

KS2 Unit 4, Lesson 2: Why is Good Friday good?

Context:

- Having begun to consider what is important to Christians they will now explore a key belief.

Overview:

- Children will understand importance and significance of the cross to many Christians.
- Children will understand that Christians believe that through Jesus' death on the cross their sins can be forgiven.

Essential core: Understand that Christians believe that because Jesus died on the cross they can be forgiven by God.

Resources: 2 ropes, 2 planks, cross, labelled cards. Miracle Maker DVD from 1:06:04-1:13.

INTRODUCTION:

Watch 'The Miracle Maker' DVD from 1:06:04-1:13. Can the children identify Herod, Pilate, the religious leaders, the Roman Soldiers in the video? Or you may watch a video on <http://request.org.uk/restart/2014/06/10/holy-week/> Ask them to think the crucifixion scene. What words come into their minds as they watch it. Take a few ideas.

The story of the crucifixion seems very sad and tragic - the words the children thought of will probably reflect this. And yet for Christians, the cross is a central and arguably the most important part of their faith. Why is this? What is so important about Jesus' cross?

Tell the children that you are going to do a 'drama' type demonstration to investigate why the cross is so important. You will need to have a large clear space - which could be inside or outside - 2 ropes and cards labelled on both sides as follows: A/God; B/people; Gap/sin. You will also need a large wooden or paper cross, or two planks of wood that you could lie in the shape of a cross. Ask for a few volunteers (about 6-8). The rest of the children need to sit or stand in a circle outside the space.

Put both of the ropes down together on the floor to divide the space in two. Put label A on one side and label B on the other. Ask the volunteers to stand in area B. Challenge them to move into area A. This is easy - they just step over the ropes. Now move the ropes apart so that there is a gap between areas A and B, and put the label 'gap' in the space. Move the children back into area B and challenge them to move to area A. Now it is a bit harder as they have to step or jump over the gap to get to area A. Keep moving the ropes apart and asking the children to move from B to A; gradually this gets harder and harder until it's impossible - the gap is just too big to jump across without landing in the gap! You could have fun with this - asking different children to try and jump the gap, but end up with a gap that no-one could cross. Now turn the labels over so that area A is now labelled 'God', area B is labelled 'people' and the gap is labelled 'sin'.

Explain to the children that this is a picture to explain why the cross is so important for Christians. Christians believe that God is completely good and holy. People are not - they may try to be good, but the Bible says that sin (the things people do wrong) separates them from God, and spoils their relationship with God. So there is a big gap between people and God, and no matter how hard they try, people cannot cross it - a bit like the children trying to jump over the gap once it had got too wide. (Emphasise the size of the gap e.g. "it's actually as if we put this rope right over the other side of the field" etc.) The only way to cross it would be for God himself to build a bridge - and this is what the cross is. Take your wooden or paper cross, and lay it across the gap, so that your volunteers can cross it. You could also lay the word

'forgiveness' on the cross, to show that Christians believe that through Jesus' death on the cross their sins can be forgiven and their relationship with God restored.

Formative assessment: Show children the picture of the cross filling the gap, and ask if they can explain the picture. They could do this orally to a partner and then write their explanation. Can they also explain why Christians call Jesus 'my saviour'?

Differentiation: Going deeper.

Ask children to explain how belief in the cross might help a Christian who is feeling guilty about doing something wrong.