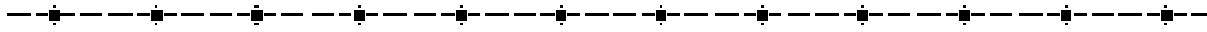


GOD'S BIG PLAN

Remember Me John 13:1-18:1

Supporting Scriptures: Matthew 26:17-46; Mark 14:12-42; Luke 22:7-46; John 13:1-18:1;
John 1:29-31; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26



Lesson Goals: To see that love is expressed in obedience.
To see the need for unity among believers.
To see that believers are known by their love.

Scripture Memory If you love me, you will do the things I command. John 14:15 (ICB)

NOTE: Familiarize yourself with this story. Don't read it. Tell it as a STORY. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

The Lesson: Let's review what we have learned so far. (Review the previous stories, focusing on the ones that specifically point to Christ's birth. Encourage more and more students to share.)

What would you do if you were somehow allowed to know that this would be your last day on earth? (Allow your students to share their ideas.) Well, Jesus had known throughout His ministry that the time would come for His last day on earth, as well. And as the time to sacrifice the Passover lamb grew closer, not long after raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus went back to Jerusalem. As Jesus walked through the gates of Jerusalem one last time, He knew what was coming. The people were happy to see Him. They were ready to make Him king, but the leaders were waiting for Him. They were still angry and they wanted Jesus to die.

Jesus knew His time was up. He had finished the work God gave Him to do. During that last week, Jesus visited the temple and He told stories. These weren't just any stories; they explained things about God and heaven. But on Thursday of that week, Jesus just wanted time with His disciples. Some things were about to happen that they would struggle with. One of the twelve was about to turn Jesus in to the leaders. Another of them would say he had never known Jesus. They would be afraid and not know what to do. Jesus, knowing all of this, wanted to prepare them. He wanted to show them how much He really loved them.

READ: Luke 22:7-8 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Peter and John did as Jesus asked them. They found a man who was willing to let them use an up-stairs room that he had. It even had a table in it where they could eat. As they all sat around the table and began to eat, Jesus encouraged them: "I have really looked forward to eating this Passover meal with you. It's something I wanted to do before I suffer. It's the last time I'll eat it with you until we eat together in heaven." When He said that, Jesus took some bread. He gave thanks, broke it, and handed some to each of His disciples. Then He told them, "My body is going to be broken just like this bread. Every time you eat it, from now on, remember me." Then Jesus took the cup. He gave thanks, again, and handed the cup to each one. "Just as wine is poured out of its container into the cup, my blood will be poured out for you. It will be poured out to forgive sins. Every time you drink this, remember me."

When they had finished eating, Jesus got up from the table. He wrapped a towel around His waist, poured water into a large bowl, and washed the disciple's dusty, dirty feet. Some of them had a hard time

letting Jesus wash their feet because they knew that this job was what the lowest servants were made to do. But Jesus was teaching them an important lesson. “You should do as I have done for you,” Jesus concluded. “The way to be a true leader, to be truly important, is to serve one another. Service comes from love and the only way people will know you belong to me is if you love each other.” He continued, “And to show your love for me, obey what I’ve asked you to do.”

Jesus encouraged his weary, scared disciples with this: “Don’t worry about anything. In My Father’s house are many places to live. I’m about to leave so that I can get a place ready for you. I won’t be gone forever, though. I’ll come back for you so that we can be together. You already know where I’m going.” But one of the disciples was confused, “We don’t know where you’re going or how to get there.” Jesus answered: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one gets to God except through me.”

Even though He was about to go away, Jesus wanted to reassure His disciples. He explained that He wouldn’t leave them alone. He was sending a Helper, or Friend, to them who was just like Himself. The Helper, or Holy Spirit, would live with and in everyone who chose to follow Jesus. He would teach them and remind them of everything Jesus had said to them. Jesus knew that His friends would miss walking with Him and talking with Him, but He assured them that having the Holy Spirit inside was even better than having Him at their side.

They left the upstairs room where they had eaten and walked through the dark city of Jerusalem. They were on their way to the garden they had visited so many times before. As they walked, Jesus reminded them over and over again to love each other and to love Him by being obedient. Jesus explained how they would be able to love each other and share God’s love with others. They needed to stay so close and connected with Jesus that they were like a branch attached to a vine.

As they neared the garden, Jesus prayed. Jesus prayed for Himself, knowing that he was about to be arrested. Jesus also prayed for His disciples. He had cared for them and He prayed for their protection from the evil one. And then Jesus did something amazing. Jesus prayed for me and He prayed for you! “I don’t just pray for My disciples,” Jesus told God. “I also pray for the ones who will one day believe in Me because these followers of mine shared the good news. I want them to get along with each other, because only by getting along with each other will a lost and dying world believe that You sent Me.”

Review:

Let’s review what you have learned. Who would like to retell the story? (Ask your group if anything was left out or told inaccurately.) Would anyone else like to retell the story?

What was the last part of Jesus’ prayer on the last night of His life? (Jesus prayed for me and He prayed for you!) Almost 2,000 years ago, just hours before He would be nailed to a cross, Jesus was thinking about you. Do you know that He cares for you more than anyone else ever could? Do you know that when He was nailed to the cross, He did it for me and for you? He had done nothing wrong, but He took my punishment and yours. He did this to make a way, to be the way, that we get to God. Will you trust Him today to guide you through life, to love you and care for you, to send the Helper to live in you and teach you?

For those of you who have already chosen to follow God, believing that Jesus is the only way to God, what would you say to the question, “Do you love Jesus?” Would any of you even think of saying, “No?” But what’s more important: what you say or what you do? (What you do, of course.) How do we show Jesus we love Him? (Obedience!) And how did Jesus say other people could tell that we belonged to Him? (By getting along with each other.) Do other people see Jesus in you? Can your friends tell that you follow Jesus just by the way you treat other believers? They should. Why don’t you take time right now and ask for God’s help.

Planning for Next Week
Lesson 40 • Jesus Gives His Life for You
Matthew 26:47-27:66

PRESCHOOL LESSON

SING: “Jesus Gave them Bread and Wine” to the tune of “London Bridge”

Jesus gave the bread and wine,
bread and wine, bread and wine.
Jesus gave the bread and wine,
He said, “Remember Me.”

(Come prepared with a loaf of bread, a bottle of grape juice, a glass, and a towel. Also bring a picture of the crucifixion.)

SHARE: At the time of year when people celebrated their freedom from Egypt so long ago, Jesus wanted to celebrate this special time with His friends. He sent Peter and John into the city of Jerusalem to get everything ready. Peter and John did as Jesus asked them. They found a man who let them use an upstairs room that he had. There was a table in the room where they could eat. As they all sat around the table and began to eat, Jesus told them, “I have really looked forward to eating this Passover meal with you. It’s something I wanted to do before I suffer. It’s the last time I’ll eat it with you until we eat together in heaven.” You see, Jesus knew that He was about to be nailed to a cross.

Jesus took some of the bread that they were eating. (*Hold the loaf of bread you brought.*) He gave thanks (*fold your hands in prayer*), broke it (*tear the loaf in two*), and handed some to each of His disciples. Then He told them, “My body is going to be broken just like this bread. (*Show them the picture of Jesus on the cross.*) Every time you eat it, from now on, remember me.” Then Jesus took the cup. (*Pour grape juice into the glass.*) He gave thanks, again, and handed the cup to each one. “Just as wine is poured out of its container into the cup, my blood will be poured out for you. (*Again, show your students the picture of Jesus, crucified.*) It will be poured out to forgive sins. Every time you drink this, remember me.” Jesus was using everyday things, like bread and drink, to help His friends understand what was about to happen to Him. He also wanted them to know that He was doing it for them.

When they had finished eating, Jesus got up from the table. He wrapped a towel around His waist (*wrap the towel around your waist*), poured water into a large bowl, and washed the disciple’s dusty, dirty feet. (*If it won’t be too much of a distraction for your students, wash their feet, as well, or simply wipe them off with a wet cloth.*) Some of them didn’t want Jesus to wash their feet. They knew that washing feet was what the least important servants were made to do and Jesus wasn’t a servant; He was their teacher and leader. But Jesus was teaching them an important lesson. “You should do as I have done for you,” Jesus said. “Serve one another. You have to love each other to serve each other and that’s the only way people will know you belong to me if you love each other. And if you love me,” Jesus continued, “obey what I’ve asked you to do.”

PRAY: Thank you, God, for loving me. Help me to show my love for you by obeying you.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- **Memory Verse Activity** - While practicing the verse repeatedly, ask for help from your students in making a list of the things they know that Jesus has commanded. When a sufficiently long list has been made, review the list, asking your students whether or not they obey that commandment. Remind them that love for Jesus shows itself in obedience. Encourage them that God offers forgiveness when we disobey.
- Set up a short table in the middle of your meeting area. If feasible, lounge around the table on pillows while you share the story today, explaining that this is how Jesus and His disciples would have eaten. And if possible, provide what would have been eaten at the Passover meal: lamb, unleavened bread, bitter herbs, grape juice, etc.
- Partake of the Lord's Supper. Be sure to explain 1 Corinthians 11:23-34.
- Make a "Last Supper Keychain" or magnet. Cut a "slice of bread" shape from cardstock. Print "Remember Me" on the slice of bread. Punch a hole and insert a keychain or simply mount a magnet on the back.
- Bring different pictures to class, ones that show kindness and love being shown to others and others that show meanness and sinfulness. Help your students identify the differences between the two. Encourage them to love others as Jesus loved them.
- Have a foot washing service. For maximum effect, have a basin ready as your students arrive. Unlace their shoes and take them off gently. Remove any socks and wash their feet. Before you begin the story, ask them how they felt when you, their teacher, washed their feet.
- For older students and adults: Discuss the Passover and freedom from Egyptian bondage. Use this time simply as a reminder of earlier lessons. Point them forward to next week by also discussing John 1:29-31.