



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

John 18:1-14

Jeremiah 23:1-5

Session Theme:

Betrayal

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Warm Up: Resist the Temptation

Bring a bag of treats to class. Give each child one treat. Have kids imagine that they could have the full bag of treats for themselves if they would just start a little rumor about someone. Would they do it? (Explain that this isn't really an option and you don't want them to do that.) It may seem tempting to betray someone for a short-term gain, like a treat, but what would be the long-term repercussions of that? It's always wise to think about the results of our actions, and to ask God to help us make good choices.

In today's story, two of Jesus' friends were tempted to betray him — one out of fear, and the other for money. Did they do it, or did they stay true? Let's find out.

c. Opening Prayer

Lord God, we want to be brave and do the right thing. But sometimes fear or greed can cause us to make bad decisions. Give us courage so that we will never deny our faith in you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" (children's song)
- "In the Hour of Trial" (hymn)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the New Testament
- Scripture Section: Arrest

After the Last Supper, Jesus brought his disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. While he was there, Judas showed up with guards from the temple who wanted to arrest Jesus. Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss and handed him over to be put on trial.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level.

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help students think about details of the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, Questions)

Adult: Bible Study Sheet (Introduction and Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. If you have not already done so, introduce the Theme Word for the week, providing the definition, and asking how the lesson connects to that theme.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format



Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: John 18:1-14

1. In the hours before his arrest and trial, why do you think Jesus went to the Garden? What did he intend to do there? (For a hint, read Matthew 26:36-46.)

The Garden of Gethsemane would have been a quiet, peaceful place, with memories of good times Jesus spent with his disciples. Jesus went there specifically to spend his last hours in prayer to his Father. He didn't want to be alone; he wanted the disciples to be with him.

2. Who was with Judas when he entered the Garden? For what kind of reception were they ready?

The disciple Judas betrayed Jesus. He brought a band of soldiers and some of the chief priests and Pharisees with him to the garden. (These were not Roman soldiers, but the Jewish temple police.) The group was armed with weapons and lights, prepared for a conflict.

3. What happened to the soldiers when Jesus said: "I am he" (v. 6)? How is this similar to what happened to Moses when he encountered the burning bush in Exodus 3:6? In Exodus 3:14, what did God tell Moses his name was?

In the original Greek, Jesus literally replied, "Ego eimi," or "I am." This is the name for himself that God revealed to Moses at the burning bush, when Moses stood on holy ground. The whole scene radiates the almighty power of God. When Jesus said this same thing to the soldiers, he was proclaiming his divine identity. The holy power of God's name actually knocked the soldiers off their feet.

4. Back in the Garden, what did Peter do when Judas and the others arrived? Was Jesus happy with Peter for his actions? What did he say?

When Peter saw what was happening, he grabbed his sword and cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant. He was ready to defend Jesus and try to prevent his arrest. But Jesus reprimanded Peter and told him to put his sword away. Jesus knew he must face what was to come.

5. It must have felt terrible for Jesus to be betrayed by a friend. Yet Jesus stayed calm, and trusted that God was in control of even this situation. Have you ever felt betrayed before? Did your faith help you deal with that experience?

Answers will vary. Even though it feels awful to be betrayed, it does not need to destroy us. We do not need to lose hope because God gives us the strength to get through. Not only that, but difficult situations are often the very places where we draw near to God and learn to trust him. God can bring good out of anything.

God's presence and power can even give us the grace to be able to forgive those who have betrayed us. God's care and compassion can help us let go of our anger and pain.

6. Where did the soldiers take Jesus after they arrested him? Who were the captain and officers working for?

The soldiers arrested Jesus and tied him up. Then they brought him to a man named Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest. (Annas was the senior member of the council and was the one who appears to have been in charge, even though Caiaphas technically held the office of high priest.)

7. Read Jeremiah 23:1-5. Who do you think are the bad "shepherds" that Jeremiah was referring to? What did they do (or neglect to do)?

The "shepherds of Israel" that Scripture refers to are the people who serve in positions of leadership, which may include both political and religious authorities. The term shepherd means that God had given them a caretaking role. They were meant to guard and watch over the people and provide for their needs.

However, these shepherds had done the opposite. They had destroyed the nation they were supposed to care for and driven people away. This was the case with the Jewish council of Jesus' day, which refused to recognize him.

8. According to Jeremiah, what was God going to do about this? How was this prophecy fulfilled many years later in Jesus and his disciples?

The Lord said that he would replace the bad shepherds with a Good Shepherd. He said: "I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely" (v. 5-6).

This is a prophecy of Jesus as the Messiah, the anointed king who would come from the line of King David. He would be a faithful ruler and bring in the Kingdom of God. This would be a spiritual kingdom of faith, and his salvation would be deliverance from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: "What's the Story?"

Materials Needed:

- Index cards
- Pens or pencils
- Timer

Instructions:

Divide the class into groups of two or three kids. Have each group sit together at a table or around a desk, and give them seven index cards and a pen or pencil. Designate one of the kids to be the scribe. As you read the following list out loud, invite the scribes to write one event, along with the number, on each of their index cards.

1. Soldiers arrest Jesus
2. Jesus heals a hurt servant
3. Judas goes to the authorities
4. Peter defends Jesus
5. Jesus goes to a garden with friends
6. Judas brings soldiers to the garden
7. Jesus asks, 'Who are you looking for?'

Ask kids to shuffle the index cards. Next, set a timer for 5 minutes. During this time, the kids in each group will work as a team to put the events from the story in the correct order on the table in front of them. When the timer goes off, explain that the order of events is 5, 3, 6, 7, 4, 2, 1. Have kids compare their order to the correct one and see how many they got right.

Afterwards, have groups discuss these question:

- Have you ever had a friend turn against you or treat you badly?
- Do you think Jesus understands what that feels like? Why or why not?
- How can remembering today's story help us when we go through hard things, ourselves?

Wrap up the discussion time with the following prayer:

Lord Jesus, when we feel alone, help us to remember what you went through for our sake. You are with us and you love us. No matter how lonely or left out we may feel at times, we have a true friend in you. Thank you for all you have done for us. We love you. Amen.



Activity 2: Point Out the Person Game

Materials Needed:

- Small cross

Instructions:

Today's Bible story showed Judas betraying Jesus by pointing him out to a group of people who would arrest him.

In this game, kids will reenact part of that story. To do so, one player will "betray" another using an element of guessing.

To play the game, follow these directions:

Choose a volunteer to play the part of Judas, and ask that person to stand outside the classroom door. Explain that Judas will be called back in when the group is ready.

Next, have the rest of the students scatter about the classroom. Some can be reading books, others can be sitting at desks, others can be talking to one another.

Choose one of these students to act as Jesus and give him or her the small cross. Have Jesus hide the cross in a pocket or hand so it can't easily be seen. Jesus will be participating in activities like the others.

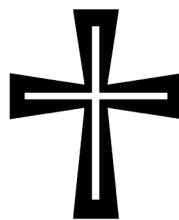
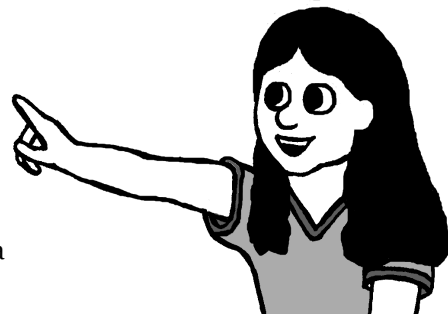
Invite Judas to return to the room. When Judas enters, everyone freezes in place.

After looking closely at the "frozen scene" but not touching anyone or anything, Judas will try to guess who might have the cross in their hand or pocket.

Judas will then say, "There's Jesus!" and point at one of the kids. If Judas is correct, the player shows the cross and the round ends. If wrong, the player will say, "No."

Judas gets only one guess. If Judas guesses incorrectly, he has to leave the room to be Judas again, and another person will be chosen as Jesus.

Play several rounds, having different kids play each role.



Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:

Holy Week Events

Events:

- 1) Jesus rose from the grave and appeared to his followers.
- 2) Jesus ate his Last Supper with his disciples in the Upper Room.
- 3) Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem, riding on a donkey.
- 4) The disciples hid in fear behind locked doors all day long.
- 5) Judas betrayed Jesus, and showed the soldiers where to arrest him.
- 6) People waved palm branches for Jesus and cheered "Hosanna!"
- 7) Jesus was nailed to the cross, with a sign that read "The King of the Jews."
- 8) The women went to visit the tomb where Jesus had been buried.
- 9) Jesus was arrested in the garden and taken away to be questioned.
- 10) Jesus died on the cross, saying "It is finished."

Days of Holy Week:

PALM SUNDAY

MAUNDY THURSDAY

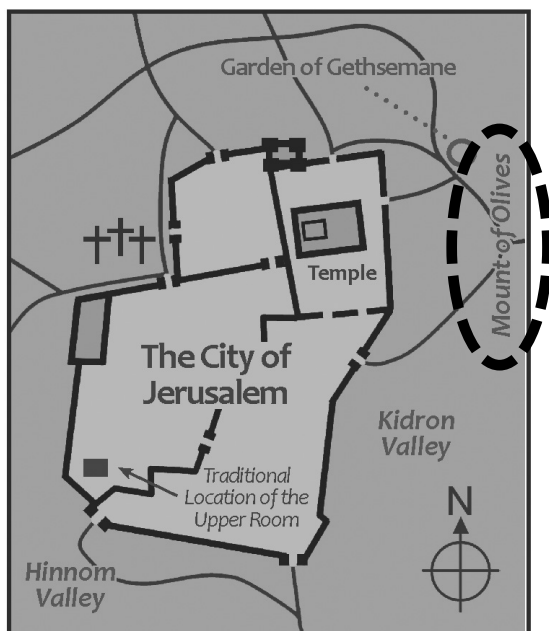
GOOD FRIDAY

HOLY SATURDAY

EASTER SUNDAY

Map Answer:

The Garden of Gethsemane is on the northeast side of the city. It is within the ridge known as the Mount of Olives.



Vocabulary Word for the Week

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary.

Betrayal

when someone you trust turns against you

Judas' betrayal of Jesus must have been painful for our Lord. Yet in the end, it was Judas who was hurt most by his own actions.

Reflection for the Week Ahead

To betray someone means to be disloyal or unfaithful to them. It means to turn against a friend. The person who is betrayed feels deep pain and may be tempted to get back at the one who caused the hurt in some way. Yet this does not help the situation. In fact, it often makes things worse.

As we read in today's lesson, Jesus was betrayed by his disciple Judas. How painful that must have been! How lonely and disappointing. If we ever feel let down by someone close, we can take comfort in knowing that Jesus understands. But we can also learn something from him. For in the midst of it all, even as he was being unfairly arrested and taken away, Jesus sought to heal rather than hurt. He was so focused on doing God's will that he did not repay evil with evil. May God give us the strength to do the same when we face hard situations of our own.



What surprised you most about today's story? What did you notice about Jesus' reaction to Judas and the soldiers?

The Practice of Prayer

Write a prayer confessing to God your own weaknesses and failings. Ask for his forgiveness. Pray that he would give you his Spirit, so that you could turn away from sin and cling to him in faith.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.