

# It's Empty!

## PRESCHOOL LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

**Scripture:** John 20:2

**Memory Verse:** They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him! - John 20:2

## The Children's Sermon

As you can see, I have a glass with some juice in it. There are two ways of looking at this glass of juice. Some people would look at the glass and say it is half empty. There are others who would look at the glass and say it is half full. (Drink all of the juice in the glass.)

Well, we solved that problem, didn't we? Now everyone who looks at this glass would say that it is empty, but guess what? Everyone still wouldn't look at the glass in the same way. Some would look at the glass and grumble and complain because it empty. Others would look at the glass and see it as a glass just waiting to be filled with good things to drink. I guess there are always different ways to look at any situation.

On the Sunday morning after Jesus was crucified, a woman named Mary went to visit the grave where the body of Jesus had been laid. When she got there, she found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. She ran to find someone to tell them what she had seen. She found two of the disciples, Peter and John, and she said to them, "They have taken our Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they have put him."

The three of them immediately ran to the tomb. When they got there, they all saw the same thing, but they didn't all look at it in the same way.

Peter looked and was curious. The Bible says Peter went in the empty tomb and looked around. He saw strips of linen laying around and the cloth that Jesus had been buried in folded neatly and placed where the body had been. "Hmmm, very interesting," Peter might have said to himself.

Mary looked and was sad. The Bible tells us that Mary didn't even go inside the empty tomb. She just stood outside the tomb and wept because she feared that someone had stolen the body of Jesus.

John looked and believed. The bible says that John went inside the tomb and he saw and believed. Now, I don't know exactly how much John understood, but I think he believed that Jesus had risen from the grave just as he said he would.

Three people – they all saw the same thing – one was curious, one was sad, and one believed. I think that is pretty much the same way people react to the story of Jesus today. Some people hear the story and they are curious, others hear it and think it is sad, others hear it and believe. How do you look at it?

Let's imagine a bit more about that special morning. The sun was just coming up, and the birds were starting to sing. It was a new day, but for Mary, Peter, and John, it felt like the saddest day ever. They missed Jesus so much. But something amazing was about to happen at the empty tomb.

When Peter stepped into the empty tomb, his eyes opened wide. He saw the linens but no Jesus. "Where could He be?" Peter wondered. He scratched his head, thinking hard. The empty tomb was a big puzzle he wanted to solve.

Mary, standing outside, was crying. Her heart felt so heavy. She loved Jesus so much and now she couldn't even say goodbye. But the empty tomb was more than just a place of sadness. It was the start of something new, something full of hope.

John, when he saw the empty tomb, felt something warm in his heart. It was like a little light turned on. "Could it be true? Did Jesus really do what He said He would?" John thought. He remembered Jesus talking about rising again. The empty tomb was starting to make sense to him.

The empty tomb wasn't just an empty space. It was a message from Jesus. He was telling everyone, "I am alive! I have beaten death!" This is what we call the Empty Tomb Resurrection. It's a big word, but it means Jesus came back to life, and because of that, we can all have hope.

The Empty Tomb Resurrection is like the first flower blooming after a long, cold winter. It's a sign that good things are coming. Jesus defeating death means we can all be friends with God forever. That's the best news ever!

Now, think about how you feel when you hear about the Empty Tomb Resurrection. Are you like Peter, full of questions and wanting to learn more? Or maybe you're like Mary, feeling a bit sad but also hopeful. Or are you like John, believing and feeling happy in your heart?

This is a story for everyone. It doesn't matter if you're curious, sad, or believing. Jesus loves all of us. He wants us to know that He is always with us, and because He lives, we can face tomorrow with a smile.

So, next time you hear about the Empty Tomb, remember it's not just an old story. It's about Jesus, who loves us so much that He came back to life. It's about hope, love, and the promise of being with God forever.

Dear Lord, today we look into an empty grave. Help us all to see and believe that Jesus has risen just as he said he would. Help us to remember the Empty Tomb Resurrection every day, to feel the hope it brings, and to share that hope with others. Amen.

Remember, the Empty Tomb is not the end of the story. It's just the beginning. It's the start of a beautiful friendship with Jesus, who is always with us, loving us, and guiding us.

## Bible Memory Verse

**They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him! - John 20:2**

You Will Need:

- Empty cardboard box (tomb)
- Stone (a large rock or a paper mache ball)
- Figure of Jesus (a small doll or paper cutout)

Get Ready:

- Cut a side of the box to make an opening for the tomb.

-Paint or decorate the box and stone to look like a tomb and a boulder.

Do This:

1. Place the figure of Jesus inside the tomb and close it with the stone.
2. Tell the children the story of Jesus' resurrection from John 20:2, emphasizing how Mary Magdalene found the tomb empty.
3. Let the children take turns rolling the stone away to discover that Jesus is not there and discuss the joy and surprise of finding the tomb empty, reinforcing the memory verse.

## Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large cardboard box
- Stones (or paper rocks)
- A small doll wrapped in cloth
- A simple drawing or picture of an angel

Get Ready:

- Cut one side of the cardboard box to create an opening, simulating the entrance to a tomb.
- Place the wrapped doll inside the box and cover the entrance with stones or paper rocks.
- Prepare the angel picture to be revealed at the right moment.

Do this:

1. Tell the children they're going to discover what happened on the first Easter morning. Explain that Jesus' friends found the tomb empty because He had risen.

2. Let the children take turns removing the stones from the tomb's entrance.
3. Once the stones are removed, show them the inside of the tomb is empty (remove the doll beforehand without them seeing) and reveal the angel picture, explaining that Jesus is alive, just as the angel said.

## Snack Activity: Empty Tomb Rolls

You'll Need:

- Crescent roll dough
- Marshmallows
- Cinnamon and sugar mix
- Melted butter

Get Ready: Preheat your oven as directed on the crescent roll dough package. Mix cinnamon and sugar in a small bowl.

Do this:

1. Explain that the marshmallow represents Jesus, pure and sinless (white). The crescent roll represents the tomb.
2. Dip the marshmallow in melted butter, then roll it in the cinnamon and sugar mix. This represents the spices used to anoint the body of Jesus.
3. Wrap the marshmallow with the crescent roll dough, pinching the dough together securely so that the marshmallow is completely covered. This is like the sealed tomb.
4. Bake according to the crescent roll package instructions. While baking, explain that Jesus was in the tomb for three days.
5. Once the rolls are done, let them cool slightly. When you open the rolls, the marshmallow inside has disappeared, leaving an empty space. This represents the empty tomb on Easter morning, showing that Jesus has risen.

## Game Activity: Empty Tomb Hop

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Small stones or pebbles
- A picture of an empty tomb

Get Ready: Use the sidewalk chalk to draw a large outline of a tomb on the ground, with a big stone beside it. Scatter small stones or pebbles inside the tomb outline.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that when Jesus was resurrected, the tomb where He was laid was found empty. The stone that covered the entrance was rolled away.
2. Have the children stand a short distance away from the tomb outline. One by one, let them hop towards the tomb, pick up a stone, and hop back, pretending to spread the good news that Jesus is alive.
3. After collecting a stone, each child can place it beside the 'big stone' to symbolize the stone being rolled away. Repeat until all stones are 'rolled away' from the tomb.

## Craft Activity: Empty Tomb Garden

You'll Need:

- A small clay pot or plastic cup
- Soil
- Grass seeds or small plant
- A large stone
- Small stick and a piece of cloth

Get Ready: Fill the clay pot or plastic cup about three-quarters full with soil.

Do this:

1. Plant the grass seeds or place the small plant in the center of the pot. This represents the garden where Jesus was buried.
2. Place the large stone partially covering the top of the pot, leaving a small opening. This represents the stone rolled away from the tomb.
3. Make a small cross by tying the cloth around the top of the stick. Insert the stick into the soil near the plant to remind us that Jesus died but rose again.

## Prayer Activity: Jesus is Alive! Easter Prayer

You'll Need:

- A small, empty cardboard box (to represent the empty tomb)
- A small figure or paper cutout of Jesus
- Colorful construction paper

Get Ready: Cut out a simple cross shape from the construction paper. Place the small figure of Jesus inside the cardboard box.

Do this:

1. Gather the children around and show them the box, explaining that it represents the tomb where Jesus was placed after He died, but on Easter, He wasn't there because He rose again!
2. Open the box and show them that it is empty, just like the tomb was on Easter morning. Then, take out the figure of Jesus to show He is alive.



3. Lead the children in a simple prayer, thanking Jesus for loving us so much that He died and rose again for us. Encourage them to say, 'Thank you, Jesus, for being alive and loving me!'