

BRINGING PRAISE TO JESUS



FAMILY DEVOTION AND SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON TO ACCOMPANY GATEWAYS TO BETTER EDUCATION'S EASTER RESTORATION CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Lesson Objective

- By the end of the lesson based on Matthew 21:1-17, students will know that they can bring praise to Jesus by telling others about him—including their public school teachers.
- Students will bring praise to Jesus by giving materials to their teachers and helping restore teaching about Easter to their schools.

Materials

- Bible
- Gateways' *Easter Restoration Cards*
- *Free to Speak* pamphlets
- Textbook-style lesson from Gateways—*The Easter Story*

Introduction

Read aloud: Did you know that Jesus loves it when children praise him? Today we are going to read a story in the Bible about when children were saying good things about Jesus. Some adults tried to stop them, but Jesus didn't. In fact, Jesus said this is the kind of thing that he likes to hear.

Question: Easter is coming soon; what do we celebrate at Easter? [Solicit answers]

Read aloud: Well, let's read the story of when Jesus was coming to Jerusalem just before he was going to die on the cross and rise from the dead.

Scripture Reading

Read Matthew 21:1-17 [Note: read from a version that uses the word "children" rather than "babes" in verse 16 such as the NIV, NLT, HCSB, or NCV.] **Key Verse:** **Matthew 21:16**

"Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, "From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise?" (NIV)

Read aloud: The children were shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David." *Hosanna* was a special word that meant "Save us now, we beg you!" It was a recognition that Jesus was the Messiah sent from God to save them.

Question: What did the children mean when they said "Son of David"? [Answer: it was a recognition that Jesus was from the kingly line of David and was the Messiah.]

Read aloud: So, the children were shouting something like this: "Save us now, we beg you, because you are the Messiah we've been waiting for!" When the teachers in the temple heard the children saying this, they went to Jesus and told him that he should stop the children. But, Jesus told the teachers that his Heavenly Father wanted children to praise him. He quoted a verse from the Psalms (Psalm 8:2) that we read in our story in Matthew 21:16.



Application

Question: How can we praise Jesus? [Answer: When we sing about him, pray, and tell others about him.]

Read aloud: Unfortunately, some public school teachers might think that students can't talk about Jesus at school. In a way, they are kind of like the teachers in our Bible story who tried to stop the children from talking about Jesus. In their hearts, the teachers may love Jesus just like you do. However, some of them think the law says they can't teach students about Jesus as we approach Easter. But they can!

The truth is, it's perfectly fine for you and your teachers to talk about Jesus at school. One way you can bring praise to Jesus is to encourage your teacher to teach the class what the Bible says about Jesus and the Easter story's impact throughout history.

Use the Easter Card

1. Read aloud the short story, "Bunny Goes to School," contained in the Gateways' Easter Restoration Card.
2. Give each child a copy of the card and talk about the information in it—including the eight lesson plan ideas on the last page for the teacher to use.
3. Have them write a personal note to their teachers on the inside cover of the card. For example:

"Dear Mrs. _____, Thank you for being such a good teacher. I am giving this card to you because it explains that it is okay for you to teach our class about Jesus this Easter.
Love, [your name]"

Use the Pamphlet

Give each child a copy of the pocket-sized pamphlet *Free to Speak*. Have them review it while you summarize each of seven religious liberties it outlines. **NOW IN SPANISH TOO!**

Use the Textbook-Style Lesson Plan

1. Give each child a color copy of *The Easter Story*. This is an excellent way to help them learn some of the ways Christ's death and resurrection impacted history. It is a paraphrase of Luke 22-24 with cultural connections to Shakespeare, Leonardo da Vinci, the Legend of King Arthur, Abraham Lincoln, John Newton, Martin Luther King, Jr., and *The Lord of the Rings*.
2. If you have time, read the story to them. If you don't have time, recommend that they read it at home.
3. Encourage the children to give the entire lesson (including the last page "For Parents and Educators") to their teachers along with the Easter card and *Free to Speak* pamphlet.

Closing Prayer

Pray that God will bless their giving of the Easter cards, *Free to Speak* pamphlets, and *The Easter Story* lesson plan to their teachers during the next week.

Follow Up

One or two weeks later, ask the children what the result was of giving the materials to their teachers. Their stories will give them an opportunity to praise the Lord and pray for their teachers.



FIND ALL THE MATERIALS FOR THIS LESSON AT [GOGATEWAYS.ORG/STORE](https://gogateways.org/store)

- 10 Easter Restoration Cards (Impact 10 Classrooms!)
- 10 Free to Speak Pamphlets (FREE)
- 1 FREE copy of *The Easter Story* (and FREE access to the downloadable PDF file)

\$25

