



DEEPER BIBLE What's So Loving About Dying?

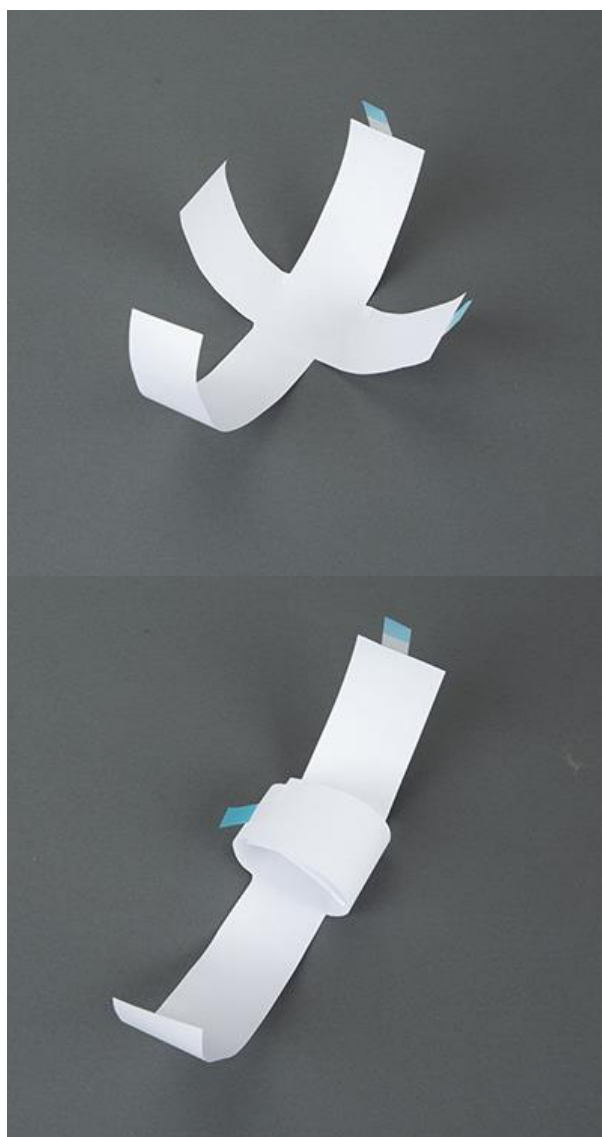
[15 min]

Supplies

- Bibles*
- large sheet of paper (the bigger the better)
- scissors
- sticky notes

Easy Prep

- Cut a cross out of the paper. Roll up the vertical piece from both the top and bottom, and secure it with a sticky note. Then fold in the arms and secure them with another sticky note.



Set It Up

Say: **We're learning that God is loving, and that God's ultimate act of love was Jesus dying.**

Read 1 John 4:9-10.

Say: **But here's a question: What's so loving about dying? Doesn't everyone die? What makes *this* the ultimate sign that God is loving? Let's dig in to that.**

Dig Deeper

Say: **In order to answer our question, we'll need to figure out why Jesus needed to die. Romans 5 helps us understand that.**

Read Romans 5:6-8. Have small groups discuss these questions.

Ask: • **What does this verse show you about why Jesus needed to die?**

• **What does this verse show you about why Jesus' death was an act of love?**

Say: **This verse shows that we had a need: we're all sinners. That means we've all made wrong choices. And the punishment for those wrong things is permanent death—being apart from God forever. But Jesus took the punishment by dying, then showing his power by coming back to life. Jesus beat death!**

And this verse also shows that we didn't deserve what Jesus did for us. It's like this: Imagine you study really hard for a tough test, and you get an A. There's another kid in your class who got an F and is really upset about that. In a strange twist, your teacher offers an option: Anyone can trade grades with anyone else, as long as both people agree to the trade.

Ask: • **Would you trade with the kid who got an F if you knew he studied really hard but just blanked out because he was so nervous?** Have kids go to one side of the room for yes and the other side of the room for no. Then ask a few kids from each side to explain their choice.

• **What about if it was a kid who was dying of cancer and wasn't able to study because he was too sick?** Have kids go to one side of the room for yes and the other side for no. Then ask a few kids from each side to explain their choice.

• **What if it was a kid who goofs off in class all the time and played video games all night instead of studying?** Have kids go to one side of the room for yes and the other side for no. Then ask a few kids from each side to explain their choice.

Say: **Maybe you'd consider trading with someone who tried hard or who had circumstances out of their control. But it's pretty unlikely anyone would give up an A for someone who flunked because they didn't try.**

Or how about this one?

It's lunch time. You brought a delicious lunch...your favorite. But then you see another kid with no food.

Ask: • **Would you give up or share your lunch if you knew her parents didn't have jobs and she didn't have enough food at home to bring a lunch or enough money to buy a lunch?** Have kids go to one side of the room for yes and the other side for no. Then ask a few kids from each side to explain their choice.

• **What about if she had a lunch but accidentally forgot it on the bus?** Have kids go to one side of the room for yes and the other side for no. Then ask a few kids from each side to explain their choice.

• **What if she purposely threw away her lunch hoping for something better, then threatened to punch you if you didn't give her your lunch?** Have kids go to one side of the room for yes and the other side for no. Then ask a few kids from each side to explain their choice.

Say: **We'd probably at least share our lunch with someone who was genuinely hungry. But someone who was threatening us, who threw away their own lunch? They don't deserve it!**

Here's the thing: We're like the kid who played video games instead of studying and the girl who threw away her lunch and threatened people to give her theirs. We didn't do anything to deserve Jesus' love. We didn't do anything to deserve him taking our punishment. But he did it anyway!

That's love.

Unfold a Cross

I'd like to close this part of our lesson with a blessing over you. It comes from Ephesians 3:18:

“And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide (unfold one arm of the cross), **how long** (unfold the other arm of the cross), **how high** (begin to unroll the length of the cross), **and how deep** (finish unrolling the cross and show kids) **his love is.”**