

GOD’S LOVE, OUR LIFE

PART 1

BY JACKIE OESCH

THE PASSION STORY FROM THE BOOKS OF MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN

- LESSON 1: *HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST* – JESUS, THE KING**
- LESSON 2: *Is It I?* – READINGS FROM THE FOUR GOSPELS**
- LESSON 3: *LOVE ONE ANOTHER* – JESUS’ LAST TEACHINGS**
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- LESSON 6: *CRUCIFY HIM!* – SENTENCED BY PILATE**
- LESSON 7: *FATHER, FORGIVE THEM* – GREAT LOVE**

**“...I HAVE STORED UP YOUR WORD IN MY HEART...”
PSALM 119:11**

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GETTING STARTED

Because of the amount of material, *God's Love, Our Life* is divided into two units. Each unit has seven lessons. Each lesson has between four and six parts. These divisions are different than the other units of study. As you proceed with your Bible study, however, you will continue the adventure that is designed to shape the rest of your life. Your journey will be unique to you and will be determined in part by your eager and enthusiastic passion to grow in your knowledge of the Bible and appreciation for several new Biblical characters and truths. Your commitment to the study promises to enrich your life as God speaks to you through His Word.

As you study you are encouraged to have some recommended supplies on hand:

1. This Bible Study unit: *God's Love, Our Life – Part 1*
2. English Standard Version of the Holy Bible (ESV). Note: If you are making a new purchase, look for a Bible, if possible, that has:
 - a. a cross-reference column preferably down the center of each page,
 - b. a Concordance usually found in the back of the Bible, and
 - c. a few basic maps also usually found in the back.
3. Pen or pencil
4. 3x5 or 4x6 index cards

With the three features listed in #2 you will be adequately supplied for your study and be ready to successfully navigate through these lessons. If, however, this is your first exposure to the Bible, you may want to consider beginning with the study entitled *Navigating the Bible*. This study provides navigational tools designed to help you develop skills and make you a more confident Bible student. *Navigating the Bible* may be downloaded at no cost or obligation from the CrossConnect Ministries website (www.crosscm.org). Although this study is recommended, it is not essential for success in studying *God's Love, Our Life*.

Do not hesitate to mark up your Bible. It's your Bible to study. Make it your own with your notes, your underlining, highlighting, circling and arrows! You may choose to use a notebook or tablet for recording thoughts, questions, and tracking your journey through the study.

The study material is written so that you are able to learn on your own. With a degree of self-discipline you will cover the material with little or no difficulty. At the same time, you will acquire new information, share new insights, and ask some challenging questions that will beg for answers. Anticipating this response you are encouraged to seriously consider inviting a couple of friends to study with you.

May you find joy in your study. May your heart be receptive as God speaks to you through His Word. May these Bible stories reassure you of His great love given to you through His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

It's time to get started! Let's learn the greatest love story that has ever been told!

Editor's note: For clarification, capitalized pronouns reference God. i.e. "...what He said."

INTRODUCTION

All of the Bible stories that have been told in this CrossConnect series have pointed to Jesus and to this one moment in His life—His suffering, death, and resurrection. In short, this is the story of Jesus, God's Son, who handed His life over to the will of His Father in order that all humankind might have Life through Him. The story is almost too good to be true. But, this story is God's Good News, His love story for all who believe. The story is not complete without including both Part 1 and Part 2. Although the material is presented as two units they must be studied as one.

We will learn about Jesus' royal ride into Jerusalem as the people sang their Hosannas. We will learn of the plot to have Him killed, observe His last meal with His friends and listen to His words of comfort and hope. We will follow Him to the Garden of Gethsemane, watch as He agonizes in prayer, and look on as He is betrayed into the hands of evil men.

We will travel with Him as He is handed over to Annas and Caiaphas, then handed over to Pilate and on to Herod and then back to Pilate. No one seemed to know what to do with Him. The Jews wanted Him dead but couldn't kill Him. The Romans found nothing wrong with Him and saw no need to crucify Him. No one knew what to do with this man who was called the King of the Jews.

Ultimately, the pressure of the crowd and the weak character of Pilate led to the long walk to Calvary where Jesus and the two thieves were crucified. The crowd jeered at Jesus, rebuked and mocked Him. The thieves crucified with Him even had their say. Yet, we hear Jesus' seven brief sentences that He speaks to His friends, His Father, and to us. His compassion compelled Him to offer love and forgiveness to all. And, we hear Him yell out with His last breath, "Tetelestai!" He wanted all people everywhere to know that His work was finished.

His rapid burial ushered in the Sabbath Day. And early on the first day of the week the earth shook with the earthquake, the Father's stamp of approval. "PARDONED!" His resurrection announced to the world that as He rose to life so we too shall rise. We have been set free from the bondage of the tomb and given new life in Him.

Jesus appeared on Easter to many including the women who cared for Him during His ministry here on earth. He also appeared to Peter, Mary Magdalene, two travelers going to Emmaus and to all the disciples locked ever so tightly into an upper room for fear of the Jews. And Jesus brought peace to them... He gave them His vision, His plan, and prepared them for the days to come when they would receive power from on high to tell this story of the Father's love through His Son, Jesus Christ.

But, just knowing the facts of these stories and believing that they happened a long time ago have no eternal value. After all, even the devil knows these stories and knows they are true. St. John in his Gospel tells us in John 20:30 that Jesus did many miraculous sign in the presence of His disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But John goes on to say in verse 31 why these things were all written: “But these are written that you may *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by *believing* you may have life in His name.” Yes, truly, God’s love is our Life!

LESSON ONE

HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!

MARK 11:1-11 – JESUS, THE KING

OVERVIEW OF LESSON 1

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INTRODUCTION

All of His life Jesus had been misunderstood. People wanted a king who would free them from the bondage of Rome. They wanted a king who spoke of justice and compassion, one who would release them from their oppressors. They failed to know Jesus as the king He actually was, the king who sought to rule and reign in the hearts and lives of people. He was the King of the Kingdom of God. Instead the people were blinded by their own needs which obstructed their awareness of their greatest need, the need for the promised Messiah, the Christ.

Jesus' royal entry into Jerusalem sitting on a donkey, no less, begins what is traditionally known as Holy Week. The day of His kingly ride is known by the Christian church as Palm Sunday. Many churches use palm branches often carried by children for the worship service processional. We dare not get all caught up in the pomp and circumstances of the day but rather begin to realize that this man who began with the accolades and hosannas early in the week was the same One would be nailed to a cross only a few days later.

LESSON I

Part 1

TEACHING: In the Bible study unit entitled *God's Search, Our Mission* we were introduced to some of Jesus' parables as He taught those who followed Him. We also observed Jesus reaching out with compassion to the rich and educated, to the poor and the outcast, and to the tax collectors and sinners. Jesus' ministry attracted people who wanted to live lives free and forgiven, lives lived to the full (John 10:10).

The way in which Jesus lived His life and carried out His healing ministry was the fulfillment of the prophecies declared by the prophets. They were also signs that He was the promised Messiah (Hebrew), the Anointed One, the Christ (Greek). Frequently, the Gospel writers used phrases such as, "spoken by the prophet" or "fulfilled the prophecy." What the prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 61:1 is an example. This prophecy tells us what God's Anointed One would do. The Lord's Anointed One would...

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

1. When Jesus' cousin John the Baptist was in prison, John sent some of his followers to Jesus to verify that He was the Messiah, the Anointed One. What are we told in Matthew 11:3? What were they to ask Jesus? _____

2. What was Jesus' response in verses 4 and 5? _____

3. Notice in verse 5 that Jesus makes reference to the Old Testament prophet Isaiah. If you have cross-references in your Bible you will find additional references at the end of verse 5 that may include Isaiah 35:4-6 and Matthew 15:31. What do these references tell us about Jesus, the Messiah, the Anointed One? _____

4. Another time Jesus was in the synagogue in Nazareth reading from the Book of Isaiah. See Luke 4:16-21. Do the words sound familiar? What section of Isaiah did He read? _____

In the lessons of this study we will learn that Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth for a greater purpose than teaching a new way of life or even healing the sick, releasing the tongues of the mute, enabling the lame to walk and the blind to see. He came and lived as a man, as one of us; He endured the temptations of Satan and the ridicule of the Pharisees and teachers of the law. He suffered the scorn and mocking of His enemies and, ultimately, died by crucifixion. Jesus' greater purpose was to carry out the will of the Father, even unto death (Matthew 26:39).

1. What is the will of the Father (1 Timothy 2:4)? _____

2. How was the Father's will to be accomplished (Matthew 20:17-19)? _____

3. What does St. Paul tell us in his letter to Timothy (1 Timothy 1:15)? _____

4. See also Mark 2:17 and John 3:17: _____

Part 2

ASSIGNMENT: Read Mark 11:1-10. We will use St. Mark's account of the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem as the basis for our study. The story is also recorded in the other three Gospels:

- Matthew 21:1-11
- Luke 19:29-38
- John 12:12-15

We will use these references for supplemental information.

EXERCISE:

1. Where was Jesus going (Mark 11:1)? _____
Two other towns were mentioned: _____ and _____. Most likely you will not find Bethphage (located between Jerusalem and Jericho) on the map but you will be able to find Bethany located about two miles to the southeast of Jerusalem. This, you may recall from a previous study, was where the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus was located.
2. What was Jesus' instruction to two of His disciples (verse 2)? _____

3. And, if they were questioned, what were they to say (verse 3)? _____

4. The story unfolds just as Jesus had said it would (verse 4-6):
 - a. What did they find? _____
 - b. What did they do? _____
 - c. What were they asked? _____
 - d. How did they respond? _____
5. They brought to Jesus the colt no one had ever ridden. What happened next (verse 7)?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
6. What did many people do (verse 8-10)?
 - a. They spread _____
 - b. They spread _____
 - c. They shouted _____
7. According to St. Mark, where did Jesus go (verse 11) _____

Part 3

REFLECTION:

1. We recall that Jesus carried out His ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing in order to fulfill what the Old Testament prophets had foretold concerning the Messiah, the Christ, this Promised One. Matthew tells us in Matthew 21:5 that this ride into Jerusalem on a colt was another prophetic fulfillment concerning Jesus. What are we told by the prophet in Zechariah 9:9?

2. Jesus' instruction to the two disciples was that they were to find a colt no one had ever ridden (verse 2). In verse 7 we are told that when they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it that He sat on it. Does this raise some thoughts in your mind? Why a colt, the foal of a donkey? According to the prophet Jesus was riding into Jerusalem as a king. "See your King comes to you..." Is this how you would envision a king coming, riding on a donkey? Or, might you envision a scene much like the one in the movie *Ben-Hur* when Judah came parading in on a chariot and hearing the deafening cheers of the Roman citizens as they welcomed their conquering hero? Your thoughts... _____

3. We must ask ourselves: If Jesus had come riding into Jerusalem with Ben Hur-type pomp and circumstance, would He be the King about whom the prophet spoke? The King that Zechariah was describing was different than other kings. What words did Zechariah use to describe this King that would be coming? _____

4. Jesus asked for a colt that no one had ever ridden. We learn that even this unbroken, humble animal would submit to this King who was humbly submitting to the will of His Father. This was Jesus' final trip into Jerusalem and He came as King. The people lauded Him as "the King who comes in the name of the Lord (Luke 19:38)," as "the King of Israel (John 12:13)," as "the Son of David (Matthew 21:9)," the One coming into Jerusalem to restore the kingdom of their father David (Mark 11:10). Your thoughts: _____

5. In Mark 11:9 the people shouted, "Hosanna!" *Note:* Your Bible may have a notation following the word hosanna. The New International Version's note says that Hosanna is a Hebrew expression meaning "Save!" which has become an expression of praise. The people shouted "Hosanna!" They regarded Jesus as a political king who would save them from the tyranny of Rome. Many in the crowd saw for themselves or had heard the story of how this Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, how He had healed the sick, given sight to the blind, and enabled the lame to walk. They wanted a king who would save them from death and disease. And, they wanted a king who would address their wants and desires. They wanted a king who would bring peace. What kind of King would you have wanted? _____

6. One more observation: In Luke 19:38b the crowd in words of praise and in loud voices said, "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." As you may recall, similar words were declared by the angels to the shepherds when Jesus was born. What did they say in praise to God (Luke 2:14)? _____

7. A line in one Christmas carol says, "Come see in the manger our Savior and *King*." The Magi came to Jerusalem and inquired, Where is the one who has been born *King* of the Jews (Matthew 2:2)? The prophets recognized that the Messiah would come as a king (Zechariah 9:9). Even Pilate had a notice fastened to the cross that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the *King* of the Jews (John 19:19)." From His birth to His death Jesus was sought after, worshipped, and yet crucified as a *King*. He was called the *King* of the Jews! Your thoughts and reflections: _____

Part 4

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Close your eyes for a moment and use your imagination.
 - a. If you stepped out your door and saw Jesus coming down the street with the crowd shouting their “Hosannas” and waving palm branches would you join them? Why? Why not? _____
 - b. Would you see yourself throwing your robe over the donkey because you recognized who He was and then declare Him to be your King? Why? Why not? _____
 - c. Would you be hopeful that at last you have a King who would deliver you from all that robbed you of peace? Why? Why not? _____
2. Jesus came as the gentle, righteous King committed to the will of the Father. What is my level of commitment to the will of the Father? When do I find it difficult to come under the authority of my King, the King of all kings? _____

PRAYER: Jesus, You came into Jerusalem as a gentle and humble King. The crowds paid homage to You because they believed You would free them from Roman rule and tyranny. Instead You came for something far greater. You came to free all humankind from the bondage and tyranny of sin that obstructed our relationship with our Heavenly Father. You came and submitted Your will to the will of the Father. You came in order to fulfill the prophecies that declared You to be the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, our Savior and King. For this I give You my thanks and praise. _____

LESSON TWO

IS IT I?

READINGS FROM THE FOUR GOSPELS MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN

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INTRODUCTION

So much is revealed in this lesson. Things aren't what they seem to be. Everything is not okay. Jesus is troubled, His spirit is in turmoil. He knows the hour has come when He will be betrayed into the hands of men who insist that He be killed. How do you think you would conduct yourself at such a time as this?

Watch Jesus. Learn from Him. Remember He began His ministry with the words to His disciples, "Come, follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." Even to the end Jesus was teaching them to be fishers of men. Envision yourself entering the room for the Passover meal. Your friends are there with you. It's been a rough day and you anticipate the lowly servant girl washing your feet...

Listen to the chatter in the room as the men attempt to find out who the betrayer is. It just couldn't be me! And now you begin to look around at your friends and try to imagine which one would do such a thing...

As you continue with your study, remember, all that Jesus did, He did for you and me.

LESSON 2

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: The story of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem is traditionally read in Christian churches throughout the world each year on Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter. Processions are conducted in many congregations with children carrying palm branches and saying or singing, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”

Very shortly, however, the scene changes dramatically. What happens? At the end of the Palm Sunday story we get a hint of trouble brewing. A plot to kill Jesus is developing. Let’s continue to set the stage...

ASSIGNMENT: Read John 11:45-53. Jesus had just raised Lazarus from the dead (verses 38-43).

EXERCISE:

1. How did some of the Jews respond to what Jesus did (verse 45)? _____
2. How did some of the other Jews respond (verse 46)? _____
3. What did the chief priests and Pharisees do (verse 47a)? _____
4. What were their concerns (verses 47b-48)?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

Jesus was performing many miraculous signs. How could they stop Him?

5. What did Caiaphas, the high priest, have to say (verses 49-50)? _____

We are told in verse 51 that what Caiaphas said was a prophecy (verse 51b-52)? He said:

- a. that Jesus would _____
 - b. and not only for that nation but _____
 - c. to bring them _____
6. What was the decision of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council (verse 53)? _____

 7. What precaution for His life did Jesus take (verse 54)? _____

If you have a map in the back of your Bible, locate Ephraim. This town is situated approximately 12 miles north of Jerusalem.

8. The time had come for the Jewish Passover in Jerusalem. Why would you think that many were looking for Jesus (verse 56)? _____
 9. What were the orders of the chief priests and Pharisees? _____
-

REFLECTION: It's interesting to note that the religious leaders recognized that Jesus performed many miraculous signs (John 11:47b) and that they could not stop Him by giving any order or making any law. Yet they would not acknowledge that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah. They were powerless to stop Him and feared that if He wasn't stopped everyone would believe in Him and they would lose their power and influence over the people. They would lose their prestigious position within the Jewish society and their impeccable obedience to the Law would be futile. They feared that the Romans would take away their Temple and their status as a nation.

Part 2

ASSIGNMENT: Read John 12:1-11.

EXERCISE:

1. Six days before the Passover. A dinner was given in Jesus' honor (verse 2). Where do we find Jesus (verse 1)? _____

Note: Mark 14:3 tells us they are at the home of _____

- a. What is Martha doing? _____
 - b. What is Lazarus doing? _____
 - c. What does Mary do (John 12:3)? _____
-

Note: Nard was used to prepare a body for burial. The fragrance of the expensive perfume that Mary poured on Jesus' head would remain with Him throughout His suffering and death. She poured the perfume on Jesus as though preparing His body for His burial.

2. What do we learn about Judas Iscariot in verses 4-6?
 - a. Why did Judas object to Mary's actions? _____
 - b. What was the value of the nard? _____

- c. What was truly at the heart of Judas' concern? _____

- d. What was his mode of operation as the keeper of the money bag? _____

- 3. What was Jesus' response to Judas (verse 7-8)? _____

- 4. Meanwhile, according to verse 9, what was happening with the Jews? _____

- They came to see Jesus and _____ (verse 9).
- 5. How did the chief priests modify their plans (verse 10)? _____
- 6. According to verse 11 what problem did Lazarus create (verse 11)? _____

REFLECTION: In these verses from John 12 Judas' heart was revealed. He objected to what Mary had done. He verbalized his objections saying, in essence, she had wasted a year's wages by pouring that expensive perfume on Jesus' feet. Judas said that the perfume should have been sold and the money given to the poor. But verse 6 exposes Judas for who he really was. He was not concerned for the poor. In no uncertain terms we are told that Judas was a thief. He kept the money bag for the group of disciples and helped himself as he liked to the money it contained. Judas was a crook. A thief! Why would Jesus tolerate such a person? Why would He include Judas as a disciple? For three years Judas was with Jesus, heard His teachings, saw how He treated all kinds of people and yet Jesus' example and teachings didn't seem to have any effect on Judas at all.

- 1. Describe the way you think Jesus regarded Judas. _____

- 2. Describe the way you think about thieves and crooks: _____

- 3. What is one area of your thoughts about the wrongdoer that you desire to have transformed into the likeness of Jesus? _____

Part 3

ASSIGNMENT: Read Matthew 26:1-5. Satan's *plot* exposed...

EXERCISE:

1. How many days until Passover (verse 2)? _____
2. What do we learn about the plot to kill Jesus from verse 4? _____
3. What were they afraid of (verse 5)? _____

ASSIGNMENT: Read Matthew 26:14-16.

EXERCISE: (See also Mark 14:10-11.)

1. Where did Judas Iscariot go (verse 14)? _____
2. What did he ask them (verse 15)? _____
3. What did they agree would be the payment? _____
4. What was Judas hired to do (verse 16)? _____

ASSIGNMENT: Read Luke 22:1-6.

EXERCISE: Much of what we read in Luke 22 is a review; however, look for one or two new insights from these verses.

1. We are reminded in verse 2 that these plotters and schemers were afraid _____

2. Then what distressing fact are we told in verse 3? _____
3. In verse 4 we learn that Judas was actually a part of the discussion on how he would betray Jesus. We are told that Judas _____ with them the *plot* to hand Jesus over to the chief priests and officers. What was the attitude in the room according to verse 5? _____

4. To those gathered in the room—the chief priests and officers of the temple guard—Judas’ betrayal of Jesus was worth the money! Thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15)! What was the opportune time Judas was watching for (Luke 22:6)? _____

ASSIGNMENT: Read John 13:1-2. God’s salvation *plan* revealed...

EXERCISE:

1. We are told that “the hour had come (verse 1)...” The time had come for the will of the Father to be accomplished through Jesus. “Having _____ His own who were in the _____, He _____ them to the end.”

2. The evening meal was served (verse 2). What are we told about Judas Iscariot, son of Simon?

In Luke 22:3 we read that “Satan entered Judas.” Now in John 13:2 we learn more about the plot, namely, that Satan prompted Judas’ thoughts and his actions. Judas plotted how he would betray his master.

Part 4

MEMORIZATION: In the introduction to *God’s Love, Our Life* it was said that this story is the greatest love story that has ever been told. In John 13:1 we are told that Jesus knew the right time had come and now He was about to show the full extent of His love. Humankind deserved death. You and I deserved to be stretched out and nailed on the cross to die. You and I deserved not only to die but to be dead forever in hell. This is the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. This was God’s plan. His suffering and death were not a result of anything He had done but He paid the price of *our* sin on *our* behalf. His punishment, His suffering and death, was not what He deserved. Sin made us incapable of being the perfection that God created us to be in Genesis 1. Romans 5:6 and 8 reveal the truth about God’s timing, our condition, and His love. Take time to write out Romans 5:6 and 8 on an index card and add these verses to your memory library. In thinking about God’s *plan* for your salvation consider these questions:

1. Why would God’s perfect timing be when I am powerless?
2. Why would God’s love not be based on my spiritual condition?
3. Why would He demonstrate His love for me while I am still a sinner, while I am dead in my sin?

Write out these questions on the back of your card and begin to marvel at God’s love that does everything for us because we were powerless and could never save ourselves (Ephesians 2:8-9). You and I were *dead* in our transgressions and sin (Ephesians 2:1).

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, when I think of Your great plan of love for me even when I was powerless, I cannot help but praise Your name. When I think that I was dead in my transgressions and sin, I cannot help but give You thanks. When I think that just at the right You died for the ungodly, I can only drop to my knees and thank You that in Your mercy You died for me a poor miserable sinner! _____

INTRODUCTION: In this section we will begin to see that even the action of a betrayer does not cause what is to happen. Jesus will be giving His life up of His own accord and in obedience to the Father’s will, not as a victim of an evil plot.

ASSIGNMENT: Read John 13:21-30.

- Was Jesus surprised by what was about to take place?
- Was Judas surprised by what Jesus knew?

EXERCISE:

1. We are told that Jesus was _____ in _____ (verse 21). What does He tell His disciples: “Truly, I say to you _____

2. What is the reaction of the disciples (verse 22)? _____
3. Verse 23 speaks of “one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.” The disciple is the Gospel writer John who was reclining next to Jesus at the table. What does Simon Peter do (verse 24)?

4. What does John ask Jesus (verse 25)? _____
5. What does Jesus tell John (verse 26)? _____
6. Jesus dipped the bread and gave the dish with the bread (given to the honored guest) to Judas who took it. And we are told (verse 27) as soon as Judas took the bread, _____

- No longer are Judas’ thoughts being prompted but now his whole being, his essence is controlled by Satan.
7. Is Jesus surprised? What are his last words to Judas (verse 27b)? _____

8. The disciples were totally confused. No one at the meal _____ why Jesus said this to Judas. What did the disciples think Jesus told him (verse 29)? _____

9. What is the last thing we are told (verse 30)? _____
...and it was night.

Part 5

REFLECTION: Can you envision yourself as one of the disciples reclining at the table with Jesus? Jesus is present with His disciples. The meal has been prepared and served. Everything seems to be as it has always been at Passover until this moment when Jesus makes this statement. You can hardly believe what He has just said. One of us? Betraying Him? We’ve all been with Him these past three years. We’ve gone everywhere together. We’ve seen Him perform many miracles and confront the Pharisees

and teachers of the Law. We've been to weddings together and fed thousands of people with Him. We've all been friends and now He's announcing that one of us is going to betray Him?

You and the other disciples recall that several times throughout the three years Jesus had told them all that He was going to be betrayed, suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed but would be raised to life on the third day (Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31-32; Luke 9:22; and John 12:32-33). But, you don't remember Him ever saying anything about one of *us* betraying Him (Matthew 20:18).

Now He's saying something to Judas and tells him to do it quickly (John 13:27b). Judas is leaving. He's going to miss the Passover meal. You can't help but wonder what's going on. It's dark. It is night (John 13:30). Judas is gone. Your thoughts: _____

SUMMARY: In this lesson we recognize that Jesus was committed to the will of the Father and knew that the hour had come when He would suffer and die for the salvation of humankind. The story of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday as Israel's King culminated with Judas, the chief priests and elders, the teachers of the Law, and the officers of the Temple guard gathered together to discuss and come to a consensus on how Jesus would be arrested without a crowd of people around Him. Judas left with the payment of thirty pieces of silver and the agreement that he would find the opportune time to hand Jesus over to them.

APPLICATION: When Jesus told the disciples that one would betray Him they all asked the same question, "Is it I?" Jesus knew what Judas was about to do and sent him on his way to do quickly what he had to do. We cannot point the finger at Judas, however, without asking ourselves the question: "Is it I?" Is it hard to think about betrayal?

1. Have I ever betrayed someone? Who did I betray? What were the consequences of my actions?

2. Have I ever been the victim of betrayal? Who betrayed me? What happened? What were some of my feelings and some of the consequences? _____

3. How might I respond to someone who has betrayed me? _____

4. Jesus has never betrayed me but have I ever betrayed Jesus? What were the circumstances?

PRAYER: I know, Lord, that I would be lying if I did not admit that I, too, have been guilty of betraying You. I have wanted to be popular rather than boldly confess You before others. I have chosen to act in disobedience rather than do the right thing. I have considered wealth and possession of greater worth than knowing You and professing You to be my Lord and Savior. I thank You that in spite of how I have treated You that You have never withheld Your grace and mercy from me. You have never betrayed me. You have only been my Savior and Redeemer. _____

LESSON THREE

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

JOHN 13-17 – JESUS’ LAST TEACHINGS

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout His ministry Jesus taught His disciples. He had promised to make them fishers of men. He taught right up to the end of His life, the time just before his suffering and death took place. Jesus taught them by example in this next story. As you study this lesson observe Jesus and listen carefully to what He says as He teaches. Keep in mind the words from John 3:17 which you studied in a previous lesson, “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.”

John 13-17 are chapters filled with Jesus’ teachings. Read the words carefully. Listen as Jesus talks to His disciples. Everything He said to them He says to you and to me. Learn from Him!

The high priestly prayer is prayed by Jesus with His disciples. In this prayer Jesus prayed for Himself, His disciples, and for us. Identify what He specifically asks His Father. Let His prayer become yours as you also pray for those who are His disciples now and for those who are yet to follow as His disciples take on Jesus’ mission to seek and save the lost.

LESSON 3

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: After all that has gone on the past week—Jesus’ ride into Jerusalem, His teachings, Judas’ plot to betray Him, preparations for the Passover dinner, and the bringing of His disciples together for the meal—at last, Jesus had a quiet moment with His close and most faithful followers of the past three years, His disciples. He knew that the time had come to leave this world and go to the Father (Matthew 26:18). He is about to be handed over to be crucified. Death is at hand. And now, Jesus begins to “show the full extent of His love for His own who were in the world (John 13:1 KJV).”

What would you share with your best friends if you wanted them to know how much you loved them? Jesus didn’t have much time. Within the next several hours He would be betrayed, denied, mocked, scourged, and flogged. He would be crucified and then hang on the cross for hours until He would finally breathe His last breath. Ultimately, His suffering and death would show the full extent of His love. However, if you were in a situation when time was running out, what do you think you would do or say to communicate your love for those with you?

ASSIGNMENT: In Lesson 2 we will use John 13-17 as the basis for our study. Parts of these chapters are also recorded in the other three Gospels. We will use additional references for supplemental information.

Let’s begin! Read John 13:1-17.

- What is the setting?
- What did Jesus do?
- What was Simon Peter’s problem?
- What was Jesus’ teaching?

EXERCISE:

1. In verses 2-3 it seems as though so many things are happening at once.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. After a day of foot travel, Jesus and those with Him needed to have their feet washed. Sandals failed to protect them from the dirt of the streets. This was work for a servant. It appears that everyone was gathered at the table ready to be served the evening meal and waiting for the servant to wash his/her feet. The washing had not yet been done. Apparently, no servant was available to wash the feet of the guests. In the posture of a servant, what did Jesus do (verse 4-5)?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

After that, He:

- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

3. Everything appeared to be going fine until Jesus came to Simon Peter. What did Peter ask (verse 6)? _____

4. What was Jesus' answer (verse 7)? _____

5. What did Peter declare (verse 8)? _____
And, what was Jesus' answer? _____

6. Simon Peter thought he had a better idea (verse 9). What was that? _____

7. Jesus answered (verse 10): _____

Part 2

TEACHING: Jesus was washing feet and spoke of the need to bathe the physical body. He then moved the subject to the hearts of those gathered with Him noting that their hearts were clean. But He also added that not all hearts of those present were clean. In verse 11 we are told that Jesus was making reference to _____ (Luke 22:4), the one whose heart was not clean, the heart of the one who would betray Him.

EXERCISE:

1. When Jesus finished washing their feet, what did He do (verse 12)? _____

2. What did He ask His disciples? _____

3. Then what did He say (verse 13)? “You call me _____ and _____, and you are right, for so _____.”
4. He goes on to say, “If I then, your _____ and _____, have washed _____ feet, you also ought to _____ one another’s _____ (verse 14).”
5. In verse 15 He says, “For I have given you an _____, that _____ also should _____ just as _____ have done for _____. Truly, Truly, I say to you, a _____ is not _____ than his _____, nor is a _____ greater than the one who _____ him.”
6. What is the significance of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples and teaching them by example to wash the feet of one another (verse 17)? _____

REFLECTION:

1. Jesus taught the disciples by *example*. Envision yourself sitting at the table. What would it have been like to be waiting for the servants to come and wash your feet? _____

 - a. What might have been going through your mind? _____

 - b. Do you think you would have done anything? Would you be checking on the wait staff to find out what was holding everything up? After all, you were a guest and all of these friends needed attention... _____

2. But, apparently there is no servant to wash everyone’s feet. Now what? Then, very nonchalantly Jesus, your Lord and Teacher, gets up from the table where He is sitting and takes off His outer garment. He wraps a towel around His waist and pours water into a basin. You are dumbfounded by what Jesus is doing. He begins to wash everyone’s feet and to dry them with the towel that He’s wrapped around Himself. Now what are you thinking? _____

3. It’s an awkward moment. What are you feeling? Guilty? But you aren’t the one who is supposed to be doing this. It’s the servant’s responsibility! Now what are you thinking as you watch Jesus acting like a servant? After all, He’s doing something *you* would never do? _____

4. Now, you're next. He's about to wash your feet! Would you be passive and let Jesus have His way with you? Or, would you be more aggressive like Peter and insist on having your own way, allowing Jesus to wash you only as you would give consent? How do you think you would act?

5. Jesus has just finished washing His disciples' feet. How often might they recall this moment with Jesus just before He suffered and died? He gave them an example they would never forget. He tells them: Do what I have done. I have washed your feet, now you wash one another's feet. What did Jesus' example mean for the disciples? _____

6. Jesus promised that those who served others would be blessed. How might the disciples have processed both Jesus' example and His teaching? _____

Part 3

TEACHING: John 13-17 are chapters filled with the teachings of Jesus to these men who had traveled with Him throughout the land for the past three years. He told them that one of them would betray Him and then He tells Peter that he will deny Him. With such news these men are troubled. Then Jesus adds that even though they want to go where He is going He tells them that they cannot follow Him now.

They are unable to comprehend what Jesus is telling them but Jesus does not leave them troubled. He comforts them with words of reassurance. Note John 14:2-3. What does He tell them? "In my

_____ house are many _____. If it were not so, would I have _____ you that I go to _____ a _____ for you? And if I go... _____

MEMORIZATION: A word of comfort for His disciples also holds the promise of comfort for us as well, especially during hard and trying times, during times of doubt and frustration. Write out John 14:6.

Find security in these words. Jesus says, "I am the Way..." What does this mean when there are so many philosophies and ideologies clamoring for attention, so many detractors wanting us to believe there is another way? _____

Jesus says, "I am...the Truth..." What does this mean for my life when the world around me wants me to believe that there is no truth? _____

And Jesus says, "I am...the Life..." What does it mean for me that Jesus is my Life and that He offers to me the abundant Life in Him (John 10:10) even during a time when the world around me is dead in trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1)? _____

Take time to write this verse on an index card and allow your mind to meditate on these three words: Way, Truth, and Life. Jesus is the Way to the Father. Jesus is all Truth. Jesus is Life in this world and in the next!

TEACHING: In John 15 Jesus teaches His disciples by using the picture of the grapevine and its branches. In verse 5 He says, "I AM the _____; you are the _____ He promises that anyone who remains in Him and He remains in them will bear much fruit. Then He adds, "_____."

MEMORIZATION: In John 15:12-13 Jesus says, "This is My _____, that you _____ as I have _____ you. Greater _____ has no one than this, that someone _____ his _____ for his _____. Again, write this on an index card. Consider ways in which one lays down his life for his friends. Note on your card those ways. Watch for opportunities you are given to lay down your life for others.

Part 4

TEACHING: Jesus continues His teaching in chapters 14-16.

1. He tells them about the coming of the _____, the _____ of _____ (John 14:16-17).
2. He shares that the world will _____ those who are His disciples and that the world will hate them because of _____ (John 15:18ff).
3. Jesus concludes all He wants to share with the disciples by adding that they will grieve for Him but their _____ will turn into _____ (John 16:20ff).
4. And, He tells them why He has shared these teachings with them (John 16:33): "In the _____ you will have _____. But take _____! I have _____ the _____."

TEACHING: John 17 contains what is often referred to as Jesus' high priestly prayer.

1. In verses 1-5 Jesus prays for *Himself*. What did Jesus include in His prayer for Himself?
 - a. Verse 2? _____

 - b. In verse 3 He defines eternal life: "This is eternal life: _____

_____."
2. In verses 6-19 Jesus prays for *His disciples*. What did Jesus include in His prayer for them?
 - a. Verse 11: "Holy Father, _____
_____."
 - b. Verse 15: "I do not ask _____
_____."
 - c. Verse 17: "Sanctify _____."
3. In verses 20-26 Jesus prays for *all believers*. What did Jesus include in His prayer for the believers yet to come?
 - a. Verse 21a: "that all of them _____
_____."
 - b. Verse 21b: "May they also _____
_____."
 - c. Verse 23: "May they be _____
_____."
 - d. Verse 24: "Father, _____
_____."

REFLECTION QUESTION: Jesus prayed for *Himself* and *His disciples* on the night in which He was betrayed, denied, and endured the suffering of men who by morning would have Him nailed on a cross to die. Can you imagine? And that same night in the same prayer Jesus also prayed for *you and me* and for all of those who would believe in Him through our message. Can you imagine? Jesus thought of you and me as He prayed to His Father in heaven. He asked that we might be one as He and the Father are one. He asked that He might be in us. Can you imagine? What thoughts go through your mind when you consider this? _____

LESSON FOUR

TAKE EAT... TAKE DRINK

MATTHEW 26:26-28 – THE NEW COVENANT

OVERVIEW OF LESSON 4

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• Teaching: Feast of Unleavened Bread	36
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INTRODUCTION

Lesson 4 begins with Jesus instituting the Lord's Supper. Listen carefully to the words He used as He told His disciples to take and eat My body, take and drink My blood. He told them this new covenant was poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Consider what this would mean for the Jewish teachers and leaders as they maintained the practice of Passover.

Jesus had some difficult things to tell the disciples regarding what was about to happen. Typically they didn't want to believe what He told them. This time it wasn't the question of surprise, "Is it I?" No, this time it was a vehement response, "No way!" Denial! No one wanted to accept the fact that what Jesus had just said was truth. And, dear Peter spoke the loudest. All Peter could say was, "Even if..."

We have a chance to consider all the times we have profoundly said, "I would never" believing it impossible to do such a dishonorable thing. Don't miss Jesus' eyes as He looked into the eyes of one who said that he would never. He looks into our eyes and lovingly says, "This covenant is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

LESSON 4

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: A most significant event happens while Jesus is with His disciples for the Passover meal. John does not mention the event but it is recorded in the other three Gospels: Matthew 26, Mark 14, and Luke 22. We need to learn what happened; we need to review what made this particular event significant; and, we need to understand what significance this event has for your life and mine.

The happening is often referred to as the Holy Eucharist, the Lord’s Supper, the Last Supper, or Holy Communion. Some churches speak of this as the Sacrament of the Altar. All of these terms are referencing the meal Jesus had with His disciples on the night He was betrayed. It was His last night and His last meal with them because the next day He would be crucified and die.

Let’s first look at what took place that night at the Passover meal in Jerusalem.

ASSIGNMENT: Read Matthew 26:26-28.

- The significant elements Jesus used were the bread and the wine.
- The bread contained no yeast. It was like a flatbread or cracker.
- The wine or the “fruit of the vine” was the fermented juice of the grape.

TEACHING: Now let’s begin to look at some words and phrases that hold important meaning and will help us to understand what Jesus instituted when He said, “Take eat” and “drink from it.” One phrase is the *Feast of Unleavened Bread* and one word is *Passover* found in Matthew 26:17. Most likely, if you have a Bible with a cross-reference, one reference for verse 17 will be Exodus 12:17-20, 33-34, 39. The Feast of the Unleavened Bread tells us more about the bread.

EXERCISE: The Bread, His Body (Exodus 12)

1. What were the Israelites to celebrate (verse 17a)? _____
2. This was not a one-time celebration. What were their instructions (verse 17c)? _____

3. What are we told about the bread (verse 18)? _____
4. What are we told about the yeast (verses 19-20)? _____

EXERCISE: The Wine, His Blood

1. In Matthew 26:28 Jesus gives the wine to His disciples and says this is my blood. Blood was an essential part of the first Passover (Exodus 12:1-11). What was the instruction regarding the animal (Exodus 12:5)? _____
2. What was the instruction regarding the blood of the animal (verse 7)? _____

3. What did God say would happen on that particular night (verse 12)? _____

4. The blood would be a sign on the houses where the Israelites lived. What was God's promise to His people all because of the blood (verse 13)? _____

Part 2

TEACHING: The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Passover were connected. Meat and bread were the basic food of the Israelites' meals. In Exodus we find the instructions of God to His people regarding the preparation of the food. Managing the blood of the animals and instructions for making the bread were new concepts but significant ones from God's perspective. These new concepts would help give understanding to the ultimate Passover that would take place on the night He was betrayed when Jesus instituted something new, this new "covenant" (Matthew 26:28).

As the angel of death passed through the land of Egypt killing the firstborn male of every womb whether man or animal, the blood of the lamb on the doorframes saved God's people (Exodus 12:23). In the same way, Jesus, the Lamb of God, shed His blood on the cross for our sins. His blood becomes our covering and by faith is that which saves us from eternal damnation. His blood offers to those who believe in Him life and salvation. In Hebrews 9:22 we are reminded again that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. His death grants to us pardon and peace in His name. Figuratively speaking, the angel of death passes over us.

We've looked back to the time when the Israelites were slaves in Egypt and the Lord delivered them. We've looked ahead to what Jesus' death and resurrection accomplished for us, namely granting to all who believe life and salvation with Him forever. For both the Israelites and for us the sacrifice was the blood. The old covenant demanded the blood sacrifice of animals and the new covenant demanded the blood of Jesus Himself.

So now, let's go back to Jerusalem, back to the room where Jesus and His disciples are celebrating the Passover meal. From our study in Exodus we know that the bread Jesus offered His disciples was unleavened. The bread was His body (Matthew 26:26).

Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to them. His command was for each of them to drink from the cup. The "fruit of the vine" was His blood of the new covenant which is...

1. _____
2. _____ (Matthew 26:28)

No longer would sacrifices be required because He came to fulfill the Law which demanded the sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins. He came as the One who was the ultimate sacrifice who came to fulfill the demands of the Law by the shedding of His own blood. His blood is our salvation! *Note:* For further study check out Hebrews 9:11-28.

In this lesson we learned about the last Passover meal Jesus had with His disciples. In 1 Corinthians 11:23 St. Paul tells us, "The _____ Jesus, on the night when He was _____, took _____, and when He had given _____, He broke it and said, This is My _____, which is for _____; do this in _____ of Me. In the same way, also He took the _____ after supper, saying, "This cup is the _____ in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in _____ of Me." Jesus told them that this meal instituted the new covenant in which His blood would be shed as the final sacrifice, the payment that offered to all who believed the forgiveness of sins.

Part 3

REVIEW:

1. Who instituted the Lord's Supper? _____
See Matthew 26:26.
2. What were the visible elements that Jesus used? _____ and _____
See Matthew 26, 29.
3. What was the significance of the new covenant? _____
See Matthew 26:28.

TEACHING: Each year following God's rescue and deliverance of the Israelites from the tyranny of the Egyptians (Exodus 1-14) His people celebrated Passover, a meal instituted by God (Exodus 12). The meal included eating unleavened bread, bread made without yeast, and the Passover lamb, a lamb without

defect whose blood was shed and used as a protective covering over the doorframes of their houses. Each year the Israelites participated in the Passover meal as a reminder of their deliverance and the freedom God brought to Israel. Each year unleavened bread and the lamb whose blood was shed were eaten as an act of participating again in the first Passover meal. The Passover was the way of saying that the deliverance and freedom our forefathers experienced is the same deliverance and freedom each generation experienced. It was a way God made alive for every generation the original act of deliverance and freedom.

Now at the Passover meal with His disciples Jesus institutes something new, a new covenant. This covenant was to replace the Passover meal. Now He invites them to experience their deliverance from the slavery of sin as they participated in this sacred meal of bread and wine. This new covenant was not only offered for the Israelites but was offered for all generations that would follow, including you and me as we participate in this sacred meal, offered to deliver us from the consequences of sin. The unleavened bread offers us the body of Christ. The blood is not the blood of a lamb but the blood of Jesus, called the Lamb of God. We participate in the blood as we receive the wine. Thus, every time we participate in Holy Communion we participate in His act of deliverance and it is made alive for us in our generation.

THOUGHT QUESTION:

1. Food is essential for life but when we eat food do we understand all the workings in our body that enable the food to be taken in and digested? We do know that without food one will die. Jesus chose to use bread and wine as visible elements for instituting the Lord’s Supper. If food is essential for physical life, how would spiritual food be essential for one’s spiritual life?

2. As you studied about the Last Supper Jesus ate with His disciples, what did you learn about God and His great love for humankind? _____

MEMORIZATION: Jeremiah 31:3 and 34 are two verses that promise great comfort for us all and are offered in the new covenant. Write these verses and then share what they mean to you.

1. Jeremiah 31:3 – “I have loved _____

2. What this verse means to me? _____

3. Jeremiah 31:34 – “For I will forgive _____
_____.”

4. What this verse means to me? _____

Memorize these verses. Write them on index cards to remind yourself constantly that you are loved with an everlasting love and that God forgives your sins and remembers them no more! This is His promise of the new covenant! By faith in the Almighty God who said these words we can believe them for they are the true promise of God.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I can only give to You my thanks and praise. You gave Your body and blood as the final sacrifice and payment for sin. Because of You my sins are remembered no more. Because of You I am reassured of the Father’s love, His everlasting love. You gave to Your followers Your body and blood to eat and drink in remembrance of You and You commanded all of us to eat and drink often for Your body and blood are the new covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. _____

Part 4

TEACHING: Up to this point in our study of *God’s Love, Our Life* we have read about Jesus’ triumphant ride into Jerusalem as King. We saw Jesus washing the feet of His disciples and heard Him say to them, “I have set an example that you should do as I have done for you.” After He was finished washing their feet He instituted the new covenant in His blood that would be poured out for them for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus spent time sharing His final thoughts with them ending with His high priestly prayer, the prayer in which He prayed for Himself, His disciples, and even for you and me.

Before they left the room to go out to the Mount of Olives, Jesus had something disturbing to share. He had foretold that Judas, who had left the room, would betray Him. Now Jesus is ready to share something new, something that would involve all of them.

ASSIGNMENT: Read Matthew 26:31-35 and Mark 14:27.

EXERCISE:

1. What did He tell them in Matthew 26:31a? _____

2. What were the words prophesied by the prophet Zechariah (verse 31b)? _____

Note: See Zechariah 13:7. “Shepherd” refers to Jesus and the “sheep of the flock” are His disciples.

3. What is Jesus’ promise to them in verse 32? _____

4. What is Peter’s bold statement in verse 33? _____

5. Then Jesus foretells exactly what Peter will do in spite of what he boldly declares before Jesus and all the others (verse 34): _____

6. Peter refused to believe what Jesus said about him. What did he declare (verse 35a)? _____

Note: In John’s Gospel we will learn that after Peter denies Jesus that Jesus looked at Peter. The question we need to address is what the look of Jesus communicated to Peter. Based on Jesus’ prayer for Peter (Luke 22:32) we will need to consider whether Jesus’ look communicated rebuke or compassion.

7. What are we told about the others (verse 35b)? _____

REFLECTION: There was nothing left to say. Jesus was not going to argue with them. He had told the truth about what would happen. Envision yourself sitting around the table with Jesus and all of these friends. One could probably hear a pin drop. The truth had silenced them. They sat there in disbelief but they also knew Jesus well enough to know that He wasn’t kidding. He wasn’t teasing or making fun of them.

1. Do you think they left the room wanting in their hearts to prove Him wrong?
2. Do you think Peter is adamantly mumbling something under his breath something like, “I *never* will”?
3. As you leave the room, what do you think would be going through your mind?

APPLICATION:

1. We have all said it, “I would never do that.” Recall a time when you said, “I would never ...”

2. What was it that caused you to say, "I would never ...?" _____

3. Did others hear you? Did they also agree that they never would either? What was the atmosphere in the room? _____

4. Have you wondered if you would ever disown Jesus? What would cause you to consider denying that you know Him? _____

PRAYER: O Lord, You know that like Peter, I, too, have said, "I would never do that!" And, You know that I have done it. I hold regrets in my heart. These regrets have held me in their grip. They have kept me from living the life I know You would have me live. Lord Jesus, be gracious and merciful to me. Forgive me. Thank You for restoring me into a relationship with You that frees me to serve You wholeheartedly. Thank You for loving me and for inviting me into a love relationship with You. And, Lord, as You have forgiven me, enable me to forgive those who have also said, "I would never do that." Give me a heart of love and compassion that releases them to live free and forgiven. _____

LESSON FIVE

I AM HE

MATTHEW 26 AND JOHN 18 – PRAYER, ARREST, TRIAL, DENIAL

OVERVIEW OF LESSON 5

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• Jesus Before Annas, Caiaphas, the Sanhedrin	50
• Peter's Denial	53

INTRODUCTION

This lesson begins with Jesus and His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus' heart is troubled for He knows the horror that awaits Him, even to the point of His Father forsaking Him. The story picks up the pace as the betrayer approaches. Jesus is left alone. The abandonment of disciples, the agony the physical torture inflicted by the guards and officials, and the denial of Peter are all part of this passion drama.

Be watchful. Look for the times when Jesus makes reference to fulfilling the Scriptures which remind us that He was determined to keep the will of the Father before Him at all times. Seek to discover what would cause the arresting guards to "draw back and fall to the ground" when Jesus said, "I am He." And, notice who takes command of the situation at that moment.

Jesus is taken before Annas and Caiaphas. Everyone is trying to find fault with Him. They need witnesses to give false testimonies about Him. And while Jesus is being spit upon and scourged, what is happening in the courtyard outside?

Take time to reflect on Peter's dark night of the soul when along with all the other disciples he declared, "I would never..." Catch the look in Jesus' eyes as He looked straight at Peter who suddenly remembered and went out and wept bitterly.

LESSON 5

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: Peter had just learned that he would do the unimaginable. He would disown Jesus, his friend, his teacher, his Lord. Peter, however, vehemently refused to accept what Jesus had said about him. With the words of Peter still echoing—"I will not deny you"—the men began to leave the room.

From Matthew's Gospel it appears as though Jesus' prediction concerning Peter was the last thing He shared with them. One can only imagine what was going on in the minds of the disciples. They knew that one of them would betray their Lord and Master. Now they have just been told that they would all scatter and abandon Him and that Peter, the rock, would deny Him and not just once but three times. Together with Jesus they left the room and headed out into the night.

ASSIGNMENT: Read Matthew 26:36-46. For our study we will primarily use Matthew's account of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and use Mark, Luke, and John for additional information.

- What was Jesus doing in the Garden?
- What were the disciples doing?
- What was Jesus' concern for His disciples?

EXERCISE:

1. Where did Jesus go with His disciples (verse 36a)? _____
Where was this garden located (John 18:1; Luke 22:39)? _____

Note: This would be a good time to use your map and become logistically oriented.

Traditionally, the room where Jesus ate the Last Supper was located in the southwestern part of the city in the Essene Quarter. After dinner, as usual, Jesus went with His disciples to the Mount of Olives to the northeast of the city. Then they would descend from Jerusalem situated atop Mount Zion to the valley below and cross the Kidron Valley that ran along the east side of Jerusalem outside of the city wall. Coming up out of the valley they would ascend again to make their way to the Mount of Olives and to Gethsemane, a garden within the olive groves.

2. What did Jesus tell the disciples (verse 36b)? _____
3. Who did Jesus take with Him as He went further into the garden (Matthew 26:37)? _____

4. What words do Matthew and Mark use to describe Jesus' emotions?
 - a. Matthew 26:37, 38a _____
 - b. Mark 14:33, 34 _____

 5. What is Jesus' instruction for the three disciples that He has brought with Him (verse 38b)?

In Luke 22:40 Jesus is more specific. What does He tell them to pray for? _____

 6. Jesus leaves them and goes off by Himself to pray. What does He ask His Father in Matthew 26:39?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

 7. How does Luke describe what is happening to Jesus as He prays (Luke 22:43-44)? _____

 8. After Jesus prayed He returned to His disciples. What does He find according to Matthew 26:40a? _____

 9. What does He ask Peter (verse 40b)? _____

 10. Why was it important to Jesus that Peter watch and pray (verse 41)? _____

Jesus said: "The _____ indeed is _____, but the _____ is _____."

 11. What does Jesus do according to verse 42? _____

What is His prayer this time? _____

 12. What did Jesus find the next time He came to the disciples (verse 43)? _____

 13. Then He left them again and... _____ (verse 44).
-
14. This time when Jesus returns (verse 45-46)...
 - a. What does He tell them? _____
 - b. What does He declare? _____
 - c. What is His resolve? _____

Part 2

TEACHING: Jesus begins His passion deeply *distressed* and *sorrowful*. “My soul is *overwhelmed with sorrow* to the point of death.” These words may lose their impact in translation; however, they reveal horror and anguish. Jesus’ heart is ready to break or burst with grief. Luke says, “His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.” We are given more understanding of Jesus’ anguish when we listen to His prayer: “...may this cup be taken from me (Matthew 26:39).” What was this cup? Isaiah 51:17 speaks of the “_____ of [God’s] _____.” Jesus was about to receive the full extent of God’s wrath by taking on Himself the sin of the whole world.

If Christ came into the world to save sinners from the wrath of God, then why did He ask the Father to remove this cup from Him? We must remember that Jesus was both the Son of God (divine nature) but also the Son of Man (human nature). No human being can comprehend the full extent of God’s wrath that would be poured out on His Son. Jesus was overwhelmed with the horror He faced. He was readying Himself to bear the wrath of God for the sins of all humankind. He would be abandoned and forsaken by God. Although He was tempted to refuse the cup of suffering knowing its severity, He humbly accepted the Father’s will by praying, “Thy will be done.” Jesus says in John 6:38, “For I have _____ from _____, not to do _____ but to do the _____ of _____ who _____.” Never does Jesus waver from His resolve to do the will of the Father. Rather, it’s almost as though Jesus looked at His watch and declared, “It’s time! Let’s go!”

INTRODUCTION: Just as soon as Jesus had finished His time of prayer He returned to where the rest of His disciples had been waiting. Then His betrayer arrived. Jesus knew the hour had come for the Son of Man to be betrayed into the hands of sinners (Matthew 26:45). The action begins. Use your imagination and place yourself in the garden as the men came to arrest Jesus.

ASSIGNMENT: Read Matthew 26:47-56. Other references will include Mark 14:43-50, Luke 22:57-54a, and John 18:2-12.

EXERCISE: Let’s begin with Matthew 26.

1. Who showed up (verse 47)? _____

Note: John tells us that Judas knew the place where Jesus would be because Jesus had come there often with His disciples (John 18:2).

2. Who did he bring with him? _____

3. They are armed with _____ and _____. What are they carrying according to John 18:3c? _____
 4. Who sent them? _____
 5. What was the betrayer's signal (verse 48)? _____
 6. John adds to the story. Jesus seems to take charge. What question does He ask the men (John 18:4)? _____
 7. What was their answer (verse 5a)? _____
 8. What did Jesus tell them (verse 5b)? _____
 9. What happened when Jesus told them who He was (verse 6)? _____

 10. In verses 7 and 8a the exchange was repeated.
 - a. What did Jesus say? _____
 - b. What was their answer? _____
 11. Jesus was eager to accomplish the will of His Father. What had Jesus said in John 6:39 that John repeats again in John 18:9b? _____
 12. According to Matthew 26:50 the men who had come with Judas stepped forward, seized Jesus, and arrested him. What happened next (verse 51)? _____

- Note:* We are told in both Luke and John that Jesus' companion was Simon Peter.
13. What was Jesus' command (verse 52a)? _____
What did Jesus tell Peter (verse 52b)? _____

- Jesus puts Himself under the authority of the Word. "How then should the _____ be _____, that it must be so (verse 54)?"
14. Now Jesus addresses the crowd. What did He ask them? _____

- Every day He had been in the temple courts teaching. They did not arrest Him there. What did Jesus want to make perfectly clear in verse 56a? _____

- Again Jesus wanted them to know that He was under the authority of the Word, the writings of the prophets, that they might be fulfilled.
15. Jesus was arrested. What did all the disciples do (verse 56b)? _____

Part 3

REFLECTION:

1. The crowd of men all followed Judas and came to the garden to arrest Jesus. The soldiers and officials came. They were sent by the chief priests and elders of the people. They came armed with clubs and swords. They came with lanterns and torches. They came with authority and yet when Jesus said that He was Jesus of Nazareth they “drew back and fell to the ground.” These men came with the authority of those who sent them, mere men. Jesus was there among them as one under the authority of Scriptures to fulfill the will of His Father.
2. As you imagine yourself present in the story, where do you find yourself standing?
 - a. With Judas, ready to betray Him with a kiss...
 - b. With the soldiers, ready to arrest Him...
 - c. With Peter, ready to do battle for Him...
 - d. With Jesus’ disciples, off and running...
3. Are you comfortable with your choice? What would be a reason for choosing to stand where you did? _____

DIGGING DEEPER: You are encouraged to read what Isaiah, one of the prophets, wrote about Jesus, the Messiah. Read Isaiah 53:1-12. Throughout the remainder of this study of *God’s Love, Our Life* you are encouraged to refer back to this chapter and discover how Jesus presents Himself as One under the authority of the Scriptures. Watch how He chose to be obedient to the will of the Father in order to fulfill all that the prophets wrote about Him. Jesus is the Messiah, Hebrew for the Anointed One (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18). Jesus is the Christ, Greek for the Anointed One!

APPLICATION: The crowd was sent under the authority of the officials and elders. Jesus was sent by the Father and placed Himself under the authority of the Scriptures. Who has sent me?

1. Under whose authority do I seek to live my life doing the will of my Father in heaven?

2. What difference does living under this authority make in the way I live my life? _____

INTRODUCTION: The trial of Jesus was a mockery. From Gethsemane He was bound and taken to church rulers, city officials, and to the Roman governor. The chief priests and the Pharisees were determined to have Jesus put to death. They would no longer tolerate this man who claimed to be the

promised Messiah, the Anointed One, whom Israel had been waiting for over the centuries. The first stop on the road to the cross is recorded in John's Gospel.

ASSIGNMENT: Read John 18:12-13, 19-24.

EXERCISE:

1. Where did the soldiers and Jewish officials first take Jesus (John 18:13) _____
2. What are we told about Annas in this verse? _____
3. What are we told about Caiaphas? _____
What had Caiaphas prophesied in John 11:49-52 that is referenced in John 18:14? _____

4. Now skip down to John 18:19ff. Jesus was questioned by Annas, the older high priest. What did he ask Jesus about (verse 19)?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
5. Briefly, how did Jesus respond (verses 20-21)? _____

6. What was the reaction of one of the officials (verse 22)? _____

7. How did Jesus respond (verse 23)? _____

8. Realizing that nothing was being accomplished with their questioning, where did Annas have Jesus sent (verse 24)? _____

Part 4

INTRODUCTION: Although logistics can become somewhat confusing, keep in mind as you read that this trial happened in the middle of the night. Luke tells us that it was _____ when they arrived. Also, remember that as the hours of the trial wore on Jesus has endured much suffering and cruelty by the hands of the soldiers and guards.

ASSIGNMENT: Read Matthew 26:57-68. Other references will be Mark 14:53-65 and Luke 22:63-71.

EXERCISE:

1. Where is Jesus taken (Matthew 26:57)? _____

2. Who are all of those assembled? _____

Note: We are told that Peter is following at a safe distance. We will learn more about him later in this lesson.

3. What were the chief priests and the Sanhedrin looking for (verse 59)? _____

_____ against Jesus in order that they might _____.

Note: The Sanhedrin was a council consisting of chief priests, scribes, and elders. They primarily governed in Judea but were expected to live in obedience to the supreme authority of Rome.

4. What did they find (verse 60)? _____

5. What did two false witnesses declare (verse 61)? _____

When read in context what was the truth (John 2:19-21)? _____

6. The high priest wanted Jesus to respond to the accusations (verse 62). What did Jesus say (verse 63)? _____

Take a moment and turn to Isaiah 53. In the light of this scene where Jesus stood before the Sanhedrin and was falsely accused, how did Isaiah describe the Messiah in verse 7? _____

7. What did the high priest demand to know from Jesus in Matthew 26:63? _____

The truth is that the high priest wanted Jesus to say whether or not He was the Christ, the Messiah. If this was who He said He was then Jesus would be guilty of blasphemy, claiming to be God, which would be worthy of _____ (verse 66).

8. What is Jesus' answer (verse 64)? _____ But then He goes on to say that He, the Son of Man, would be seen _____."

Caiaphas had heard enough. He and the other officials had already decided against Jesus. They believed His words to be blasphemy, not truth. How did Caiaphas show His disgust with Jesus' response (verse 65)? _____

9. They all condemned Jesus as deserving death. What are some of the cruelties they inflicted on Him now (verses 67-68)? _____

Mark and Luke reveal more concerning the cruelty of the guards.

REFLECTION:

1. Can you hear Caiaphas charging Jesus “under oath by the living God” to tell those present if He is the Christ, the Son of God? Maybe you are asking Jesus the same question. What is your reaction to Jesus’ answer? _____

2. Do you believe that Jesus is telling the truth when He says to you and me, “I am the Christ, the Son of the Living God?” _____ What difference does it make in your life whether or not you believe He is who He says He is? _____

DIGGING DEEPER: During this inquisition Peter was in the courtyard. This same Peter wrote the Books of First and Second Peter located near the end of the Bible. Turn to 1 Peter 2:20b-23a. Peter wrote to the new Christians who were part of the early Christian church and he wrote to you and me.

1. He says, “But if when you do _____ and _____ for it you endure, this is a _____ thing in the sight of _____. For to this you have been _____, because Christ also suffered for _____, leaving you an _____, so that you might _____ in _____.”
Verse 22 is a quote from the prophet Isaiah. (Isaiah 53:9) – “He _____ no _____, and neither was _____ found in His mouth.”
2. In addition, Peter says in verse 23, “When he was _____, He did not _____ in return; when He _____, He did not _____, but continued entrusting Himself to Him who _____.”

APPLICATION QUESTION: Christ endured suffering even though He did nothing wrong. He has left an example and has called us to follow in His steps. How does being called to follow in His step affect the way one lives? Does His call make a difference for me and my life? _____

Part 5

EXERCISE: Before we move on with Jesus’ trial we need to learn what has been going on in the courtyard of the high priest.

1. What do Matthew 26:58, Mark 14:54 and Luke 22:54 tell us about Peter? _____

2. John 18:15 and 16 give us a little more information. What does John tell us?
 - a. Who was this other disciple? _____
 - b. Who did John know? _____
 - c. This gave him access to the courtyard of the high priest where Annas and the others officials, Pharisees, and chief priests were gathered. But, what about Peter? Where was Peter waiting? _____
 - d. How did Peter get entrance into the courtyard (verse 16)? _____

 3. Peter is now in the courtyard with others. John 18:18 describes the scene: "..._____
-
-
-
4. What did the girl on duty, most likely the one who allowed Peter entrance into the courtyard ask him (John 18:17a)? _____
 - a. Peter's reply (verse 17b)? "_____."
 - b. Luke 22:55 tells us that Peter sat down by the fire and in the firelight the servant girl looked closely at him and said (verse 56), "_____."
 - c. And, Peter replied, "_____."
 - d. In Matthew 26:70 when stated that he had been with Jesus of Galilee, Peter denied it before everyone. "_____."
 - e. Mark 14:68 says that Peter denied that he was with the Nazarene, Jesus. "_____ and went out into the entryway."

 5. Jesus had prophesied that Peter would deny Him three times. What are we told about the other two times in the following references?
 - a. Matthew 26:71-74a - _____
 - b. Mark 14:69-71 - _____
 - c. Luke 22:58-60 - _____
 - d. John 18:25-27a) - _____

 6. Then the rooster crowed. Jesus' prophecy became a reality for Peter. He remembered the word Jesus had spoken (Matthew 26:75a): "_____."
-
-

7. And Peter (verse 75b)... _____
8. Luke adds something to the moment. Luke 22:61 tells us that just as the rooster crowed the Lord _____ and _____ at _____.

THOUGHT QUESTION: Was Jesus communicating a rebuke or compassion? Verse 61 says, “And Peter _____ the _____ of the Lord, how he had said to him...”
 What would this tell us about Jesus’ look? _____

See also 2 Corinthians 7:10. Your thoughts and reflections: _____

Part 6

REFLECTION:

1. How devastating for Peter. Only hours earlier he had vehemently said that he would *never*... and in the moment he did what he said he would never do. He denied Jesus, His Lord, the one whom he declared to be the _____ (Matthew 16:16).
 And, he denied Him not only once but three times!
 2. We are told that Jesus turned and looked straight at Peter. Peter remembered the words Jesus had said to him. Seeing the eyes of Jesus brought Peter grave sorrow and remorse for what he had done. He had just denied the One who would never deny him but would willingly be crucified for him. He went out and wept bitterly.
 3. In the night and all alone he is faced with the reality of his own propensity to sin. It was more than Peter’s actions that grieved Peter. His words of denial were only revealing the condition of his own heart. He, too, was conceived in sin. Apart from the love of the One who was going to the cross Peter knew he had no salvation.
 4. Undoubtedly, Peter recalled the words Jesus had said to him (Matthew 26:41) when He found the disciples sleeping: “_____”
 _____.” Then He added, “_____”
 _____.” The Lord knew Peter’s desire to do good but He also knew the power of temptation. Jesus had also told Peter that He had prayed for him that his faith would not fail. What strength might have been given to Peter during this night of grief and shame because he knew that Jesus had prayed for him asking that his faith would not fail? _____
-

APPLICATION:

1. Owning up to one’s own words and action is difficult when it demands acknowledging a wrongdoing that one never thought possible. Our proclamation, like Peter’s, may have been, “Even if everyone else would _____, I never would!” You fill in the blank. “Even if everyone else made derogatory comments about you, I never would!” “Even if everyone else was bad mouthing the boss, I never would!” Even if everyone else cheated on their taxes, I never would!”
2. What thoughts are going through your mind right now? _____

3. It may be difficult but take time to consider what you don’t believe you would ever do:
 - a. Admit to yourself something that you have done. Relive the moment.
 - b. Who were the people involved? What were the words said/the actions taken? _____

 - c. What were the consequences? _____
 - d. What was your reaction when you did what you said you would never do? _____

MEMORIZATION: The story doesn’t end leaving us with something we find impossible to forgive about ourselves or something we believe that God would never forgive. 2 Corinthians 7:10 gives to each of us God’s Good News! “...for godly _____
_____.” Be sure that you note this passage on another index card and place it in your memory bank. Repentance leads to salvation and good health! Godly sorrow enables God to speak His Word of forgiveness to us and the obstacle can no longer keep us separated from God and those we have wronged.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, it is difficult to believe I would ever deny You as Peter did. I want to believe that I would *never* do that. But if I look honestly at my own life, I know that I have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. I know that I have denied You before others, especially when I have wanted acceptance and approval from them. Forgive me, Lord Jesus. I can only repent and trust in Your promise that “godly sorrow brings salvation.” Heal my thirsty soul that longs to drink from things of this world rather than to drink from Your righteousness. Thank You for Your look of love that forgives me and cleanses me from all unrighteousness. _____

LESSON SIX

CRUCIFY HIM!

MATTHEW 27 AND LUKE 23 – SENTENCED BY PILATE

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INTRODUCTION

Things began to happen very quickly. The chief priests and elders of the people wanted Jesus dead. Herod wanted to see Jesus perform some magic. And Pilate wanted Him released. No one knew what to do with this man called the Christ, the Son of God, the King of the Jews.

Be sure to watch for the notorious prisoner that shows up. Who is he? Where did he come from? What has he done? Why is he in prison? What's his part in all of this? Don't dismiss this man too quickly. Consider his release and then consider your own. We need to ask ourselves the same questions we asked this man: Who am I? What have I done? What's my part in all of this?

So much uncertainty existed among everyone except those who wanted Jesus dead. They knew what they wanted and refused to relent until Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified.

LESSON 6

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: In Lesson 5 we learned about Peter’s denial and how he wept bitterly over the fact that he had denied his Lord. But what happened to Judas, the one who had betrayed Him? The last we heard about him was when he betrayed Jesus in the Garden with a kiss. Only Matthew records what happened to Judas. (*Note:* St. Luke has a brief account also in Acts 1:15-20.)

ASSIGNMENT: Read Matthew 27:1-10.

- What did Judas admit?
- What was the response of his accomplices?
- What action did Judas take?

EXERCISE:

1. What are we told was the decision of the chief priests and elders (verse 1)? _____
2. So they _____ Him and led Him away and _____ Him over to _____ the _____ (verse 2).
3. What seemed to surprise Judas, the betrayer (verse 3a)? _____
4. He changed his mind. What did he do? _____ (verse 3b).
To whom did he return it? _____
5. What did Judas tell them (verse 4a)? _____
6. Obviously, the chief priests and elders would take no responsibility for Judas’ betrayal of Jesus. What did they reply? _____
7. What did Judas do (verse 5)?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
8. The chief priests were left with the money and needed to decide what to do with it. Why was the money not able to be put into the treasury (verse 6)? _____
9. How did the men decide to use the money (verse 7)? _____
10. What is the burial place called (verse 8)? _____
11. Another prophecy was fulfilled in Matthew 27:9-10. What did Jeremiah say? _____

REFLECTION:

1. Judas was a man who followed what *he* believed to be true about Jesus. *He* believed that Jesus was the Messiah, the Promised One, but he believed like many other Jews that the Messiah would come and reign as a political king with power and overthrow the oppressive Roman government. If Jesus established an earthly kingdom, Judas had high hopes of holding a significant position within the kingdom. Jesus, however, spoke of a different kingdom, a kingdom not of this world.
2. We get another picture of Judas in John 12:4-6. Judas must have shown some business acumen because he was appointed treasurer for the disciples. What do these verses reveal about Judas' heart and character? _____

3. It's a sad picture. Judas betrayed Jesus and Jesus hung nailed to a cross. Judas' own death was suicide. He hung from his own tree, a tree that offered no forgiveness. His life as a thief and hypocrite, a deceiver and betrayer was not filled with the hope of eternal life but was dashed of all hope and the dream of a life that would make him great in the eyes of others. With no hope, no repentance, and no forgiveness he died condemned to eternal damnation.
4. Think for a moment about the differences between Peter and Judas. What did each man believe concerning Jesus, who He was and why He came?

Reference	Peter
Matthew 16:15-16	
John 6:68	
John 6:69	

Reference	Judas
John 6:63b-64	
John 6:70-71	
John 8:44-47	
John 12:6	

REFLECTION: Take time once again to review 2 Corinthians 7:10. What do these words tell us about the differences between Peter and Judas? What do they tell us about the relationship each had with Jesus?

PRAYER: Lord, like Peter I declare, “You have the words of eternal life.” Your Holy Spirit has given to me the faith to believe and know that You, Jesus, are the Holy One of God. Like Peter, I live with hope and declare, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Like Peter, this has been revealed to me by my Heavenly Father. What comfort these words give to me! I know that in spite of all I do and say, in spite of all my evil thoughts and intents, no matter what, I know that I live loved and forgiven. To You alone I give my thanks and praise.

Part 2

INTRODUCTION: Jesus finished His interrogation before Annas and members of the Sanhedrin. He was slapped, mocked, blindfolded, spit upon, and beaten. Witnesses gave false testimonies concerning Him. He was accused of blasphemy and condemned as worthy of death. Very early in the morning with everyone present, including the whole Sanhedrin, a decision was made (Mark 15:1). They bound Jesus, led Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate (Luke 23:1). Quite possibly it was during this transfer that Jesus looked on Peter who had just denied Him.

Keep in mind as you read that Jesus had been up all night and, undoubtedly, weakened from all the torture inflicted by those gathered at this mock trial. He had traveled on foot from the upper room in the southwest corner of Jerusalem where the Passover meal was eaten, to the northeast corner outside the city to Gethsemane. The soldiers who arrested Him brought Him back to the southwestern region of the city to the residence of Caiaphas who then sent Jesus to Pilate’s palace.

One more point before we continue. Each of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) includes parts of Jesus trial, His suffering, and His death. Remember that each Gospel writer was writing in order to reach a different audience so each one had a different purpose for what he included in the Book that he wrote. We will continue our study in the Book of Luke.

ASSIGNMENT: Read Luke 23:1-7.

- Where was Jesus sent next?
- What were the accusations?
- What was Pilate's conclusion?

EXERCISE:

1. Where does the assembly take Jesus (verse 1)? _____
Pilate was the Roman governor in Judea during the time of Jesus from 26 A.D. to 36 A.D. Not much is known about him but we do know that an appointment by Rome to rule in Judea was not a coveted position. We also know that Pilate's political career could be jeopardized if a riot broke out in his jurisdiction. With that in mind, let's continue...
2. Accusations were made against Jesus. What did they claim (verse 2)?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
3. What did Pilate ask Jesus (verse 3)? _____
And, Jesus replied, "_____."
4. What was Pilate's announcement to Jesus' accusers (verse 4)? _____

5. What did the crowd insist (verse 5)? _____
_____ This territory was under Pilate's jurisdiction.
6. Now, what did Pilate want to know (verse 6)? _____
7. Pilate had found a way out this predicament. Jesus was under _____
jurisdiction. So what did Pilate do (verse 7)? _____
We know that Jesus was first taken to Annas and then sent on to Caiaphas. Those gathered with Caiaphas determined that Jesus should die because of blasphemy, because of who He claimed to be. The chief priests and other officials did not have the right to execute Him so they handed Him over to Pilate. Luke is the only writer to share that after Pilate's first encounter with Jesus he had Him sent on to Herod.
8. Most likely, Herod was visiting from Galilee in order to celebrate the Passover. His royal palace was situated not far from Caiaphas's house in the western section of Jerusalem.
 - a. What was Herod's reaction to Jesus (verse 8a)? _____
 - b. Why (verse 8b)? _____
 - c. Why (verse 8c)? _____

9. Verse 9: Herod _____
 But Jesus _____
10. Verse 10: The chief priests and teachers _____
11. Verse 11a: Herod and his soldiers _____
 Verse 11b: They _____ and sent Him back to _____.
12. What do we learn about the relationship between Herod and Pilate from verse 12? _____

Part 3

REFLECTION:

1. No one seemed to know what to do with Jesus. Those who wanted to kill Him didn't have the authority. The one who had the authority found no fault in Him and saw no reason to put Him to death. One can't help but ask the question: What have I done with Jesus? _____

If I side with those who want to kill Him, would I do it because...

- a. of who He claims to be? _____

- b. of His radical teachings that call me to repentance? _____

- c. He's an irritant in my life that keeps pestering me? _____

Again, what have I done with Jesus? _____

2. Herod was all excited to see Jesus. He wanted to see some magic tricks. From what he had heard about Jesus, he hoped to see some miracles. Instead, Herod couldn't even get Jesus to talk. He certainly wasn't going to get Him to perform any miracles. And, what about me? Am I like Herod? Do I want to see what Jesus will do for me? What miracle do I need Him to perform for me now? A new job? A fancy car? A healing? A conception? What miracle am I asking for before I'll ever believe in Him? _____

What would it take for me to admit that I'm waiting to see the magic of God's power before believing by faith that Jesus is the Christ, *my* Savior and *my* Redeemer? _____

3. Jesus' accusers were vehement. They were relentless because they wanted Him dead. How am I like His accusers? Am I angry with Jesus? Did He let me down? Did He not do what I wanted

done? Why does He make me so mad? Why do I refuse to change my thoughts about Him?
What has entangled me in its coils and won't release me to understand and accept His great love
for me? _____

4. Herod and his soldiers had their fun with Him. They mocked and ridiculed Jesus, covered Him in an elegant robe, and then sent the one who said He was the King of the Jews back to Pilate again. Do I make fun of Him? Is Jesus the brunt of my jokes? What makes it so easy for me to make snide comments about Him, to mock and ridicule Him, to dress Him up and make Him look like a fool rather than worship and honor Him as the Son of God? _____

PRAYER: Take time in confession to admit what it is that you have done with Jesus. Come before the Lord in humility and repentance thanking Him for suffering on your behalf even though with Pilate you know the need to admit that you “find no basis for a charge against this man.” _____

And then, listen closely to God's Good News for you as you meditate on the words of 1 John 1:9, “If we

Part 4

INTRODUCTION: Jesus was taken back to Pilate. The problem was back in Pilate's hands. What was he going to do with this man called Jesus? We know what the others did with Jesus. Now it's Pilate's turn to reveal his character.

ASSIGNMENT: Read Luke 23:13-25.

- Who did Pilate gather together?
- Who did the crowd insist to have released?
- What was Pilate to do with Jesus?
- What was Pilate's decision?

EXERCISE:

1. Who did Pilate call together (verse 13)? _____
2. What did he tell them?

- a. Verse 14a: _____
 - b. Verse 14b: _____
 - c. Verse 14c: _____
3. What did Pilate say about Herod (verse 15a)? _____
 4. What did Pilate say about Jesus (verse 15b)? _____
 5. What did Pilate tell this group that he was going to do (verse 16)? _____

Note: Roman punishments were so brutal that sometimes the prisoner would die before his execution. The punishments involved severe scourging and flogging.

TEACHING: The custom at the time of the Feast of the Passover was that one prisoner chosen by the crowd was released (Matthew 27:15ff). According to Matthew 27:17 we learn that the option Pilate gave to the crowd was to release _____ or to release _____. What do we learn about Barabbas in Matthew 27:16 and Luke 23:19? _____

EXERCISE:

1. The crowd had been persuaded by the chief priests and elders (Matthew 27:20). What was the crowd's response when Pilate asked which of the two they wanted him to release (verse 21)?

2. But Luke 23:20 tells us that Pilate wanted to release Jesus. So, what did he do? _____
3. What did the crowd keep shouting (verse 21)? _____
4. About this point in the trial Matthew alone tells about a brief incident that happened. Read Matthew 27:19. What happens? _____
What does the message say? _____
5. For the third time Pilate speaks to the crowd (verse 4, 14, 22). What does he ask them (Luke 23:22)? _____
What did he say about Jesus? _____
6. But what did the crowd demand (verse 23)? _____
7. What was Pilate's ultimate decision (verse 23)? _____
8. He released _____, the people's choice (verse 24, 25), and _____
Jesus over to their _____.
9. What more do we learn about Pilate in these references?
 - a. Mark 15:15 _____

- b. John 19:12-13 _____
- c. Matthew 27:24-26 _____
10. What are we told about Jesus' treatment by the governor's soldiers in Matthew 27:27-31?
- a. How did they dress Him? _____
- b. How did they abuse Him? _____
- _____
11. Then comes the words from verses 31: "Then they _____ Him away to _____ Him." The prophet Isaiah speaks about Jesus in Isaiah 53:7. What does the prophet say? "He was _____
- _____
- _____."

Part 5

REFLECTION: It would be very easy to continue with the passion story without taking any time to reflect on the prisoner who had just been released from his sentence for insurrection and murder. Matthew referred to Barabbas as a notorious prisoner.

We can hear the crowd yelling in Pilate's face, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Apparently, the prison where Barabbas was held was located close enough to the Praetorium that Barabbas may have heard the screams and shouts of the crowd. He wouldn't have been able to hear the questions Pilate asked, but just imagine for a moment what that would have been like. He was a prisoner for treason and murder. Death would have been His sentence.

Pilate asked the question: "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" The crowd yelled back, "*Barabbas!*" The next question Pilate asked: "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" And the crowd shouted, "*Crucify Him!*" And then, Pilate would have asked, "Why? What crime has he committed?" And they would have shouted all the louder, "*Crucify Him!*"

Take a moment and visualize yourself in prison. You are Barabbas. Now read the words in italics that you hear. Substitute *your* name, and if you are a woman reading this, substitute the pronoun "her" for "him."

- What are you thinking? _____
- What is about to happen to you? _____

You know you will be punished for your crime and you know the punishment is death!

Take some moments and continue your reflection. Imagine what Barabbas must have thought when the jailer came and told him that he was released from prison and that the crowd wanted Jesus to be crucified instead. Sounds unbelievable? Barabbas experienced firsthand Jesus as his substitute. Jesus was the substitute sacrifice for his sins and for the sins of the whole world.

The prophet Isaiah speaks of Jesus as our substitute in Isaiah 53:4-5. Write out these verses and learn how Jesus substituted His life for yours and mine: _____

Yes, Jesus took *our* infirmities and carried *our* sorrows. He was pierced for *our* transgressions, He was crushed for *our* iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace *was upon Him*, and by His wounds *we* are healed.

Once he was released we don't know what Barabbas did. Did he stand at a distance in some hidden place and see Jesus, the One who was crucified in his place, nailed to a cross? Did he utter the words, "He is dying in my place? Did he have any idea that Jesus had done no wrong or that He was the Son of God? Would that have made any difference to him? Of course, we don't know the answer to these questions but we can imagine what it might have been like to regain his life. And, where did he go that night? Who did he tell about his release?

Just as Barabbas was released from the punishment and condemnation of his past, you and I are also released from our past. We have been set free. We are now free to live new lives filled with hope and a future, a future with Him in eternity! Because Jesus bore our punishment we stand before the Father with nothing but His Word which tells us that we are forgiven! Now nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God which is ours in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:39).

APPLICATION QUESTIONS: You and I have been released from our prison because Jesus died in our place.

1. What am I going to do? What difference is it going to make in my life that I have been released? Am I going to celebrate my freedom? Am I going to forget about it and continue to live as I always have? What is my response to my freedom going to be? I escaped death!
2. I want to know the One who died in my place. I am going to get to know Him by...

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

LESSON SEVEN

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM

JOHN 18, 19 AND LUKE 23 – GREAT LOVE

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INTRODUCTION

Pilate delivered Jesus over to be crucified. The scene moves from Pilate's judgment seat called Gabbatha to Calvary. Pilate recognized Jesus' innocence yet found himself frightened by the crowd's threats and the potential for a riot so he washed his hands of the whole ordeal, declaring himself innocent of an innocent man's blood.

One can't help but stand in awe of a crucified man praying, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Yet these are the first words Jesus speaks. And there's more. You are encouraged to listen carefully to the dialogue between Jesus and one of the thieves on another cross. Jesus is welcoming a man into Paradise yet those hanging around the cross are mocking and scoffing Him.

Those who scorned Him believed that if Jesus came down off the cross it would prove that He was the Christ. Jesus remained on the cross until He died, however, which was the ultimate purpose for the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah. His death would be that which gives us eternal life with Him forever!

LESSON 7

Part 1

INTRODUCTION: Throughout Jesus' life people wanted to kill Him. In Matthew 2:2 the Magi from the east came to Jerusalem asking, "Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews?" This King they were looking for was not an earthly king (John 18:36) but the One who came as the Christ, the Messiah, the one the prophets foretold would come. The King that the Jewish people had been waiting for, however, was a king whom they believed would rule in Israel and would free them from the powers of Rome. So, the Magi came to Jerusalem all excited to worship the One born King of the Jews. But what was King Herod the Great's reaction to the news that the Messiah, this King of the Jews, was born (Matthew 2:3, 8, 13b, 16)? _____

In John 1:49 Nathaniel made a profound declaration. What did he say about Jesus? _____

ASSIGNMENT: Read John 18:33-19:16.

EXERCISE:

1. Jesus was indeed the King of Israel! Now Pilate, the Roman governor, asks Jesus the question that the Jews declared to be blasphemy and was punishable by death. What was the question (John 18:33)? _____
2. What did Jesus say about His kingdom in verse 36? _____

3. Then Pilate declared, "You are a _____ then (verse 37)!"
 - a. Jesus answered him, "You say that I am a _____."
 - b. Jesus tells Pilate that He came as a King in order to testify to the _____.
 - c. In verse 38 Pilate asked a question that people still ask today: _____
4. In verse 38 Pilate went out to the Jews and said, "_____."
5. Pilate's soldiers even mocked Jesus by dressing Him as a king in a purple robe and making a crown of thorns and said, "_____ (John 19:3)."
6. Again Pilate comes before the Jews (verse 4) and says, "_____."
_____.

7. When the chief priests and their officials saw Jesus dressed in the purple robe and wearing a crown of thorns they shouted, “ _____ ! _____ !”
8. Verse 6b: Pilate continues to insist: “ _____ .”
9. But the Jews found Pilate’s vulnerable spot. What did they shout in verse 12? _____

10. Pilate brings Jesus out. He sits down on the judgment seat and says, “ _____
_____ (verse 14b).”
11. They shouted, “ _____ (verse 15),”
12. Pilate asked, “ _____ ?”
13. The chief priests answered, “ _____ .”
14. Pilate succumbs to the people and hands Jesus over to be _____ (verse 16).

Part 2

REFLECTION: Why was the crowd so intent on crucifying Jesus when days before the people were singing, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord (Luke 19:38)!” What had gone wrong? What had changed their minds? Had they begun to think that they been fooled and that His claim to be the King of the Jews was not true? Had His miracles blinded them and kept them from recognizing who He really was? Or, maybe they had just been caught up in the moment, caught in the hysteria of the crowd...

Then again, this may have been a different crowd... Other king-like figures came to Jerusalem during these days prior to the Passover. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, arrived from Galilee where he ruled as tetrarch to celebrate the Passover. Undoubtedly, he arrived with his entourage of soldiers and horses. Pilate also traveled to Jerusalem from his palace in Caesarea with his soldiers determined to keep peace during the days of Passover. His presence was to ensure that the Jews remembered they lived under the power and authority of Rome.

So, who made up this crowd that was yelling, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Your thoughts: _____

APPLICATION:

1. If you had been in the crowd, what do you think you would have been yelling? _____

2. Why? _____

REFLECTION: Jesus' innocence was established and declared by Pilate. "I find no basis..." Pilate wanted to set Jesus free until the Jews put Jesus up against his king. Now Pilate had to make a choice between two kings. Would it be Jesus, the King of the Jews, or would it be Caesar, the king of the Roman Empire? Pilate chose Caesar, the people's choice, the king that impoverished them as a nation and oppressed them as a people. They wanted nothing to do with Jesus, the One who testified to the truth and offered the abundant life (John 10:10). Pilate made the wrong choice. He executed the wrong king.

APPLICATION:

1. Who is your king? Whom have you welcomed into your life to sit on the throne and rule over your heart and mind? _____
2. Take a moment to describe your king: _____

3. What about your king makes your king so attractive to you? _____

MEMORIZATION: Pilate was correct in saying that he found no fault in the man. He found no basis on which to execute Jesus. Jesus was the perfect Son of God who came as the Son of Man to be our substitute, dying in our place. The _____ of _____ His _____ us from all _____ (1 John 1:7b). If you have not already added this verse to your memory library, be sure that you do it now. In these few words we find reassurance that the shed blood of Jesus is the active agent of cleansing within our souls. We are washed clean in the blood of the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I see You tortured and shamed by my sin. I see You standing next to Pilate and all of us in the crowd shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" In spite of what I see with my mind's eye, I can only give to You my thanks and praise. Your everlasting love is for me and for all who are shouting in the crowd. Thank You for shedding Your blood in order that I might be made clean from all of my unrighteousness. My sin is removed because of You. By Your Spirit enable me to believe this truth and grant rest for my soul. _____

Part 3

INTRODUCTION: Jesus had been handed over to the soldiers in Gethsemane, then handed over to the chief priests, Pilate, Herod, and then handed back to Pilate again. Now Pilate surrendered Jesus to the will of the crowd and is He is finally handed over to the Roman soldiers and taken away to be crucified. His death is imminent. He is made to carry His own cross. He must walk the road that is before Him, the road that leads to Golgotha, The Place of the Skull (Mark 15:22).

Some followed. Some carried crosses. Some mourned and wailed. Some sneered and some mocked. Some hurled insults. One prayed. One gave. One forgave. As you read, look for yourself in the crowd. Don't be afraid of the cross but come close so you can listen and hear Jesus' last words.

ASSIGNMENT: We will look primarily at Luke and John's account of the crucifixion. Read Luke 23:26-43 and John 19:16b-27. *Note:* You are encouraged to read each of the Gospel accounts of the crucifixion which are also found in Matthew 27:32-44 and Mark 15:21-32 to help complete the story.

EXERCISE (from Luke 23):

1. The soldiers led Jesus away. Obviously, He has been weakened by the flogging and torment of the Roman soldiers. Who is forced to carry Jesus' cross (verse 26)? _____
What are we told about him? _____
Mark 15:21 tells us that Simon was the father of _____ and _____.
Quite possible he became a leader in the early Christian church. Simon was from Cyrene, present day Libya.
2. We see Simon following Jesus in verse 26. Who is following in verse 27? _____

3. Jesus would not be executed alone. Who were the others led out with Him (verse 32)?

4. When they came to the place called the _____, there they _____
Him, along with the _____ one on His _____, the other
on His _____ (verse 33).
5. What are the first words that we hear Jesus say (verse 34a)? _____

6. And the soldiers who crucified Him _____ (verse 34b)
7. What are the people doing (verse 35)? _____

8. "...but the rulers _____ at Him. They said, "_____."
9. And what about the soldiers? What did they do (verse 36)? _____
They offered Him _____ and said, "_____."
- Note:* What did the sign read that declared His crime (verse 38)? _____
10. One of the criminals who hung there railed at Him (verse 39). What was the insult he hurled at Jesus? _____
11. But the other criminal _____ him (verse 40). What do you hear him say to the accusing criminal (verses 40-41)?
- Do you not _____
 - And we _____
 - But this man _____
12. Having said that he turned to Jesus and said, "_____ (verse 42)."
13. Jesus answered him, "_____ you will be _____ in _____ (verse 43)."

Part 4

REFLECTION: This section of Scripture (Luke 23:26-43) has several points to consider. Let's look at a few and ask that God's Spirit lead us into a deeper appreciation of Jesus' love for us, the ones for whom He suffered and died.

- We are told that Simon followed Jesus bearing the cross, which apart from the Father's love would have been for his own crucifixion. He took up the cross and followed Jesus. What had Jesus told His disciples earlier in His ministry when He tried to talk to them about His death (Matthew 16:24-25)? _____
- We are told that the people followed Him, including "women who mourned and wailed for Him." Women had served Jesus throughout His ministry (Luke 8:2). How it must have grieved them to see the cruelty done to Jesus, their friend. His death was inevitable yet His great love for them compelled Jesus to suffer and die.
- Even in the placement of His cross prophecies were fulfilled. What does Isaiah 53:12 tell us? What is the significance of Jesus' cross being placed between the two criminals? _____

4. Luke 4:1-13 records the story of Jesus when He was tempted by the devil in the desert. Read the story and identify the temptations in verses 3, 6, and 9. The devil uses the phrase “if You are the Son of God...” with two of the three temptations. Then, unable to get Jesus to yield to his temptations, it says in verse 13 that he (the devil) _____ from Him until an _____.” In Luke 23 we can hear similar words used...
- by the rulers (verse 35): _____
 - by the soldiers (verse 37): _____
 - by one of the criminals (verse 39): _____

Using those gathered at the cross the devil found his “opportune time” and again tempts Jesus by saying, “If You are who You really say that You are, You don’t have to do this. Prove to everyone who you are by performing the ultimate miracle. Save yourself. Come down from the cross. Prove to us that you are the Messiah, the Christ, the Chosen One, the King of the Jews.” On the cross enduring such suffering Jesus is most vulnerable to the devil’s temptations. What insight do we get from John 12:27? Jesus was talking to His disciples about what is going to happen. “...and what shall I say? ‘Father, _____ Me _____ this _____’? But for this _____ I have come to this _____. _____, _____ Your name.”

CLOSING: This first lesson ends abruptly. Jesus has been crucified. He has prayed for those who have done this and has promised the thief who was crucified next to Him that “Today you will be with Me in Paradise.” We have come to the conclusion of Part I. We are ready to begin *God’s Love, Our Life–Part 2*.

In John 15:13 we are told, “Greater love has no one than this, than someone lay down his life for his friends.” This is what Jesus has done for us, His friends. The story is not finished. The story does not end with Jesus hanging on the cross. The story ends with the best news ever! You are encouraged to press on and begin *God’s Love, Our Life – Part 2!*

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