

Gospel Activity: Three Crosses (from Daniel lesson 3, adapted)

(Place the three crosses on a flannelboard or dry-erase board.) One day many years ago three wooden crosses stood on a hill outside the city of Jerusalem. The Roman empire used crosses like these as a cruel way to put criminals to death for their crimes. (See Luke 23:33-43.) Two thieves were nailed to the outside crosses for the wrong they had done. Do you know who was nailed to the center cross? (Jesus Christ, the Son of God.) Jesus never did even one wrong thing. Why was He being punished? The Bible tells us that He was dying for your sin and mine, for all the wrong things that we have done. God says, **All have sinned** (Rom. 3:23). Every person has disobeyed God's laws. Lying, cheating, saying mean words and talking back to your mom or dad are just some of the things God calls sin. Because you have sinned, you deserve to be separated from God forever. But Jesus was dying for the sins of the whole world, including yours. He died for you (placing red heart with FOR YOU.) The heart is red to remind us that he gave His blood to pay for our sins. That's why He came to our world. The Bible, says, **The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world** (1 John 4:14). That means He came to save us from the punishment for our sins by dying on the cross, and then three days later coming back to life again!

The two thieves deserved to die for the wrong things they had done. At first both of them made fun of Jesus. One of them said to Him, "Aren't You the one God promised to send? Save Yourself and us!" This man's heart was full of the darkness of sin and unbelief. He said NO to Jesus (placing the NO heart), he wouldn't believe that Jesus is the Son of God who was dying to save him from sin. This man died in his sin and was separated from God forever in a place of punishment -- he is there today.

But the other thief was different. He began to think about his sin and how he needed a Savior. He stopped making fun of Jesus and said to the other thief, "Don't you even fear God? We are getting what we deserve, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he turned to Jesus and said, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." He was saying YES to Jesus (placing the YES heart). He said "Yes, Jesus, I believe you are the perfect Son of God and that you are dying for my sins." The very moment he believed in Jesus His sins were all forgiven and his heart was made clean!

Jesus said to the man who said YES, "Today you will be with Me in paradise." That means the thief would be with Jesus in heaven that very day. He is in heaven with Jesus right now and he'll always be with Jesus!

My question to you is, which thief are you like? Oh, you might say, "I'm not a thief!" You may never have stolen anything, but that doesn't matter, because God tells us that we have all sinned. Do you say NO to Jesus like that first thief? If you do, you will be separated forever from God just like him.

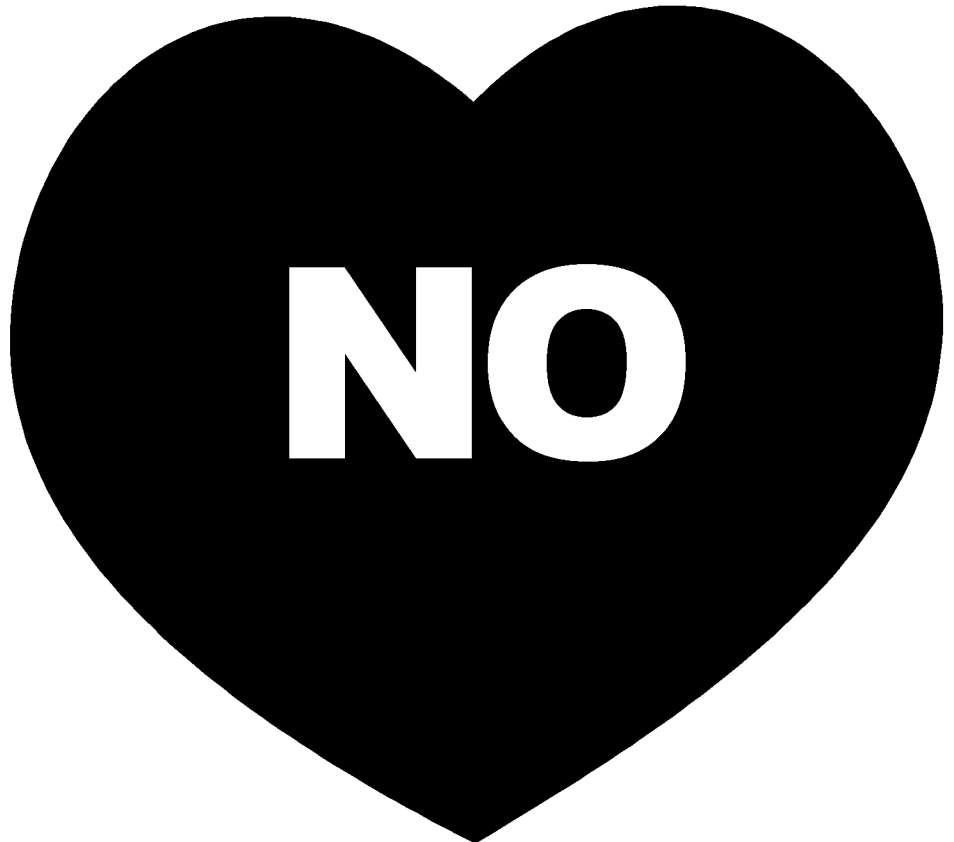
Or do you say YES to Jesus by believing in who He is and what He did for you on the cross? If you say YES, then just like the second thief, all your sins are forgiven, your heart is made clean, and you belong to Jesus forever! Will you say YES to Jesus right now?

Cut out the hearts and crosses.

Back the hearts with heavy construction paper that has been lightly sandpapered on the back to make it stick to the flannelboard. Stick the construction paper to the hearts in just one spot using a dab of glue stick or preferably a small piece of double-sided tape.


Color the FOR YOU heart red, leaving the letters white.

Either color the crosses brown and back them with sanded construction paper or print them out on brown construction paper and sandpaper the backs.





YES



**FOR
YOU**

