



The Passion of Christ...but to Kids



Since the Mel Gibson movie, "The Passion of the Christ" has come out I've had frequent opportunities to share with relative strangers, just why Christ had to suffer so for my sins. This blockbuster movie gives the Christian community a rare opportunity to give a testimony for the hope that is within us....we should take it!! Isn't it amazing the interest that the general public has in a subject so foreign to it?

But, what about the kids? All of the controversy swirling around the movie has surely filtered down to our pre-teens, yet the graphic depiction of Christ's sufferings and the well-deserved "R" rating should keep us from taking our children to see it. However, we should use this occasion to tell our children again this thrilling and sobering story of why Jesus Christ had to suffer in our behalf and why this God-man Christ was the "Lamb of God" who takes away the sins of the world. They need to understand how, by the strokes (stripes) of the Roman whip on Jesus' back, we are healed. Its a story that our kids need to be reminded of again and again.

What is the best way to do this? As Director of Children's Ministry International (CMI), www.childministry.com, we are always looking for appropriate ways and methods to achieve this. This season, we are introducing "IT IS FINISHED" a four lesson series on the Betrayal, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ for children ages 3/4 to 11/12 years old. We use the passages from Isaiah 53 to tell the story. These reusable lessons are colorful and simple yet ensure that the kids see the big picture. Its only \$19.95 and in many ways is like our ADVENT series (easy to use, non-dated, non-consumable, multiple ages, appropriate crafts).

Reformed churches are often not liturgical churches. We often believe that Christ's Resurrection is appropriately celebrated each Lord's Day and the Easter celebration is often overlooked. "Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunrise Services" are often found in other churches (Methodist, Episcopal and Lutheran for example), but thought of as Roman Catholic hold-overs by reformed Christians. Even the word Easter, is derived from "Eostre" the Goddess of Fertility. It's no wonder that the celebration of Easter is often, for children,

surrounded more with fertile, chocolate egg, producing rabbits than the Sufferings (Passion) and Resurrection of Christ. This should not be so! We can use this Easter season to remind our covenant children of "the Passion of Christ".

Let's be ready to discuss the "real" Easter story with our children.

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