

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

This session is also appropriate to use when the church takes the Lord's Supper

Jesus Gives His Life
Mark 14:12-26, 32-42

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Important note for leaders: Your publishers of this resource suggest that, in most situations, the best option for the “fruit of the vine” to be served during Communion will be a quality, non-alcoholic grape juice. Members of your home church may come from different religious backgrounds. Some may be offended if served real wine at the Lord’s Supper. In that case, grape juice is a much better choice. (1 Corinthians 8 teaches the general principle found in this suggestion).

Serving anything with alcohol in a room where there is a person present who has experienced alcoholism personally or second-hand, presents a physical or psychological danger to that person. As well, you are in a home environment where children are experiencing both family and church. Your church should be an expression of agape (sacrificial) love and sensitive to each personal situation. It would be well for your church to decide beforehand what should be served at your Lord’s Supper (Communion) and how it should be served.

Leaders’ Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the “Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study”. That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session “Background” located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day’s study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God’s will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the

offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

Have a dictionary available for youth to use in the Youth Application time.

Worship Time Leader:

Prepare to celebrate the Lord's supper (see gathering time).

Also provide small glasses for individual use.

Ask someone to lead the communion service or the worship leader may take on this responsibility.

Music Sources:

"We Have Come Into His House" *Maranatha Praise*, #70

"The Old Rugged Cross" *Heritage Hymnal*, #39

"Here At Your Table, Lord" *Baptist Hymnal* (1991) #368

"This Is the Day" *Maranatha Praise*, #117

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Jesus Gives His Life*****Focal Text**

Mark 14:12-26, 32-42

Background Text

Mark 14:1-42

Main Idea

Jesus willingly gave his life in faithfulness to his God-given mission.

Question to Explore

What is worth a person's life?

Teaching Aim

To help the class identify ways they will express gratitude for Jesus' giving his life.

Gathering together:

On a table that is placed in a prominent position in the meeting area, place an uncut loaf of bread (or unbroken crackers or other unleavened bread) along with a partially filled wineglass and a decanter or pitcher of grape juice or wine. (See note to leaders on page 2.)

When the group has gathered ask an older child if they remember anything special about the bread and wine?

Ask adults what the display means to them.

Say: Today we will celebrate the Lord's Supper. Our lesson and worship time will focus on Mark's account of Jesus last meal with his friends before he faced death on the cross.

First thoughts:**Remembering**

Across from my home there is a playing field with a baseball diamond that is named after a young baseball player who lost his life. He was struck and killed by lightning while playing in a tournament in a distant city. The community and his parents wanted to memorialize him through providing a sports field that acknowledges his life and his passion for the game of baseball. Not long ago his parents also inserted a notice in the local paper reminding the community that it has been ten years since this sad event occurred.

Over the years the community has changed drastically and grown dramatically. I wonder how many current residents know the story behind this park and its name. People tend to forget or become indifferent to one individual's life and death as time passes. Those most affected by the event want to keep the memory of their loved one alive.

The Passover meal Jesus celebrated with his friends was a memorial service marking a historical Israelite event. Based on that well-established tradition Jesus instituted a similar meal that would have great spiritual significance to his followers. He knew how important it is for people to relate an event to the regular observance of a special ceremony. Christians have been remembering and celebrating "communion" for generations and today we will continue to perpetuate the memory of Jesus' death with this solemn ceremony that is, at the same time, a celebration of our relationship to Jesus.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Sing several songs that commemorate Jesus' sacrificial death for the purpose of our salvation.

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Jesus Gives His Life

Focal Text

Mark 14:12-26, 32-42

Background Text

Mark 14:1-42

Main Idea

Jesus willingly gave his life in faithfulness to his God-given mission.

Question to Explore

What is worth a person's life?

Teaching Aim

To help the class identify ways they will express gratitude for Jesus' giving his life.

Introduction to your personal study:

"How much does it cost?" This question accompanies most every business transaction. The buyer must then decide if the item is worth the price. In these passages Jesus taught us how much it would cost for sinners to have forgiveness and to be brought into a right relationship with God. It would cost Jesus his own life. There was no other way, and the cross was absolutely necessary. Jesus willingly gave his life for us. We must be worth an awful lot to him.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you as well.

The Israelite faith was a bloody religion. From Genesis onward animal sacrifices were offered regularly as gifts and as means for having fellowship with God. At the Passover, a spotless lamb lost its life so that people might live. A sinful person could find forgiveness of their sins and have a relationship with God through the blood of a sacrifice. Someone or something must die in their place. Blood was an important symbol. It was a constant reminder that sin cost a life.

During the Jewish Passover celebration Jesus taught his disciples how he must die to free people from their sins and bring people into a right "covenant" relationship with God. His body would be given and his blood would be poured out. The cross was necessary, and Jesus willingly submitted himself to the Father's will.

Focusing on the Meaning:

The Passover Celebration.

The typical Jewish Passover meal re-enacts the exodus from Egypt, reminding the people of God's grace in salvation (cf. Exodus 12:1-30, 43-49). The meal had several main elements. The Passover lamb reminded the people of the first Passover when the angel of death "passed over" the Israelite homes because of the lamb's blood smeared over the doors (cf. Exodus 12:7, 12-13). A bowl of salt water reminded them of the people's tears in Egypt and of the Red Sea crossing. Bitter herbs (e.g. horseradish) were a reminder of the bitterness of slavery. A sauce made with dried fruit reminded them of the clay used to make bricks in Egypt. Unleavened bread symbolized total separation from Egypt and their speedy departure (cf. Exodus 12:14-20, 39). Finally, four cups of wine (greatly diluted) were used to remind the people of God's four promises of deliverance found in Exodus 6:6-7,

- 1) "I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians;"
- 2) "I will free you from being slaves to them;"
- 3) "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment;"
- 4) "I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God."

The participants drank one cup in association with each promise. "The cup" that Jesus took in instituting the Lord's Supper (v. 23) was most probably the third cup of the ceremony, the "Cup of Redemption;" the one taken after the Passover meal was eaten.

Mark 14:12-26 – "This is My Body; This is My Blood"

vv. 12-16 – The **"Feast of Unleavened Bread"** was an eight-day feast that coincided with the Jewish Passover. The day, **"when it was customary to sacrifice the**

Passover lamb," marks the day of the week as Thursday. Jewish law determined that the Passover meal had to be eaten inside the city of Jerusalem, and the disciples inquired where they should make preparations for the meal. Jesus sent two of his disciples into the city and instructed them to follow a man who was carrying a jar of water (normally the task of a woman). He would lead them to the correct house with an appropriate guest room (v. 14). Jesus had most probably made arrangements ahead of time for the room. It was **"furnished and ready"** (v. 15), with everything necessary but the food (e.g. table, cushions, couches, vessels, etc.). The disciples **"prepared** for the **Passover"** meal for the group (v. 16), getting all of the ingredients necessary.

vv. 17-21 – During the Passover meal, Jesus shocked his disciples with the announcement, **"I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me – one who is eating with me."** Having mentioned his betrayal before, Jesus here for the first time plainly stated that the betrayer would be one of the Twelve. In Middle Eastern society, eating with someone was a meaningful sign of friendship, so betraying a person with whom you have broken bread was the worst kind of treachery (cf. Psalms 41:9). The stunned disciples wondered about themselves, **"Surely not I?"** No individual is exempt from such scrutiny, not even the Twelve that Jesus chose to be close to his side. Each person should ask himself or herself if they would betray Jesus when faced with temptation, persecution, or some other trial. Peter protested the most, but he found himself denying Jesus when times were difficult (cf. 14:27-31, 66-72). Many have sold their loyalty to the Lord Jesus for much less than thirty pieces of silver. **"It is one of the Twelve . . . one who dips bread into the bowl with me."** Dipping bread into the bowl of sauce was a part of the Passover meal. The person who would betray Jesus was close enough to him to share the same bowl with Jesus!

"The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." Jesus would fulfill the divine plan foretold in the Old Testament. He would have to suffer and die for the sins of people (cf. Isaiah 53). Judas, however, was still responsible for his wicked and evil act. God can take even the most despicable deeds of people and turn them into instruments of his salvation (cf. Rom 8:28).

vv. 22-24 – **"Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples."**

Giving thanks, breaking, and eating bread are vital parts of the Passover meal, but here Jesus gave the actions a new and more significant meaning. **"Take it; this is my body."** Jesus used the broken bread as a picture of his body. In the same way that a photograph represents a person, the broken bread represented Jesus. Though none of his bones would be broken, his body would be beaten with fists and a rod, shredded by a torturer's whip, and pierced by a crown of thorns, nails, and a soldier's spear. The broken bread today is still a visual reminder of the awful price he had to pay for our sins.

Jesus took the third cup of the Passover meal, "the Cup of Redemption," and added new meaning to it. He **"gave thanks"** for the cup (from which comes the term "Eucharist") and said, **"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for**

many." God's covenant with Israel was sealed with the blood of a sacrifice (cf. Exodus 24:8), and in much the same way the **"new covenant"** between God and humanity (cf. Jeremiah 31:31-34) would be sealed with blood also. Jesus' sacrificial death would bring forgiveness for sins and bring people into a right relationship with God (cf. Isaiah 53:12). The "poured out" wine symbolizes Jesus' blood shed for our sin.

vv. 25-26 – This would be Jesus' last celebration meal with his disciples until the great banquet when he is rejoined with his people in the end time (cf. Isaiah 25:6-8; Luke 14:15; Rev 19:6-9). Even though Jesus would die a horrible sacrificial death, he promised victory and salvation in the end.

The final **"hymn"** of the Passover celebration was most probably Psalm 118. Jesus faced his betrayal and death by singing and taking encouragement in the words of the psalmist.

"In my anguish I cried to the Lord, and he answered by setting me free. The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? (Psalms 118:5-6)

The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: "The Lord's right hand has done mighty things! The Lord's right hand is lifted high; the Lord's right hand has done mighty things!" I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord has done. (Psalms 118:14-17)

I will give thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation. The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. O Lord, save us; O Lord, grant us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" (Psalms 118:21-26).

The Lord's Supper. Christians today remember the sacrifice that Jesus paid for our sins by regularly celebrating the "Lord's Supper" (also called "Communion" or "the Eucharist"). It is a Christian "ordinance," to be practiced regularly by those who have placed their personal faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus said to his followers, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24, 25). "Remembering" means far more than simply calling to one's mind, for it also means to be affected by the experience. The Scripture does not teach how often it should be practiced but only that it should be done regularly as an act of worship (1 Corinthians 11:26). It is a time when a group of Christians "commune" with God and each other (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:23-34) to remember Christ's death for our sins and to look forward to his return (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:26). Participants should confess their sins to God (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:27-29) and find his cleansing and forgiveness (cf. 1 John 1:9). They eat bread and drink "the fruit of the vine" (either wine or grape juice) as symbols of Christ's body and blood. It is an act of obedience and worship that should take place within each believer's heart. Without the heart involved no worship takes place (cf. Psalms 51:16-17). Nothing "magical" happens simply by going through the motions. But those who

come clean before God, remember the tremendous price he paid for their sins, and will allow themselves to be transformed by that understanding, will meet with God in a true worship encounter.

Mark 14:32-42 – "Not What I Will, But What You Will"

vv. 32-34 – "Gethsemane" (lit. "oil press") was an olive grove on the Mount of Olives. It was a favourite place of Jesus (cf. Luke 22:39; John 18:2), a place where he and his disciples could be alone. **"Sit here while I pray."** Prayer characterized Jesus' entire life, and this should be the pattern for all of his followers. **"Peter"** had just boasted of his constant loyalty to Jesus (14:31), and **"James and John"** had claimed that they would suffer with Jesus (10:38-40). If Jesus brought them along for companionship and support in one of his darkest hours, they delivered neither. They could not even stay awake while Jesus agonized in prayer. The terms **"deeply distressed and troubled"** mean to be overcome by surprise, bewilderment, fear, grief, uncertainty, and anxiety. Words can hardly describe Jesus' intense emotional state at that time. His burden and sorrow were tremendous **"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death."** He wanted his three disciples to share his burden with him **"Stay here and keep watch."**

vv. 35-36 – Falling to the ground from utter grief, Jesus prayed, **"Abba, Father."** Jewish children used this term with their own fathers (e.g. "Daddy"). No Jew would use this term towards God because they thought it would be irreverent. But Jesus showed his intimate relationship with the heavenly Father by boldly approaching him in prayer. He taught that we could also have a similar relationship with God (Matt 6:9; Luke 11:2; cf. Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). Jesus agonized with the task before him, **"Take this cup from me."** The "cup of God's wrath" (cf. Mark 10:38-39) meant that Jesus would have to suffer God's judgment for the sins of the entire world. He had never experienced sin before, but he would need to carry our sin for us (Isaiah 53:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21). If there were any other way for salvation to be accomplished he wanted it to happen, but with the resolve of an obedient servant, Jesus willingly submitted himself to the Father's will, **"Yet not what I will, but what you will."** God would not spare Jesus from his horrible death but would give him something far better, victory over death. Jesus obeyed his Father's will, but his obedience was preceded by much agony. He suffered before the cross as well as on the cross. In the future many of his followers would have to struggle with what it would cost them to obey the Lord, and for many of them it would cost their own lives. Some would agonize and die alone like Jesus, but they could take comfort and strength from Jesus' example.

vv. 37-38 – Jesus returned and found the three asleep. He called, **"Simon,"** rather than "Peter" (lit. "Rock", cf. Matt 16:17-18) probably suggesting that Peter had reverted to his old self. **"Are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour?"** The one who promised that he would always be faithful and would always stick close to Jesus (11:29) could not stay awake for even one hour. **"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."** While Jesus was praying the disciples should be "watching" (spiritually alert) and praying also. Peter

would soon be tempted to deny Jesus, and he would tragically fall (14:66-72). The other disciples in fear of their lives would desert Jesus also (13:50). They would not be able to withstand that temptation in their own strength. Their human spirit was eager, ready, and willing to follow, but they lacked the strength to remain faithful. They should be praying that God would give them the strength rather than spending their time sleeping (Rom 7:14-25).

vv. 39-42 – Three times Jesus found his disciples sleeping instead of praying. (Note that Peter needed that spiritual strength three times [14:66-72]). ***"Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"*** Having settled the issue with the Father, Jesus walked boldly to meet Judas and those with him.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

These passages set the stage for Jesus' crucifixion (15:21-41) and explain the significance of it. The Passover celebrated how God had rescued the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt, and the blood of the original Passover lamb saved them from death. In much the same way Jesus would suffer and die to rescue people from their sin and save them from death. At Gethsemane Jesus struggled with the horror of experiencing sin for the first time on the cross. The sinless Lamb of God would have to bear our penalty. He willingly submitted himself to the Father's will and faced the cross with peace, resolve, and bold determination. Today we remember his sacrifice for us through the broken bread and the poured cup.

For Personal Reflection:

1. **What have I learned from this study?**
2. **What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**
3. **What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Jesus Gives His Life

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc. Children who stay with their parents in the Youth/Adult study should have the material on worship as suggested in **The Children's Corner** at the beginning of this **Unit** of studies. (Ask your leader who downloads the studies for those suggestions).

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Mark 14:12-26, 32-42

Background Text

Mark 14:1-42

Main Idea

Jesus willingly gave his life in faithfulness to his God-given mission.

Questions to Explore

What is worth a person's life?

Teaching Aim

To help the class identify ways they will express gratitude for Jesus' giving his life.

Connect with Life:

As the group gathers, ask them: When was the last time you asked the question, 'How much does it cost?'

Then ask: Once you found out what it cost, did you decide it was worth it?

Explain that in today's lesson Jesus tells us that our salvation would cost his own life.

Ask: Do you think he felt we were 'worth it'?

Guide the Study:

Do a brief mini-lecture from the **Teacher Preparation** about the Jewish Passover celebration. If the group is unfamiliar with the story of the original Passover found in Exodus 12:1-30, briefly retell the story.

Have someone read Mark 14:12-21, and explain how Jesus and his disciples were about to celebrate the Passover.

Point out how close Jesus' betrayer was sitting to Jesus.

Ask: According to verse 21, was Jesus' death accidental? (No, it was written about him in the scriptures)

Look for various opinions to this question: Was Judas then responsible for his evil actions? (**Yes. However, be prepared for some who might think otherwise. Be careful not to "put down" a person whom you asked for an opinion but answers differently than you may believe.**)

Ask someone to read verses 22-26. Explain how the broken bread is a visual picture of what would happen to his body. Explain how Jesus' blood was "poured out" for sinners.

Ask: What would Jesus mean by **'my blood of the covenant'**? Be ready to explain how God's covenant with Israel was sealed with a blood sacrifice and how Jesus would seal the "new covenant" with his own blood.

Take a few moments to explain the significance of the Lord's Supper (taken from the study notes).

Say: In our worship time, we will be observing the Lord's Supper together.

Have someone read Mark 14:32-34.

Ask: Can you describe some of the emotions Jesus must have felt at that moment?

Read verses 35-36.

Point out the intimacy Jesus had with the Father ("Abba, Father"). Be ready to explain "the cup" of God's wrath that he asked God to take from him.

Point out how Jesus willingly submitted to God's will: (**"Yet not what I will, but what you will"**).

Ask: How did Jesus set an example for us to follow?

Have someone read verses 37-42.

Ask: What kind of temptation would the disciples face shortly? (to desert Jesus, to deny him) How did Jesus tell them to prepare for such trials (watch [be spiritually alert] and pray, recognize their personal weakness)

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

State: The hymn writer penned the words, 'Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.' Let's take a few moments in private reflection and think of an appropriate response for you to make to Jesus and his love for you.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Jesus Gives His Life **Mark 14:12-26, 32-42**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Lord's Supper or Communion?

Discuss the meaning of the Lord's Supper. Another word which is used to describe the event is "communion." Look up the meaning of "communion" in the dictionary. Why does this word describe the events of the Lord's Supper?

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Jesus Gives His Life*****Mark 14:12-26, 32-42****Beginning the Service:**

Sing "The Old Rugged Cross" or another hymn that forcefully teaches the meaning of Jesus' death on the cross.

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

A newspaper recently published two news stories on the same page. In the first, a man was sentenced to four years in prison for the strangulation of a woman. The second story told of a man receiving a thirty-five year sentence for stealing a two hundred-dollar radio from a pick-up truck. I wonder, "What is wrong with this picture when a radio is worth far more than a life?"

Jesus willingly gave his life for our sins. He understood the real value of a life. Let's pray today that God will give us opportunities to offer the hope of eternal life to someone who faces eternity without Jesus' saving love.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

Why Did Christ Die?

A teacher had a room full of nine-year-old children the first year that he taught school. They discovered that he attended a small Baptist church. Their only exposure to that

church was at Vacation Bible School. One little boy said he had seen the swimming pool inside, which was of course the baptistry. One girl wondered what the plus sign on top of the building stood for, which of course was a cross. The teacher often wondered what they would have asked if they had seen the Lord's Supper. Would they have in any way understood our Lord's death? Today we have studied Mark's account of the Lord's Supper as he taught us about his death. We have also looked at him in the Garden of Gethsemane in agonizing prayer asking to be spared death, but submitting to God's will and not the temptation to resist.

We will use Romans 5:6-11 as a text to be a commentary on our study today. Why did Christ die? Paul tells us he died for the ungodly—who were helpless. He also says he died at God's good pleasure at the exact right moment. As we participate in the Lord's Supper we must remember that we are sinners and we are the ungodly for whom he died! Christ died for you and me as he demonstrated God's love for us. He died in our place taking our punishment of death for our sins. Why would he do that?

1. He died for us because God's Love is greater than man's rebellion.

Paul uses three important words to identify those who rebelled against God: ungodly, sinners, and enemies. Perhaps some other words he could have used are unlovely, unlovable, rebellious, haters of him, lacking piety, filled with self-interest, self-will, and self-indulgence. We are not lovely in God's eyes. We love sin and darkness. We are caught in our own sin. By our rebellion we say, "God, I hate you!" Isaiah said, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all (53:6)." We have rebelled against God as the Prodigal son rebelled against his father in Luke 15.

And yet, at the "right time" or the "strategic time" which God set from the creation, he acted for our redemption. God loves the unlovely. Christ died for the ungodly. God's love is greater than our rebellion.

2. He also died for us because man is worth saving.

When God created man in his image, he gave man an intrinsic value. One person said, "God don't make no junk!" Man's ultimate worth is found in the price God paid for his redemption. A man recently sold a van. He checked the Internet to see what he should ask for it. His family had driven it for thirteen years and had great memories of the trips they took in it. He put a price on the vehicle, which no one would pay because they did not have such memories. He settled for a lot less before I found a buyer. The memories did not give the van any real value. However, even the most ungodly person in the world is worth the death of Christ.

3. He also died for us because sin's power had to be broken.

Paul reminds us that Christ died while we were helpless, without strength. We were gripped in sin's power. We could not do anything to help ourselves. Only the sacrifice of Christ on the cross could set us free. Our bondage reminds one of an old story about a hunter and a bear. The hunter stalked the bear until he had him in his sight. The bear began to cry. He sobbed about his family that would be left behind. They both sat

down on a log and cried together. They began to talk. The bear asked the hunter, "What are you looking for?" He answered, "A warm coat for the cold winter." Then he asked the bear what he was looking for. He answered, "I just needed a warm meal for the long nap I am about to take." A few minutes of silence passed, then the bear walked off and both of them had what they were seeking! Sin holds us in a bear hug. It eats us like a bear. The shed blood of Jesus is the only way the grip of sin can be broken. Jesus paid the price for our sin!

Call to Commitment:

A young lady, Donna, participated in youth group. She handed her leader a note one Sunday morning that read: "I had a dream the other night that I took a trip back to when Jesus Christ, my Saviour, was alive. I dreamed I saw him being led to the place they were to crucify him, and bearing his own cross I saw him fall many times. I saw them beat him with their whips and leave red marks across his back. I saw them lay the cross down and nailed him, hand and foot, to it: and how they straightened it up and let him hang there in disgrace. I saw the guards take his coat and garments and divide them among themselves. As I stood watching longer I saw them take a long pole and break the legs of the first and third men, but when they came to Jesus Christ, in the midst, they found him already dead, so they took a spear and pierced his side. The blood poured out and ran down that old rugged tree and onto the ground. After they had all gone I knelt beneath the cross and began to pray. I reached out to touch it and stained my hands with blood. The tears ran down my face. As I looked up and saw him there, I thought I heard him say, 'I'm doing this for you.'"

"But just then I awoke and found myself kneeling on the floor by the bed. I reached toward my face and saw that my eyes and cheeks were wet. I bowed my head once more and prayed again, and once more I thought I heard him say, 'I'm doing this for you my child, for you.'"

Concluding the Service:

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

Have a time of personal reflection and meditation before observing the Lord's Supper.

Make sure to "break" bread and "pour" the juice.

Break the bread into small pieces and place on a serving plate.

Ask someone to pray a prayer for Christ's broken body symbolized by the broken bread.

Distribute the bread.

When all have received a portion say: Let us share this bread together—remembering that Jesus died for us so that we who know Him as our Saviour will not die spiritually. (Everyone will then eat their small piece of bread at the same time).

Pour the juice or wine into small cups.

Ask someone to thank God for the blood that Jesus spilled for us on the cross.

Distribute the juice.

When all have received a portion say: “Whenever you eat this bread or drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” Let us drink this cup together. (Everyone will drink the grape juice at the same time).

Say: We truly have reason to rejoice and be glad knowing how much God loved us and how completely Jesus obeyed his Heavenly Father.

Sing “This Is the Day” after reminding the group that the words are taken from the same psalm that Jesus and the disciples likely sang at the conclusion of the Passover meal or “the Last Supper”.

Dismiss the group.