

# Faith at Home for families

## Activity 9 – Alive in Christ



Hello to you from St Mary's Church. It's lovely to be with you again!

How are you getting on with your Prayer Treasure Box?

Maybe it's getting so full of treasures that you are having trouble lifting it!

### This week – Sin is 'heavy', but Jesus helps us

Talking about heavy things, this week's story is about something that's heavy, or at least something that can weigh us down. If you would like to read the story for yourself it can be found in Romans chapter 6 verses 1-11. You can read it from a Bible you have at home, or look it up online, or read it at the bottom of this sheet.

- I wonder, can you think of something that feels heavy for you to carry?
- Maybe your school bag when it is full of books.
- Think about how heavy it feels.
- The straps are digging into your shoulders, and you can't run, you have to walk slowly, wishing with every step that you'll get to where you're going.
- Phew, that sounds like hard work!
- Can you remember what it feels like when you arrive in your classroom and you can finally put your bag down on the floor?
- It's such a relief!
- All the blood rushes back into your arm and you feel as light as a feather!

## Bad News!

People like you and me can get weighed down by other things too. We can get weighed down by sin. Sin is things we do wrong that become habits, because the more we do them the easier it gets. And then it's really hard to stop.

- Things like telling made up stories so that other people will like us better.
- Things like telling mean jokes about other people.

We can feel trapped by these habits, or as our Bible story says, we can be 'slaves to sin'.

These bad habits make us feel heavy on the inside because we know in our hearts that we shouldn't be doing them.

They weigh us down just as much as that heavy school bag.



## Good News!



There's good news in our Bible story!

If we follow Jesus, we can be free of all that heaviness.

We can put down our sin and feel like we did when we put that heavy school bag down - *as light as a feather!*

How does following Jesus free us of heaviness?

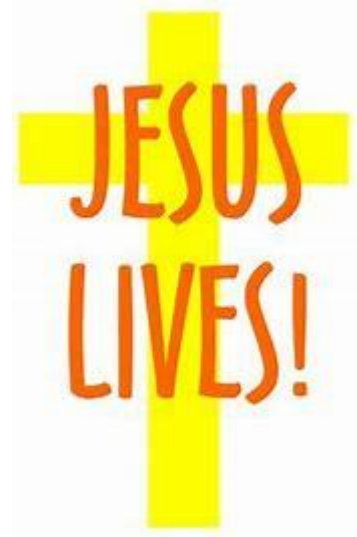
- Do you remember the Easter story when Jesus died on the cross?
- Do you remember why Good Friday is called 'good' even though Jesus died?

Although Good Friday is a sad part of the story, it's 'good' for us because when we sin, or do wrong things, we can say sorry to God and he will forgive us.

- When we say sorry we give God our heavy sins and then we can be free to do better!

Of course, the Easter story doesn't end at the cross. We know that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive.

- If we truly follow Jesus, we follow him to where he died,
- But then we must keep going and follow him to where he became alive again!
- When we follow Jesus we are alive in Him! (It's OK to be a bit puzzled about this, I'll let you into a secret, me too!)
- When you decide to follow Jesus you are asking him to be 3 things in your life:
  - *Leader* You are saying you will obey him. It doesn't mean you will be perfect, but it does mean you are going to listen to him and do what he says.
  - *Forgiver* You are telling Jesus you are sorry for your sins and you are going to turn away from them. You are asking him to forgive you.
  - *Friend* You are asking Jesus to be your best friend.



*I wonder what you will say sorry for this week*

### Prayer Treasure Box – Idea 9

We thank God that he frees us from our heavy sins  
so we can do better.

- Try to find something for your Prayer Treasure Box that reminds you that God forgives you and makes you light again!
- It could be something heavy like a small rock from the garden.
- Or something really light, like a feather!
- If you can't find a feather, maybe you can make one out of paper.



## A prayer you might like to say

Dear God,

we thank you that we can give you

our heavy sins when we say sorry,

so we can feel light again.

Help us to do good things over and over

until they become habits we can't stop.

Amen.

## Other 'Alive in Christ' activities!

### GOOD NEWS

- Can you think of something good to do for someone every day this week?
- Does it make you feel light as a feather?!

### BUTTERFLY CRAFT

- If you haven't got a wooden peg, a lollipop stick works just as well!
- Stick strips of colourful paper to the back of the peg or stick for wings
- Stick a pipe cleaner to the back too for the butterfly's antennae



## Bible Reading

### Romans chapter 6 verses 1-11 – Dead to sin but alive in Christ

*A bit of background information before we read this.*

*The stories we read in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are things Jesus said or did, and they were written by people who saw and knew Jesus. We hear these stories quite a lot and are probably familiar with them. Today's story is from the book of Romans. It was a letter written by Paul to people in Rome. In the letter he introduces himself to the people he will meet when he visits Rome. He also tells them his ideas about what it means to have faith in Jesus.*

*Baptism at the time of this letter was for grown-ups. If they wanted to show their belief in Jesus they would walk into a river for the ceremony and go completely under the water (which is a bit like being 'buried'.) When they came back up out of the water it was a sign their sins had been washed away. Baptisms in our church use a smaller amount of water to show our sins have been washed away. Perhaps we can think of it as the difference between having a shower and just washing our hands.*

*Here's the reading:*

Paul says to the Romans: Shall we keep on sinning so that God can keep on showing us more and more kindness and forgiveness? Of course not! Our old, sinful life has ended. It's dead. So how can we continue living in sin? Did you forget that all of us became part of Christ Jesus when we were baptised? When we were baptised we shared his death.

So when we were baptised, we were buried with Christ and our old sin-loving nature was buried with him. And just as Christ was raised from death by the wonderful power of God the Father, so we can now live a new life.

Christ died, and we have been joined with him by dying too. And now we share his new life and shall rise as he did. We know that our old life was put to death on the cross with Christ. This happened so that our sinful selves would have no power over us. Then we would no longer be slaves to sin. Anyone who has died is made free from sin's control

And since our old sin-loving self "died" with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ has been raised from death. And we know

he will never die again. Death will no longer rule over him. And so, when Christ died, he died to defeat the power of sin, and only needed to die once to defeat sin for all time. He now has a new life, and his new life is with God. In the same way, we should see ourselves as being dead to the power of sin and living in fellowship with God through Christ Jesus.