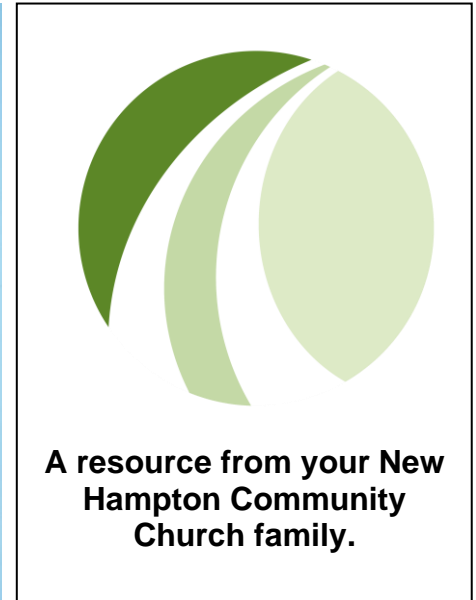




April

parenting CHRISTIAN kids



Easter Reveals Jesus' Strength and Power

POWERSOURCE

TALK TO JESUS:

1. Thank Jesus for being all-powerful and for defeating sin and death.
2. Ask Jesus to remind your family that he controls all things.
3. Ask Jesus to help you share the meaning of Easter with your kids.

"We are weak, but he is strong." That is a line from one of the first Christian songs many kids learn, "Jesus Loves Me." For young children, strength is a physical concept associated with big muscles. As kids become abstract thinkers, they understand concepts such as moral strength and divine power.

Because God is omnipotent, or all-powerful, all things are under his control. As Luke 1:37 (NCV) says, "God can do anything!" During his earthly ministry, Jesus stood up to Satan's temptations, calmed a raging storm, healed sick people, and rose from the dead.

Jesus' power is especially evident at Easter, when we celebrate his

victory over sin and the grave. Death is no match for Jesus, who lives forever and offers us eternal life in heaven.

To share Easter's good news—and Jesus' power—with your children, emphasize that Jesus wants us to be his friend and have the power to live forever, too. That happens when we believe that Jesus is alive, tell him we love him, and say we are sorry when we mess up. We ask Jesus for forgiveness and promise to follow and love him every day.

Doing this means we have put our faith in Jesus. It also means we have Jesus' power with us every day to help us. And, like Jesus, we will live forever.

Use the ideas on these pages to enhance your Easter celebrations.

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He Is Mighty to Save

In our sinful world, we are bombarded by problems and fears. That may be one reason kids gravitate toward superheroes and crime-fighters. Knowing we are protected is comforting. Yet no animated character is a match for Jesus' strength. Throughout the Bible, he solves dilemmas from feeding large crowds with just a little food to casting demons out of suffering people. Jesus also calms people's fears, serving as a good Shepherd who protects his sheep. Today Jesus continues solving the toughest problems and easing our fears, reminding us daily of his goodness, mercy, and might.



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Packed With Power

Read aloud Ephesians 3:20. Ask: **What does it mean to have God's power working in us?**

Hand out rulers and measuring tapes. Say: **Measure your foot.** (Pause.) **Now measure a chair.** (Pause.) **Now measure this wall.** (Pause.) **Now measure the distance from here to Mars.** (Pause.)

Say: **That's right—we can't measure that distance, can we? That is what God's power is like! It is so big and wonderful we can't measure it. But we know it is there because God tells us he's powerful, and God showed his power by raising Jesus from the dead. That power can help us every day with any hard things.**

Say: **Think of one area where you need God's power. Silently ask God to use his power to help you.** (Pause.) After a minute of silence, close in prayer, thanking God for using his power to raise Jesus from the dead and to help and strengthen us.

You Can't Keep Jesus Down!

Place five or six inflated helium balloons (with long strings) inside a laundry basket and cover the basket with a blanket. Say: "On Easter, nothing could keep Jesus in the grave. This basket is like a grave. The blanket is the stone. When God rolled away the stone, Jesus rose from the dead." Remove the blanket. Say: "Try to get the balloons back into the basket while keeping one hand behind your back." After playing, read Luke 24:1-6. Ask: "What does it mean to you that Jesus used his power to rise from the dead?"

Parade of Strength Make some homemade instruments and crepe paper streamers. Ask: "What things are hard for you to do? Who helps you do those things?" Read aloud Philippians 4:13. Say: "Jesus gives us strength to be kind, to forgive, and to serve. He helps us do anything. Let's celebrate with a parade!" Play music and march around, waving streamers and playing instruments. Repeat the Bible verse as you march.

Power Drawings Form two teams and take turns drawing (and guessing) things that remind them of Jesus' power, like an empty tomb, a volcano, lightning, or any answer to prayer. Afterward, ask:

"What are some new or different things you learned about Jesus' power? What else can you think of that is tough to draw? How can we keep a lookout for Jesus' power?"

Resurrection Relay Read aloud John 20:1-18 and talk about the disciples' excitement on Easter. Have family members form two groups, and have groups line up on different sides of a room. Give one group a hula hoop or large ball. Say: "Let's pretend this is the stone that was rolled away from Jesus' tomb. Take turns rolling it back and forth, and each time shout, 'Jesus is alive!'" Afterward, say: "Easter news about Jesus' resurrection is powerful. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we can live with him forever. Who can you tell that Jesus is alive?"

Super Strength Have family members play Freeze Tag while you play a song. Say: "While the song plays quietly, the person who is It will have normal strength to tag people. When the song gets loud, the person who is It will have super strength, so everyone else has to hop on one foot." After playing, read Judges 16:4-30. Ask: "What was it like to play this game with normal strength? What was it like with super strength? Where did Samson get his strength? Where do we get ours?"

"The Lord is my strength and my song; he has given me victory. This is my God, and I will praise him."
—Exodus 15:2