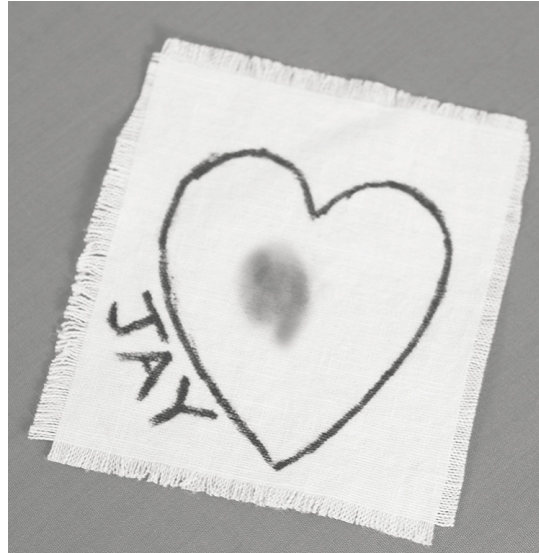


out of the  
**BASKET**

Easter ideas  
for families



## Activity and Lesson: Jesus Washes Away Our Sins



***A hands on keepsake activity and lesson to help kids explore how Jesus washes away our sins. Appropriate for all ages.***

### **Materials needed :**

- Washable red markers
- White fabric (old pillow cases work well) torn or cut into 3x3-inch squares
- Permanent markers
- A bowl filled with warm soapy water

### **Activity:**

1. Tell your kids that Jesus loves us very much—so much that he forgives the bad things we do. Tell them he died on the cross so we could live with him forever in heaven.
2. Help children color their thumbs with a red washable marker so they can make a thumbprint on a piece of white fabric.
3. Once each child has made a print, draw a heart around it with permanent marker and have them write their name in the heart with permanent marker.
4. Tell kids that their prints represent the naughty things we do which are called sins. Discuss things that they might do that are sins.
5. Have kids dip their fabric in a bowl of soapy water and wash it. When they're done, the red print will be gone, but the black heart and their name will remain. Explain to kids that that's what happens to our sins when we ask Jesus to forgive us. He takes our sins away, and his love for us is permanent and never fades.
6. Have your kids hang their cloth in their room to remind them that Jesus loves them so much he died for their sins.

### **Faith Talk**

SAY: "Jesus gave his life so we could live with him forever in heaven. His big gift to us is that he forgives our sins. He loves us no matter what! Jesus is alive today and he loves you!"

## Activity and Lesson: Empty Tomb Easter Cookies



***Families can use this classic, interactive recipe at home the night before Easter. Best for Ages 4 and up***

### **Materials needed:**

- 1 cup whole pecans
- 1 plastic sealable sandwich bag
- Wooden spoon
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 3 egg whites
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 cup sugar
- Electric mixer
- Greased cookie sheet
- Masking tape

**Prep:** Heat the oven to 300 degrees.

### **Activity (to be done the night before Easter, preferably)**

1. Place the pecans in the baggie. Let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break them into small pieces. **SAY:** "After Jesus was arrested, soldiers beat him" (John 19:1-3).
2. Next, let children smell and taste the vinegar. Put one teaspoon in a mixing bowl. **SAY:** "When Jesus was thirsty on the cross, soldiers gave him vinegar to drink" (John 19:28-30).
3. Add the egg whites. **SAY:** "An egg can sometimes have a new life in it, such as a bird. Jesus died so we can live with him forever" (John 10:10-11).
4. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let kids brush it into the bowl and then taste what's left. **SAY:** "Salt represents the tears of Jesus' friends" (Luke 23:27).
5. Add the sugar. **SAY:** "The sweetest part of Easter is that Jesus died because he loves us—and then he came back to life" (Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16).
6. Beat ingredients with a mixer on high for 12 to 15 minutes, until stiff peaks form. **SAY:** "The color white represents how we become pure because Jesus washes away our sins" (Isaiah 1:18).
7. Fold in the broken nuts. Drop by teaspoonful onto a greased cookie sheet. **SAY:** "Each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid to rest" (Matthew 27:57-60).

8. Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door, and turn off the oven. Give each child some tape to seal the door. **SAY:** "When Jesus was sealed in the tomb, the world was dark" (Matthew 27:65-66).
9. Tell children it's time to go to bed and ask how they feel about leaving the cookies in the oven overnight. **SAY:** "Jesus' friends were sad to leave him in the tomb, too" (John 16:20).

### **Easter Morning Faith Talk**

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow!

**SAY:** "On the first Easter morning, Jesus' followers were amazed, too. The tomb was empty because Jesus came back to life" (Matthew 28:1-9)!

## Activity and Lesson: Light after Darkness



***A hands on activity and lesson about the light of Jesus' resurrection. Appropriate for all ages.***

### **Materials needed :**

- White coffee filters cut into 2" X 4" strips
- 1 paper cup per child filled approx ½" of water
- Washable black markers (not permanent)
- Paper clips

**Prep:** Place the cups of water on one end of the table, and make sure there is a totally dry area with the filter strips and markers.

This kind of experiment is known as chromatography...Greek for color writing. As the water travels up the filter paper, it dissolves the black ink and pulls it up the paper too. You'll discover that the black ink is a actually mixture of several different colors.

1. Have your kids stop first at the "dry" side of the table and take a marker and filter paper.  
**SAY:** Jesus said he is God's Son. Some people didn't believe him and wanted him killed. They put Jesus on a cross, and he died. Although Jesus warned his friends about what was going to happen, they didn't understand it when he died. This was a dark time for them.
2. Ask them to draw a thick line with the black marker on the filter paper about half an inch from the bottom.
3. Have your kids move to spot where the cups are and dip their filter paper into a cup until the bottom of the paper just touches the water (not passing the ink line).
4. Instruct each person to paper-clip the paper to the side of the cup. (It's best if the paper stands up and is not folded over—the folding will stop or slow the progress of the water.)
5. Have your kids watch as the water travels up the paper, and encourage them to talk about what happens to the changes in color.  
**SAY:** Death wasn't the end for Jesus! He came back to life three days later. Jesus is alive today! When his friends found out, it was like light was brought back. Jesus made a dark situation much better.

## Family Devotional Experience: A Taste of Good Friday

### Materials Needed:

- 1 lemon cut into thin slices for each family member
- 1 Taste Twisting Tablet per family member (order on [lifetreefamily.com/easter](http://lifetreefamily.com/easter))

**Note:** The Taste Twisting Tablets are 100% all natural and made from freeze-dried Miracle Fruit pulp. When dissolved in one's mouth they temporarily (about 30 min) turn the taste of anything sour to very sweet. Order at [lifetreefamily.com/easter](http://lifetreefamily.com/easter)

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Invite your family to the table and explain that they will get to experience a "taste" of Good Friday and how Jesus' sacrifice on the cross reflects the sweetness of his love for us.

**SAY:** "Jesus was arrested because he told people he was the son of God, which also meant he was a king. This made the Romans very angry because they said Caesar was their only king. The crowds yelled and screamed for Jesus to be punished even though he was telling the truth and hadn't done anything wrong. They wanted Jesus to die on the cross, and instead of a king's crown, they made him wear a crown of long, sharp thorns. The thorns cut deeply into his head, making him bleed. It was a very sour and sad day."

Give a slice of lemon to each family member and ask them to taste it. Discuss how the lemons taste and feel on your tongue. (Before you move on, ask family members to put their lemons down.)

Next, pass out 1 Taste Twister Tablet per person and tell them to let it slowly dissolve in their mouth for a few minutes while you continue...

**SAY:** "Next they beat Jesus and made him carry a heavy wooden cross to a hill called the 'Golgotha' which means 'Skull.' Then they nailed Jesus' hands and feet to the cross. Jesus hung there on the cross for hours in terrible pain. He finally cried out that he was thirsty, and a soldier dipped a sponge into some sour wine and lifted it to Jesus' lips with a stick. When Jesus tasted the wine, he said "It is finished" and his spirit was released from his body and he died. "

Pause to allow your family to reflect for a moment and ask how they feel about Jesus being beaten and crucified even though Jesus never sinned and he didn't do anything to deserve it.

**SAY:** "The Bible explains that when we disobey God, that's called sin. And the price of sin is death. All of us—all human beings—have sinned. Only Jesus never sinned, yet he was willing to die for us on the cross to pay for our sins so that we could have eternal life in heaven. That's why we can call it Good Friday—even though it was a sad and painful day where Jesus died on the cross, we learn from this day how much we are truly loved. Jesus' sacrifice was the ultimate act of love, and turned something sour and terrible into something sweet and good."

Ask your family members to taste their lemon slices again—even take a bite of it. Discuss what the lemon slices taste like now, and what it feels like to experience something that turned from unpleasant to very sweet.

Close with a prayer, thanking Jesus for loving us so much that he was willing to endure the pain on the cross for something much sweeter.

## High Flyers

***Family Game and simple lesson for kids at Easter. Appropriate for all ages.***

### **Materials Needed:**

- 1 High Flyer for each family member (order on [lifetreefamily.com/easter](http://lifetreefamily.com/easter))
- 1 basket or bucket

**Prep:** Tape a line on the floor and set a basket about 15 feet in front of the line. (or let kids use their Easter baskets.)

1. Give each child a High Flyer (it makes a great Easter basket gift!) Point out that there's the message "Jesus Is Alive" on the handle.
2. Help them in assembling the propellers from largest to smallest on the Flyer using the notches to snap them in place.
3. Ask your kids to stand behind the taped line and aim for the basket. On the count of three, have your kids pull the string sharply using the plastic loop, launching their propellers into the air. Let them keep trying different angles and try their luck at getting the flyers to land in the basket.
4. Have your kids help each other collect the propellers and ensure everyone gets a set of three (any set of three will work).

As your kids enjoy using their High Flyers, use these talking points to your family discover more about Jesus.

**SAY:** "Two of Jesus' friends went to see Jesus' body at the tomb after he died. But they didn't find Jesus; they found two angels who told them Jesus is alive!

And just like these propellers rush up into the air, the women rushed home to tell Jesus' other friends.

And just as the propellers flew in different directions, Jesus' friends went in different directions to tell everyone that Jesus is alive! We, too, can go all around our community and world to tell others that Jesus is alive. "

## Activity and Lesson: Meaningful Family Easter Egg Hunt

**Best for Ages 5 and up**

**Prep:** You'll need two egg-hunting areas, one without eggs and one with lots of filled plastic eggs.

**Get Set:** Before the egg hunt, help children try to imagine what it was like to be at the first Easter. Gather in a room separate from the hunt location. Read or tell about Jesus dying on the cross. At the part when the soldiers put Jesus' body in the tomb, pause to take children to the egg hunt to the location without any eggs (but don't tell them there aren't any eggs.) Tell children you'll finish the story when they return.

When kids get frustrated they can't find anything, ask children what it's like to discover that something's unexpectedly missing. Discuss their feelings and explain this is probably how Jesus' friends felt when they went to the tomb and couldn't find his body.

**Faith Talk:** Read Luke 24:3-6.

**SAY:** "Jesus wasn't in the tomb because he's alive. This surprised Jesus' friends, but it was a good surprise. The good news of Easter is that Jesus didn't stay dead. By rising, he gives us good gifts such as forgiveness and peace."

Then send children to the hunt location that's filled with eggs and have fun hunting!



## Activity and Lesson: Resurrection/Dissolving Paper Experience

### Materials Needed:

- 1 clear pitcher or clear container full of water
- 1 pack of Dissolving Paper (order at [Lifetreefamily.com/easter](http://Lifetreefamily.com/easter))
- 1 pen for each family member

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**Note:** Don't substitute regular paper for the dissolving paper, or the experience will not work. Order the Dissolving Paper at [lifetreefamily.com/easter](http://lifetreefamily.com/easter).

Invite your family to the table and explain you'll take a journey back in time to the moments after Mary discovered the empty tomb of Jesus, and what a thrilling experience it meant that Jesus defeated death.

Place the dissolving papers, pens, and pitcher of water in the center of the table and ask family members to think about some of their sins, and confess them by writing or drawing them on the papers (1 sin per paper.) Remind them that in this activity they won't have to share these with others, just with God.

**SAY:** "On Easter morning, Mary came to Jesus' tomb and the great big stone blocking the entrance was rolled away. When she looked inside, Jesus was gone! She ran as fast as she could to tell Jesus' friends that she was worried that someone must have entered the tomb and taken Jesus' body away."

Put the empty clear container in the center of this table and ask family members to put all of their papers in the container, one at a time.

**SAY:** "Jesus' friends were sad and surprised Jesus was gone, and went to look for his body. Mary sat by the empty tomb and cried. She couldn't believe Jesus was gone! But then she looked one more time and saw two angels where Jesus' body had been. They asked why she was crying, and she said it was because someone took Jesus' body away. But as she turned to walk away, someone called out her name. It was Jesus, he was alive!"

Next, pour water over the papers and ask kids to take turns stirring it for a minute or two. As they are stirring, say the following:

**SAY:** "After Jesus died on the cross, God brought him back to life. That's why Jesus wasn't in the tomb. Because Jesus paid for our sins, and then came back to life, he forgives our sins. When we confess our sins and accept Jesus' forgiveness, he washes our sins away."

Ask your family members to look at the water and talk about how they feel to see their sins have disappeared.

**SAY:** "We follow Jesus because he's alive! Jesus paid for our sins so we can be close to God. When we believe and follow Jesus, we can live with him forever in heaven. Jesus coming back to life was a gift of love to us from God. This gift is waiting for you, all you have to do is accept it."

Close in prayer. **You can say:** "God, thank you for how amazing and big your love is for us, and that our sins are forgiven because of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus."