Bob: It’s amazing how much children, even little children, can remember and can retain. It’s important for us, as parents, to make sure we’re helping them remember the right stuff.

Dennis: Does anybody here—hold your hand up if you know the answer to this. Does anyone here know what happened on the first Easter?

Child: He rose from the dead!

Child: Jesus died on the cross, and He arose again.

Dennis: Okay. Do you see this big book right here?

Child: Yes. My brother has that!

Dennis: He does? Does he like it?

Child: Mm-hm.

Dennis: This is called *The Beginner’s Bible*, and there is a story in here. I want you to see the picture. Can you see the picture, right over here, on this page right here?

Child: That’s Jesus.

Dennis: What is Jesus doing there?

Child: He’s praying.

Child: He’s praying.

Dennis: Do you know what He had done before He went to the garden to pray? He had come into Jerusalem riding—

Child: —a donkey.
Dennis: A donkey; that's right.

Child: And then they crucified Him.

Dennis: Yes, and He is praying because it's getting ready to be a very sad day in His life.

Child: And they waved palm branches and said, "Hosannah."

Child: Yes, and they took their shirt and laid it on the ground.

Dennis: Do you know what the surprise was that God had planned?

Child: Jesus would rose from the dead, and rise from the dead.

Dennis: You mean He would come back alive?

Child: Yes, and they didn't even know that.

Child: From the dead.

Child: They didn't even know that He was going to rose from the dead.

Dennis: Yes. Well, this book says, "And His friends would not be sad for long." Now, look at this next page. Surprise! What's the picture up there?

Child: I know.

Child: I know.

Dennis: What is it, Jimmy?

Child: The stone’s been rolled. The stone’s been rolled. Jesus' body isn't there anymore. He's not there anymore.

Child: I can't see the pictures!

Child: —and they said, "Good news. The Savior has rose from the dead."

Bob: This is FamilyLife Today for Wednesday, February 29th. Our host is the president of FamilyLife®, Dennis Rainey, and I'm Bob Lepine. We're going to talk today about how we can team up together to tell the kids in your neighborhood the Easter story.

And welcome to FamilyLife Today. Thanks for joining us on the Wednesday edition. I was with a friend of mine recently, and he was sharing with me how he
had come to faith in Christ. I was astounded by one of the things he said. He said, "I was 19 years old before I ever heard the story of Easter, the story of the Gospel." He said, "I had heard the name of Jesus, but I had always heard it in a non-religious context. I had heard people use it as profanity."

**Dennis:** He grew up in America?

**Bob:** Grew up in America, grew up—

**Dennis:** —had never heard the Gospel, and the truth about Who Jesus Christ is, and what He came to do until he was 19?

**Bob:** He didn't know that Jesus Christ was a man who lived on earth 2,000 years ago. All he knew was that people threw that name around when they were angry. Somebody sat him down and shared the Gospel with him, and that was when he came to Christ. I was astounded. I mean, I was really amazed to think that there are people growing up right in our neighborhoods who just don't know the story of Jesus, the story of the Gospel, the story of His death and resurrection.

**Dennis:** Well, if you add to that story the statistical reality that 80 percent—now listen to me, 80 percent of all children do not go to church. Now, think about that. That means out of the ten kids that your child is playing with, only two of them are going to end up going to church. The other eight—they, most likely—are going to be like your friend, Bob, who won't know who Jesus Christ really is.

**Bob:** They may occasionally wind up in a church for Christmas or for Easter, but they're growing up without any foundation of anything related to spiritual reality or spiritual truth. All of this got me thinking. What if we could, on one weekend, just get the word out to all of the kids? You know, what if we could find one weekend where we could just get all the kids together and just say, "We just want to make sure you've heard the story. We want to make sure you know that this is not a fable. This is something that really happened; and this is how people become a Christian, by putting their faith and trust in the Person who died and was raised again"? What if you could do that with all the kids in the U.S.?

**Dennis:** And what day of the year would you do it on if you decided to do something like that?

**Bob:** Well, I guess you could pick any weekend; couldn't you?

**Dennis:** You could pick a weekend, and you would probably pick either a Saturday or a Sunday. For a lot of reasons, you might look at Saturday and say, especially for younger children, you might say, "You know what? A spring Saturday might be a great time to share the Gospel with kids." How about
hosting it around a day that is celebrated by the Christian community, as perhaps, the holiest day of the year?

**Bob:** You’re talking about Resurrection Day, talking about Easter; right?

**Dennis:** That’s right. Our message, the message of Jesus Christ, is hinged upon the reality of Jesus Christ dying on the cross for our sins, and then defeating death on our behalf, and offering life beyond the grave.

**Bob:** We were kicking this around with our team, here at FamilyLife. Of course, for years, we’ve been making available a tool to families called Resurrection Eggs®, that a lot of our listeners have used with their own children, with relatives, as a way to teach kids the basics of the Gospel message—about Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, about His being arrested, about His scourging, about His crucifixion, and about His resurrection. We’ve had more than 850,000 sets of Resurrection Eggs be used here in America, in Russia, and in Spanish-speaking countries.

Before we get into that, we ought to spend just a little time understanding where the idea for Resurrection Eggs came from, in the first place.

**Barbara:** I didn’t come up with the idea. I’m not a creative-type person.

**Bob:** Meet Barbara Craft.

**Barbara:** I’m one that sees an idea and I can go with it.

**Bob:** She’s a mom and a grandmother who has a heart for sharing the real story of Easter with everyone—her own children, her friends, her neighbors. She remembers when a friend of hers first shared with her the idea of using brightly-colored Easter eggs to tell others, not about the Easter bunny, but about the death and resurrection of Jesus.

**Barbara:** I was in our home, teaching ladies how to do a craft project, using paper bags, and paper twists, and making soft frilly baskets. One of the girls sitting there had mentioned telling the Easter story with eggs. I had never heard about it.

The next thing I knew, she sent me a paper. It had just some Scriptures and showed every day, common things that you can use and put inside a plastic egg and tell the Easter story. Right away, I started making baskets for my neighbors, making sets of eggs from this craft project, and putting them in there, and just giving them out to whomever I could.

**Bob:** We got excited about that and thought, “This gives us a great opportunity to go to our listeners and say, ‘What if we could partner together with you and
host the World's Largest Easter Egg Hunt in neighborhoods all across America?" Now just think about that. That's your backyard, or a neighborhood park, or teaming up with some of your friends from church, or some neighbors, and inviting all the neighborhood kids over and having a party, a little party, right before Easter—the Saturday before Easter—where you use the Resurrection Eggs as a way to communicate the message of the Gospel to the children in your neighborhood.

What if we could have tens of thousands of kids hear the Gospel on one Saturday?

**Dennis:** —and had, as you've just said, Bob, the World's Largest Easter Egg Hunt, in the history of Easter. Now, if you think about it, Easter eggs—as a symbol—there is nothing special about them, related to the Easter holiday. It's a secular symbol, but it's a safe one.

It's interesting how FamilyLife has put together a resource for families, and for churches, and people who work with children called Resurrection Eggs, that has, in each egg, an object that tells the Easter story. You pass these eggs out to a few children, or as they have been, on Sunday morning at Sunday school classes, or even in a big church. I've seen this done in front of the adults, and the adults are craning their heads looking—

**Bob:** —to see what's in the egg.

**Dennis:** To see what's in the eggs there. So you open the egg up, and you say, "Ah, this is a donkey. This represents the donkey that Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem as He was about to enter the final days of His life and go to the cross." And then there's another egg that has a little piece of leather in it, and that, of course, represents the scourge, where Jesus was beaten, and—

**Bob:** —there are coins in one egg that represent the money that Judas collected for betraying Jesus. There's a representation of the nails that were driven into His hands and into His feet when He was crucified.

**Dennis:** Right, a cross.

**Bob:** Right, a crown of thorns that's placed on His head. All of these symbols help you tell the story to children in a way that captures their imagination, captures their attention, and helps them remember it. That's been one of the great things. Children can come up to you a year later, and they can tell you the story because they remember the objects. They touched them. They passed them around and looked at them.

**Dennis:** Mm-hm. When you take this Easter story, with all of its fascination for children, and you realize that eight out of ten children will never go to church—
and add to that what George Barna tells us—that between the ages of 5 and 13, a child is five times more likely to become a Christian and receive Christ as Savior and Lord during that age range, between 5 years and 13, than he is at any other time in his life. You take those facts; and you think, “This is a tremendous opportunity.”

It's not a matter of staging some kind of huge event that takes hours and hours and days and days to get ready for it. There's a little preparation, but we want you to know we've thought about you as we have thought about hatching the World's Largest Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt. As we've thought about it, we've thought, “How can we make it into a very simple kit to equip moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas, to be able to let the light shine before children?”

Bob, I just happen to believe, I think the Lord, God of the Universe, is pleased when we step out to tell the Good News—the story of Christ's life, His death on behalf of our sins, and His resurrection from the dead, and how He offers eternal life to all who will trust in Him and believe in Him. I think God is pleased when we tell this story, especially to young people.

**Bob:** Well, Jesus, Himself, commissioned us with this assignment of telling the Gospel story in what we refer to now as "The Great Commission." It's really our mission on earth. It's what God wants us to be all about. We thought, “What if we could go to our listeners, give them a pretty easy assignment to accomplish—help them with all the details? We'll think through—we've got the checklist, all put together for you; and just ask them to sign up and say, 'I can do that in my neighborhood.'"

What if we would get, I don't know, thousands, tens of thousands, of families that would say, "We can do this in our neighborhood. We'll team up with some friends of ours, and we'll pull it off together." This could be a wonderful outreach where tens of thousands of children could hear the Gospel.

**Dennis:** I think it could be as simple as passing out some fliers or, maybe, taking an egg, filled with some candy, around to each home in your neighborhood—especially homes that have children in them—and inviting them to come over on Saturday morning, Easter weekend, for a one-hour Easter egg hunt. You might have six, or seven, maybe ten children come to your backyard and have your children participate in it. It could be as simple as six to ten children, who might not otherwise hear the Gospel.

Or, Bob, it may be that there will be those families—and I have to believe there are going to be those families who live near a park. I know, when we had smaller children, we lived near a small park that would have been ideal to have made some posters, and put some posters on some telephone poles near the park a week to ten days before the Easter egg hunt and said, "Saturday morning at
10:00 there is going to be an Easter egg hunt here for children between the ages of 4 and 13,"—whatever age you want to make it for.

Just see what happens. See how many kids end up coming. Use that park as a miniature cathedral to enjoy some fun with children, but let us equip you to be able to host an Easter egg hunt, where you get the privilege of explaining very simply—you don't have to be seminary-trained to do this. You don't have to have a theological diploma—but to be able to walk through 12 plastic Easter eggs, each having an object in them, except one. There is one Easter egg that's empty. It doesn't have anything in it. I'll let you decide what that is. But walk through these 12 eggs and tell the story of who Jesus Christ is, what He came to do, and how these children can have a personal relationship with Him.

Bob: Now, we're thinking the park would have dozens, maybe hundreds, of eggs, depending on how many kids are coming. Most of the eggs would have candy in them. The kids would go pick up a basketful of eggs, but some of these eggs will be the special ones that you're describing, that are the Resurrection Eggs.

After the kids have gathered up all of their eggs, and they've got them in their baskets, you would pull them together, and you'd say, "Now, how many of you have an egg that has a sticker on it or that has a checkmark on it?" Some of the kids would raise their hand. You'd start taking them through, color by color, and have them open each egg. You would say, "Who has got the pink egg?" Somebody would raise their hand and say, "I've got the pink egg." They open it up, they pull out the donkey, and then you'd say, "Do you know why there is a donkey in your egg?"

We've actually got a booklet that takes you through the story of Easter. It tells you what each symbol represents, and you can tell them the story. You know what? In addition to the kids coming over, a lot of the kids are going to bring Mom, or Mom and Dad with them. They're going to stand around and hear the story. They may not know the story, or maybe a long time since they've heard it; and you may have some adults who come to faith as they listen to you present the Gospel.

Dennis: I have a friend who does this in his neighborhood—he and his wife—and this has happened. They have had family members come with children to see what's up, see what's happening, here at their house. They've had some great opportunities to share their personal faith in Jesus Christ in a very winsome, fun-loving way; but, at the same time, offer the truth of who Jesus Christ is to young people and adults alike.

Bob: You know, we've got a lot of folks listening right now to FamilyLife Today. How many of the ones who are listening do you think are going to say, "Yes, we could do that." Do you think it's ten percent?
Dennis: One percent.

Bob: One percent.

Dennis: Yes. Yes, I think this is a new idea. I think it takes a while for new ideas to be embraced, but this broadcast is heard by somewhere around a million-and-a-half to two million people. Now, if you could give me one percent of that, I'd like that.

Bob: Yes, that would be a lot of neighborhoods.

Dennis: It would.

Bob: In fact, what we've done, on our website at FamilyLife.com—you go to our main website and you can click on—there's a link on the main page for the World's Largest Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt. We're asking folks to go by and sign up—the “One Percenters”—we're asking them to sign up and say, "We're going to do this in our neighborhood."

Dennis: "We're going to be a 'One Percenter'."

Bob: Yes.

Dennis: It doesn't mean, “My neighborhood is the largest neighborhood.”

Bob: No, it just means that, “We'll do it. We'll invite some neighborhood kids over”—

Dennis: —“and we're going to be a part of the World's”—

Bob and Dennis: —“Largest Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt.”

Bob: That's what you're a part of. Then, when you sign up, we're going to send you the material that you need. We'll keep you up to date, in the weeks between here and Easter, with updated information. Just check up and make sure that you've got everything you need—that you're on target for this. We're going to keep a map here, that's pinpointed with all of the locations where this is happening, and get an idea of the neighborhoods where this is taking place.

After it's over, we're going to try to connect with everybody, and get some stories, and get some pictures, and post those on our website, and see if we can build a little momentum. Imagine thousands of kids, tens of thousands of kids, on the day before Easter, hearing the Good News that Jesus died for us and made it possible for us to have a relationship with God through Christ. That
would make this Easter a whole lot more special than any Easter you’ve been a part of before.

**Dennis:** It really would, and there is one additional reason for you to do this. That is to make your children a part of it. There is nothing quite like having outreaches, whether it be in your neighborhood, at your school, in a park.

We did this, on a number of occasions, with our children. We joined with Josh McDowell one time and actually paid for the cable company to come in and wire the cable to a gymnasium, where our kids went to junior high, to be a part of the World’s Largest Pizza Party. Our children were a part of hosting that for their junior high and high school. There were about 100, 125 kids, as I recall, at that pizza party. We bought the pizza and brought it in there, and they had a chance to hear Josh McDowell present the Gospel, live, as a part of that cable network that we were a part of.

Well, here is a similar opportunity for your children to be a part of evangelistically, reaching out to their neighborhood, their friends. Maybe you want to invite some of your extended family members over to your house on Saturday morning and be a part of this World’s Largest Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt.

**Bob:** We’ve got the tools that you need here at FamilyLife. If you don’t already have a set of Resurrection Eggs, you can order those from us. Go online at FamilyLifeToday.com and order a set of Resurrection Eggs. I think there are a lot of Christian bookstores that have them, as well.

In addition to the Resurrection Eggs, you may want to get a copy of the *Miss PattyCake* video that’s designed for children between the ages of four and ten. The video is themed together with the Resurrection Eggs and reinforce the story that you have already told to the children as you go through the Resurrection Eggs. There’s an activity book, that we put together, that’s online that can be downloaded, as well, with games, and activities, and some recipes, and some crafts that you can do.

**Dennis:** So what would you do with that? You’d have the hunt outside—

**Bob:** Here is how I would do it. I would have the kids come over. We’d have the Easter egg hunt with all the candy eggs and the Resurrection Eggs, set out in the backyard or in the park. Then after the kids have gathered up their eggs, I’d have them all come and sit around in a big circle. I would say, "How many of you have an egg with a sticker on it or with a checkmark on it?" We’d have kids raise their hand, and I’d say, "Who has the pink egg with the sticker on it?" I would just go through the presentation of the Resurrection Eggs, using the material that’s in the Resurrection Egg kit.
Well, once that was all done, I think we might have a cake for the kids. Then, I'd take them into the living room. I'd sit them all around the TV; and say, "We're going to watch a video that talks about the Resurrection Eggs that we just talked about with Miss PattyCake." Just pop in the video—it's about 30 minutes long. I'd let them watch that.

Or, I'd pull out the picture book; and I'd read that to them. There are a lot of different things you can do—a lot of different ideas you can adapt to make this work how you want it to work, but we don't want it to be too complicated. We just want lots of people to sign up and do it.

**Dennis:** —and lots of children to hear. You know, Jesus made it very clear. He said, "Hinder not the children to come unto Me." He spoke to little children as those who had value, whose lives were important. I think, today, the Christian community needs a—well, I think we need a fresh appreciation for presenting the Gospel to children. What a better way to do it than on Easter weekend, by being a part of this Easter egg hunt.

**Bob:** Well, our hope is that you'll be part of the “One Percenters”—you will go to our website at FamilyLife.com. Sign up. We've got a map on the website that's showing where these neighborhood Easter egg hunts are being held. We'll keep in touch with you. There's the downloadable activity book, 50 pages of ideas and activities. There are invitations that you can download and use, as well. Of course, if you need a set of Resurrection Eggs, you can order those from us at FamilyLifeToday.com.

The *Miss PattyCake* video, if you need that, it's available at FamilyLifeToday.com, as well; or you can call us at 1-800-FL-TODAY to order these resources. Again, the activity book is downloadable; but we can send you the Resurrection Eggs and the *Miss PattyCake* DVD when you get in touch with us at 1-800-FL-TODAY.

Again, our hope is that one Saturday, this spring, there will be tens of thousands of kids who will have an opportunity to hear the Gospel message because of your participation with us in this World’s Largest Neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt.

What are you doing over there?

**Dennis:** I'm just practicing a little math, just trying to figure out what one percent of 2 million is.

**Bob:** Well, that's pretty easy to figure out; isn't it?

**Dennis:** It's 20,000; and if that's true,—

**Bob:** You had to write that down?
**Dennis:** That's 20,000 families; and then you had—in each Easter egg hunt, you had six kids come—six children—

**Bob:** Okay, all right.

**Dennis:** That's 120,000. If you had a dozen kids come, that would be a quarter million, 240,000.

**Bob:** That would be pretty good; wouldn't it?

**Dennis:** That would be a good day's work for telling the story, the Easter story, to children, this coming Easter.

**Bob:** Well, it starts with the "One Percenters"—those folks who are listening, who will say, "You know what? We ought to do that." Not just, "We ought to do that," but "We're going to do it." Go to FamilyLife.com, or call us at 1-800-FL-TODAY. If you need help getting set up with this, call. Somebody on our team will help walk you through it. Again, go to the website at FamilyLife.com. Let's see if we can make this happen—if we can get tens of thousands of homes all across the country participating this year, in time for Easter.

Now, tomorrow we're going to talk to a mom who did this. I think she did it last year. She's been doing it for a couple of years, and she's going to share with us some of the exciting stuff that has happened as she has—I guess you'd call her a "Point One Per Center" because she was an early, early adopter to this idea; right?

**Dennis:** She was.

**Bob:** We'll talk with her tomorrow, and I hope you can be back with us for that. I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, and our entire broadcast production team.

**Dennis:** Hold it. I just figured out that if we had 1,000 families who held these in parks, and you had 75 children—

**Bob:** —at each park—

**Dennis:** —at each park. That would be another 75,000.

**Bob:** Yes, that would kick it up there; wouldn't it?

**Dennis:** That would kick it up there.
Bob: We hope you can be back with us tomorrow for another edition of FamilyLife Today.

Dennis: I wonder if we could rent the Cowboys’ Stadium?

Bob: FamilyLife Today is a production of FamilyLife of Little Rock, Arkansas. Help for today, hope for tomorrow.

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