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Jesus displayed his power over sin at the resurrection. When we surrender our lives to Him, we possess the same power to overcome our own sin.

Use the Easter lesson (starting on the next page) to drive home that point to the students in your ministry. We all struggle with sin. Our only hope is Jesus. When we rely on Him, he gives us the power to resist temptation.

Although this is a serious topic, this lesson opens up with a fun game called – Epic Noodle Challenge. And yes, the game does connect to the main idea of the lesson. It's actually a great opener. Enjoy!

Nick Diliberto, Ministry to Youth

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A promotional graphic for the March Youth Bundle. It features a man in a white t-shirt and dark pants, smiling and pointing towards the right. The background is a solid yellow color. On the right side, there is a white box containing the text "MARCH YOUTH BUNDLE" in large, bold, yellow letters. Below this, in smaller white text, it says "SAVE 95% ON \$2,026 WORTH OF YOUTH MINISTRY LESSONS!". At the bottom of the white box, it says "MARCH 16-25 ONLY" in bold, yellow letters.

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EASTER YOUTH GROUP GAME & LESSON

Bible: Matthew 28: 1–10

Bottom Line: Jesus breaks the power of sin in your life!

SUPPLIES

Game Supplies:

- One three-foot swimming noodle per student. Cut noodles in half, giving each player a three-foot noodle.
- Optional – an equal amount colored bracelets to separate teams (2 colors). An equal amount of colored bracelets to separate the teams. Two colors, one color for each team.
- Alternative is to put boys on one team and girls on another (try and get an equal amount of players on each team).

Teaching Supplies:

- One donut. Substitute something else if your students don't absolutely love donuts.
- Skateboard – borrow one from a student.

OPENING GAME: EPIC NOODLE BATTLE

Description: Split up the group into two teams of even amount of players.

Give each student a three-foot swimming noodle & a bracelet to wear on their wrist.

The bracelet identifies the teams.

The goal of the game is to hit players on the opposing team (below the waist) with the noodle.

If a player is hit, she is “dead” and sits down on the ground.

Dead players cannot move from the spot they were hit, unless they are resurrected.

A player from the same team can hit “dead” players with the noodle and “resurrect” them to life. Resurrected players are back in the game and continue playing.

The goal is to hit all players on the opposing team, declaring them all “dead”.

Once successful, declare that team as the winner.

If you need to end the game before all players on one team are “dead”, call time when appropriate. Whichever team has the least amount of “dead” players wins.

Variation: If you have access to a large building, with a lot of empty rooms, then open up the building as your playing area.

Students will enjoy the large playing area and hiding in the many room (it makes the game more exciting).

After the game, say: Congrats to the winning team! In today’s message we will be focusing on Jesus’ “death” and “resurrection.”

Sound familiar?

Ha, that’s right.

We just played a game involving “dead” & “resurrected” players.

Let’s talk about this a few minutes. First, I have a few questions for you.

Discuss the following questions:

- If you were Jesus’ best friend, what would be going on in your mind when he died on the cross? What emotions would you be feeling?
- If you were Jesus’ best friend, what would be going on in your mind when he rose from the dead? What emotions would you be feeling?
- Why do you think Jesus’ resurrection is so important to us today?

TEACH – EASTER

Supplies:

- One donut. Substitute something else if your students don't absolutely love donuts.
- Skateboard – borrow one from a student.

(Note: This experience could trigger the emotions of some students who have experienced a death of a family member or friend. In the event that occurs, please be sensitive to the student's emotions and feelings. If necessary, pull the student aside to talk through the issue and pray together. Look at it as a ministry opportunity.)

Close your eyes and imagine the events I am about to describe happen to you.

I want for you to imagine in your mind one of your close friends.

Choose a friend and get a clear picture of him or her in your head.

As I read through the following events, picture they are happening to you.

- You're at home watching your favorite show on TV while sitting on the sofa.
- Your mom enters the room and asks you to turn off the TV. You can tell she has something important to tell you by the tone of her voice.
- She tells you that your friend has died in a car accident.
- Your friend's death troubles you deeply—you are sad, mad and confused.
- You are at the funeral a few days later when all of a sudden someone notices the casket is empty.
- The family starts to complain to the funeral home only to soon realize an amazing miracle has taken place. Your friend is alive. In fact, she enters the room appearing to be quite normal.

Question: What would you be thinking & feeling at that moment?

Say: When Jesus died on the cross, his closest friends and family were devastated.

They loved and cared for him deeply.

When they discovered he was alive, they were thrilled!

Their thoughts and feelings were probably similar to what you would experience in the same situation.

Read Matthew 28:1–10 (NCV):

The day after the Sabbath day was the first day of the week. At dawn on the first day, Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary went to look at the tomb. At that time there was a strong earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven, went to the tomb, and rolled the stone away from the entrance. Then he sat on the stone.

He was shining as bright as lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The soldiers guarding the tomb shook with fear because of the angel, and they became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, “Don’t be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus, who has been crucified. He is not here. He has risen from the dead as he said he would. Come and see the place where his body was. And go quickly and tell his followers, ‘Jesus has risen from the dead. He is going into Galilee ahead of you, and you will see him there.’”

Then the angel said, “Now I have told you.”

The women left the tomb quickly. They were afraid, but they were also very happy. They ran to tell Jesus’ followers what had happened. Suddenly, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings.” The women came up to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him.

Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Go and tell my followers to go on to Galilee, and they will see me there.”

Say: You may have heard this story before, but have you ever thought about why it is so important that Jesus came back from the dead?

Today we are going to explore that question, and you might be surprised at the answer.

(Hold up the donut)

**Note: feel free to use something else that your group would really like if donuts aren’t appealing enough.*

Who likes donuts? Who is a really big fan and would like to eat this one?

(Pick a student to come upfront.) Hi there, what's your name? Great, before you eat this.

I am going to put it right under your nose, but you can't have it yet.

(Put it under the students nose.) Now, smell this yummy donut.

Smells good, doesn't it? I want you to hold it now, but you still can't eat it. (Hand the donut to the student.) What's going through your mind right now? (Get response.)

I bet your mouth is watering and you can't wait to eat it.

Well, you can't have it yet. But you will soon, so hang on.

I've got a few more things I want to share with everyone.

So, while I do that. You just hold up the donut. But don't eat it yet.

I have a love-hate relationship with hot, warm donuts.

I love them because they're soooo good (especially when they are warm and gooey), but I hate them because they aren't very healthy.

I try to eat a healthy diet, and donuts aren't on the list of good things to eat.

But once I smell and see yummy donuts, I simply can't resist.

A certain kind of power comes over me. I will try with all my strength to not eat one, but I just got to have it. So warm, tasty and soooooo goooooood!

(Talking to the volunteer with the donut)

Has it been difficult not eating the donut?

Why or why not? (Get a response)

You've done a great job, go ahead and eat it.

Let's give him a round of applause. You can go sit down now.

It's hard to resist what I call, the "power of the donut".

Donuts are a great illustration of the power of sin.

For many of us, we can't resist the tempting power of the donut. Like the donut, sin has power over us.

In fact, its power is much stronger.

Before we surrender our lives to Jesus, we can't break the power of sin. In some area of our lives, sin will control and overpower us.

And that sin blocks us from having a forever friendship with Jesus.

SIN was powerful enough to kill Jesus.

Although Jesus was whipped, wore a crown of thorns, nailed to a cross and stabbed on the side – none of those things killed him.

What killed Jesus was the weight of all the sins of the world. The Bible tells us that SIN crushed and killed Jesus.

The good news is that Jesus came back to life. Why is that so important? Because he broke the power of sin! Sin killed him, but God's power raised him from the dead!

Jesus breaks the power of sin in our lives!

When we surrender our lives to Jesus and follow Him, we are given the same power to overcome sin in our lives.

What does that look like in everyday life?

God gives you the power to say no when all your friends are getting in trouble and want you to join them.

God gives you the power to say no when you're all alone online, and are tempted to go to that website you know you shouldn't.

Who can give some more examples? (Get responses)

(Hold up the skateboard)

Who likes to skateboard and is pretty good at it?

I need someone to show us a skateboard trick. Who wants to do that? (Pick a volunteer)
Okay, thanks for coming up here. Go for it.

(Allow the volunteer a few minutes to show everyone a trick.)

Great job! I have a few questions for you.

- How long have you been skateboarding?
- When you first started, did you fall down a lot?
- When learning a new trick, do you still sometimes fall down?

Thanks for sharing! You can have a seat now. (Volunteer goes back to his chair.)

When you first learn something new, such as skateboarding, you're going to fail a lot. But over time, you get better. Like how you saw (name of volunteer) do those cool skateboard tricks.

At first, he/she probably messed up a lot. Even when you get really good at something, you're going to mess up some. You will never be perfect at anything. But you do get better over time with practice.

It is the same with sin.

The first step is to surrender your life to Jesus.

You then have access to God's power to overcome sin.

But you're still going to sin, mess up and fail.

The goal is to start relying on God's power to resist sin now. Over time, with God's help, you're going to get better.

One day you will be like a pro-skater, where, for the most part, you do what is right and live life God's way.

You will still mess up every once in awhile, like any pro-skater does, but for the most part you are overcoming sin in your life.

Note: Consider allowing students an opportunity to get prayer for whatever issues they're struggling with. Do that in small groups, ask students to come to the front for prayer, or whatever method you feel comfortable with. This is a great opportunity for a time of prayer.

End lesson.

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