

Amazing Grace

*This is a true story, as told by
Matthew, Mark, Luke and John*



You are holding a true story in your hands. It was recorded by the people who saw these events happen. These eyewitness accounts of history have stood the test of time and made a difference in millions of lives around the world. The stories were written down and put in one book. That book is called the Bible.



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The Story of Jesus



A long time ago there was a girl named Mary who lived in Galilee in a small town called Nazareth. Mary was engaged to marry a man named Joseph. One day an

angel appeared to Mary and said, “The Lord has given you special favor. He is with you.” This frightened Mary. The angel also told her she was to become pregnant and give birth to a baby boy, whom she was to name Jesus. The angel said, “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God.” Mary answered, “I will serve the Lord, let it happen just as you said.” (read **Luke 1:26-38**) Mary obeyed God and wanted to do what he asked of her.

This is one of the many Old Testament prophecies (stories foretold) that came true about the coming of the Messiah, whom we call Jesus. “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign...The virgin will be with child [become pregnant]! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel [another name for Jesus that means ‘God with us’].”

Isaiah 7:14

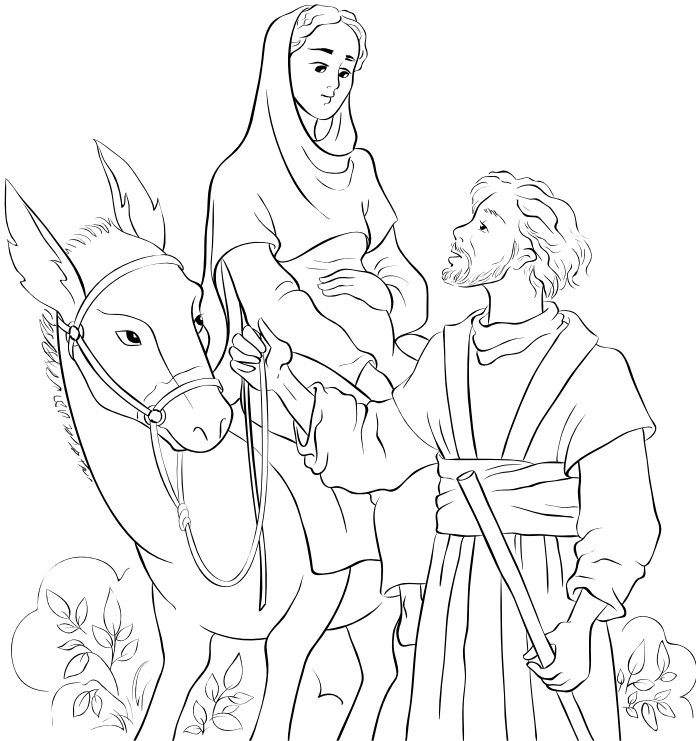
Jesus is Born



Caesar Augustus was the ruler of Rome at that time. He made a law which stated that everyone must go to their family hometown to write their names on a list. Mary and Joseph traveled from Galilee to the

town of Bethlehem to enroll on the ruler's list. Mary was ready to have her baby, but they couldn't find anywhere to stay. They finally found a stable (a barn), where Mary gave birth to her first son and named him Jesus. (read **Luke 2:1-7**)

In the Old Testament, the book of **Micah 5:2** said the Messiah (another word for Jesus) would be born in Bethlehem. They said this hundreds of years before it happened!



Jesus Goes to the Temple

Jesus went with his parents to the temple when he was twelve years old. He became separated from his parents, and they were searching for him. They finally found Jesus back at the temple talking with the wise men. Everyone was amazed by how much he understood at such a young age. Jesus was clearly different from any of the other children. (read **Luke 2:41-47**)

The Bible tells us, “The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.” **Isaiah 11:2** In this verse, Isaiah was speaking of Jesus. This was around 700 years before Jesus was born!

Jesus is Baptized



When Jesus was thirty years old, he began teaching the people about the good news of God. At that time, there

was a man named John the Baptist who also traveled around teaching the crowds who gathered around him. He told the people of a man who was coming to save everyone from their sins. John was speaking about Jesus. When John the Baptist was baptizing the people, he also baptized Jesus. (When you are baptized it is a public display that you have decided to follow Jesus.) Jesus then prayed and the Holy Spirit came down from heaven. The crowd heard a voice saying, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy!” (read **Luke 3:21-22**)

Many years before it happened, the Old Testament told us that John the Baptist would come as a messenger to prepare the way for Jesus. He cried, “Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness.” (read **Isaiah 40:3**)

Jesus Heals the Sick

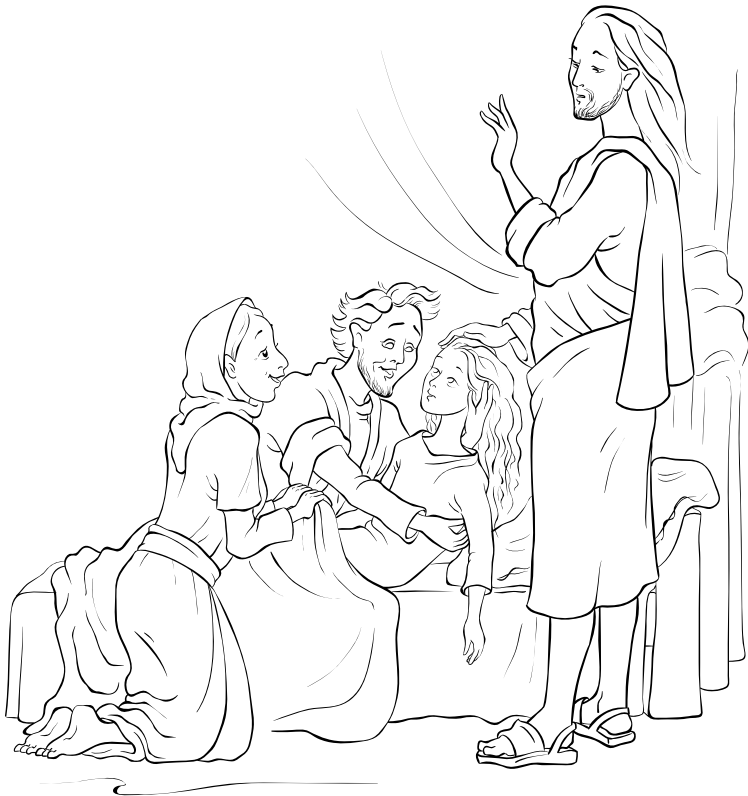


Jesus traveled all over Galilee telling the people about God and healing the sick. He healed people who were blind so they could see again. People who could not walk were able to walk, just as the Scriptures foretold.

He healed every disease and sickness among the people. The power of Jesus was so strong that even when people touched his clothing they were healed. (read **Mark 5:27-34**)

“And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf. The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will sing for joy!”

Isaiah 35:5-6



Miracles of Jesus: Feeding a Crowd of 5,000



Jesus was in a small fishing village near Galilee. When the crowds heard that Jesus was there, they came to see him. The people wanted to hear his message about God's kingdom. He performed more miracles by healing those who were suffering. Jesus'

closest followers were called his disciples. The crowds following Jesus grew so large that his disciples told Jesus to send them back to the villages to get something to eat because they were hungry and it was getting late in the day. Jesus said to the disciples, “You give them something to eat.” They answered, “We have only five loaves of bread and two fish – unless we go buy food for all of this crowd.” **Luke 9:13** Scripture says there were 5,000 men, not including all the women and children following Jesus that day!

Jesus told his disciples, “Have everyone sit down in groups of fifty each.” The disciples did as Jesus asked and everyone sat down. Jesus held the basket with the five loaves of bread and two fish up toward heaven and gave thanks and broke the bread. He gave the fish and bread to the people and they all ate until they were full. There were twelve baskets left over that were filled with bread and fish. This

is one of Jesus' most famous miracles. (A miracle is something good that happens that God made happen to help his people.) This was also a wonderful lesson for the disciples because Jesus was teaching them to trust and believe in God. "For nothing is impossible with God." **Luke 1:37**

God tries to teach us lessons, but if we don't believe in him or trust him, we will miss his plan for our lives. His plan sometimes includes miracles. God loves us and wants us to have a relationship with him. When we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and we ask him into our hearts, the Bible tells us we will live forever in heaven with him. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish (die) but have eternal life." **John 3:16**

Jesus Loves Children



Some people brought little children to Jesus. They wanted him to pray for their children. But the disciples said he was too busy, and they tried to send the children

away. Then Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.” **Matthew 19:13-15**

Jesus loved how the children trusted him. You do not need anything (money, power, or material things) to trust Jesus. All you need is faith in Jesus.

The Bible says in **Ephesians 2:8-9**, “For it is by grace you have been saved through your faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works so no one can boast.”



Jesus Tells a Story



Jesus told a story about a man who had 100 sheep and lost one of them. Jesus asked, “Don’t you think he would leave the

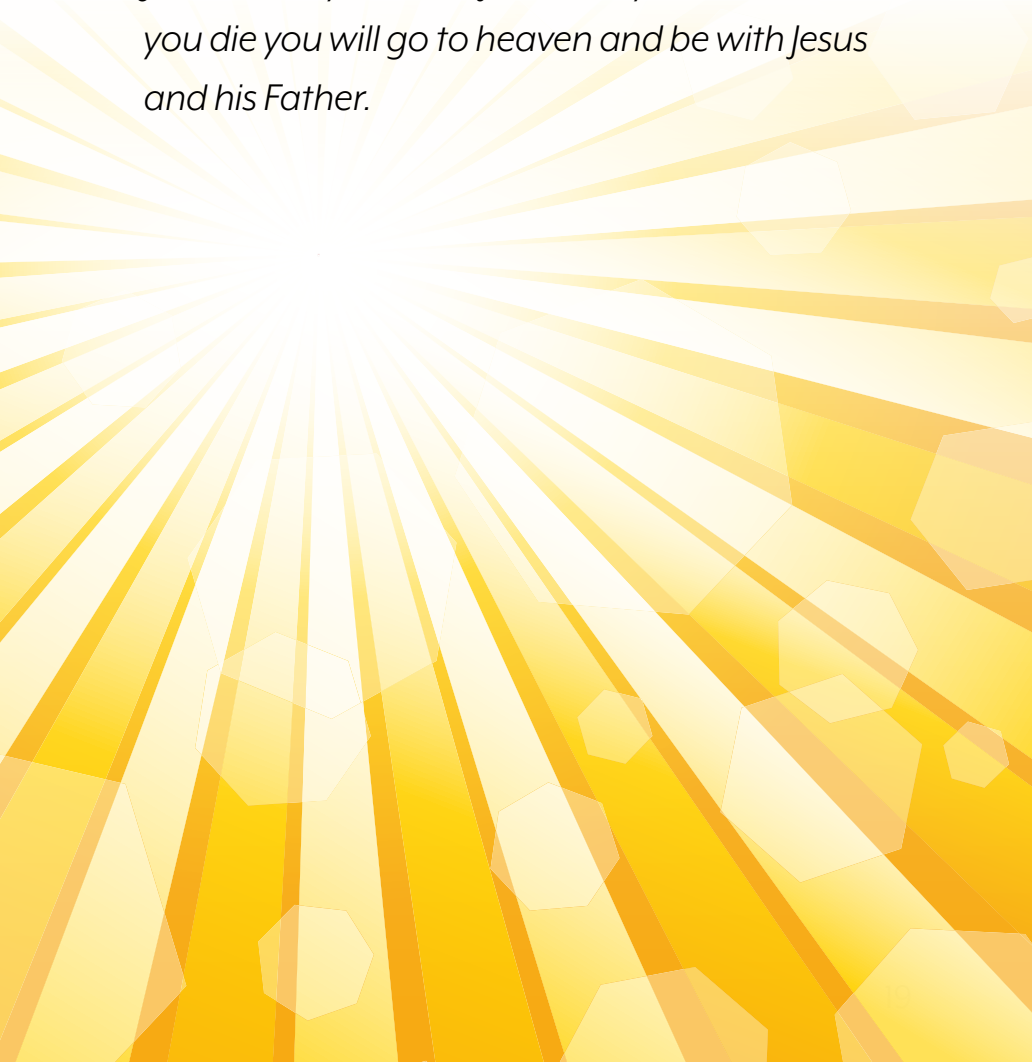
99 and go look for the one that is lost until he finds it?” Jesus told this story as an example so that people could understand. A person who doesn’t know Jesus is like a lost sheep. There will be great joy in heaven when a person who is lost turns away from sin (when you do something wrong or hurtful to someone else) and trusts in Jesus. (read **Luke 15:4-7**)

If you have wandered away like a sheep and are lost, Jesus will always be there waiting for you to come back to him. He loves every one of us. But sometimes we stray. (We don’t do what God wants us to do.) We need Jesus in our lives to protect us and lead us on the path that he has planned for us. Life is a journey, and it is comforting to know that he is always there for us if we believe in him. Nothing brings God greater joy than when one of his lost children (children who don’t know Jesus) returns to him.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14:6 *If you invite Jesus into your life, when you die you will go to heaven and be with Jesus and his Father.*



Jesus Teaches the People



Love Your Enemies

“But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.” **Luke 6:27-28**

God asks us to be kind to everyone. Sometimes it is hard to be nice to people who are mean, but God tells us to love them, too.

Forgive

Jesus said, “If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you.” **Matthew 6:14**

“Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

Luke 6:37

“But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.” **Mark 11:25** (*A grudge is having feelings of anger toward someone.*)

No one is perfect; Jesus was the only perfect man. We all need forgiveness—all we need to do is ask God and he will forgive us of things we have done wrong if we believe in him.

Ask, Search, Knock

If you believe in Jesus, he says to ask and it will be given to you. If you look for him, you will find him. (read **Matthew 7:7**) If you ask Jesus into your life, he will come in. He is

there for everyone who asks.

Do you want to follow Jesus?

Check this box if you do.

- Yes
- Yes but I have questions and want to talk to my church leader.

See page 39 for a prayer you can pray to follow Jesus now.



Jesus is Arrested



Jesus had many followers and many people were trusting in him. The chief priests were jealous of Jesus. They wanted to have him killed because they wanted people to turn to them instead of Jesus. One

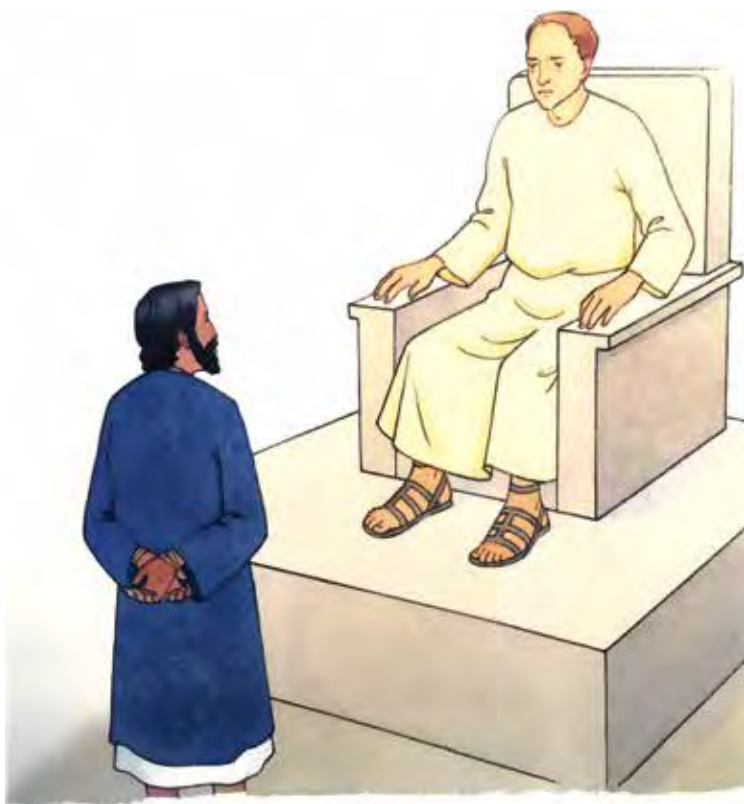
of Jesus' disciples named Judas went to the chief priest and temple guard and offered to hand Jesus over if they would give him money. Then he watched for the right time to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was around him. The chief priests paid Judas thirty pieces of silver. The soldiers of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, arrested Jesus and took him to the governor (the leader of the land) named Pontius Pilate. (read **Luke 22:1-6**)

The Old Testament foretold that the Messiah would be handed over for money. "They paid me thirty pieces of silver."

Zechariah 11:12



Jesus Goes Before the Governor, Pontius Pilate



The soldiers brought Jesus to stand in front of the governor. The governor asked Jesus, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

Jesus answered, “Yes. It is just as you say.”

Matthew 27:11

Every year at the Passover Feast (a celebration), the governor let one prisoner go free. The governor asked the people in the crowd, “Who do you want me to set free? Barabbas? Or Jesus?” The people shouted, “Barabbas!” Governor Pilate then asked what he should do with Jesus. They shouted, “Crucify him!” (Crucify means to put a person to death on a cross.)

But the governor did not want to be responsible for killing Jesus. He had found no evidence that Jesus was guilty of any crime. So, the governor washed his hands in a bowl of water in front of the crowd and said, “I am innocent of this man’s blood. It is your responsibility.” He did not want to kill Jesus! And he handed him over to the soldiers to be crucified (killed). (read ***Matthew 27:24-26***)

Jesus is Crucified and Dies for all of our Sins



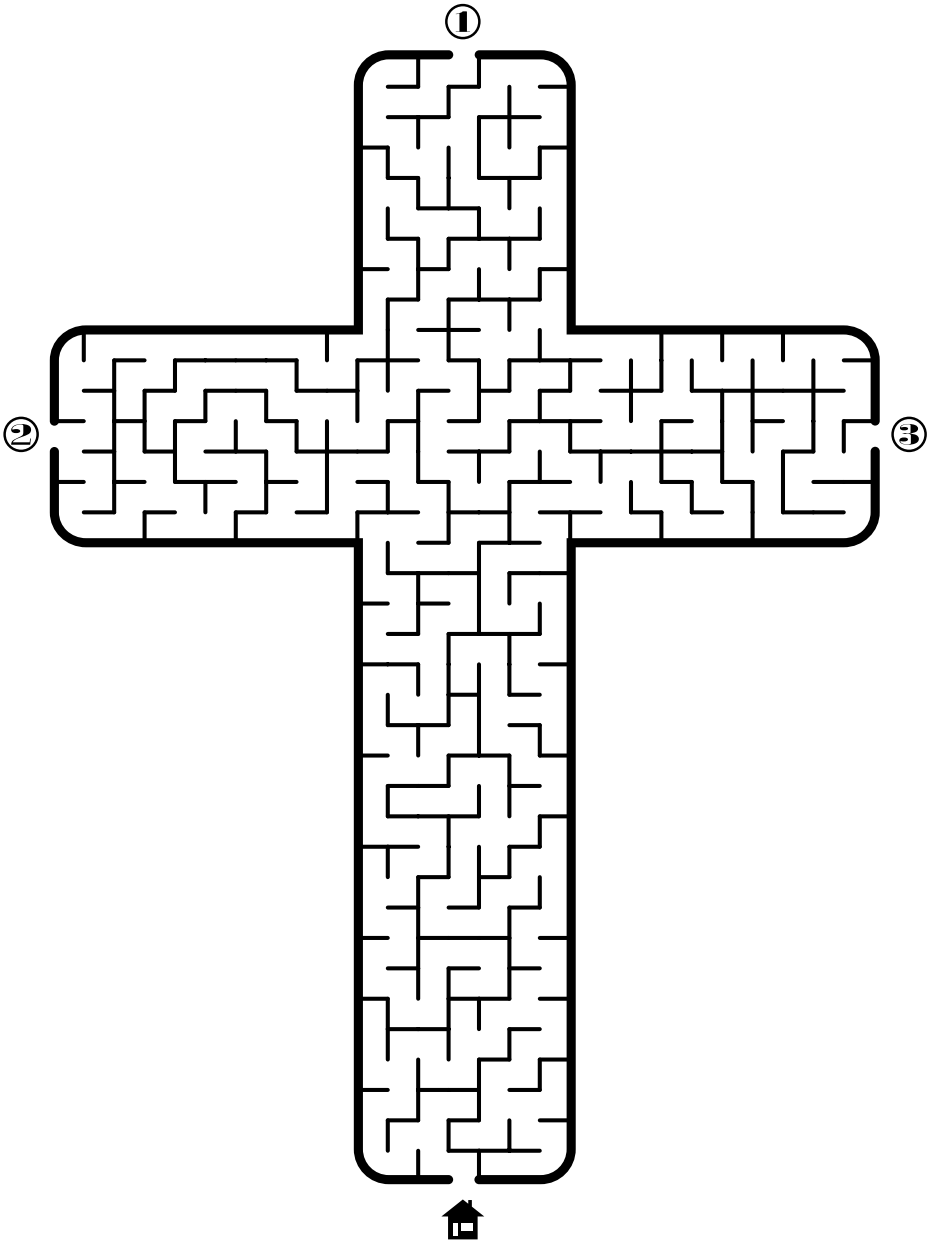
The soldiers made fun of Jesus and beat him and made him carry his own cross to the place where he would be crucified. They threw dice to divide up his clothing. They played this game so the winner got to keep Jesus' clothes. Then they nailed his hands and feet to the

cross. (read **Matthew 27:35; John 19:16-20**).

These details about Jesus' death were told in the Old Testament. "They pierce (put nails in) my hands and feet... They divide my garments among themselves and throw dice for my clothing." (**Psalm 22:16-18**)

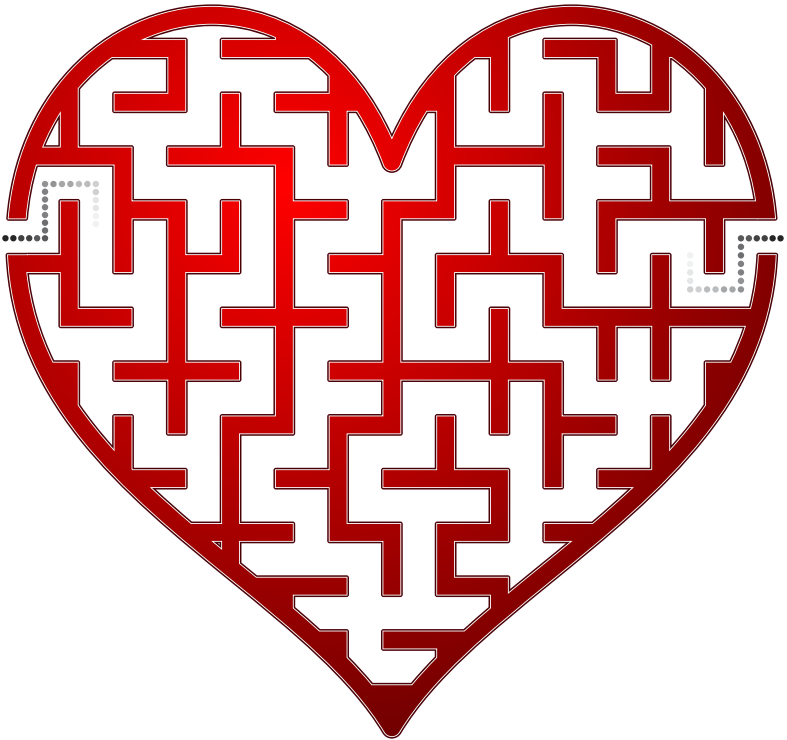
King David wrote this Psalm hundreds of years before Jesus was even born—long before anyone had ever been crucified. There was no way for David to have known Jesus' hands and feet would be nailed to a cross! This was another prophecy from the Old Testament that was fulfilled.

Jesus died on the cross for our sins. It was God's plan from the beginning for Jesus to die on the cross for **all** of our sins, for **all** of time. God has a plan for each of us, but this was his plan for Jesus. He died for **our** sins so that we can have **eternal** life with **him** if we believe in Jesus. (read **1 Peter 1:19-21**) **Eternal life means to live forever with Jesus in heaven.**



Amazing Grace

Grace is a gift you are given that you don't deserve. Jesus' sacrifice for us shows God's grace, because he loves us.



The Temple Curtain Tears

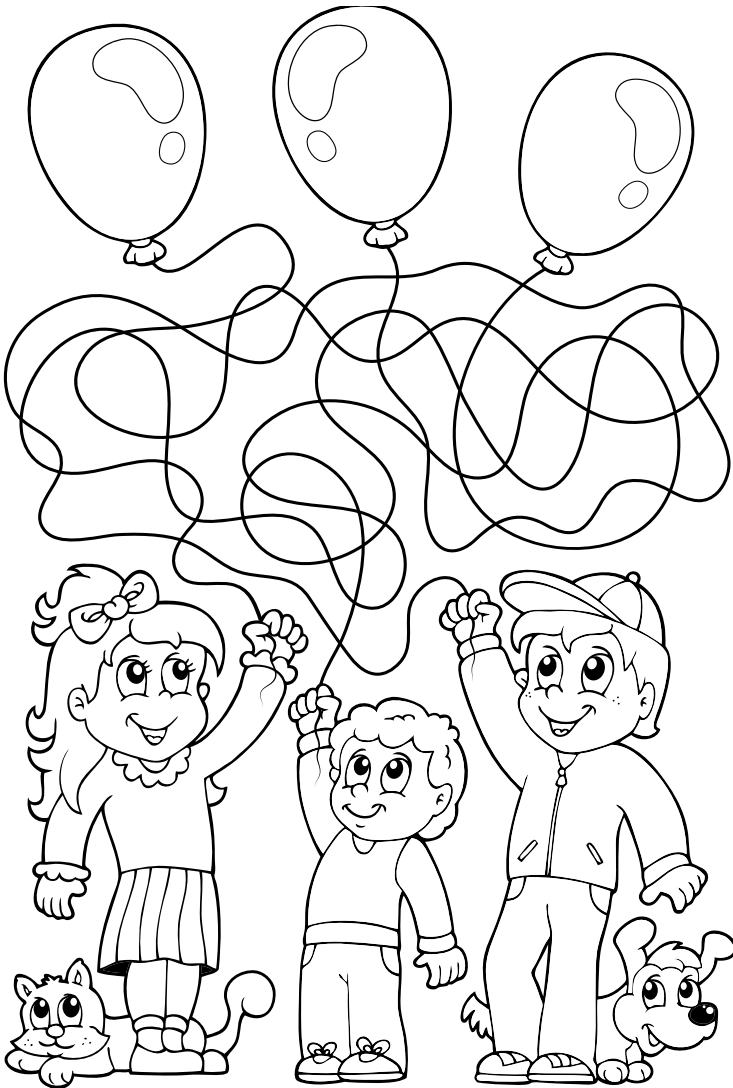


The day the soldiers crucified (killed) Jesus, the whole land was covered in darkness from noon until three o'clock in the afternoon. Right before he took his last breath, Jesus said, "Father, into your hands I give my very life." And then he died. (read **Luke 23:44-46**)

In those days the temple had a sacred (special and holy) place that was enclosed with a large, thick curtain, where only the chief priests could enter. It was sixty feet high and four inches thick. The priests only entered once a year to make a sacrifice for the sins of all of the people of Israel. In the Old Testament of the Bible the priest would sacrifice or kill a perfect lamb to take the punishment for everyone's sins. The people had to give up something valuable like a lamb as an offering to God.

When Jesus died, the curtain was torn from top to bottom without any human hands touching it. Some people believed that this was a miraculous symbol of the end of the old system of sacrifice. Remember that a miracle is something only God can do. **Today we do not sacrifice animals because Jesus died on the cross for our sins. He took our sin upon himself, and he became the ultimate sacrifice. You**

**no longer need a priest to ask God to
forgive you. You can ask God directly for
forgiveness. (read *1 Peter 1:18-20*)**



Jesus is Buried



A man named Joseph went to Pilate and asked if he could take Jesus' body to be buried. He then buried Jesus in a new tomb that had never been used. (read **John 19:38-42**)

The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb where Jesus was buried. Early in the morning on Sunday, the women returned to the tomb, but Jesus' body was not there. Suddenly two angels appeared to the women and said, "He is not here; he is risen!" Then they remembered what Jesus had told them. (read **Luke 24:1-8**)

Jesus is Alive!

The women returned to the disciples and told them about Jesus' body. Then suddenly, Jesus appeared in the house with them. He appeared to them many times over the next forty days and proved to them that he was alive. Even though Jesus had told them he would die and come to life again, they were still astonished (amazed) to touch him and see that he was alive. Jesus told them that the Holy Spirit was coming. (read **Acts 1:1-8**)

Jesus arose from the dead to prove that he had victory over death. He promised to save us and give us eternal life if we believe that he is the Son of God and that he died for our sins.

Jesus Returns to Heaven



After he rose from the dead, Jesus appeared to many people before he went back to heaven. Even though he returned to heaven with God, Jesus gave his

Holy Spirit to be with his followers so that he could always be with them.

He said to his disciples, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses...telling people about me everywhere. After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him.”

Acts 1:8-9

Still to this day Jesus is in heaven with God the Father. If you believe these stories you have just read and decide to follow Jesus, then tell him you want him to be in charge of your life, and he will always be with you. And when you die, you will be with Jesus and God in heaven. Heaven is a beautiful and peaceful place. You can feel God’s love and comfort the minute you get there if you believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins.

God's Amazing Grace for You

Ask Jesus to give you a desire to know **him** more. Pray that **he** will open your heart, ears, and mind to see how **he** is at work in your life. **He** loves you and wants to have a close relationship with you. To have a close relationship with Jesus, read the Bible. Also join a Sunday school group at a church and hang out with friends who believe in Jesus. Talk to your church leader about the scriptures in this book.

Jesus taught about love, loving your neighbor, loving your family and friends, and even praying for your enemies. God is a God of love, peace and kindness—not hate or revenge.

If something is confusing, be careful. Chaos and confusion come from the evil one (the devil). God is not the author of chaos, but of order and peace. (read ***1 Corinthians 14:33***)

Jesus invites everyone to follow him. He accepts everyone, but he leaves it up to **you** to make the choice to **follow him** and invite **him** into your life. Whisper a prayer, and ask God to come into your heart. Are you ready to invite him? You can do it right now.

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for all the things I have done that I know are wrong. Now I know the truth about what you did for me. You came to earth, died on the cross for the things I have done wrong and rose again. I want to know more about you. Give me the desire to follow you and be the person you created me to be.

Thank you Jesus that you care about me at all times. I am not alone when you are with me. Even though I can't see you, I know that you are there. I love you Jesus. You are my Savior! Amen.

I became a Christian on _____
in the year ____.

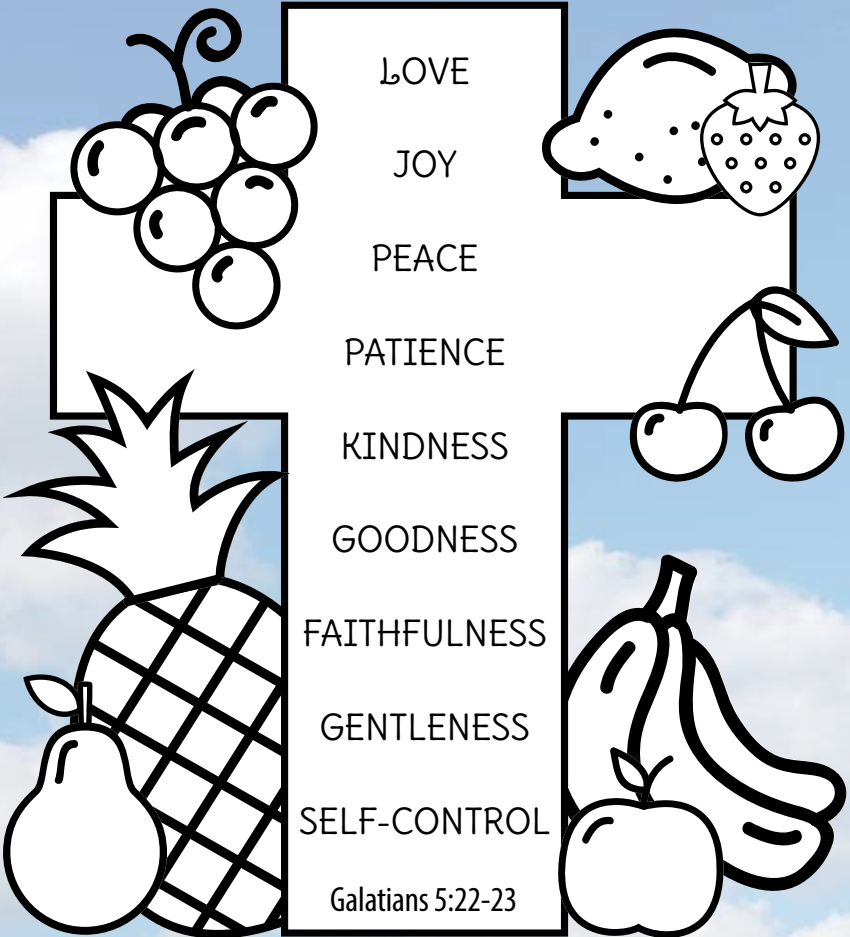
Signed _____

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The Fruit of the Spirit



LOVE

JOY

PEACE

PATIENCE

KINDNESS

GOODNESS

FAITHFULNESS

GENTLENESS

SELF-CONTROL

Galatians 5:22-23