

Jesus is betrayed by his friends



**a complete Easter
Sunday school lesson
- 11 creative ideas -**

Luke 22: 39 - 71

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- a complete Easter Sunday School lesson -

In this booklet we offer you eleven creative ideas that you can use in your Sunday school, kids ministry, children's church or youth work on the Bible story of Jesus being betrayed, disowned and deserted by his friends in the garden of Gethsemane in Luke 22: 39 - 71.

Eleven ideas for your Sunday school lesson:

- * Alone in the world - a children's moment
- * Egg bowling - an icebreaker
- * How do I tell the this Bible story? - four storytelling tips
- * The early hatchling gets the worm - YouTube video and discussion
- * Pencils through a plastic bag - a fun science experiment
- * In the garden of Gethsemane - a creative activity
- * Friends make wrong choices - a creative activity
- * What does Easter mean to us? - a creative activity
- * Watch and pray... - a Bible game
- * Go on, guess who it is? - a Bible game
- * Father, forgive them... - a creative prayer idea

The Bible story in this lesson:

Jesus takes his disciples with him to the Mount of Olives to pray. The disciples fall asleep, even though Jesus had encouraged them to pray that God would give them strength so they would not fall into temptation. Jesus is afraid, and even sweats blood. Then Judas arrives; he betrays Jesus with a kiss. Peter takes his sword and cuts off the ear of one of the soldiers, but Jesus doesn't want that at all, and heals the ear. Jesus is taken away, and Peter follows him.

In the courtyard of the house of the high priest Peter denies knowing Jesus three times. When he hears the rooster crow, he leaves in tears. Jesus is blindfolded and hit by the soldiers. Then next morning they bring him to the rulers, who ask him all sorts of questions and accuse him falsely.

(Luke 22: 39 - 71)



Children's moment - Alone in the world

A children's moment about Jesus feeling all alone while he is praying in the garden of Gethsemane and his disciples are all fast asleep

What do you need:

A copy of the book 'Alone in the world' by Hector Malot, or another book

What do you do:

Do: Show the children the book

Ask: Do you know the story 'Alone in the world'? It's about an orphan boy called Remi who has lots of adventures in France, but always ends up being left along.

Do: Tell a bit more about the story, if you know it.

Tell: In today's Bible story Jesus may well have felt alone in the world at times. His friends fall asleep when he needs them the most. Judas betrays him with a kiss. Someone gets hurt by a sword, although Jesus doesn't want that at all, Peter denies knowing him. Jesus probably felt very alone.

Sometimes we feel alone too. When that happens, it is good to know that Jesus knows what it feels like, and understands it. And he has promised: 'I will always be with you. Especially when you're feeling alone'.



Icebreaker - Egg bowling

A playful introduction to our Sunday school lesson about Easter and Jesus being deserted by his friends.

What do you need:

- two chocolate eggs per child
- a tennis ball

What do you do:

- Do:** Make sure you have a clear space on the floor, and put a tennis ball on the ground. Give each child two small wrapped chocolate Easter eggs. If possible make sure that each team has different coloured eggs. Divide the children into teams of three or four children. Depending on the amount of time you have, each team can play against each other team.
- Do:** Tape a starting line on the floor. The first two teams can take it in turns to 'bowl' their eggs see how close they can get to the tennis ball. The team who has the closest egg wins the round.
- Tell:** We have all just tried to get as close as possible to the tennis ball. In our story today Jesus' friends try to get as far away from him as possible. So it's actually the opposite to our game!
- Ask:** Why did the disciples want to get as far away from Jesus as possible?



How do I tell the story myself? - Four storytelling tips

Tip 1:

Use the experiment with the plastic bag and the pencil to tell the story..

Tip 2:

Use the creative activity 'The story of Gethsemane' as a basis for telling the story.

Tip 3:

Use the creative activity 'Friends make the wrong choices' as a basis for telling the story.

Tip 4:

Tell the story from Peter's point of view..



YouTube video and creative discussion - The early hatchling gets the worm

You can use this secular YouTube video to hold a creative discussion with the children about the Bible story.

A small chick finds a worm, who then becomes her best friend. They play together all the time. One morning when she wakes up the worm is gone. As she goes out to look for him, she sees another chick with a worm in its beak. She finally succeeds in getting the worm back out of its beak, but it turns out to be the wrong worm. She throws the wrong worm away and rushes over to hug her real friend who has just showed up.

How does this film apply to today's Bible story?

Our story today is about friendship, and also the things that can go wrong in a friendship. At the lowest point in his life, Jesus' friends are not there for him. They fall asleep, betray him, deny knowing him, and even resort to violence, because they really don't know what to do any more.

Important questions:

It's important to always watch the film yourself beforehand and to ask yourself:

- do I want to show this to the children?
- does this film work in the context and age-range of the children I am working with?

If you choose to show this YouTube video, we suggest you use the following steps:

Step 1: Betrayed by a chocolate kiss

What do you need:

- chocolates – if you have any chocolates called chocolate kisses in your country, use these! Otherwise, any other chocolate will do. Make sure you have enough for each child and a few to spare.

What do you do:

Tell: In a minute, we're going to send someone out of the room. Someone else is going to hide one of the chocolates. We then invite the other person to come back into the room, and to look for the chocolate. If they find it, they get to keep it, and we will give them another one. If they can't find it, then the person who hid the chocolate will get two chocolates.



Do: Choose the child who will leave the room, and the child who is going to hide the chocolate.

For the leader! – when the child is looking for the chocolate, help him or her by giving very clear tips. Do this in such a way that all the other children (and especially the child who hid the chocolate) will see you as a traitor. Once the child has found the chocolate, give him or her another one.

Tell: Talk with the children about betrayal.

Ask: What did you think about the fact that I helped them to find the hidden chocolate?

What does it feel like if your friends betray you?

If you used a 'chocolate kiss'- ask the children why you did that... .. link it to Judas betraying Jesus with a kiss.

Do: Give all the children a chocolate, and give the child who was 'betrayed' an extra one.

Step 2: Watch the video 'The early hatchling gets the worm' together

You can find this video here on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcoYI-fk6S8>

The film lasts a couple of minutes.

Step 3: What is worse?

What do you need:

- 10 small chocolate eggs for each child (or other sweets – or if you don't want to use sweets you can use any other small objects, such as marbles)
- four bowls or small boxes
- 4 statements printed on paper:
 - 'Being abandoned by your friends'
 - 'Being betrayed by a friend'
 - 'Having friends who do things you don't like'
 - 'Having your friends say they don't know you'

What do you do:

Tell: In the video the chick is a very good friend to the worm. But sometimes things go differently. In our Bible story the friends do four things that hurt Jesus.

First of all they left him alone during one of the most difficult times of his life. While they are together in the garden, praying, they all fall asleep.

- Do: Show the statement: 'Being abandoned by your friends'.
- Tell: Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss.
- Do: Show the statement: 'Being betrayed by a friend'
- Tell: Peter does something that Jesus doesn't like at all – he cuts off the ear of one of the people who has come to arrest Jesus.
- Do: Show the statement: 'Having friends who do things you don't like'
- Tell: Peter then denies even knowing Jesus.
- Do: Show the statement: 'Having your friends say they don't know you'.
- Ask: Which of these things do you think is the worst?
- Do: Lay all the statements out on the table, and put a bowl or box next to each one.
Give each child ten chocolate eggs (or small items of your choice).
- Tell: Think about each statements, and put them in order - which do you think is worst, and which one is the least bad?
- Put four eggs in the bowl by the statement you think is the worst
Put three eggs in the bowl by the statement you think is the second to worst
Put two eggs in the bowl by the statement you think is the third to worst
Put one egg in the bowl by the statement you think is the least worst
- Do: Give the children time to do this.
When they are finished, count the eggs in each bowl.
- Ask: Which bowl had the most eggs? Talk about each statement in turn from the worst to the least worse, and what the children think about each – what makes them so bad.
- Which one do you think Jesus would have found the worst?
Why? And how would he have dealt with it?

**Being abandoned by your
friends**

Being betrayed by a friend

**Having friends who do things
you don't like**

**Having your friends say they
don't know you**

Fun science experiment - Pencils through a plastic bag

Jesus has a lot to cope with in this story; the disciples abandon him by falling asleep, Judas betrays him with a kiss, his disciples use violence, and Peter denies knowing him, he is hurt and insulted, and falsely convicted. How does he cope with all of this?



What do you need:

- a strong zip lock plastic bag
- water
- six pencils

What do you do:

- Do: Fill the plastic bag with water, zip it shut, and hand out the pencils to six children.
- Tell: Jesus has a lot to cope with in this story. First of all, the disciples abandon him by falling asleep.
- Do: Have one of the children carefully push a pencil right through the plastic bag, so it is sticking out both sides. Leave it in there.
- Ask: How do you think that felt for Jesus, that his friends were asleep, while he was so upset that he was even sweating blood? Talk about this with the children.
- Tell: Then comes Judas with his kiss of betrayal.
- Do: Have another child push another pencil through the plastic bag.
- Ask: How do you think that it felt for Jesus, that his friend betrayed him with a kiss? Talk about this with the children.
- Tell: One of the disciples, Peter, takes his sword and cuts the ear off one of the people who have come to arrest Jesus.
- Do: Have another child push a pencil through the plastic bag.
- Ask: Would Jesus have wanted this to happen, do you think? Talk about this with the children.
- Tell: The Peter says three times that he doesn't know Jesus.
- Do: Ask the next child to come up and put their pencil through the plastic bag.

Ask: What would it have felt like for Jesus, having his friend saying that he didn't know him at all? Has anything like that ever happened to you? Talk about this with the children.

Tell: Then the soldiers blindfold him, hit him and insult him.

Do: Ask the next child to come up and put their pencil through the plastic bag.

Ask: How would Jesus have felt while this was happening? He had the power to stop the soldiers, but he just let it happen. Why? Talk about this with the children.

Tell: Then the Jewish leaders convict him - they say he is guilty, while he hasn't done anything.

Do: Ask the last child to put their pencil through the bag.

Ask: How did Jesus cope with all the things that people did to him, all the pencils they stuck into him? Did it make him angry? What does he do? Talk about this with the children.

What do you do if people disappoint you, or betray you, or don't want to be your friend any more, or hurt you, or insult you, or falsely accuse you?

Creative activity - In the garden of Gethsemane

Four very important events in the life of Jesus happened in the garden of Gethsemane. Using four symbols or drawings, we are going to take a deeper look at what happened.

What do you need:

- worksheets
- pens/ coloured pencils

What do you do:

Tell: The story takes place in the garden of Gethsemane. This wasn't a garden full of flowers, but a garden full of olive trees. Really you could call it an orchard. It was a place where Jesus regularly came to pray.

Ask: Who knows what the word 'Gethsemane' means?

Tell: Gethsemane means olive press. This is something you use to press olives very very hard until they are completely squashed.

Ask: Who knows what comes out of the olives?

Tell: Oil comes out – olive oil. Here in the garden, Jesus is also under a lot of pressure. He doesn't have to do this. He doesn't have to suffer. He could just walk away. But he wants to do the will of his Father. Jesus is under so much pressure that as he sweats, it comes out as drops of blood.

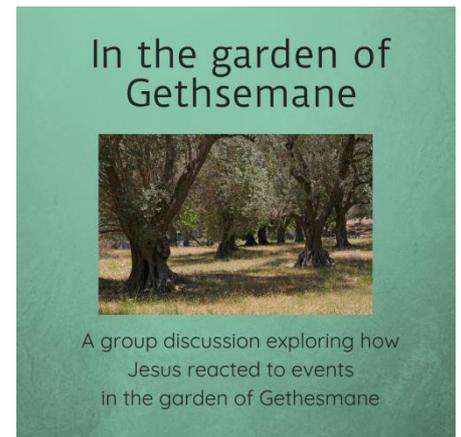
Ask: Have you ever felt that? That you had to do something, but really wanted to run away as fast as possible?

Tell: That's what Jesus felt in the garden of Gethsemane, the olive press.

Do: Ask the children to draw something that represents the garden. It might be a tree, or something more detailed.

Tell: Jesus prays in the garden, and asks God to take away the cup of suffering from him. This wasn't a real cup, but it was a symbol of what was to come. It was as if he was holding a cup that was full of something really bitter and horrible.

Ask: Would you want to drink that? Would you drink it if you had to? If it was a nasty medicine for example?



Tell: Jesus knows that he has to drink all of the nasty horrible stuff that's in the cup. He would love to walk away from the pain and suffering, but he gives himself to God.

Do: Ask the children to draw something that is a symbol for the cup of suffering that Jesus had to drink.

Tell: While Jesus is praying, one of the twelve disciples comes into the garden with a group of soldiers. Judas betrays his friend with a kiss.

Ask: Why does Judas betray Jesus with a kiss?
How do you think Jesus would have felt?
How did Jesus react to this betrayal?
How would you have reacted?

Do: Ask the children to draw something as a symbol for the kiss that Judas betrayed Jesus with.

Tell: Peter draws his sword, and cuts off the ear of one of the soldiers. Jesus is not at all happy with this. He heals the soldier's ear. Most people would want to defend themselves if they are betrayed or treated unjustly. But Jesus doesn't defend himself. He gives in, or surrenders to the situation.

Ask: Why is Peter not allowed to defend Jesus?
Why doesn't Jesus fight back against the betrayal and injustice?

Tell: Jesus could have easily fought back against the betrayal and injustice, but he had already surrendered himself to his Father. Perhaps that was the battle – to not react in power and might, but to react in peace.

Ask: How do we react if we are attacked?

Do: Ask the children to draw a symbol (such as a sword) to represent Peter's resistance.

Tell: Now we have four drawings:

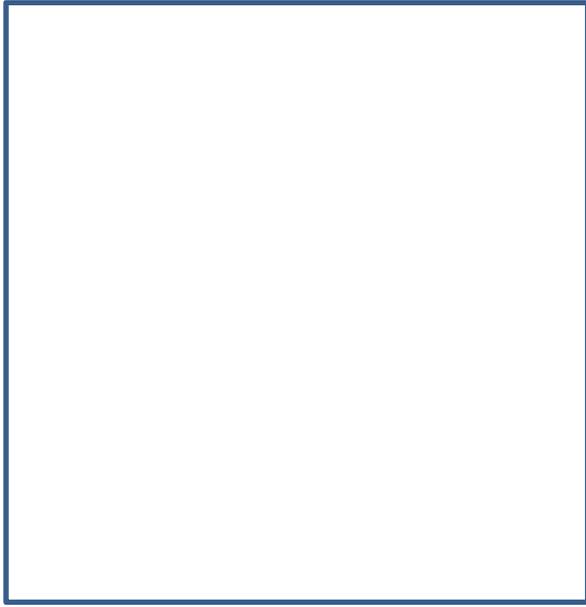
The garden as a symbol for the pressure that Jesus was under

The cup as a symbol for the suffering that he had to go through

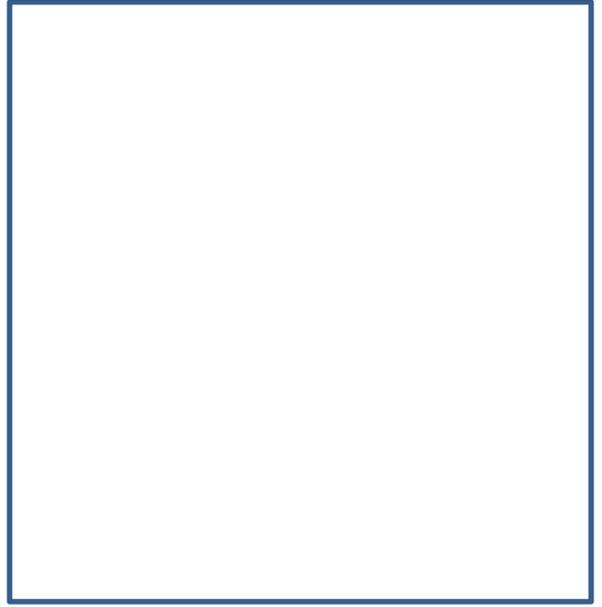
The kiss as a symbol for the betrayal

The sword as a symbol for the fact that we want to defend ourselves and take revenge.

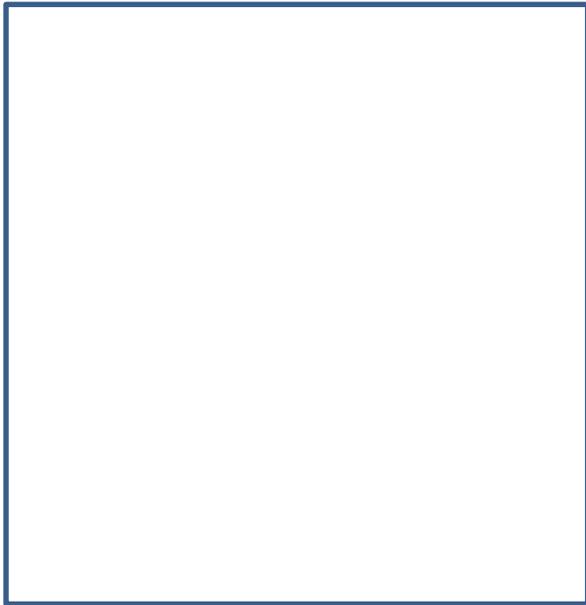
But Jesus does things completely differently to us.



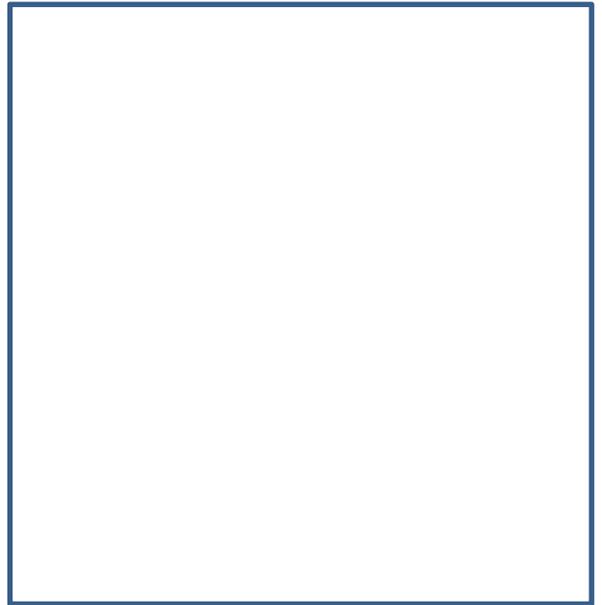
The garden



The cup



The kiss



The sword

Creative activity - Friends make wrong choices

Jesus encourages his friends to ask God for strength, so they won't fall into temptation, but it all goes completely wrong.

What do you need:

- 10 small chocolate eggs for each child (or other sweets – or if you don't want to use sweets you can use any other small objects, such as marbles)
- four bowls or small boxes
- 4 statements printed on paper:
 - 'Being abandoned by your friends'
 - 'Being betrayed by a friend'
 - 'Having friends who do things you don't like'
 - 'Having your friends say they don't know you'

What do you do:

Tell: In a minute, we're going to send someone out of the room. Someone else is going to hide one of the chocolates. We then invite the other person to come back into the room, and to look for the chocolate. If they find it, they get to keep it, and we will give them another one. If they can't find it, then the person who hid the chocolate will get two chocolates.

Do: Choose the child who will leave the room, and the child who is going to hide the chocolate.

For the leader! – when the child is looking for the chocolate, help him or her by giving very clear tips. Do this in such a way that all the other children (and especially the child who hid the chocolate) will see you as a traitor. Once the child has found the chocolate, give him or her another one.

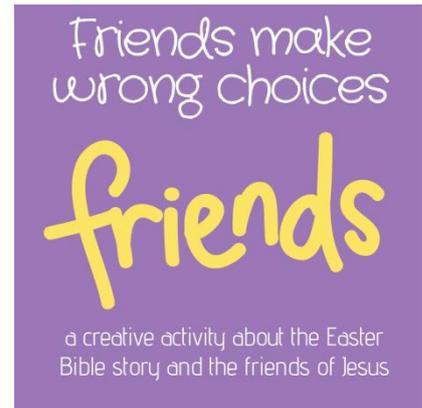
Tell: Talk with the children about betrayal.

Ask: What did you think about the fact that I helped them to find the hidden chocolate?

What does it feel like if your friends betray you?

If you used a 'chocolate kiss'- ask the children why you did that... .. link it to Judas betraying Jesus with a kiss.

Do: Give all the children a chocolate, and give the child who was 'betrayed' an extra one.



Tell: In our Bible story the friends do four things that hurt Jesus.

First of all they left him alone during one of the most difficult times of his life. While they are together in the garden praying, they all fall asleep.

Do: Show the statement: 'Being abandoned by your friends'.

Tell: Judas betrays Jesus with a kiss.

Do: Show the statement: 'Being betrayed by a friend'

Tell: Peter does something that Jesus doesn't like at all – he cuts off the ear of one of the people who has come to arrest Jesus.

Do: Show the statement: 'Having friends who do things you don't like'

Tell: Peter then denies even knowing Jesus.

Do: Show the statement: 'Having your friends say they don't know you'.

Ask: Which of these things do you think is the worst?

Do: Lay all the statements out on the table, and put a bowl or box next to each one.
Give each child ten chocolate eggs (or small items of your choice).

Tell: Think about each statements, and put them in order - which do you think is worst, and which one is the least bad?

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Do: Give the children time to do this.
When they are finished, count the eggs in each bowl.

Ask: Which bowl had the most eggs? Talk about each statement in turn from the worst to the least worse, and what the children think about each – what makes them so bad.

Which one do you think Jesus would have found the worst?

Why? And how would he have dealt with it?

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Creative activity - What does Easter mean to us?

It's a lovely symbol to light a large candle while we are telling the Bible story, to remind us of Jesus' presence in our children's work. This idea builds on that.

What do you need:

- a large white candle
- coloured sheets of candle wax
- pairs of scissors

What do you do:

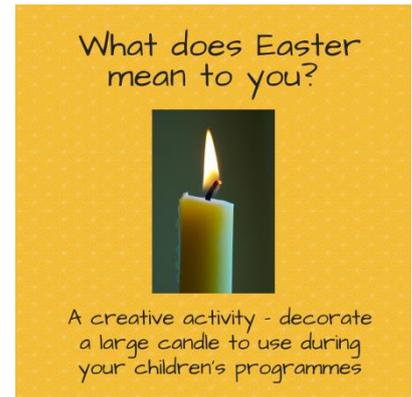
Do: Show the children the candle and ask them what Easter means to them.

Help them to think of symbols and pictures that represent Easter for them.

The children can then cut shapes out of the sheets of candle wax and stick them on the large candle.

You can then light this candle for the coming year during your children's work to represent Jesus' presence.

Tell: Remind the children that you do this because Jesus is the light of the world, and he is always with us.



Bible game - Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.

Jesus knows what is going to happen in the coming hours. He encourages his disciples to pray for strength, so that they won't fall into temptation. The disciples don't seem to hear him, and fall asleep. Once more Jesus says the same thing, but it doesn't seem to help.



What do you need:

- ten large plastic cups
- ten stickers
- felt pens
- a soft ball

What do you do:

Preparation: Write the 11 words in this sentence on the 10 stickers (put 'so that' on one sticker):
"Watch – and – pray – so that – you – will – not – fall – into – temptation". Stick one word onto each plastic cup.

Do: Make a pyramid of the cups, so that the sentence makes sense:

Watch
and pray
so that you will
not fall into temptation

Do: Depending on the age of the children decide the distance from which they have to roll the soft ball. They can take it in turns to try and knock down all the cups.

Tell: Jesus knows what is going to happen in the coming hours. He encourages his disciples to pray for strength, so that they won't fall into temptation. The disciples don't seem to hear him, and fall asleep. Once more Jesus says the same thing, but it doesn't seem to help.

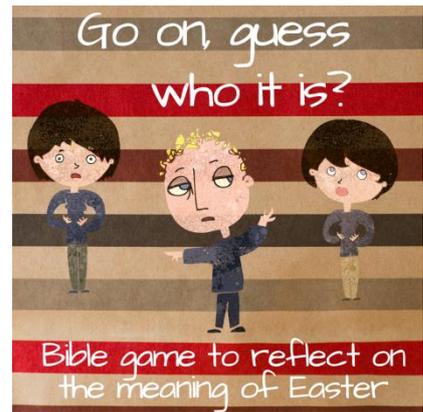
- Ask: Do you think that the disciples prayed for strength?
Did they make the right choices?
What would have happened if they had prayed?
Do you think that it helps if we ask God for strength so that we won't be tempted to make wrong choices?
- Do: Pray with the children and ask for strength for them, so that they won't be tempted to make wrong choices.

Bible game - Go on, guess who it is?

The soldiers blindfold Jesus and hit him, while they insult him: “Hey, you’re a prophet aren’t you? Go on then, tell us who hit you!”

What do you need:

- two blindfolds



What do you do:

Do: Divide the group into two teams.

Tell: The two teams are going to compete against each other to complete the game. It’s all about recognising people without being able to see them, so first of all have all the children study their team mates – what they look like and sound like. Then each team chooses one person who puts on a blindfold.

Once the game starts, the other team members come and stand in front of him or her so that the blindfolded child can feel the other person’s face. How long does it take them to ‘recognise’ all their team mates, and which team is the fastest?

You can play many variations of this game:

- the blindfolded child can only listen to the voices of their team mates as they say just one word: ‘Hallo!’ Can they guess who they are from their voice?

- the blindfolded child touches only the hair of his or her team mates.

- the blindfolded child can only listen to the laugh of his or her team mates.

Ask: Which was the easiest way to recognise your team mates?
Which was the hardest way?

Tell: In our Bible story today, the soldiers blindfold Jesus and hit him, while they insult him: “Hey, you’re a prophet aren’t you? Go on then, tell us who hit you!”

Ask: Why do you think the soldiers did that?
What do you think it felt like for Jesus?
Do you think that Jesus knew who was hitting him?
Could Jesus have stopped this horrible game the soldiers were playing with him?
Why didn’t he?

Creative prayer idea - Father, forgive them...

We use Jesus' short prayer on the cross to help the children to think and pray in a creative way about forgiving those who have been mean to us or have hurt us.

What do you need:

- a piece of red cloth, as a cloak
- pins
- pen and paper

What do you do:

Tell: Jesus was laughed at, hit, and spat on. The soldiers put a purple cloak around his shoulders, and Jesus did nothing in return. He even prayed for them and asked his Father to forgive his enemies.

It's really hard to pray for people who persecute you, and do you harm. It can also be hard to pray for people who are being persecuted.

Here is a piece of red cloth, pen and paper.

In the coming few minutes you can take time to pray for someone who has hurt you, or a friend who has disappointed you. Or perhaps you would rather pray for Christians who are being persecuted all around the world.

Do: Write the name of the person, or the country where Christians are persecuted, and pin it onto the red cloak.

