
“The Greatest Gift of All”

[Children’s Sermon Object Lesson on Luke 23:33-43](#)



Children’s Message: The Greatest Gift of All, The End of the Church Year and Preparation for Advent

Main Objective: The liturgical (church calendar) year goes through seasons, just as the weather and annual calendar have seasons. The church year begins with the Advent season, as we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. It may seem out of place to focus on the death of Christ right before the season welcoming His birth, but it marks a transition. The objective of this message is to remind kids that we are thankful for the birth of Jesus, but we can be most thankful for His ultimate death and resurrection.

Law/Gospel Theme: The Incarnation (God becoming man) is an amazing thing, and certainly something to rejoice in. Because of Jesus, we have life and hope. We are dead in our sins, but He allows us true life. The greatest thing we can receive is salvation, and it is free for all who believe.

Object Lesson Props & Optional Materials: Party items (horns, hats, confetti, etc.); gift bag or wrapped present; cross or picture of a cross.

Bible Passage: Luke 23:33-43

Bonus Ideas:

- Don’t miss all our [children’s sermon object lessons](#) and the [video teaching example](#) of this message for kids.
- See our preschool lesson on [Luke 23:33-43 Jesus is Crucified](#) and [He is Risen Lesson plan for kids from Luke 23-24](#)
- Get more ideas for your [Luke 23:33-43 Sunday School Lessons](#)
- [Coloring Pages Jesus Crucified on Good Friday](#) and [Jesus the best Gift](#)



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Children's Sermon (Luke 23:33-43) Object Lesson on the Greatest Gift of All

Greet students in a celebratory mood, carrying streamers or party horns, perhaps even a New Year hat...

Hi guys! And Happy New Year!!! Woohoo! Aren't you so excited? *(Pause)*

What... do you think it isn't time for New Year just yet? That normally comes at the end of December, doesn't it?

Well, actually, we are about to transition our church seasons...just like we go through fall, winter, spring, and summer, in the church we often talk about different times, too, like Lent or Pentecost, or the one we are coming up on quite soon. Do you know what it's about to be??

We are getting ready for Advent! And on the church calendar, Advent is the beginning of the year! So right now, we are closing out our year and getting ready for a fresh new one. And you know, many of us think of Advent as connected to what holiday...? *(Allow responses)*.

That's right, Christmas! We are going to be celebrating Christmas pretty soon, which means all sorts of fun decorations, and special songs, and of course...*(Pull out wrapped box or gift bag)* presents!!!

Now, who can tell me about a special present you have received, or maybe something you want to receive? *(This can be omitted for timing purposes, as asking children to talk about toys can invite quite a bit of discussion)*

Well, I have in this present something that is really special. In fact, I think it is the best present ever. Do you want to see what it is? *(If box is wrapped, children can assist in unwrapping. Or pull out the cross for a grand reveal)*



Look at this! It's a cross! Hmmm...that's interesting. Normally when I think of Christmas, I think of angels and stars and the little baby in a manger. Does that have to do with the cross, too??

Well, it actually does...and this is a reminder of why we get to celebrate Christmas. You see, Advent is an important season because we remember that God kept His promise and sent a Savior, a Messiah for us. It is amazing and fantastic that Jesus came to Earth and was born as a human to live among us. But we also need to recognize *why* He came. He was born to die. He grew up and lived with people, but then He went to the cross and gave up His life, in a very painful and shameful way! And because of that, we can have eternal life with God. Jesus died for everyone. For you, for me, for the criminal next to Him on the cross. He did that so our sins can be forgiven.

That is pretty awesome. That's something we should be thankful for every day. So as we are shopping and wrapping and asking and giving, why don't we make sure to take some time to pause and reflect on that? Jesus is the greatest gift of Christmas. And He isn't just a baby; His life was the gift. God came and took our place so that we could be closer to Him. Kind of mind blowing, really!

I encourage you to keep that in mind and to say prayer of special thanks for that, especially during Thanksgiving and the Advent season. In fact, why don't we say a prayer right now?



Children's Prayer Moment

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for grace and forgiveness

Thank you for always being there

Even when things around us change

Help us remember you as we prepare for Advent

And to be thankful for the greatest gift of all

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

Thank you for Jesus

In His name, Amen!



Luke 23:33-43 NIV

And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. ³⁵ And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³ And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." -[Luke 23:33-43](#)





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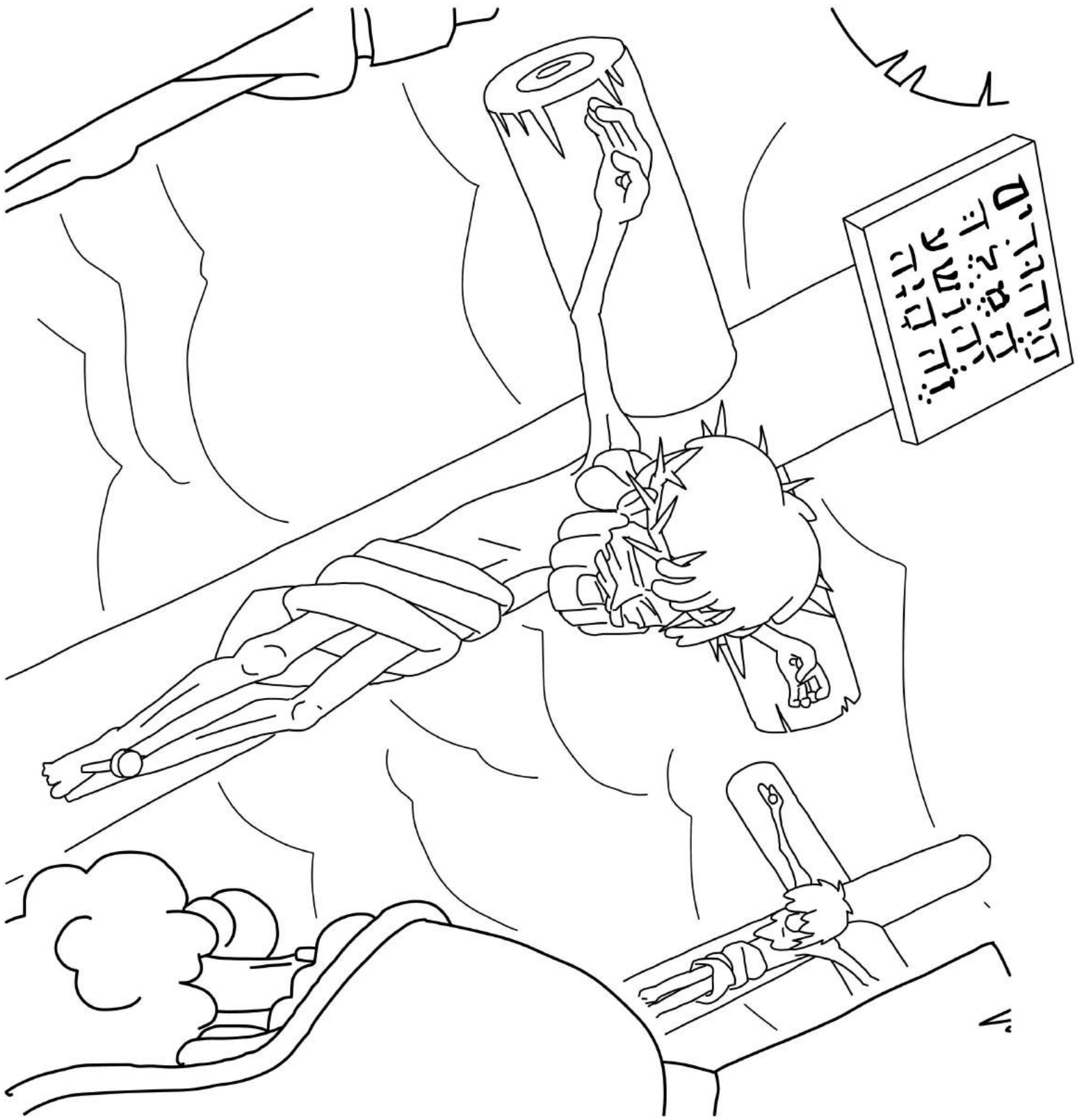
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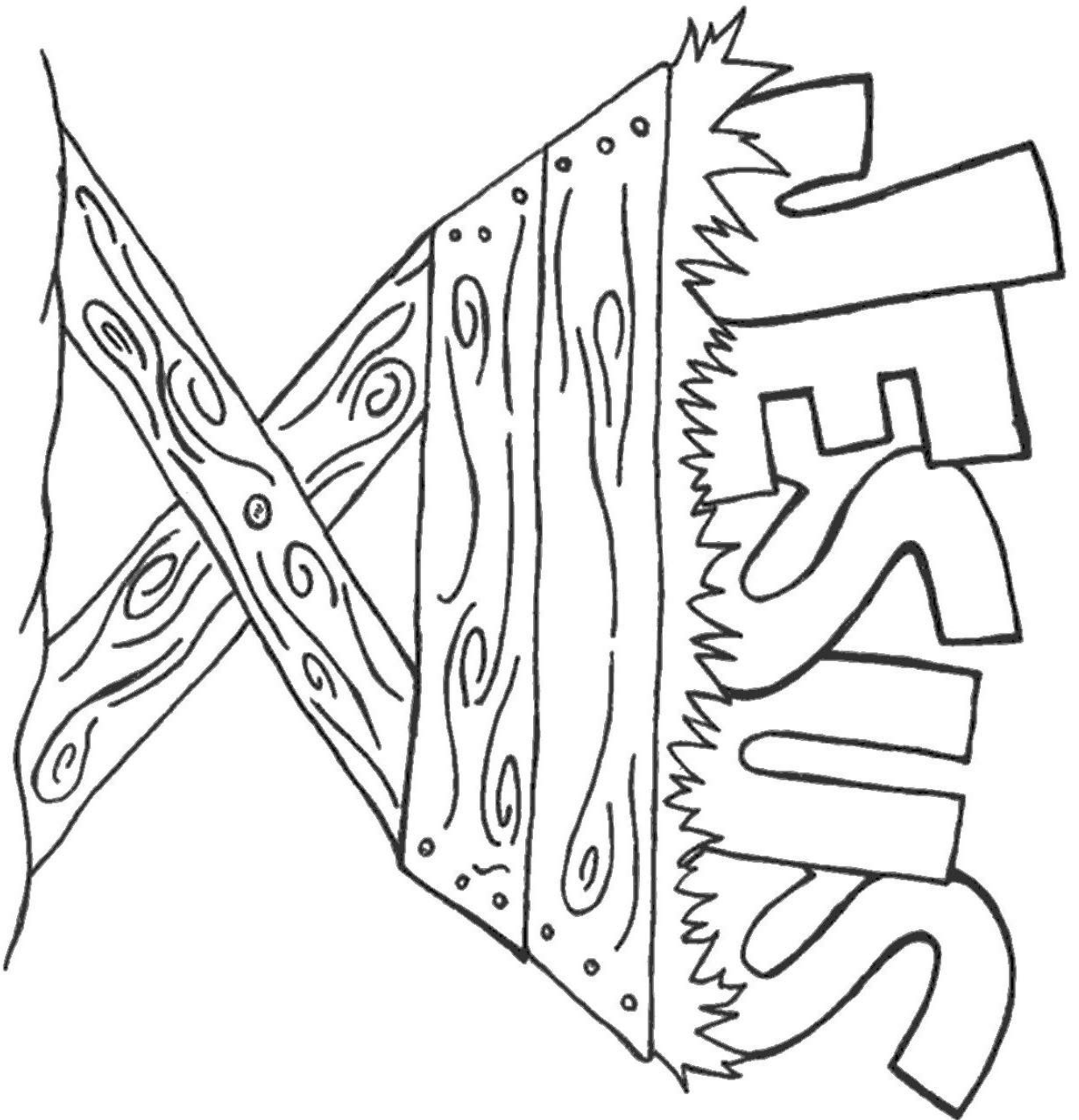
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No gift compares to Jesus!

