

The Story of Easter
A Children's Play/Skit
By Michael Grady
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(Teacher tells children about the Biblical account of Easter. As each scene is mentioned, characters perform the scene.)

(Teacher & kids are sitting in a circle reading the Bible and having a discussion)

Teacher: So, who knows the Story of Easter and why we celebrate?

Child 1: Oh - I know all about Easter. It's a time to visit the Easter Bunny at the mall and take pictures.

Child 2: ...and get a new Easter outfit for Church

Child 3: ...and dye Easter eggs and have Easter Egg Hunt

Child 4 – ...and the Easter Bunny brings us a big basket filled with candy!

Teacher: “Well all of that is certainly true – but that’s not really the significance of why we celebrate Easter. As Christians, we celebrate this holiday because we believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ three days after he was crucified on a cross. Let’s take a closer look at what the Bible says.”

(Children move to the far end of the stage)

(Jesus & two disciples enter)

Teacher: **[Matthew 21:1-3, 6-9]** As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus chose two disciples and said to them

Jesus: Go to the village ahead of you and at once you will find a donkey tied there. Untie her and bring her to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell them that the Lord needs her

Teacher: The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. **[Pause]** On Sunday, what we know refer to as “Palm Sunday” they brought the donkey for Jesus to ride upon. They placed their coats on the donkey for Jesus to ride upon and they and headed into the city of Jerusalem

(Children spread coats on the donkey, reenter the line and spread branches on the road)

A very large crowd spread their coats on the road while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. **[Wait until the crowds get on stage]** The crowds that went ahead of Him and those that followed shouted

Crowds: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

(Crowds leave the stage)

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(Pharisees enter stage talking among themselves, clearly upset at the praise Jesus is getting)

Teacher: All of this activity angered the Pharisees and the Scribes and they were determined to find a reason to arrest Jesus and even have Him be put to death. By the end of the week, the Pharisees had decided that the best way was to bring Jesus before their Council and put Him on trial.

(Pharisees leave)

(Table is moved onto stage)

(Jesus and the Disciples are sitting around the table)

Teacher: **[Matthew 26:20-22, 26-28]** When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve disciples and while they were eating He said

Jesus: I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.

Teacher: They were very sad and began to say to Him one after the other,

Disciples: Surely not I, Lord?

Teacher: While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it and gave it to His disciples saying

Jesus: Take and eat; this is my body.

Teacher: Then He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying,

Jesus: Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

(Table is moved from the stage)

(Three go aside – Judas and 2 soldiers)

(Jesus and the Disciples leave the stage, walk around and come back to the stage, which is now the Garden of Gethsemane)

Teacher: **Matthew 26:36, 38, 45, 47, 50** Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane **[Pause until the Disciples are settled]** and He said to them

Jesus: Sit here while I go over there and pray.

(Jesus walks away and the Disciples fall asleep)

Teacher: **[Wait until Jesus has prayed and gets up and returns to the Disciples]** Later He came to them and said

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Jesus: My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Please keep watch with me.

Teacher: But the disciples remained asleep. *[Pause and let Jesus pray again]* After the third time, He came to them and said

Jesus: Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of the sinners. Arise, *[Pause and wait for the Disciples to wake up]* let us go. Here comes my betrayer.

(Judas and soldiers come to arrest Jesus – Judas comes to Jesus first and then soldiers arrest him)
(Disciples watch as the crowd sent by the Pharisees come and arrested Jesus)

Teacher: While He was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords sent from the Chief Priest and the Pharisees. After Judas identifies Jesus, the soldiers stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested Him.

(Soldiers bring Jesus to the Council)
(Jesus stands before the men on the Council who pronounce the judgment of death)

Teacher: Jesus is taken before the Council when He says

Jesus: Yes, I am the Son of Man that will sit at the right hand of God

Teacher: The Pharisees tear their clothes and wail. Then they pronounce Him worthy of death. *[Pause]* Afterwards the soldiers take Him to the Roman court where Jesus is to appear before Pilate.

(Everyone leaves the stage and everyone but Jesus and the soldiers sit on the floor in front of the stage)
(Pilate enters the stage and the soldiers bring Jesus to Pilate)
(Jesus stands before Pilate with the crowd watching on when Pilate asks his question)

Teacher: Jesus stands before Pilate, who asks the crowd what do they want him to do with Jesus? The crowd says

Crowds: Crucify Him. Crucify Him. Crucify Him.

Teacher: Pilate, realizing that Jesus has done nothing wrong washes his hands before the crowds to show that he takes no responsibility for the punishment of this man and sends Him off to be beaten and crucified.

(Jesus is taken to the soldiers who in turn beat Him and hand Him a cross)
(Jesus carries the cross on his back. The other is dressed as a Roman soldier and pretends to whip Jesus)

Teacher: The soldiers beat Jesus and put a crown of thorns on his head. The soldiers made Jesus carry his cross to the place where he would die.

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(As the Teacher talks, the soldier mocks Jesus and pretends to nail him to the cross. Jesus "dies")

Teacher: Jesus hung on the cross while the soldiers mocked him. **[Pause]** Finally, he dies on the cross. **[Wait for Jesus to be taken down]** Joseph of Arimathea obtains permission to take Jesus down from the Cross and puts Him in a tomb that Joseph owns. Because of the Jewish Holiday, the Passover, Jesus is left in the tomb until the ladies can come after the Holiday to prepare Him for His burial.

(Stage goes dark and Jesus exits tomb.)

(The women come to the tomb ready to prepare Jesus' body and when they discover He is gone, run offstage. One stays behind, Jesus comes behind her to let her know He is alive)

Teacher: But that's not the end of the story! **[Pause – wait for the women]** On Sunday morning, the women who had supported and followed Jesus for the past three years came to the tomb to give Jesus a proper burial. They arrived as dawn was breaking and discovered that the body was missing. **[Pause – the women look surprised]** They ran to tell the disciples that someone had stolen Jesus' body. **[Pause]** While they were gone, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene. Jesus explained that all of this was God's plan that He would be crucified and on the third day arose from the dead to save all those who would believe in Him. **[Pause]** With great joy, Mary Magdalene runs to tell the disciples that

(With great joy, she runs off to tell the disciples)

Mary Magdalene: He is risen, He is risen, indeed!

(All come rushing onstage cheering)

Everyone: Hooray!!! Hooray!!! Hooray!!!

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List of Characters & Props

Characters:

- Teacher
- Four Children
- Jesus
- Multiple Disciples
- Multiple people for the "Crowds"
- Judas
- A few Soldiers
- Mary Magdalene
- 2 Other Women
- 1 or 2 Angels
- Pilate

Possible Props – Improve as Needed:

- Clothing for first century A.D. (include soldier clothes)
- Clothing for angels
- Multiple coats to lay on the donkey and on the ground
- Multiple branches (palm leaves regular tree branches with leaves)
- Wooden donkey on rollers (or some other form to represent the donkey)
- Table and blankets for the last supper
- Food and drink for last supper
- Cups and plates for last supper
- Wooden or plastic swords and clubs
- Large chairs for leaders of Sanhedrin court
- Bowl for Pilate to wash his hands
- Whips
- Crown of thorns
- Cross for Jesus to carry
- Settings for the tomb
- Containers/Bottles for women to carry to the tomb