














The Trial of Jesus

ACTIVITY	MINUTES	GRADE LEVEL	FOCUS	PITstops	*OTHER SUPPLIES
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OPENING ACTIVITY People's Court	10	1-6	 	 A-B	5 volunteers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LESSON The Trial of Jesus	10	1-6	 	 C-G	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MEMORY VERSE	5	1-6			
REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITY (Choose One Option)					
<input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 1 Eyewitness News	5	1-6		 H	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OPTION 2 Crown of Thorns	5	1-6		 I-J	butterscotch chips, Spanish peanuts, hard Chinese noodles
<input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 3 What DID Jesus Do?	10	1-6			string
<input type="checkbox"/> WORSHIP PROGRAM Forgiveness	10	1-6			
<input type="checkbox"/> LET'S DO IT! (LDI)					
Jesus On Trial	5	1-2			
Who Did It?	5	3-4			
Who Are They?	5	5-6			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DIALOGUE FOLDER					
iSPEAK	5	1-2			
iSPEAK	5	3-4			
iSPEAK	5	5-6			

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOME

This lesson will help junior soldiers understand the events that led up to Jesus' crucifixion. They'll understand that Jesus suffered and died on the cross to save all people from their sins.

YOU ARE HERE!



Place the timeline marker on **30 A.D.** on the **New Testament** timeline.

*In addition to materials listed in this chart, you need Basic Classroom Supplies.

The Trial of Jesus

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE LEADER

BIBLE REFERENCES:

This lesson is based on the following Bible references:

Luke 22:47-23:49

UNIT AIM:

This unit will help junior soldiers understand that the trial and death of Jesus was a part of God's plan. The events that followed the resurrection of Jesus, and the events that transpired before and after Stephen's trial created the climate necessary for the spread of Christianity throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria.

THROUGH THE STUDY of the trial of Jesus, Christians have an excellent opportunity to answer the question, "What DID Jesus do?" He was illegally arrested in the middle of the night, betrayed by one who was supposed to be a friend, abused, beaten, humiliated, accused of crimes He didn't commit, and threatened with death. The Jewish leaders found false witnesses who lied about Jesus. His disciples ran away. Peter denied even knowing Him.

The Sanhedrin was the most important Jewish court, made up of the chief priests and elders but it had no authority to sentence a man to death. Rome ruled the Jewish nation, and the Roman government could sentence someone to death. The Sanhedrin decided that Jesus should die. After a long night of being questioned, accused, beaten, and threatened, Jesus was taken before Pilate, the Roman governor. Pilate was afraid of losing his power and was under tremendous pressure to give them what they wanted.

According to Jewish law, Jesus' trial was illegal. He was arrested in the middle of the night, which meant that the preliminary hearing took place under darkness, a practice forbidden by Jewish law, especially in capital cases. False witnesses were found to testify against Jesus saying He spoke against the Temple of God. Bearing false witness is a direct violation of one of the Ten Commandments, the foundation for Jewish law: "Do not give false witness against your neighbor" (Exodus 20:16 NIV). At dawn Jesus was bound and taken to Pilate for trial; however, it was Passover, and Jewish law prohibited holding trials on festival days.

During the proceedings, the Jewish people refused to enter into Pilate's place of judgment. According to law if they entered the house of a gentile they would be unclean, and unable to eat the Passover meal. It's interesting that the Jewish people were concerned with remaining clean so they could eat the Passover lamb, when they had condemned the Messiah, the one about whom John the Baptist said, "Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29b NIV).

The charges brought against Jesus were fabricated, designed to make Jesus look like a political rebel and enemy of the Roman government. The Sanhedrin accused Jesus of forbidding the paying of taxes to Caesar, and of misleading the nation by declaring Himself king.

Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Yes. It is just as you say." Pilate was convinced that Jesus wasn't a threat to him or to Rome. He found no fault in Jesus; in fact, he wanted to drop the entire matter,



but the Jewish people kept pressing him. They wanted Jesus to be condemned. Since Jesus came from Galilee, Pilate ordered that Jesus be seen by Herod, the ruler of Galilee.

Herod was excited to see Jesus. He wanted to be entertained and see Jesus perform a miracle but Jesus refused to “perform” a miracle for Herod—He wouldn’t even speak to Herod. Herod abused Jesus, and then sent Him back to Pilate.

Pilate still found no guilt in Jesus. But to please the Jews Pilate said he would punish Jesus before setting Him free. Pilate questioned Jesus, but He remained silent. Wanting to set Jesus free, and still please the Jews, Pilate proposed an idea. It was the custom for the governor to release one prisoner on the day of the feast of Passover. The prisoner could be anyone the Jewish people wanted. Pilate thought the Jewish people would prefer to release Jesus, a teacher who had done good things among them, than to release Barabbas, a murderer.




The Jewish leaders encouraged the crowd to plead for the release of Barabbas. When Pilate asked what he should do with Jesus, the crowd raised their voices, shouting, “Crucify Him!”

Pilate gave into the demands of the people. He handed Jesus over to be crucified. Jesus was marched through the city. He was spat upon, mocked, and beaten.

Why did Jesus suffer all that pain? He never lost sight of His purpose in coming as “The Word became a human being” (John 1:14). He had come to be the perfect Passover Lamb—to bring people into a right relationship with God.

OPENING ACTIVITY

People’s Court

Before class, make 5 copies of  A-B. Set up the classroom to look like a courtroom. Recruit 5 volunteers—corps cadets, young adults, or older junior soldiers—to help with this activity. Assign each volunteer a role in the trial, and give each volunteer a copy of the script on  A-B. Ad-lib your own skit if you don’t want to use the script on  A-B.

Defendant: A man accused of a murder he didn’t commit. He’ll probably get the death penalty if convicted.

Prosecutor: Knows the defendant is innocent, but doesn’t care. They’ll be elected to an important position if this case is won. The prosecutor is black-mailing the judge.



MATERIALS NEEDED:

-  A-B
- 5 volunteers



Judge: Thinks the defendant is innocent, but has to go along with the prosecutor because the prosecutor knows something that would cause the judge to go to jail if it's made public.

Witnesses (2): They've been bribed to lie and say they saw the defendant commit murder.

Crowd/Jury (the junior soldiers): They're against the defendant. The prosecutor stirs them up.

After the short skit, ask junior soldiers the following questions:

Have you ever been accused of something you didn't do? *(Allow response.)*

How did it make you feel? *(Allow response.)*

What do you do if someone accuses you of doing something you didn't do? *(Allow response.)*



MATERIALS NEEDED:

- C-G

LESSON

The Trial of Jesus

Say: **You did such a good job being the jury in the opening activity; I want you to be the jury during today's lesson. I'm going to tell you a story about a trial that Jesus went through before He died on the cross.**

There were people who didn't like Jesus. The chief priests and the elders offered a reward of 30 pieces of silver for Jesus. Judas, one of the 12 disciples, accepted the pieces of silver from the priests and elders in exchange for betraying Jesus.

Jesus and the disciples had finished eating the Passover meal. *(Show junior soldiers C.)* They walked together to a garden in a place called Gethsemane. Jesus asked Peter, James, and John to come with Him. The other disciples stayed behind. Jesus asked Peter, James, and John to stay near Him as He prayed. *(Show junior soldiers D.)* When Jesus finished praying, He noticed that the three men had fallen asleep.

When Jesus finished praying He started to walk again. Judas was walking toward Jesus with a crowd of people. Earlier, Judas accepted 30 pieces of silver from the Jewish leaders to betray Jesus. *(Show junior soldiers E.)* Judas kissed Jesus on the cheek to let the soldiers know to arrest Jesus.

After Jesus was arrested *(Show junior soldiers F.)* the Jewish leaders had a trial by the most powerful Jewish court, the Sanhedrin. The next morning they took Jesus to Pilate, the governor of Rome. They accused



Jesus of many things, but He didn't do the things they accused Him of. The Jewish leaders said Jesus caused a riot in the city. They said Jesus told the people not to pay their taxes to Caesar.

Pilate said to Jesus, "Are you the 'King of the Jews'?" Jesus said, "Yes. It is just as you say." Pilate told the high priests and the others in the crowd that Jesus was harmless, and that there was no evidence to charge Him.

But, the people weren't happy with Pilate's decision. They continued to accuse Jesus of doing bad things. They said that Jesus had caused trouble because of His teachings from Galilee to Judea. Pilate stopped and thought for a second. He asked the high priests, "Is He a Galilean?" Pilate wasn't in charge of Galilee, Herod was. And, since Herod was in Jerusalem at the time, Pilate ordered that Jesus be taken to see Herod.

Herod was excited to see Jesus. He had heard so much about Him and the miracles He performed. Herod was hoping to see Jesus perform a miracle. He asked Jesus many questions, but Jesus didn't speak to him. He didn't even say one word.

Herod was offended because Jesus wouldn't speak to him, or perform a miracle. Herod turned on Jesus. He and his guards began to make fun of Jesus. They called Him names. They even dressed Him up like a king, and sent Him back to Pilate.

Pilate called in the high priests and the crowd that brought Jesus to him in the first place. Pilate told them, "You brought me this man. You said he was turning the people against the authorities. I've questioned him in front of you. I've found no basis for your charges against him. Herod hasn't either. So he sent Jesus back to us. As you can see, Jesus has done nothing that's worthy of death. So I'll just have him whipped and let him go."

The high priests and the crowd didn't like what Pilate said to them. They started shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Pilate wanted to let Jesus go. But Pilate also wanted to keep the people happy so he came up with a plan. Every year during Passover the governor would release one prisoner. The prisoner could be anyone the people wanted. Pilate thought the Jewish people would rather have Jesus set free, than the murderer Barabbas.

But the people shouted, "Kill this man! Give Barabbas to us!" The people shouted louder and louder, "Crucify Jesus! Crucify Him!"

Finally, Pilate gave in. He released the murderer Barabbas, and gave Jesus to the people to be punished any way the crowd wanted. They made



fun of Jesus. They put a crown of thorns on His head. They spit on Him as He walked by. (Show junior soldiers  G.)

Ask junior soldiers the following questions. Allow time for the junior soldiers to think about the question and respond.

Say: **Does this trial seem fair to you? Why or why not?** (Allow response.)

Say: **What do you think about the things that they accused Jesus of doing? Did He do anything against the law?** (Allow response.)

Say: **How did the Jewish leaders treat Jesus?** (Allow response.)

Say: **What did Jesus do to defend Himself? Why?** (Allow response.)

Say: **Why do you think God let this happen to Jesus?** (Allow response.)

Say: (Read Luke 22:42 aloud.) **Jesus could have escaped this trial. He didn't have to let this happen. Jesus could have called a thousand angels to come and rescue Him, but He wanted to do God's will. God sent Jesus to earth, to die on the cross, to save each of us from our sins. Jesus came to earth to save us, so we can know God!**

The people didn't treat Jesus like He was a King. They made fun of Him, they called Him names, and they spat on Him. How do you think that made Jesus feel? (Ask a junior soldier to read Luke 23:34.) **What did Jesus do to the people that treated Him badly?** (Allow response.) **That's right, He forgave them.**

Even though Jesus was put on trial and was accused of doing things He didn't do, Jesus still died on the cross to save all of us from our sin.

MEMORY VERSE

Luke 23:34a (NIV) 

"Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing.'"

Use the following motions to teach junior soldiers the memory verse. Encourage junior soldiers to do the motions with you as you recite the verse together.

Father: Lift both hands up toward heaven.

Forgive: Wipe right hand over left palm, like you're washing something away.

Them: Point right finger at imaginary people.



LESSON 1

They: Point left finger at imaginary people.


Don't know: Point right index finger at your forehead.

What they are doing: Rotate hands around each other in a rolling motion.

REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

(CHOOSE ONE OPTION)

Eyewitness News (option 1)

Before class, make one copy of  H for each junior soldier. Review today's lesson as junior soldiers draw a picture related to the lesson. Encourage junior soldiers to write a brief description of their picture.

Crown of Thorns (option 2)

Prepare these cookies the night before class. While junior soldiers enjoy the snack, remind them of Jesus' suffering, and that He died on the cross for our sins.

Thorn Cookies



2 packages - Butterscotch chips

1 cup – Spanish peanuts

1 cup – Hard Chinese noodles

Melt butterscotch chips—in a double boiler if possible. Remove from heat. Add Spanish peanuts and Chinese noodles. Mix well. Spoon onto wax paper. Cool in refrigerator. Double the recipe for more than 10 people.


What DID Jesus Do? (option 3)

Before class, make one copy of  I on red paper for each junior soldier, and make one copy of  J on white cardstock for each junior soldier.

- Cut out all pieces.
- Glue one end of the long string to the back of one end of the white rectangle, and glue the other end of the long string to the back of the other end of the white rectangle.
- Glue each of the four shorter strings on the back of the white rectangle.



MATERIALS NEEDED:

-  H
- crayons/markers
- pens/pencils




MATERIALS NEEDED:

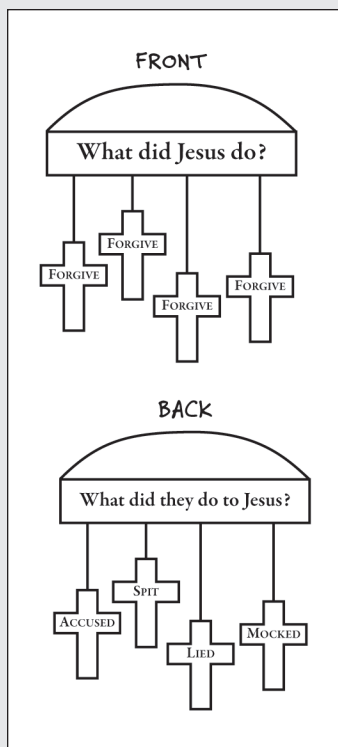
- butterscotch chips
- Spanish peanuts
- hard Chinese noodles



MATERIALS NEEDED:

-  I-J
- glue
- red/white paper
- scissors
- string





- Glue the red rectangle on top of the white rectangle.
- On each of the four pieces of string, glue one red cross, and one white cross so that the blank sides of each cross are glued together.

After junior soldiers complete their "What DID Jesus Do?" mobiles, discuss how Jesus forgave those who hurt Him.

BE AWARE!

Before serving food in class, check for food allergies. Provide an alternate snack for junior soldiers who are allergic to something you plan to serve.



WORSHIP PROGRAM

CHORUS: Song #1: "Lord, I Lift Your Name On High"
(Track #1, *Great Big Praise* CD 1)

SCRIPTURE: Mark 11:25-26 (NIRV)

CHORUS: Song #11: "You Are My All in All"
(Track #11, *Great Big Praise* CD 1)

DEVOTIONAL

Forgiveness

Say: **When Jesus was on the cross, dying for our sins, what did He say about the people who beat Him and crucified Him?** *(Allow time for response.)*
That's right, Jesus forgave them all. He said, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing."

Raise your hand if you've ever had your feelings hurt? *(Allow response.)*
What do you do when someone hurts your feelings? *(Allow response.)*
Let's look at what the Bible says to do when people hurt us.

(Read Mark 11:25-26.) **Jesus tells us that we need to forgive the people who hurt our feelings. If we're praying, and think about someone we're angry with, we need to forgive that person before we finish praying. The Bible tells us that if we want forgiveness for our sins, we have to forgive the people who hurt us.**

PRAYER



Remember to fill out
the *What Do You Think*
Evaluation on page 111.

