

# JESUS THE SAVIOR: TO THE CROSS

*(The Gospel Project Volume 9 Unit 26: Customized from the Preschool, Younger, and Older Leader Guides)*

## **BIG PICTURE QUESTION FOR THIS UNIT:**

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

## **KEY PASSAGE FOR THIS UNIT:**

Philippians 2:8

“And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

## **TODAY’S LESSON: The Last Supper**

### **PARENT/LEADER OVERVIEW:**

As the Passover celebration drew near, Jerusalem hummed with excitement. Everyone wondered if Jesus—teacher, miracle-worker, and prophet—would come for Passover. (John 11:56-57) The Passover meal was a permanent statute God intended for every Israelite family to observe each year. (See Ex. 12:1-28; Lev. 23:5-8.) But it was no secret the religious leaders were determined to kill Jesus. Jesus had warned His disciples what would happen this Passover. (Mark 10:33-34; Luke 18:31)

As they ate the Passover meal, Jesus broke bread and gave it to His disciples. He shared the cup with them too, explaining that the bread and cup represented His body and blood. Jesus established a new covenant.

In the Old Testament, God made a covenant, or promise, with His people. He gave them commandments to follow so they could live in right relationship with Him. But God’s people broke the covenant. They didn’t obey God, and they didn’t love Him.

What the sacrifice of the Passover lamb could not do—take away sins once and for all—the perfect Lamb of God was going to do. Jesus, the perfectly sinless Son of God, was going to take the punishment for sin upon Himself. (See Heb. 10:1-10.) As Jesus’ disciples prepared for Passover, Jesus prepared to die. By dying on the cross, Jesus brought forgiveness and made the way for people to know and love God again.

Believers take the Lord’s Supper to remember what Jesus did for us in His death and resurrection. We remember God’s faithfulness, and we look forward to the day that Jesus will return.

Not all the kids you teach will be ready to take the Lord’s Supper at church. Gently explain that the Lord’s Supper, like baptism, is an ordinance of the church and is a celebration for those who have repented of their sin and trusted in Jesus for salvation.

### PREPARING YOUR CHILDREN FOR GOD'S WORD:

Make sure that your children have a Bible with them even if they are too young to read.

Have your kids sing along with the worship songs that are posted for this week.

### THE BIBLE STORY: (Video teaching online)

Matthew 26; Mark 14;

Luke 22; John 13

**Jesus and His disciples were in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover.** Long ago, God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt. He sent ten plagues to Egypt and during the tenth plague, the firstborn of the Egyptians died. The Israelites smeared the blood of a lamb on their doorposts, and God kept them safe; He passed over their houses. God said that once a year, the Israelites should celebrate the Passover to remember how He rescued them. He told His people when and how to celebrate.

**On the day when the Jewish people were supposed to kill the Passover lamb, Jesus sent Peter and John to get the meal ready.** He said, "Go into the city, and you will meet a man carrying a jug of water. Follow him."

Jesus said that the man would go to a house, and the homeowner would show Peter and John a large room upstairs with furniture in it. That was the place Jesus wanted them to get the Passover meal ready. So Peter and John did as Jesus said.

**When the Passover meal was ready, Jesus and His disciples reclined to eat. Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray Me." The disciples were upset, but Jesus knew this was part of God's plan. Peter said he would never betray Jesus, but Jesus said Peter would deny Him three times.**

**Then Jesus took the bread, gave thanks to God for it, broke it, and then gave it to His disciples to eat. Jesus said, "This is My body, which I am giving for you. Do this to remember Me."**

**Jesus took the cup and gave it to His disciples. They drank from it, and Jesus said, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many."**

**They sang a hymn together, and then they went out to the Mount of Olives.**

Jesus knew He would be arrested and would suffer. Then He would die on the cross to take the punishment for the sins of the world. On the third day, Jesus would rise from the dead.

### APPLICATION:

Jesus knew all along that the time was coming for Him to be arrested and put to death. Passover was an incredibly important celebration for God's people, and Jesus made it even more special and significant. Jesus used the bread and the cup to show a picture of what He was preparing to do for us.

Jesus explained that the bread represented His body. Jesus allowed evil men to arrest Him. He did not fight back when they hurt Him and made fun of Him. He laid down His life willingly.

The cup represented Jesus' blood. The wounds Jesus suffered caused Him to bleed. Generations before, the blood of a spotless lamb had been the mark of a house that trusted God and had saved God's people from death. At the cross, Jesus shed His blood to save people from an even greater death. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

**Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.** We do this in many ways, but one of the most important is by taking the Lord's Supper, or communion. Different churches practice this in different ways. Some may pass a plate with a lot of small crackers and another with many small cups of grape juice. Others may use larger bits of bread and dip it into the cup. The important thing isn't how a church takes communion, but that they remember Jesus and honor His sacrifice through obedience. Communion is like baptism in some ways: it is for those who already have faith in Jesus, and it cannot save you. It is a symbol to you and the rest of the world of what Jesus did for you.

## CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus showed His disciples with the bread and the drink that He is the true Passover Lamb. God's people had broken the old covenant, and God promised to make a new covenant to forgive sins. The new covenant says that everyone who turns away from sin and trusts in Jesus' death and resurrection will be forgiven of his sins and will have eternal life.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

### 2-5 Year Olds:

What special celebration had Jesus and His disciples come to Jerusalem for? (*Passover*)

How would Peter and John know where to go to get the Passover meal ready? (*They would meet a man carrying a jug of water.*)

What did Jesus say the bread was like? (*His body*)

What did Jesus say the cup was like? (*His blood*)

***What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.***

How is the new covenant Jesus made with God's people better than the old one? (*God would forgive people's sins and help them obey Him.*)

### Kindergarten-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:

Whom did Jesus send to prepare the Passover? (*Peter and John, Luke 22:8*)

What two items did Jesus share with His disciples as a way to remember His sacrifice? (*the bread and the cup, Luke 22:19-20*)

What did Jesus say Peter would do three times before the morning came? (*deny that he knew Jesus, Luke 22:34*)

Why is the Lord's Supper so important? *Guide your kids to think less about the specific foods used and more about the symbolism of the meal. Remind them that Jesus' sacrifice was a choice. He did not have to allow His enemies to hurt and kill Him. The Lord's Supper is a meaningful way for us to honor Jesus by obeying Him. The Lord's Supper is a beautiful picture of what Jesus did for us in dying on the cross.*

Who can participate in taking the Lord's Supper? *Guide your kids to think about the importance of the bread and the cup. Remind them that only those who have faith in Jesus' death and resurrection have salvation from sin. Those who reject Jesus or who have not yet come to faith do not participate in the Lord's Supper.*

What other ways do we remember and celebrate Jesus' sacrifice for us? *Direct your kids to think about when most churches gather. Discuss the hymns and songs we sing. Remind your kids that we celebrate Easter in the springtime. Talk about the burial and resurrection symbolism of baptism.*

Say • **Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.** Christians today remember the same way.

### 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade:

When was the old covenant established? What is the new covenant? *Help your kids recognize that in the old covenant, God expected His people to live a certain way. He explained this covenant to Abraham in Genesis. God's people had broken the old covenant over and over, so God in His mercy established a new covenant. The new covenant says that everyone who turns away from sin and trusts in Jesus' death and resurrection will be forgiven of his sins and have eternal life.*

(Option: read Jer. 31:31.)

Why did Jesus instruct the disciples to take the bread and the cup? *Lead your kids to recall that by remembering Jesus' sacrifice in this way, we "proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."*

(Option: read 1 Cor. 11:23-26.)

What must we do to be saved through the new covenant? *Discuss with your kids that our salvation is not dependent*

*on our works because Jesus already lived a perfect life and died to pay for our sins. We receive the free gift of salvation by trusting Him as our Lord.*

(Option: read Rom. 10:9.)

Say • During the Last Supper, Jesus told His disciples about God's plan to rescue people from their sins. **Jesus commanded His disciples to remember His sacrifice.** He commands everyone who believes in Him to remember too.

## **The Gospel: God's Plan for Me**

Ask your kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with your kids.

**God rules.** Explain to your kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

**We sinned.** Tell your kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

**God provided.** Read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

**Jesus gives.** Share with your kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

**We respond.** Tell your kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

### **LIFEWAY KIDS APP:**

You can download the LifeWay Kids app to find more activities that will go along with the lessons each week. Look for The Gospel Project and click on Volume 9 (the lite version is free). Then click on Unit 26 and you will see all of the lessons in that unit. Click on this week's Bible story for more activities.