















# Eyewitness At Jesus' Trial

ACTIVITY	MINUTES	GRADE LEVEL	FOCUS	PITstops	*OTHER SUPPLIES
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OPENING ACTIVITY Just Ask	5	1-6	 		3" x 5" index cards, basin/ bucket, water, soap, towel
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LESSON Eyewitness At Jesus' Trial	15	1-6	   A		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MEMORY VERSE	10	1-6	  B		cardstock
REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITY (Choose One Option)					
<input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 1 Eyewitness News	5	1-6	  C		
<input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 2 Silhouette of Forgiveness	10	1-6			bright lamp
<input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 3 Jesus Died For Me!	5	1-6	  D		paper plate, hole-punch, ribbon
<input type="checkbox"/> WORSHIP PROGRAM Ask!	10	1-6	 		
<input type="checkbox"/> LET'S DO IT! (LDI)					
Did They or Didn't They?	5	1-2			
To Be Forgiven	5	3-4			
Who Did What?	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 roles of the witnesses at Jesus' trial. They'll learn that God forgives our sins, but we must ask Him for forgiveness.

## 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.

# Eyewitness At Jesus' Trial

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE LEADER

### BIBLE REFERENCES:

This lesson is based on the following Bible references:

Matthew 26:14-27:31

Mark 14:50

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.

**MANY PEOPLE WITNESSED** the trial and death of Jesus. Each person involved played an important role.

**Judas** took a bribe to lead the chief priests and their soldiers to a place where Jesus could be arrested quietly. Little is known of his true motivation. Perhaps it was for the money, thinking that Jesus could defeat the charges of the priests. After all, Jesus had outwitted them many times before. Perhaps Judas wanted Jesus to make an open declaration of His Messiahship. No one knows.

It's best to interpret Judas' action by his own words from Matthew 27:4a NIV, "I have sinned." Judas, who had walked with Jesus, listened to His teaching, and shared hardships, betrayed his friend. Judas was devastated by what he had done. He attempted to return the money to the chief priests who bribed him. He said to the chief priests in Matthew 27:4b NIV, "I handed over a man who is not guilty!" but they had no sympathy for Judas. Judas had done what they needed him to do, and they no longer needed him. Judas threw the 30 pieces of silver the priests paid him into the Temple, then he went and hanged himself.

**The disciples** celebrated Passover with Jesus just hours before He was arrested. During the Passover meal Jesus predicted that He'd be betrayed by one of the disciples, and that the disciples would run away once He was arrested. Peter announced that he'd never leave Jesus. Jesus responded by telling Peter that, before the rooster crowed, he'd deny knowing Jesus three times. Again Peter said he wouldn't deny Jesus. All of the disciples said the same thing. In a few hours, however, Jesus was arrested, and the disciples ran away.

Scripture records that only two of the disciples were present at Jesus' trial: **Peter and an unnamed disciple**. It's believed that the unnamed disciple was John, the son of Zebedee. John, in his writing, often mentioned himself as "a disciple" or "the disciple Jesus loved" (John 20:2; 21:20, 24 NIV). The unnamed disciple was known to the high priest and could enter the court. He also gained entry for Peter. It's assumed that he remained at the court and witnessed the entire trial but wasn't mentioned again until Jesus' death.

While Jesus was questioned, Peter had his own "trial." Over several hours, three different people who recognized Peter as one of Jesus' followers confronted him. Each time, Peter denied knowing Jesus. The third time he denied knowing Jesus, a rooster crowed. Immediately Peter knew he'd done the very thing Jesus predicted during the Passover meal and was overwhelmed with grief. It's assumed that he didn't witness the trial after his third denial of Jesus.



**Herod Antipas**, son of Herod the Great—the ruler of Judea during Christ’s birth—was the ruler of Galilee. At the request of Salome, a woman who pleased him with her dancing, Herod put John the Baptist to death. He alienated his people when he divorced his wife to marry Herodius, the daughter of his half-brother, wife of another half-brother, and mother of Salome. Herod was in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus’ trial because it was Passover. He wasn’t a man of faith—he only went to please the Jews.

Jesus spoke a few words to Pilate when questioned, but didn’t speak to Herod. Herod was pleased to see Jesus, but only because he wanted to see Jesus perform a miracle. The Jewish leaders were there to accuse Jesus, but He didn’t defend Himself. Herod showed his true opinion of Jesus by treating Him with contempt, mocking Him, dressing Him as a false king, and sending Him back to Pilate.

Little is known of **the soldiers** who were involved except that they were under the command of Pilate, the governor. These men mocked Jesus, beat Him, slapped Him, spit on Him, put a crown of thorns on His head, and crucified Him. However, Jesus had a profound effect on at least a few of the soldiers. After Jesus died, the veil of the Temple was torn in two, and amazing things happened. Several soldiers proclaimed, “He was surely the Son of God!” (Matthew 27:54 NIV).

The Roman government at the time of Jesus’ trial didn’t favor **Pilate**. When the Jews pressured Pilate to condemn Jesus, he was afraid of losing his power, so he sentenced Jesus to be crucified. Pilate believed Jesus was innocent and didn’t want to condemn Him, but did what he needed to keep his power and position.

### OPENING ACTIVITY

## Just Ask

Before class, ask two older junior soldiers to help you with this activity. Ask them to act out the story as you read. Obviously Actor A should only pretend to beat up Actor B. Give each actor a 3" x 5" index card with the following written on it:

#### ACTOR A

“I hate you. I hate you!”

#### ACTOR B

“I hate you back!”

You’ll need a basin or bucket of warm water, soap, and a towel for this activity.

Say: **Once upon a time there were two children named “A” and “B.” They didn’t like each other very much.** (Cue the actors to say their lines, Actor A goes first.) **These words made the situation even worse, so “A” (point to Actor A) began to act out their hatred. They punched “B” (pause) who fell to the ground (pause). Then “A” spit on “B” (pause).**

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 3" x 5" index cards
- basin/bucket
- water
- soap
- towel



When “B” tried to get up *(pause)*, “A” pushed them down again. “B” was really hurt, and fell on the floor and began to cry *(pause)*. “A” started to feel bad about what they’d done *(pause)*—REALLY bad *(pause)*. “B” just lay there and continued to cry.

“A” had a great idea *(pause)*. “A” said, “I did something wrong. I did a bad thing *(pause)*. My hands have sinned and I need that sin to go away. I’ll just go and wash my hands.” *(Pause for a few moments while “A” washes his/her hands. Applaud both actors and ask them to take their seats.)*

Ask junior soldiers the following questions:

**What’s wrong with this ending?** *(A person can’t cleanse himself from sin by washing his hands.)*

**If “A” really wanted to be forgiven by “B,” what should “A” have done?** *(Apologize. Ask for forgiveness.)*


Say: **Today we’re going to talk about several people who sinned, who did the wrong thing.**

## LESSON

# Eyewitnesses At Jesus’ Trial

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

-  A
- pencils/pens

Before the lesson, make one copy of  A for each junior soldier. During today’s lesson help junior soldiers fill out the handout as you discuss the different people involved in Jesus’ trial.

Say: **Last week we talked about the trial of Jesus, and how He died on the cross to save us from our sins. There were many people involved in the trial of Jesus. Some people played large roles, like Pilate, the governor, and Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus to the soldiers. Some people played smaller roles, like the people standing around in the crowd. But each person played an important role in Jesus’ trial.**

**Why did Jesus die on the cross?** *(Allow response.)* **That’s right! Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins. Do you think Jesus died to save everyone from their sins, or just certain people?** *(Allow response.)* **Jesus forgives anyone who says they’re sorry for the sin in their life, and asks for forgiveness from their sins.**

**Today we’re going to talk about the different people involved in Jesus’ trial. We’re going to read the Bible to find out what role each person or group played in the trial.**

Give each junior soldier a copy of  A and a pencil. Distribute Bibles for junior soldiers to share.



Say: **Judas was one of the 12 disciples. He played a very important role in Jesus' arrest. Listen to what the Bible says about Judas.** *(Read Matthew 26:14-16, and Matthew 26:47-50 NIV.)* **What role did Judas play in the arrest of Jesus?** *(Allow response.)* **Judas accepted money from the priests to betray Jesus. Judas is the one who led the soldiers to Jesus.** *(Instruct junior soldiers to fill in Judas' role on their handout.)* **After the priests and Jewish leaders decided to put Jesus to death, Judas realized what he'd done. He went to the priests and said, "I have sinned, I handed over a man who is not guilty"** *(Matthew 27:3-5 NIV).* **Because they had gotten what they wanted from Judas, they didn't care about him or his feelings. Judas threw the 30 coins into the Temple, and then hanged himself. Do you think Judas was forgiven for what he did?** *(Allow response.)* **There is no record in Scripture that Judas asked to be forgiven for what he'd done.** *(Instruct junior soldiers to mark the correct box, "Forgiven" or "Unforgiven" on their handout.)*

Say: **A few hours before He was arrested, Jesus had the Passover meal with the disciples. During the meal He told them that one of them would betray Him. He also told the disciples that they'd run away and abandon Him during this time.** *(Read Mark 14:50.)* **Peter spoke up and said he'd never leave Jesus. Listen to what Jesus said to Peter in Luke 22:32-34.** *(Read Luke 22:32-34 NIV.)* **What did Jesus say would happen?** *(Allow response.)* **What role did Peter play in Jesus' trial?** *(Allow response.)* *(Instruct junior soldiers to fill in Peter's role on their handout.)* **Peter denied Jesus three times. The third time he denied knowing Jesus, the rooster crowed, and Peter became very sad that he had done what Jesus said he'd do. Were Peter and the other disciples forgiven for what they did?** *(Allow response.)* **Peter and the other disciples realized their sin, and asked to be forgiven.** *(Instruct junior soldiers to mark the correct box, "Forgiven" or "Unforgiven" on their handout.)*

Say: **The soldiers played two important roles in the trial and death of Jesus. First, they arrested Jesus in the garden after Judas betrayed Jesus. Second, during the trial they did terrible things to Jesus. The Bible tells us what they did to Him.** *(Read Matthew 27:27-31 NIV.)* **What role did the soldiers play in the trial and death of Jesus?** *(Allow response.)* *(Instruct junior soldiers to fill in the soldiers' role on their handout.)* **After Jesus died on the cross, the curtain of the Temple was torn in two pieces, and the earth shook. The soldiers were terrified. Some of the soldiers said, "He was surely the Son of God!"** *(Matthew 27:54 NIV).* **Do you think the soldiers were forgiven?** *(Allow response.)* *(Instruct junior soldiers to mark the correct box, "Forgiven" or "Unforgiven" on their handout.)* **Because some of the soldiers said that Jesus was the Son of God, and they believed in Him, they were forgiven!**

Say: **Herod and Pilate each played a role in the death of Jesus. Both men were more concerned about themselves than about doing what was right. Let's see what the Bible says about each of these men.** *(Read Luke*




23:8-25.) **What role did Herod play?** (Allow response.) (Instruct junior soldiers to fill in Herod's role on their handout.) **Herod was one of the rulers who condemned Jesus. He mocked Jesus with his soldiers. What role did Pilate play?** (Allow response.) (Instruct junior soldiers to fill in Pilate's role on their handout.) **Pilate was afraid to lose his power, so he condemned Jesus, and sentenced Him to die on the cross. Do you think Herod and Pilate were forgiven?** (Allow response.) (Instruct junior soldiers to mark the correct box, "Forgiven" or "Unforgiven" on their handout.) **There is no record in Scripture that Herod or Pilate asked for forgiveness for what they did to Jesus. Eventually, both men lost their power and position.**


Say: **Jesus died on the cross for everyone. If we say we're sorry for the things we've done, and ask Jesus to live in our hearts, we can be forgiven. Peter, the disciples, and the soldiers were sorry for the role they played in the trial and death of Jesus. They asked for forgiveness, and they were forgiven. It's very important to remember that God will forgive us for doing bad things, even really bad things, but we have to ask Him for forgiveness.**





#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

-  B
- crayons/markers
- cardstock
- scissors
- tape

#### MEMORY VERSE

**Romans 10:13 (NIV)** 

"Scripture says, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

Before class, make one copy of  B on cardstock. Give each junior soldier a copy of  B and markers or crayons. Instruct them to write the memory verse on their piece of paper. Encourage them to decorate the paper if they have space left over after writing the verse. Remind junior soldiers to color and write inside the line. After they finish drawing, cut out the megaphone shape and handle. Instruct junior soldiers to roll the piece of paper to form a megaphone. Fasten the two ends together with tape, and attach handle by taping the tabs to the megaphone. Have junior soldiers shout the memory verse through their megaphones.






## REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

(CHOOSE ONE OPTION)


### Eyewitness News (option 1)

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

### Silhouette of Forgiveness (option 2)


Tape a piece of black construction paper against a flat wall or door. Stand the junior soldier sideways in front of the black paper. Shine a bright lamp on the junior soldier. Trace their shadow on the black paper using a light colored crayon. Instruct the junior soldier to cut out their silhouette and glue it to a white piece of construction paper. After the black silhouette has been glued to the white construction paper, have the junior soldier write their name at the top of the paper followed by the words, "has been FORGIVEN!"

### Jesus Died For Me! (option 3)

Use  D as a guide. Before class, use a hole-punch and make eight holes around the rim of a white paper plate. Make one plate for each junior soldier. Distribute supplies to each junior soldier. Give junior soldiers the following instructions to complete this activity:

- Thread the 40 inch piece of ribbon through the holes on the plate rim. Leave enough ribbon at each end to tie a bow.
- Trace your hand on the piece of construction paper.
- On the palm of the hand write, "Jesus' blood."
- On the thumb write "covers."
- On the index finger write "all."
- On the middle finger write "of."
- On the ring finger write your name followed by "s."
- On the pinky write "sins."
- Cut out the hand.
- Glue it onto the center of the plate.


#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

-  C
- crayons/markers
- pencils/pens

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- black and white construction paper
- scissors
- glue
- crayons/markers
- bright lamp

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

-  D
- crayons/markers
- paper plate
- hole-punch
- ribbon
- bright-colored construction paper
- scissors
- glue



## WORSHIP PROGRAM

**CHORUS:** Song #34: "Cares Chorus"  
(Track #34, *Great Big Praise* CD 1)

**SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 53:4-5 (NirV)

**CHORUS:** Song #48: "Psalm 139"  
(Track #48, *Great Big Praise* CD 1)

DEVOTIONAL

**Ask!**  

Say: **What's the difference between being sorry for doing something wrong, and being sorry for getting caught doing something wrong?** (*Allow response.*) **How do you know when you're really sorry?** (*Allow response.*) **There were two men who were very sorry for what they did during Jesus' trial. Judas was sorry that he betrayed Jesus, and Peter was sorry that he denied knowing Jesus.**

**There's a big difference between Judas and Peter. Both men were sorry for their actions. Judas was sad that Jesus was going to be crucified. He didn't like what he'd done, but the Scripture doesn't record that he asked God to help turn his life around.**

**How do we know that Peter was truly sorry for what he had done?** (*Allow time for a response, then read Matthew 26:75 NirV.*) **When Peter saw Jesus after the resurrection, he immediately asked Him for forgiveness. Peter wanted to change. Peter never denied Jesus again, because he asked God to strengthen him, and make him a mighty witness of the Good News of Jesus.**

**God, through Jesus, will forgive our sins too, if we ask and are truly sorry for what we've done. He'll make us into something better and stronger, if we let Him. All we need to do is ASK!**



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

## PRAYER

