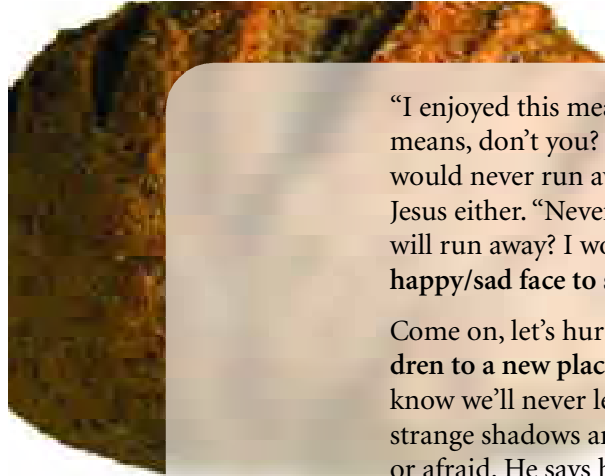
If the children heard the Bible story in your large group drama today, explain that you'd like to tell them that story again, only this time you'd like them to pretend they were really there with Jesus. This time you'd like them to pretend to be Jesus' friends, the disciples. And you'd like them to take their sad and happy faces with them to help you tell the story.

As you tell the story, move to various places in your classroom to help kids sense the many different ways and places that Jesus suffered for us.

*The story follows:*

Wow! What a strange week it's been. It all started with a big parade. Remember how we followed Jesus into Jerusalem? All the people were waving palm branches and shouting "Hosanna!" They treated our friend Jesus like a king. I wonder how you felt as you watched the big parade. (Invite children to use happy/sad face to show their answer.)

Now here we are, sitting together to eat the Passover Feast. (Give each child a cracker or a cookie, if you wish.) This is fun! I wish it could last forever. (Invite kids to use happy/sad face to show how they feel.) But listen, what's Jesus talking about now?



“I enjoyed this meal with you, but tonight my suffering will begin.” I wonder what he means, don’t you? “Before the night is over, all of you will run away from me.” We would never run away from Jesus, would we? Our friend Peter says he won’t ever leave Jesus either. “Never, Lord, never!” he cries. I wonder how Peter feels when Jesus says we will run away? I wonder how you feel? I wonder how Jesus feels? **(Invite kids to use happy/sad face to show their answers.)**

Come on, let’s hurry. Jesus is leading the way and we want to stay close. **(Lead the children to a new place in your room.)** We want him to know we love him. We want him to know we’ll never leave him! It’s dark here in the Garden of Gethsemane, isn’t it? Lots of strange shadows and night sounds. Hear the crickets? But Jesus doesn’t seem to be tired or afraid. He says he needs to be alone for a little while to pray. He wants us to stay awake and wait for him. We can do that, can’t we? **(Sit down with the children on the floor, leaning against a wall. Pretend to get very sleepy. Tell the children they are getting sleepy too. Have everyone lay their heads on the floor or against the wall and close their eyes.)**

“Couldn’t you stay awake and wait for me?” Whoops! “We’re sorry, Jesus. We meant to stay awake for you. But it was dark, and we were sleepy, and . . .” How do you think Jesus feels because we didn’t stay awake for him? **(Invite kids to use their happy/sad face to answer.)** Yes, we weren’t very good friends to Jesus, were we?

Oh no! Look! Some soldiers are heading this way. And Judas is leading them right to us. “We’ve come to arrest you, Jesus,” the soldiers say. Judas just stands there looking mean. How do you think Jesus feels now? **(Invite kids to use their happy/sad face to show their answer.)**

This is terrible. Hurry! Let’s follow the soldiers. We want to see where they are bringing our friend, don’t we? But don’t get too close! If they see us, they might arrest us too. Scary, isn’t it? Peek though that door and see if you can see what’s happening. Look! They’re beating Jesus with their whips. They’re spitting at him too. They’re mocking him. I’m afraid. Let’s hide, shall we? I wonder how Jesus is feeling now? **(Invite kids to use happy/sad face to answer.)**

Look, Peter is braver than we are. He’s sitting around the fire with some people. Let’s see if we can hear what they’re saying. I think the servant girl just asked Peter if he was a friend of Jesus. “No, I never met the man,” Peter says. Can you believe it? He must be afraid too. But wait, another girl is asking Peter the same question. She says she’s sure she saw Peter with Jesus.

“NO! I don’t know him,” Peter says again. Now the others are pointing at Peter. They’re *certain* Peter is a disciple. “No—I don’t know Jesus,” Peter is yelling. How do you think that made Jesus feel? **(Invite kids to use happy/sad face to answer.)**

**(Then walk with the children back to their seats and finish the story.)** It’s been quite a few hours since we saw Jesus last. Did you hear what happened? While we were scared and hiding, Jesus was put on trial. People laughed at him. They hurt him and mocked him. Finally the court found him guilty. They took him away to a hill where they will hang him on a cross. People will gather to watch him die. I can’t believe this happened. I wonder how you’re feeling now? I wonder how Jesus is feeling now? **(Invite kids to use happy/sad face to answer.)**

Tell the children that next week they will hear the rest of your story. Also tell them that it will turn into a happy story! Why? Because Jesus suffered in all these places and in all these ways for one very special reason: because he loves you and me. And this story will have a very happy ending!

## Storybook: "Jesus Suffers" AA Word Smart

 Picture Smart

Option to step 2

### Time

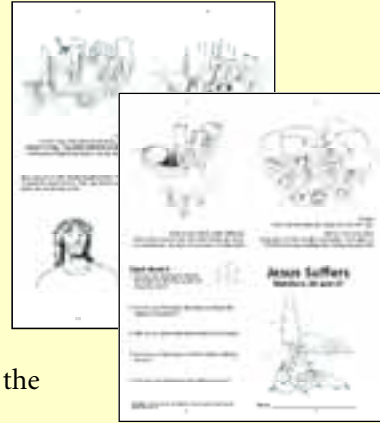
5 minutes

### Materials

Storybook: "Jesus Suffers" (copied and assembled from reproducible pages 81-82)

If your children saw the drama in the large group session, you might prefer to review the story quickly by reading the take-home storybook together. Assemble a sample book before class and show the children the pictures as you read through the pages together.

After reading the story, talk together about the questions on page 8 of the booklet.



This option will take less time than the main step.



## GROW

Because He Loves Us

AA Word Smart  
🎵 Music Smart

😊 Self Smart

### Goal

Tell why Jesus suffered for us.

### Time

5 minutes

### Materials

Walk With Me Easter CD  
CD player  
Memory Fun (reproducible page 78), optional

To help children know and remember why Jesus had to suffer, teach them the simple refrain **because he loves us**. Say it together a time or two. Then explain that every time you point to one member of your group, the children should say the refrain again, but put that child's name in instead of us: Because he loves Jake. Because he loves Rachel, and so on.

Practice with the group a few times. Then say: **Jesus was sad. Jesus was alone. Jesus suffered for all the wrong things we do. Why?** Cue the children to say the refrain: **Because he loves us**.

Then ask **Why?** again and begin pointing, one by one, to the children in your group and having the children repeat the refrain with the child's name.

When you have gone around the whole circle, quietly play the song "Oh, How He Loves You and Me" (track 5). Then pray, thanking Jesus for loving each child in your group so much that he was willing to suffer so that we could live in heaven some day.

If you plan to have children memorize the Memory Fun, John 1:29, please be sure to send a copy (reproducible page 78) home with them today.

# 4

# SHOW

## Praise and Thanks

### Goal

Praise and thank Jesus for what he did for us.

### Time

15-25 minutes

### Materials

See individual projects (below) for lists

Once we know how much Jesus loves us—how much Jesus was willing to bear for us—we want to praise him and thank him. Make this praise and thanksgiving part of your session today. Music, food, and decorations will all add to the effect.

Also during this part of your session, you'll want to choose one or more of the activities below—activities that will help the children praise Jesus for his amazing love.

## Two-Week Project Idea

### Water Bottle Shakers



Music Smart



Picture Smart



AA Word Smart

### Time

10 minutes each week

### Materials

16 oz (500 ml) empty plastic water bottle with cap, one per child  
Yarn in various colors  
Wooden or plastic beads  
Colorful office label stickers (circles or other shapes) and/or Easter stickers  
Scissors  
Ink pens, colored pencils, and/or small-tipped markers  
Permanent marker  
Soft Scrub® cleanser, optional  
Goo Gone® remover, optional

If you use this activity, the children will make their own water bottle shakers to use in accompanying the singing in your Easter program and/or large group session. Having the children do this craft may involve quite a bit of preparation time for you and others before the session, but we think you'll discover it's worth it!

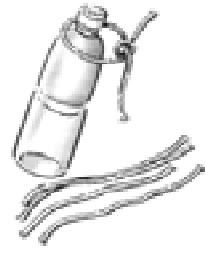
These shakers are similar to the *Shekeres* (SHAY ka rays) that the older children can make. They make a great rattling and snapping sound and are effective rhythm instruments.

If you have a large class or are working with small children, you may want to invite one or more helpers to join your group today. (A class of middle schoolers would be great helpers!) Make a sample or two ahead of time to show the children what their shakers will be like.

Notice that we include only the first half of the project here. Directions for finishing the shakers appear in session 2.



Before the session you'll need to soak the bottles to remove the labels (Goo Gone® remover works well to remove sticky residue. Soft Scrub® cleanser should remove any writing on the cap.) Write the children's names on the caps with permanent marker; then cut yarn into 12" (30 cm) pieces and tie four strands around the neck of each bottle.



During this first week, you'll want to guide the children through the steps of decorating the bottle. Next week they'll add beads to the inside and string beads on the yarn tied around the neck of the shaker.

1. Give each child the bottle with her name on the cap.
2. Show the children the blank sticker sheets and invite them to make stickers like the ones on your sample shakers. Make markers, colored pencils, and pens available to the children. You may want to give them ideas of what to draw on the shapes. Flowers or just bright colors work well!
3. Show them how to use the stickers to decorate their bottles.



4. Explain that at your next meeting they'll have the chance to add "sound" to their shakers!

## One-Week Project Ideas

### Storybook: "Jesus Suffers"

AA Word Smart    Picture Smart    People Smart    Number Smart

#### Time

10 minutes

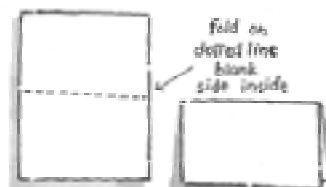
#### Materials

Storybook pages (reproducible pages 81-82), one set per child  
Crayons

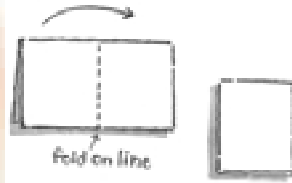
Each of the two Easter sessions offers a take-home storybook that children may share with their family and friends. For today's session, photocopy reproducible pages 81-82 and distribute a set to each child. Walk the children through the folding process, as follows, offering your help and the help of older children to the little ones in your group.



1. Fold both pages in half horizontally along the dotted lines.



2. Fold both pages in half vertically along the dotted lines.



3. Insert the second set of folded pages into the first set, so that page 3 is opposite page 2.



Have kids print their names on the cover, then color in the pictures.

Encourage them to read the story with their family and friends. If time permits, you may also want to talk about the “Think About It” questions on page 8.



**If you're short on time, just read the booklet with them and have them color it at home.**

## Praise Instruments: Rhythm Sticks



Music Smart



Picture Smart

### Time

10-15 minutes

### Materials

Dowels, 1" (2.5 cm) in diameter, one pair per child  
Ruler  
Hand saw or table saw  
Sandpaper  
Permanent markers or stickers  
Spray varnish  
Paint shirts (optional)



**Can you think of someone in your congregation who is handy with tools and enjoys working with wood? Get him or her to help. This a great opportunity to involve another adult in your ministry.**

If you choose this activity, the children will make instruments to accompany your singing. You can use them with the bottle shakers to add some great “percussion” to your Easter singing. Make a sample set of sticks to show kids what the finished project will look like.

Before your session, cut dowels into 12" (30cm) lengths. Sand the ends to remove splinters.

Set out an assortment of Easter stickers and markers on the table. Permanent markers work best; if you use these, you may want to provide old shirts to cover the children's clothing. Hand out a pair of sticks to each child and explain that their job is to decorate their sticks, making them as bright and colorful as they wish.

You will want to finish the sticks with a light coat of spray varnish and then let them dry. Depending on your time, use the sticks either this week or during your next Easter session to tap out the rhythm of the songs you use to praise Jesus.



**If your time is limited, you can purchase wooden drumsticks fairly inexpensively at music stores. Watch for sales.**

# Tambourine Hoops or Rings



## Time

10 minutes

## Materials

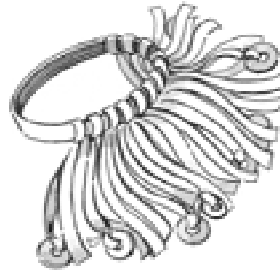
Lengths of narrow ribbon, fourteen per child  
Scissors  
Wood, plastic, or metal rings or hoops or large fruit-jar rings, one per child  
Metal washers in various sizes

Before your session, cut ribbons into 12" (30 cm) lengths. (If you wish, use purple, white, and gold ribbon for Lent and Easter.) You'll need enough to place the ribbons side by side around half the ring/hoop. (It takes around fourteen lengths to cover half of a large fruit-jar ring.)

Give each child a ring and fourteen ribbons. Show them how to fold each length of ribbon in half, slip the looped end under the hoop, and bring the loose ends up over the hoop and through the looped end as shown. Pull the ribbon right around the ring.



**You can purchase hoops at craft stores. Large fruit-jar rings also work well and are less expensive. We suggest you ask members of your church family to donate washers from their garage "collections." You'll want at least seven washers for each ring.**



**If you are working with very young children, have a helper or two to assist in the "tying," or do this part of the project for the children before the session.**

Slip each loose end through a washer and double-knot to tie securely. Repeat with the remaining lengths of ribbon. (If you don't have enough washers, tie a washer to every other ribbon.)

—Adapted from directions from Ellen Tanis, Lakeshore Vineyard Christian fellowship, Holland, Michigan.

# Picture Book Story



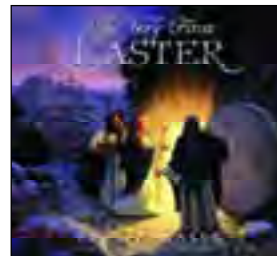
## Time

5-10 minutes

## Materials

*The Very First Easter* by Paul L. Maier

You may want to use Paul Maier's *The Very First Easter* (Concordia, 1999) with beautiful pictures by Francisco Ordaz. In this book a boy named Christopher asks his parents to tell him a true story. His parents tell him about the sorrow and joy of Jesus' death and resurrection. (You could also read this book during the large group session if you don't choose to do the drama. You may want to read half this week and half next week.)



# Jesus Suffers for Us

## Scripture

Matthew 26:36-75; 27:11-31

## Memory Challenge

John 1:29

## Focus

Jesus, the Lamb of God, loves us so much that he willingly suffered for our sins.

## WORDSearch

See Large Group Session (p. 8).



# HELLO



Word Smart



Self Smart



People Smart

### Time

5 minutes

### Materials

“Saved By a Lamb” (reproducible page 83), one per student

As group members arrive, hand them a copy of “Saved by a Lamb.” Assign the five reading parts to the first five kids to arrive in your room and ask the rest of the group to read the parts of the Israelites.



Of course, if one or more of the first five would prefer to join the group part instead of reading individual lines, respect their wishes.

Give group members a minute or two to prepare to read their lines. Then read through the drama together, encouraging your actors to be dramatic! After the drama, raise some of the following questions:

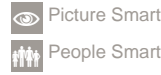
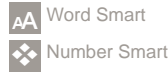
- How would you have felt about painting your lamb’s blood over the door? Why?
- Why do you think God might have asked the people to do this?

Comment to the group that in today’s session they will be hearing about another Lamb, a Lamb who suffered and died for each of *us*. Invite them to guess who you might be talking about. If they saw the drama in the opening session, they will know you are talking about Jesus.

# 2

# KNOW

## Stations of Suffering



### Goal

Tell how Jesus suffered to make us right with God.

### Time

15-20 minutes

### Materials

Stations slips (reproducible page 84)  
Bibles  
Posterboard  
Markers  
Poster putty

Make a copy of the stations slips (reproducible page 84) and cut them apart. Tell the group that today they will be taking a closer look at how Jesus, the Lamb of God, suffered for each of us. To do this you will be borrowing from an ancient Christian tradition of walking the road Jesus walked on his way to the cross. After Jesus died and rose from the grave, people came to Jerusalem to walk in Jesus' footsteps. They stopped at "stations" along the way to pray as they remembered specific things that happened during Christ's passion. Fourteen stations became the standard in the eighteenth century; a fifteenth station was added much later to emphasize Jesus' resurrection. (To learn more about the fifteen stations of the cross, visit [www.frpat.com/stations.htm](http://www.frpat.com/stations.htm) or [www.cptryon.org](http://www.cptryon.org).)



**If your group is very small, you may want to ask the children to each work on one of the posters. Or have the children do only some of the stations. You can provide posters for the others and tell the group what happened at those places.**

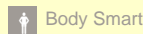


**To save time or if you are working with younger children, ask five volunteers to join your group today—one for each station. That person can quickly tell the story to the children (instead of having them read it on their own). You might also consider having the children only make a sign for their location instead of adding the symbol or picture. Or prepare the signs yourself before the session.**

In this session, your group will be taking a look at five places and ways that Jesus suffered. They will be working in small groups of two or more to read the story of their "station" from the Bible. Give each pair or small group one of the five slips and ask them to make a simple poster for that place. (You may want to make a sample poster to give them the idea.) Suggest that they include the name of the place in big letters on the poster and then a symbol to help the group remember what happened at this place. For example, for the Garden of Gethsemane, they might picture a bag of silver; for the courtyard, they might draw a rooster. Remind them to be ready to tell the group how Jesus suffered in this place.

When the groups or pairs have had time to complete their reading and poster-making (about 10 minutes), help them hang the posters on your room walls. Then ask each group to briefly tell what happened at their place and how Jesus suffered there.

## The Suffering Savior



### Time

5-10 minutes

### Materials

Drama: "The Suffering Savior" (pp. 47-49)

Option to  
step 2

If you do not have a large group session before you meet together as a small group, consider reading through this drama together today. Make enough copies of the “The Suffering Savior” script for your kids, and ask for volunteers for the various roles. Then either walk and read your way through the skit, or have kids sit around the table and read the skit as a reader’s theater. Either way, you’ll want to give cast members a few minutes to read through their parts before beginning the drama.

# 3

## GROW For Me



<b>Goal</b>
Sense the amazing sacrifice that Jesus made for us.
<b>Time</b>
5 minutes
<b>Materials</b>
Stations of the cross posters (see previous step) Memory Challenge (reproducible page 79), optional

Wonder with the group a bit about why Jesus had to suffer. Make sure they know that he had to suffer because of the way we often disobey God. Jesus had to suffer to make us right with God again—to make it possible for us to live in heaven some day.

Invite the group to join you on a walk to each of the stations of the cross that you have created together. At each station, say something like: For suffering for each of us in the Garden of Gethsemane (. . . in the courtyard, . . . before Pilate) . . . Then invite the group to join you on a refrain, such as **Thank you, Jesus.**

**tip** If some of the members of your group are not familiar with the story, you may want to tell them briefly what happened after the events you are looking at today—Jesus died on the cross. But assure them that the story doesn’t end there. In your next session, you will be hearing good news!

At the final “station,” close your walking prayer by thanking Jesus for loving each one of you so much that he was willing to suffer and die for us.

If you plan to have group members memorize the Memory Challenge, John 1:29, be sure to send a copy home with them today.

# 4

## SHOW Praise and Thanks

<b>Goal</b>
Praise and thank Jesus for what he did for us.
<b>Time</b>
15-25 minutes
<b>Materials</b>
See individual projects (below) for lists

Once we know how much Jesus loves us—how much Jesus was willing to bear for us—we want to praise him and thank him. Make this praise and thanksgiving part of your session today. Music, food, and decorations will all add to the effect.

During this part of your session, you'll want to choose one or more of the activities below—activities that will help participants praise Jesus for his amazing love. If you are working with middle schoolers, you may want to have them use this time to serve the younger children in your program/community—either by helping them make instruments and other crafts or by making the instruments themselves for a group of younger children who can use and enjoy them.

## Two-Week Project Ideas

### Resurrection Sunday *Shekeres* Music Smart

 Picture Smart

#### Time

10-15 minutes each week

#### Materials

16 oz (500 ml) empty plastic water bottle with cap, one per student  
Yarn in various colors  
Wooden or plastic beads  
Scissors  
Transparent tape  
Permanent marker  
Soft Scrub® cleanser (optional)  
Goo-Gone® remover (optional)

If you choose this craft, kids will be making a percussion instrument similar to the shakers that the younger children make, but a bit more complicated and challenging. A *shekere* (SHAY ka ray) is an African percussion instrument that is used all over the world today, especially in African, Caribbean, and Latin American cultures.



**If you know someone who owns a real *shekere*, by all means see if you can show it to your group today! Or look for some African music on a CD that includes *shekere*-playing as part of the instrumentation.**

*Shekeres* make a great rattling and snapping sound. They were originally made from a hollowed-out gourd, which was painted and covered with a net and shells, seeds, or colorful beads. Kids can use their Resurrection Sunday *shekeres* to play along with a few of the songs in the Easter program and/or for group singing or for just plain fun.

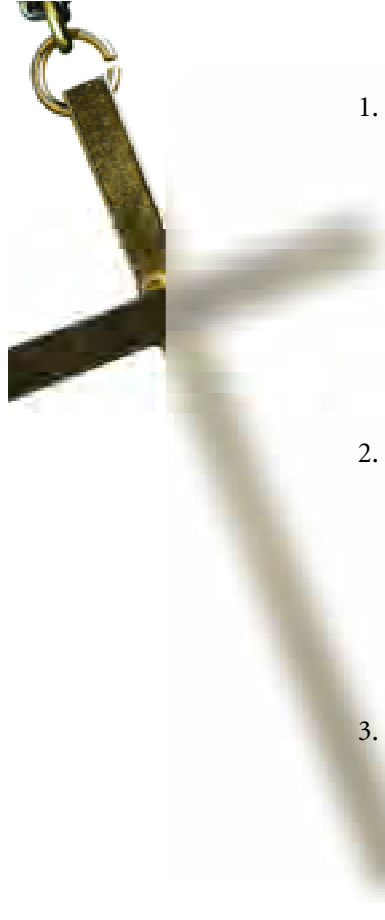
This is a two-week craft. For this first week, begin stringing beads and knotting. Next week have kids finish any stringing and beading. Make a sample ahead of time to show the group how fun these instruments can be. Shake up and enjoy the music!

Before the session today, you'll want to do the following:

- Soak water bottles to remove labels. (Goo-Gone® remover works well to remove sticky residue; Soft Scrub® cleanser should remove any writing on the cap.)
- Cut yarn. Each young person will need one 6" (15 cm) piece and six 15" (37.5 cm) pieces.

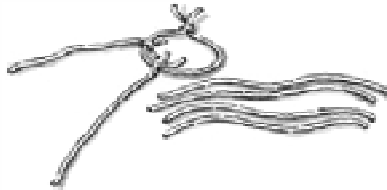
In this first session, spend a few minutes telling the group about *shekeres* and some of the areas of the world where they are used. Show the children the sample *shekere* you made (and, if possible, the real *shekere* you brought). Explain that today they will be completing the first steps of making their *shekeres*. In your next session they will be able to finish and use these instruments.

Give each person a bottle and the yarn pieces and guide them through these steps. Ask them to write their initials on the cap.

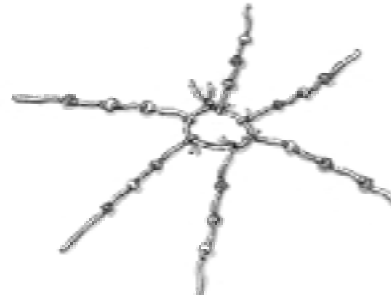
- 
1. Take the small piece of yarn and tie it in a circle, making sure the knot is tight and secure.



2. Tie each of the long strands of yarn onto the circle, making secure knots.



3. String one bead onto one of the strands of yarn. Make a knot so the bead stays in place. Thread another bead onto the same strand and make a knot. The beads do not need to be close together. Continue stringing beads and making knots until there are three beads on each strand of yarn.



Assure kids that they'll have the chance to complete work on their *shakeres* next week.

## “Lamb of God” Choral Reading

AA Word Smart

People Smart

### Time

5-10 minutes

### Materials

Choral Reading: “The Lamb of God” (reproducible page 85), one per student

This choral reading, much of which comes directly from the Bible (New International Reader’s Version), serves as a summary of the passion story, the events of Easter Sunday, and the Great Commission. If you plan to include this reading in your Easter program, you’ll want to assign parts and read it through a time or two today. You can practice it again in your next session.

If you are only planning to use the reading to review the events of the week, you may want to stop today after Reader 4 reads the verse about Pilate’s decision and the chorus responds, “Who takes away the sins of the world.”



# One-Week Project Ideas

## “Time with God” Devotional Word Smart

 Self Smart

### Time

5 minutes

### Materials

“Time with God” (reproducible pages 86-87), one per student

Distribute copies of the devotional. If you used the stations of the cross earlier in the session, explain to the group that they’ll have the opportunity to visit these stations again during the week—and a few new ones. Challenge them to follow the path of suffering that Jesus walked and to spend time thanking our Savior, the Lamb of God, for all he did for us. You may want to suggest that they ask their families to join them in these devotions each day!



Go through the devotional during your session if time allows. Otherwise, encourage kids to read it at home and share it with others.

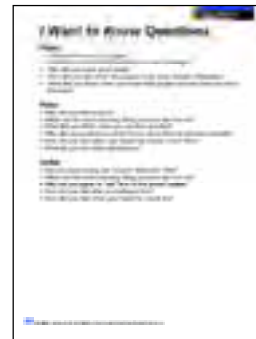
## I Want to Know Word Smart People Smart

### Time

10-20 minutes

### Materials

“I Want to Know” questions (reproducible page 88), one per student  
Sign: I Want to Know (print on posterboard or newsprint)  
Guest visitors (to play the roles of Pilate, Judas, Peter)



Before your session, arrange for three “guests”—people to play the roles of Pilate, Peter, and Judas—to visit your group. Although you could use members of your group, it’s probably best to use older teens or adults who will be more likely to come up with ready answers to the questions kids raise. Give your guests a copy of your “sample” questions, explaining that the group is not limited to this list; these questions are just to start them thinking. Encourage your guests to use a robe, hat, or other prop to help them project their role to the group. They should do their best to answer questions from the perspective of the person they are pretending to be.

Introduce this activity by explaining to the group that you were fortunate enough to get them tickets to the well-known TV show *I Want to Know*. As you set up a few chairs in the front of your room and set out the “I Want to Know” sign, tell your group that people in the studio audience of the show get to ask some famous people questions—whatever they want to know! Today’s guests on *I Want to Know* are some of the people you’ve been reading about and talking about in the last few weeks. Distribute question lists (reproducible page 87) to the members of the “audience” but assure them that they can ask questions that are not on the list too. These are just some ideas to get them thinking!

Dramatically welcome the group to *I Want to Know*—the place where every question gets answered and you find out everything you want to know! Tell them that your first guest today is a very distinguished ruler and judge by the name of Pilate: **Please welcome. . . PILATE!**

Encourage the group to clap as your guest enters. After about five questions (or fewer if your time is limited) introduce your next guest—the outspoken and well-loved fisherman Peter. Then repeat for your final guest—the double-dealing disciple Judas.



If you would like to try this activity but don’t have much time, try inviting just one guest today—maybe Pilate. Next week, repeat the program and invite Peter.

## Praise Instruments: Rhythm Sticks



### Time

10-15 minutes

### Materials

Dowels, 1" (2.5 cm) in diameter, one pair per student  
Ruler  
Hand saw or table saw  
Sandpaper  
Permanent markers or stickers  
Spray varnish  
Paint shirts (optional)

If you choose this activity, kids will be making instruments to accompany your singing—or the singing of younger children in your program. Helping younger children make instruments would be a great way to build community and challenge your older kids to serve others. But be aware that some older kids may enjoy using these instruments themselves too! Be sure to make a sample set of rhythm sticks to show kids what the finished project will be like.



**Can you think of someone in your congregation who is handy with tools and enjoys working with wood? Get him or her to help. This a great way to involve another adult in your ministry.**

Before your session, cut dowels into 12" (30 cm) lengths. Sand the ends to remove splinters.

Set out an assortment of Easter stickers and markers on the table. Encourage kids to decorate their sticks, making them as bright and colorful as they wish; show them your completed sticks to use as a model. You'll want to finish the sticks with a light coat of spray varnish, then let them dry.



**If your time is limited, you can purchase wooden drumsticks fairly inexpensively at music stores. Watch for sales.**

## Tambourine Hoops or Rings



### Time

10 minutes

### Materials

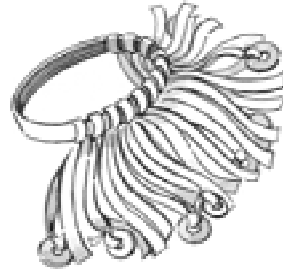
Lengths of narrow ribbon, fourteen per student  
Scissors  
Wood, plastic, or metal rings or hoops or large fruit-jar rings, one per student  
Metal washers in various sizes

Before your session, cut ribbons into 12" (30 cm) lengths. (If you wish, use purple, white, and gold ribbon for Lent and Easter.) You'll need enough to place the ribbons side by side around half the ring-hoop. (It takes around 14 lengths to cover half of a large fruit-jar ring.)



**You can purchase hoops at craft stores. Large fruit-jar rings work well and are less expensive. We suggest you ask members of your church family to donate washers from their garage "collections." You'll want at least seven washers for each ring.**

Give each person a ring and fourteen ribbons. Show them how to fold each length of ribbon in half, slip the looped end under the hoop, and bring the loose ends up over the hoop and through the looped end as shown. Pull the ribbon right around the ring.



Slip each loose end through a washer and double knot to tie securely. Repeat with the remaining lengths of ribbon. (If you don't have enough washers, tie a washer to every other ribbon.)

—Adapted from directions from Ellen Tanis, Lakeshore Vineyard Christian fellowship, Holland, Michigan. Used by permission.

## Snack: Sliced Bread and Water



Body Smart



Self Smart

### Time

5 minutes

### Materials

Sliced bread  
Napkins  
Paper cups  
Water

Reflect on Jesus' suffering by sharing together bread and water. Explain that many people give up their favorite foods during Lent to help them concentrate on Jesus' suffering. We often take God's blessings for granted. When we go without, we may realize how much we have been given.