

Happy Ever After Heaven



happyland
Resource Booklet

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Happy Ever After

All Age Resource

Theme: Story Endings

NB: Encourage people to bring a friend!



Song Choose one or two songs to play on entrance:

- Heaven Can Wait (Meatloaf)
- Heaven is a Place on Earth (Belinda Carlisle)
- Happy Ending (Mika)

Invite people to think of their favourite 'happy ever after' story ending.

Connections: PowerPoint slide with common ideas about heaven e.g. fluffy clouds, pearly gates, cupid angels, throne, huge palace, long stairway, God with white beard etc.

Welcome and Introductions

Connections: Can you guess today's theme from the music and the pictures on screen?

They are all about heaven and happy endings.

Heaven – wow that's a big topic! It's also a hard topic – I only know of one person who has been there and come back to tell us about it. Who might that be?

Jesus!

Most of us have no experience of heaven...yet. So often the language we have about heaven is picture language.

Today we're going to try to keep things simple!

Introduce Theme

We're thinking about how stories end. How does God's Big Story end? Is there a happy ending? A 'happy ever after' where everything is ok in the end?

We're going to hear about how God made the world and wanted us to be friends, but people wanted to do their own thing. The world got broken and so did friendship between people and God. God had a plan to fix the world which was Jesus. Jesus was born, died and came back to life to fix the world. We'll find out that even though the world still looks broken, God is fixing it. One day it really will all be ok...there is THE BEST 'happy ever after' ending!

Opening Prayer

Father God, thank you that you made the world and everything in it, including us.

Thank you that you made us to be friends with each other and with you.

We're sorry for the times we mess things up.

Thank you that you are fixing things.

Be with us now as we explore how you will one day completely fix everything.

Help us to accept your invitation to the best 'happy ever after'.

Amen



Song

So Amazing God

Gill Hutchinson

[\(117\) So amazing God by Gill Hutchinson - YouTube](#)

Activity: Story Endings

Using film clips or PowerPoint images, encourage people to guess the story endings. If you are feeling bold, you could even play charades to act out story endings for everyone to guess!

Suggested stories might include:

- Cinderella marrying her prince
- Jack chopping down the beanstalk and living happily ever after with his mum
- The wolf being eaten by the pigs for supper in The Three Little Pigs story
- The Gruffalo running away from the mouse
- Peter, Susan, Edmond and Lucy returning from Narnia and telling Professor Kirke who promises them that they will return one day

In addition, you could read out these quotes and see if anyone can guess the story:

- "But wherever they go, and whatever happens to them on the way, in that enchanted place on the top of the Forest a little boy and his Bear will always be playing." (The House At Pooh Corner, A.A. Milne)
- "With the Gardiners, they were always on the most intimate terms. Darcy, as well as Elizabeth, really loved them; and they were both ever sensible of the warmest gratitude towards the persons who, by bringing her into Derbyshire, had been the means of uniting them." (Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austin)
- "The scar had not pained Harry for nineteen years. All was well." (Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, J.K. Rowling)
- "'God's in his heaven, all's right with the world,' whispered Anne softly." (Anne of Green Gables, Lucy Maud Montgomery)

After the fun of guessing these endings, invite people to discuss in groups their favourite story endings. What happens? Why do you like it? Is everything ok in the end?

You might want to prime a few people to be interviewed as well.

Confession

Our friendship with God can break too. God created each of us wonderfully and deliberately, but we're not perfect – God is the only one in the whole universe who is perfect! All the mistakes we make, and bad choices we choose, get in the way of us being friends with God. It's how the world gets broken and messy, how our friendships get broken and why all of us and the world needs fixing.

But how? Well, it's a really good idea to say sorry to each other and God. When we say sorry, we aren't just saying sorry for the messy things we've done wrong – maybe when we've been cross or shouted angry words. We're saying sorry for our imperfect, wrong choices that get in the way of us being friends with God.

NB: This confession involves mimed actions

1. Gently mime washing eyes

We're sorry God for the things people see us do, or the things we see other people do that are wrong and mess up your world.

2. Mime washing ears

We're sorry God for the things we hear, or other people hear us say that are wrong and mess up your world.

3. Mime washing mouth

We're sorry God for the things we say that are wrong and mess up your world.

4. Mime washing mind

We're sorry God for the things we think that are wrong and mess up your world.

5. Mime washing heart

We're sorry God for the things we feel that are wrong and mess up your world.

6. Mime washing hands

We're sorry God for the things we do that are wrong and mess up your world.

7. Invite people to give their hands a shake and to hold them out open in front of them

Father God, please make us clean and help us to live clean lives for you in your world. Amen.





Song

God Loves You and You and You

Chris Kipling

[God Loves You And You And You - Elevation Kids Lyrics](#)

<https://youtu.be/NmrGmkj0jDk?t=39>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxhmElt67TI>

Bible Story

This story is from 2000 years ago, and we learn all about it in the Bible. Lots and lots of years after God had created the world, and after humans kept breaking friends with God, it was time for the next part of God's big plan to fix things...



Animation

Watch Happyland 'Happy Ever After'

[Jesus Fixes Things \[Official Animation\] Hope Together - YouTube](#)

NB: If you want to supplement the animation with a reading, we suggest using a children's translation of the Bible, e.g. 'The Lion Storyteller Bible'.



Song

Good News Vineyard Music

[\(68\) GOOD NEWS \[Official Lyric Video\] | Vineyard Kids - YouTube](#)

Talk

Adapt these points to suit, but encourage conversation, with those in the congregation chatting and responding together.

- Who here loves a happy ending...in a story or a film? We often want to know that whatever the problem is, it will all be ok in the end. We don't want the uncertainty and worry of wondering what will happen? Will it be ok?
- There's a lot in the world at the moment that might make us worry. Will it be ok? Take a few minutes now to talk with those around you about the things that you are worried about, the things that you want to be ok. (Take ideas/feedback)
- This isn't what the world was supposed to be like when God made it. When God made the world, it was good, *everything* was good.
- BUT God gave people the choice of being friends with him or not... people chose to turn away from God, not putting him first. Our wrong choices broke the world and our friendship with God.
- The video showed us that God needed a plan to fix things. He washed the world (story of Noah), sent rules to help people live (story of Moses and the ten commandments), he even sent messages and messengers (Daniel, David) but none of these ways fixed the world.
- Only God who is perfect and full of love could fix the world. No amount of sticky tape or glue would do. God had to fix the world with love so that people could be friends with him again.

- That's why God sent his Son, Jesus the rescuer, to show people who God is like and the way to live. But still some people ignored Jesus and put him on a wooden cross to die.
- This was part of God's plan! Jesus died on the cross to fix absolutely everyone and everything! Jesus died for all the wrong things we do, because he loves us and wants to be our friend.
- Father God showed how amazing and powerful he is by bringing Jesus back to life again, all because he loves the world and everyone in it!
- The world still looks broken today – with all the things that we've just talked about. BUT...the world is being fixed and one day, God has promised that the world will be like new. It will be perfect again. Everything will be ok. There will be **THE BEST** 'happy ever after'!
- Jesus promised 'I'll be back!' ...just like that other famous film ending! One day Jesus will come back not as a baby but as a judge to sort out all that's right and wrong... **FOREVER!**
- What do you think this perfect, fixed, brand-new heavenly world will be like? Take a few minutes to chat to the people around you. (Take ideas/feedback)
- The Bible talks about heaven in picture language. The final book in the Bible, the book of Revelation, gives us a glimpse of heaven. It was written by one of Jesus' friends, John, who had a very vivid dream from God, all about heaven!
- We're told that everything will be fixed, everything will be ok. That in heaven there won't be any of the problems that make the world broken now, because Jesus will deal with them on his return. In heaven we're told there won't be any crying...because there won't be anything to make us cry. God, our comforter, will wipe away every tear from our eyes.
- Not only that, but there won't be any more sickness either! Jesus promises that sick people will have brand-new bodies, in the brand-new, fixed, world.
- So, all in all, heaven is going to be absolutely amazing – and everyone who is Jesus' friend will live together forever, in this perfect brand-new heaven that God is bringing to our brand-new world. It's going to be **SO GOOD!**
- How many of us are good at waiting? How many of us, like Veronica Salt from 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory', want things **NOW?! Well, we don't actually have to wait for heaven – even though the world is still being fixed, we can have a taste right now...like a bite of a big cake!**
- And whilst we're waiting for Jesus to return and fix the world, we can say sorry here on earth, for the ways we break it. Like when we turn our backs on Father God, and instead, choose to see, hear, think, do, say, and feel wrong things.
- We can thank Father God for sending Jesus and ask his Special Helper, the Holy Spirit, to make us clean and to fix us. Then, as God's friend, we can help him to fix things by loving the world and everyone in it. It won't be completely fixed until Jesus comes back. But God invites us to begin our very own 'happy ever after' with him right now!



Song 'Happy Ever After'

[Jesus Fixes Things \[Official Action Video\] Hope Together - YouTube](#)

Find the accompanying book here: [Hope Together : God's Big Story Resources](#)

Prayer Activity: On Earth as it is in Heaven

The Lord's Prayer is the family prayer for Christians... we talk to God as our Dad, our Father. We say 'On earth as it is in heaven', which basically means we're asking God to make earth more like heaven – which like we've found out - is perfect and beautiful!

So now we're going to bring to God the bad things on earth that we want less of, that we want him to change so that our world is more like heaven now.

We're also going to ask God to bring the good things from heaven to earth e.g. peace, love, no sickness, no tears etc.

And then we're going to listen...is God inviting us to be part of his 'happy ever after'?

You could lead the prayers, giving time for people to think of their responses either in their heads or by talking to those around them.

In addition, you could invite people to write on one sheet of paper what they want to see *less* of in the world, and the other, what they want to see *more* of in the world, making it more like heaven. Then they could bring their more/less prayers up to the front and put them in two separate 'more' and 'less' piles. Read them out and shout a big amen at the end!

Finish with the Lord's Prayer and then the prayer from the 'Happy Ever After' book below:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread,

And forgive us our sins.

As we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.

Now and forever,

Amen



Song **Big Family of God** **Nick and Becky Drake**

[\(117\) Big Family Of God \(Official Lyric Video\) - Nick & Becky Drake // Worship For Everyone - YouTube](#)

Blessing

In John chapter 3 verse 16 it says God loved the world so much that he sent his son, Jesus, so that we can be forever friends with God.

Father God, may we know right now how much you love us and want to be our friend.
Please bless us with love for you, the world you made and people in it.
Help us to be your friend and join you in fixing what is broken...forever
Amen

Possible Extra Songs

Great Big God **Vineyard Music**

[\(117\) Our God is a Great Big God Video with lyrics - YouTube](#)

Bigger Than Big **Jay Stocker**

[\(117\) Bigger than Big - YouTube](#) Or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUU-6LD1D_0

O Praise The Name (Anastasis) **Hillsong**

[\(68\) O Praise The Name \(Anástasis\) Lyric Video - Hillsong Worship - YouTube](#)

Yet Not I **City Alight**

[\(68\) CityAlight ~ Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me \(Lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

Amazing Grace **Chris Tomlin**

[\(68\) Amazing Grace \(My Chains are Gone\) - Chris Tomlin \(with lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

Because He Lives **Celtic Worship**

[\(68\) Because He Lives \(Official Music Video\) | Celtic Worship - YouTube](#)

The Power of The Cross **Keith and Kirstyn Getty**

[\(68\) The Power of the Cross \(Official Lyric Video\) - Keith & Kristyn Getty - YouTube](#)

