

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

**This session is ideal for use in conjunction with the serving of the Lord's Supper
in the home church setting**

The Gift We Cannot Live Without

Matthew 26: 26-29, 36-45; 27:33-55

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

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:

Important note for leaders: If appropriate, plan to use this session in conjunction with the Lord's Supper (Communion). Coordinate this with the other leaders of the session and with the rest of the church ahead of time. You may wish to have the Lord's Supper during a meal served for the congregation. See the "How To:" manual on the Home Church Online website for an article with suggestions for serving the Lord's Supper.

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

Worship Time Leader:

Music Sources:

Surely the Presence of the Lord is in this Place, *The Worship Hymnal* #158; CCLI # 7909

Great is the Lord, *The Worship Hymnal* # 61; CCLI # 1149

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

The Gift We Cannot Live Without

Focal Text

Matthew 26: 26-29, 36-45; 27:33-55

Background Text

Matthew 26-27

Main Idea

Jesus gave his life for the forgiveness of our sins.

Question to Explore

What does Jesus giving his life mean to you?

Teaching Aim

To lead the class to summarize the meaning for their lives of Jesus giving His life on the cross.

Gathering together:

Sing **Surely the Presence of the Lord Is In This Place**

First thoughts:

Our focus today is on the sacrificial death of Jesus and understanding that doing God's will always leads to victory. We need to understand that Jesus was human in that he suffered dread of his coming death and pain during his crucifixion. He experienced human emotions the same as we do. But he handled them without sinning. His prayer in Gethsemane ***"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me, yet not as I will, but as you will"*** resonates through time. We will face difficult times when we will cry out, "Father, if it possible, take away this trial". When we also say, "Yet not as I will, but as you will" we will experience the grace needed to endure the trial and to some day understand the purpose for the trial.

Closing the Gathering Time:

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

The Gift We Cannot Live Without

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To lead the class to summarize the meaning for their lives of Jesus giving His life on the cross.

Introduction to your personal study:

A few years ago, the movie, *The Passion of Christ* swept America and the world. Through this movie believers, as well as non-believers, have viewed and lived through Jesus Christ's last few hours of His earthly life. They have seen the pain and felt the nails in His hands, but many have left the movie and felt no connection to the crucifixion of Jesus, or to their own lives. They do not understand that without coming to Jesus, and asking forgiveness for their sins, they will be lost in eternity.

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.

Our passage begins with the implementation of the church’s observance of the Last Supper. This was and is a sign of the new covenant, just as the Passover had been a sign of the old covenant.

The symbolism of the bread and wine should not become more important than Jesus’ death on the cross for our sins. Regardless, whether you use wine or grape juice or bread made from wheat or rice cakes, the symbolism is only for us to remember what Jesus’ death on the cross did for us. The actual taking of the bread and wine does nothing for you; what is important is what has happened in your heart.

In the following passages we will examine the beginning of the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper. We’ll see how the disciples, like ourselves, allowed physical situations to quickly erode their understanding of the Lord Jesus; and then we’ll consider the death of Christ on the cross. Any one of the three sections of this lesson must not be considered more important than one of the others. What is important is that as we take part in the Lord’s Supper, we remember what Jesus did for us on the cross. We must not allow our personal desires to get in the way of sharing the love of Jesus with others as we have been directed to do so in the Great Commission.

Focusing on the Meaning:

Matthew 26:26-29 A Special Supper

In these verses we see that Jesus established a new covenant with the people. This covenant replaces the “old covenant” that was between God and his people. The “Book of the Covenant” (in the Old Testament) was a set of rules and obligations that the people had to follow to serve God. While Christians still follow and receive spiritual and moral guidance from the Ten Commandments, as we serve God, we do not serve under the law. We serve under faith.

Jesus connected the old covenant symbolism of commitment of God to His people with His own commitment to us and on our commitment to him, as our Saviour, Lord, and Master by using the cup. The cup represents the shedding of Jesus’ blood for us. Jesus took the basics of human life, bread and cup, to show us our basic need for Him as our risen Saviour.

The Passover was a supper that helped the Jewish population to remember the exodus from Egypt, and the feeding in the desert. This new supper is an ‘Ebenezer’ (1 Samuel. 7:12) for Christians. (Ebenezer is a commemorative stone erected to remind us of the Lord’s help). The Lord’s Supper is a remembrance of Jesus’ blood, like the sacrificial offering, being for the forgiveness of our sins. It establishes the New Covenant

relationship between God and His people. The Lord's Supper is now for Christians a time of remembrance, thanks, and renewed commitment.

Matthew 26:36-45 In the Garden

Moments of despair come to every person, at some point in his life. When overwhelming despair came to me, I had a Saviour to turn to in prayer, as well as a wife and a pastor who were supportive. Jesus had his Father. Jesus came to God in anguished prayer and revealed his human characteristics.

36-38 When Jesus was facing certain death, he went to a nearby garden, Gethsemane, along with Peter, James, and John, to pray for strength and direction. He implored his disciples to support him in prayer during this time of crisis.

39 Jesus fell to his knees in prayer asking, even pleading, for his heavenly Father to remove the prospect of a horrible death from him. This confirms to me that my pleading with the Lord is acceptable when I am going through devastating situations in my life. We can turn to God and pour out our heartfelt emotions and He will hear us. Jesus showed his humanness in the garden. He begged for a different solution than the crucifixion. Yet he was willing to accept whatever God led him to.

These verses are examples to all Christians that we should pray asking for God's leadership in our lives. We voice our human desires but seek God's perfect guidance. His way is always best, although we may not understand that at the time. Jesus did not resist God's will but yielded to it. Even after praying earnestly for deliverance on two occasions and receiving no answer, he returned to pray again. Instead of shrinking from the inevitable outcome, he asked God's direction and will, and forged ahead.

40-44 Here we see the frailty of humans. Even the chosen disciples, Jesus' dearest friends, who had been on the mount of transfiguration and seen so many miracles, were not able to see the urgency of the situation. They were unable to stay awake and pray for Jesus or for themselves. Jesus knew the disciples would be tested. He warned them that a willing spirit is not sufficient – they needed strength of spirit that only comes from spending much time in prayer.

At times, we may have been guilty of prayerlessness just as these disciples were. Perhaps we have forsaken a needy brother or sister because we were unwilling to stay awake, or get up to pray with them. Many people can share a testimony that their lives were changed because others spent real time in prayer for them.

45 When Jesus returned a third time and found the disciples sound asleep, he rebuked them for their lack of diligence. Satan had robbed them of an opportunity to be a blessing.

Matthew 27:32-45 The Crucifixion

The film *The Passion of Christ* portrays the last hours of Christ's life so vividly, but even this film cannot show the inner pain Jesus endured for us.

It was the custom that only slaves or people who were not Roman citizens were crucified because of the pain that this punishment inflicted. The term crucifixion was not even mentioned in polite society; this was the ultimate form of capital punishment.

32 It was customary for the condemned individual to carry his cross or at least the crossbeam. In Jesus' case, he was in no condition to carry his cross, because of the night of torture. Because Jesus was unable to carry the cross, Simon, a bystander, was pressed into service.

33-37 Jesus bore the complete pain of our sin at his death. Our Bible passage indicates that Jesus refused a drink that was offered. This was not a thirst-quenching drink. It was common to give a narcotic drink to those being crucified so that the pain might be eased, but Jesus took no pain reliever. Jesus bore the full pain of our sin.

Jesus was crucified out in the open where all could see him. His crime, his claim to be king, was plainly posted above his head in three languages (Greek, Hebrew and Latin).

38-40 This passage barely mentions the others who were being crucified alongside Jesus that day. Refer to Luke 23:39-43 for more information about the two thieves. The crowd stood and mocked Jesus and ridiculed him as He hung dying for their sins. They challenged Jesus to demonstrate his authority as God's Son by removing himself from the cross. Perhaps many of them had participated in the miracles of feeding or seen the many signs and wonders Christ had performed in his earthly ministry. Yet their hearts had not been changed. They refused to see Jesus as King.

41-44 While the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him for not saving himself, they did not understand what they were asking. If Jesus had saved himself, there would be no way for us to be saved from our sins, and the pain of eternal damnation would have lasted for forever for us. Jesus did not resort to sensationalism. Faith is not based on material evidence.

Matthew 27:45-55

45, 46 For three hours an unusual darkness covered the land. The words Jesus cried out to God are a quotation from Psalm 22. Part of Jesus' suffering was that he felt completely forsaken by God, a frightening, catastrophic feeling. However, God was in no way displeased with Jesus. God had not forsaken him; in fact, He welcomed Jesus into his arms as Jesus committed his dying spirit to Him. God was with him through the entire suffering and was ready to bring victory out of the devastation.

47-49 Onlookers mistakenly thought Christ was calling Elijah to come and rescue him.

50-54 At the very moment of Christ's death the temple veil split in two from top to bottom (only God could do that). This is an indicator that we no longer need to access God through an earthly priest, as was the case in the Old Testament. We now have direct access to God through Christ. We are priests ourselves.

The earthquake revealed God's powerful presence in the crucifixion event. It symbolised victory over death, as some saints who had died, now returned to life.

When the centurion and the rest of the guards witnessed these incredible events they even confessed Christ must be the Son of God. This is an indication that one day all people worldwide would profess Jesus as Lord – the way to eternal life had been opened up to all who would believe.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Many have watched the movies of Jesus' death; many have read about His death but few have stepped up to be counted for Jesus. If we truly believe He died to give us eternal life, should we not want to share His gift with others? What does our life really mean, if Jesus is not the centre?

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

The Gift We Cannot Live Without

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.

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

Matthew 26: 26-29, 36-45; 27:33-55

Background Text

Matthew 26-27

Main Idea

Jesus gave his life for the forgiveness of our sins.

Question to Explore

What does Jesus giving his life mean to you?

Teaching Aim

To lead the class to summarize the meaning for their lives of Jesus giving His life on the cross.

Connect with Life:

As class members assemble, invite them to consider what the word 'gift' implies.

Share this: Each of you take a moment to recall a special gift you have received at some time.

Encourage some to share briefly as to what made it so special.

Guide the Study:

Have someone read Matthew 26: 26-29.

Discuss with the learners what is meant by the statement: “For Christians, the Lord's Supper is a time of remembrance, thanks, and renewed commitment”.

Look up 1 Samuel 7:12.

Define “Ebenezer” for the group. (Search this out from the “Teacher Preparation” material and from reference books.)

Encourage the group to share how it is that this new supper provides an “Ebenezer” for us.

Ask: Why are times of remembrance so important in the transmission of faith to children?

Read Matthew 26: 36-45.

Encourage the group to dialog about how the disciples' sleepy attitude affected Jesus.

Invite members to share how Christ displayed his humanness in the garden.

Now ask: What do you think that means for us today in our prayer lives?

Finish out the reading of the scripture with Matthew 26: 36-55.

Debate the question of whether God forsook Jesus while he was on the cross.

Ask members what they consider to be the significance of the earthquake and the temple veil being torn in two.

Question the group: How do these two things continue to impact us today?

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.

Call for feedback on today's scripture passage.

What does it mean in our own lives?

Invite members to truly personalize Christ's death on the cross.

Urge the learners to offer opinions on this: How would your lives be different if Christ had not provided a way of forgiveness?

Challenge them to live lives that are worthy of their calling, sharing the gift of eternal life with every one they meet.

Ask a person to pray, thanking God for his incredible gift of life.

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.

The Gift We Cannot Live Without **Matthew 26: 26-29, 36-45; 27:33-55**

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.

Youth will remain with the larger church today and participate in understanding and preparing to take the Lord's Supper.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***The Gift We Cannot Live Without*****Matthew 26: 26-29, 36-45; 27:33-55**

Important note for today: (Today is a good day for your home church to celebrate together the Lord's Supper. Check the of articles of Helps for Home Churches called "**How To:**" on www.homechurchonline.com to find more information about celebrating the Lord's Supper).

Beginning the Service:

Read together The Lord's Prayer found in Matthew 6:9-13.
Sing **Great is the Lord**

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

For centuries, the Black Moors have been in spiritual bondage and in physical bondage, as slaves, to the elite White Moors of Mauritania. Although slavery was banned in 1981, the Black Moors continue to have low status in society and still serve the White Moors through manual labour. Even in their isolation, God is speaking to the Black Moors. Mohamed, a gardener, dreamed that Jesus sat with him. He told Mohamed that He was with him and to listen to the stories...and believe them. Shortly after that, a worker began telling him stories from the Bible, and Mohamed came to faith in Jesus. He has led his wife to Jesus and is a strong witness

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.

The Prayer That Never Fails

Introduction:

The writer, Jan Karon, has provided many readers will a delightful experience in her seven novels describing life in the mythical town of Mitford. Father Tim, an Episcopalian priest who is single and in his late 50's in the first book of the series, *At Home in Mitford*, is deeply involved in the every day and spiritual lives of the people of his parish and of the town. The people of the town are brought to life in a wonderful way by this talented author and many spiritual truths are communicated through the foibles and strengths of these people and Father Tim's ministry to them. One of the themes that runs throughout the series is Father Tim's admonition to people in great need to pray the prayer that never fails.

People always express interest and a bit of doubt when the prayer that never fails is mentioned. Scepticism abounds that there is a prayer which is a sure thing. Father Tim assures them that the prayer **"Thy Will Be Done"** will never fail.

Upon what realities does Father Tim base his belief?

First, Jesus included this concept in his prayer often called the model prayer or The Lord's Prayer which is found in Matthew 6:9-13. In this prayer Jesus tells his followers to acknowledge the holiness of the Father in heaven and to pray that the heavenly kingdom will be expressed on earth as it is heaven. **"Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"** Matthew 6:10.

We are also to pray for our daily sustenance – a very pressing prayer for most of the people in the world in that day and in our day.

We are to ask for forgiveness and to be forgiving of others. Within this prayer is the acknowledgement that all people are working on forgiving others.

And finally, we are to ask that we be kept safe from the temptations and evils of the world.

What amazing concepts. God is holy and we want His will to be done in our lives. God is concerned about our daily needs for food and for forgiveness and forgiving. As we consider conflicts raging in our world today we must realize that the need for daily bread and the need for forgiving our enemies continue to be seen in every country and every individual.

God will help us as we struggle with the evil of the world. We are not helpless against temptation; God Himself will deliver us from the evil one.

Second, Jesus Himself applied the “prayer that never fails” to his own life. We have studied in the Bible study time of the struggle which Jesus experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane. He prayed in this time which he described to his disciples as one in which ***“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death”*** (Matthew 26:38). Yet in that desperate time he prayed ***“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”***

The prayer that never fails- ***“yet not as I will, but as you will”***.

Third, we must remember that this prayer does not mean that we will receive that which we desire, but that which is best for God’s eternal purposes in our lives and in the kingdom. Jesus was not delivered from the cross. His suffering was real and human. Yet because of His suffering, we have eternal life. The Father’s will was the right answer to his prayer.

We consider here Paul’s statement in the book of Romans 8: 28 ***“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”***

This verse is closely tied to the prayer ***“yet not as I will, but as you will”***. To be able to believe that God works for the good of those who love him even in the midst of debilitating illness or deep grief or crushing disappointment requires an understanding of God’s plan and providence for our life that has eternal importance. We are a part of God’s larger plan for bringing good to the world and our disappointments and suffering may lead to someone else’s redemption and salvation.

Thus, our prayer is ***“Your will be done.”***

Call to Commitment:

Father Tim is right when he promises people that there is a prayer that never fails. Every minister, every Christian has encountered those life situations where people ask us to explain how God will bring good out of the bad they are experiencing. It is difficult to help another person understand in the midst of grief this profound truth. It is something we had best build into our lives in the every day experiences of God’s grace. Then when those dark days come, as they will come, we can trust in a heavenly Father who has always been faithful to care for our needs – large and small. We have trusted Him in the small events of life; he will carry through the difficult situations.

Sing the old hymn *Trusting Jesus* written by Edgar Page Stites (1836-1921) with music by Ira D. Sankey, (1840-1908) found in *The Worship Hymnal*, #515 or sing a more modern song which expresses the truth of daily trusting Jesus to meet our needs.

Concluding the Service:

Either at this time or, as a part of a fellowship dinner with the church, serve the Lord's Supper. Do so with the emphasis and dignity the Lord's Supper deserves. Children who have accepted Christ as Saviour should be included. All children should be helped by their parents to be attentive during the Lord's Supper. This is a time of communion with God as families and as a church family. It should be a time of spiritual beauty, holiness, and teaching for everyone and not a play time for the children.

Concluding the Service: