



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Undefeated / Week 3

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SERIES SUMMARY

A three-week series on Easter.

WEEK 1: Because of Jesus, separation is defeated.

WEEK 2: Because of Jesus, sin is defeated.

WEEK 3: Because of Jesus, death is defeated.

SCRIPTURE

Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:54-57 NLT).

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you (Romans 8:11 NLT).

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- Have you ever felt sad because you didn't want something to end?
- Tell a personal story about a time when you were really sad to see something in your life come to a close.

TENSION

- When you love something, you don't want to see it end.
- For some of us, we have strong, difficult feelings about things coming to an end.
- Every person has one thing in common: The life we live will end at some point.

- Talking about death can make us feel afraid, worried, anxious, or unsure. Many of us don't know what to think about death, so we just don't think about it at all!
- But what if there's another way to think about death? A way that gives us comfort and confidence when we think about the end?

TRUTH

- Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and then resurrected three days later. His resurrection changed everything when it comes to death, and we can now have hope that death isn't the real ending.
- In 1 Corinthians, Paul explained that because of Jesus, death is defeated. Our dying bodies that we're living in have been transformed and will never die. (1 Corinthians 15:54-57)
- When we believe in Jesus and live our lives for Him, we invite the God who defeated death into our hearts.
- Though our physical bodies may die, there's a heaven that goes on forever.
- Jesus' death and resurrection made a way for us to be with Him if we choose to believe in Him.
- Because of Jesus, death is defeated.

APPLICATION

- Maybe for you, knowing that Jesus defeated death means . . .
- You can begin to let go of the fear you have about death.
- You want to learn more about faith and what it means for you.
- Jesus defeated death, and because He loves us, He gives us the opportunity to experience that same victory through our faith in Him.
- When you believe in Jesus, the same Spirit that raised Him from the dead and gave Him power to defeat death now lives in you. (Romans 8:11)

LANDING

- Because of Jesus, death is defeated. That's the victory we remember every Easter.
- How does it feel to know you can have a guaranteed new and forever life today?

YOUR STUDENTS

This conversation leans toward a heavy subject matter: death. Be sensitive to the different perspectives you have in the room when it comes to the topic—students who've experienced loss recently, students who have fears about it, students who may have lost someone who isn't a Christian, students who know someone sick or on the verge of passing away, etc. While you want the conversation to land on the fact that Jesus brings us new and eternal life—something to celebrate—you have to navigate the difficult and personal topic of death in order to get there. Doing that with sensitivity will help your students stay engaged.

INTERACTIVE: FEELING DEFLATED

OVERVIEW

For this Interactive, you'll use a prop (inflated and deflated balloons) to demonstrate that while death may feel like the end, Jesus' resurrection proves there's more to life.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A bunch of helium-filled latex balloons (Bonus points if they are Easter colors!)
- A large, deflated latex balloon
- A bike or hand pump
- A small table or podium

HOW-TO

Before your talk this week, secure a bunch of helium-filled balloons on stage. Place the pump and deflated balloon on a table or podium so that they're easily accessible during your message.

As you go through your talk, you'll use the inflated and deflated balloons to draw parallels between life and death. And when you reveal the truth that Jesus defeated death for us, you'll inflate a balloon to demonstrate how death is not truly the end.

Check out this week's Teaching Script to get more details on how you'll incorporate this Interactive into your lesson.



TEACHING SCRIPT

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BOTTOM LINE

BECAUSE OF JESUS, DEATH IS DEFEATED

INTRODUCTION

3 MINUTES

Happy Easter! We're celebrating the season with a series called Undefeated, and it's all about what we remember every year at Easter—the stuff Jesus defeated for us thousands of years ago.

But before we dive into that today, let me ask you a quick question: **Have you ever felt sad because you didn't want something to end?** I know I've been there!

TELL A PERSONAL STORY

Tell a story from your own life that illustrates the following thoughts or ideas . . .

- Talk about a time that you were really sad to see something come to end.
 - Maybe it was the end of a really great week at camp, a TV series or movie franchise you loved, or the end of a tournament your team won.
 - Be sure to hit on the anticipation you felt before it happened, the excitement you felt during, and the disappointment or sadness you felt when it was actually over.
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TENSION

3 MINUTES

You've experienced something like this before, right? We all have! Maybe for you it was the end of summer vacation. Or having to say goodbye to the Avengers after the final film came out. Or the end of that undefeated championship season of softball. When stuff like that is said and done, we get sad. Because **when you love something, you definitely don't want to see it end**. You don't want the party to be over!

But maybe for you, the tension you're feeling about the ending of something is for a different reason. Maybe for you, the ending is heavier. It's more serious. Your parents are getting divorced, and now their marriage is coming to an end. A fight happened in your friendship, and the drama caused it to end. A friend or family member got really sick, and their illness ended when they passed away. Endings like that are sad for a different reason. They feel heavy, and final, and really, really painful at times.

The truth is, we're all going to have to deal with endings like these at some point in our lives. Every single person who has ever been born has one thing in common: One day, they're going to die. [Note: Try not to make this heavy and overly dramatic, state it more as a fact.] The life we all live is one day going to end.

That sounds like a bummer, doesn't it? Well, I think that's probably because talking about endings of any kind has a way of making us feel sad. But talking about death? Well, that's a whole other level.

INTERACTIVE: Feeling Deflated

This is where you'll use balloons to demonstrate how, while death may feel like the end, Jesus' resurrection proves there's more to life. Refer to your Communicator Guide for more information on how to conduct this Interactive.

It's kind of like this. Take a look at these balloons we have here on stage. If balloons had the ability to be happy, I'd say these would be really happy balloons! They're full, and colorful, and floating around. Not a care in the world. They're living their best balloon lives. But the reality is, over time, they'll start to deflate. They won't hold the air they once held. And eventually, they'll end up looking like this. [Hold up a deflated balloon.]

It's kind of sad, right? One day, all of these balloons we see here [motion to the balloons on stage] will stop floating around. And it'll probably feel like the party's over.

I think sometimes that's how we feel about death. When someone dies, it can feel like that's it. That there's nothing else left. And it can leave us feeling deflated and wondering if it's truly the end.

But what if I told you there was another way to think about death? Whether you've experienced no endings like this yet or you've experienced significant loss already, I think there's something powerful we can hold onto. Something that will help give us comfort and confidence when we think about death. And it all goes back to one of those things Jesus defeated thousands of years ago at Easter.

TRUTH

4 MINUTES

Luckily, there are several passages of Scripture in the New Testament that give us some insight about how we might think about death. Today, we're going to look at one of those passages from a book called Corinthians. Now, Corinthians is actually not a book; it's a letter written by a guy called the apostle Paul. He was a leader in the early Christian church. And in this letter, he wrote to encourage a group of Christians living in a city called Corinth.

In the chapter we're looking at today, Paul spent time reminding the Christians in Corinth of something that was super important to their faith. In fact, it's what we remember and celebrate as the Easter story today. **Jesus died for their sins, was buried, and then was raised back to life just three days later.** The last part of that is something we call the resurrection, meaning simply that Jesus came back to life. Isn't that incredible? He was dead, but then came back to life! Now we know that to be true because there were witnesses there who saw it. They saw Jesus be crucified on the cross and buried in a tomb. But when they returned to that tomb days later, He was no longer there. An angel of God told them that Jesus wasn't missing or lost; He had in fact been risen from the dead. And more than that, people encountered Jesus, whole and alive again, after His resurrection. Pretty cool, right?

Jesus' resurrection is pretty amazing for a lot of reasons. I mean, a dead guy coming back to life is something to pay attention to, right? But it's so much more than just His comeback from the grave that we celebrate and remember at Easter. **Jesus' resurrection changed the game for all of us when it comes to death. Because of it, we can now have hope that death isn't the real ending. Jesus defeated sin for us, and because of that, we have new life, both now and forever through Him.**

Here's what I mean. Take a look at what Paul wrote:

Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:54-57 NLT).

There's a lot to unpack here, but the main thing I want you to know is this: **Because of Jesus, death is defeated.** That's what Paul was reminding the Corinthians of in this passage. And it's what I want you to know today, too.

Paul said that because of Jesus, our dying bodies—the ones we're walking around in right now—have been transformed. Into what exactly? Well, bodies that will never die. Now that doesn't mean we'll just keep going on, and on, and on like a bunch of superheroes. We're all still going to face death at some point in our lives. But because of Jesus, we don't have to worry about what happens next. Because of Jesus, death doesn't remain undefeated. It doesn't get the last word.

You see, **when you believe in Jesus and live your life for Him, you invite the God who defeated death into your heart.** And when you do that, you don't have to wonder what comes next. You don't have to wonder how the story ends. **Though our physical bodies may die, there is a heaven that goes on forever. There is hope!** The party isn't over. We're not like a deflated balloon with no purpose or hope for the future. [Hold up the deflated balloon.] No! We have new life (right now!) because of Jesus! [Inflate the balloon with the pump and tie it so that air won't escape.] And that new life changes us. It inspires us to change our thoughts, actions, and behaviors. It gives us hope.

Jesus' death and resurrection made a way for us to be there with Him if we choose to believe in Him. I don't know about you, but that gives me hope. When I look forward and think about the endings I may experience in this life, it gives me hope to know that Jesus made a way for there to be more than that.

Because of Jesus, death is defeated.

APPLICATION

2 MINUTES

So, what does this mean for us in our everyday lives?

For some of you, it might mean that **you can have fresh hope that the story isn't over when it comes to physical death.** That's what we celebrate here at Easter! **Jesus defeated death and then, because He loves us so much, offered us the chance to experience that same victory through our faith in Him.** The party isn't over! [Motion to the inflated balloons on stage.] So, if you believe in Jesus, this means you can rest in the hope that your faith in Jesus has given you.

Let's look one more time at something our guy Paul had to say:

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you (Romans 8:11 NLT).

If you believe in Jesus, the very same Spirit that raised Him from the dead and gave Him power to defeat death now lives in you. You're walking around with that much power inside of you right now because of Jesus! I don't know about you, but that makes me feel like I can face just about anything this world throws at me!

Now for others of you, **maybe today is the day you want to learn more about all this faith stuff and what it really means for you.** Maybe you've lived with a lot of fear, or worry, or uncertainty about so many things in your life—the endings you might face being a few. Maybe you've had questions about what happens next or what this whole Easter thing really means for you. Maybe you want to believe in Jesus and experience that same power at work in your life. If that's where you are today, a great first step would be to talk to your Small Group Leader or another trusted adult about it. They can talk with you, pray with you, and point you toward the victory we all have because of Jesus.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

Remember, **because of Jesus, death is defeated.** And that's what we celebrate at Easter. Why? Because we're going to live forever with Him in a world that's amazing! And that's something worth celebrating! [Motion to the inflated balloons.]

So as you head to Small Group, I want you to be thinking about this: **How does it feel to know you can have a guaranteed new and forever life today?**



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
