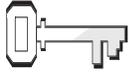


A Bitter Choice



References

Matthew 26:36-56;
Mark 14:32-50;
Luke 22:39-53;
John 18:1-12;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 685-697



Memory Verse

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42, NIV).



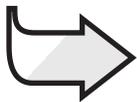
Objectives

The children will:

Know Jesus experienced terrible pain and suffering because He loves us.

Feel deeply sorry that Jesus suffered.

Respond by praising Jesus for His great love.



The Message

I thank Jesus for choosing to save me.

Monthly Theme

We remember what Jesus has done for us.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus and His disciples go to Gethsemane to pray. Jesus feels a need to have the strength to face what is before Him. He asks the disciples to pray with Him. They are very tired however, and go to sleep. Jesus struggles and prays alone. He suffers terribly but He chooses to do what must be done to save us. He feels even more pain when He is betrayed by Judas, is arrested and taken away.

This is a lesson about worship.

In paying the debt for all the sins of the world, Jesus would be separated from God. This caused Jesus deep pain and suffering. Such love calls forth our utmost gratitude.

Teacher Enrichment

"Gethsemane [comes] from an Aramaic word meaning 'oil press' " (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 524).

The Jews appreciated gardens, but they were owned by only the very rich. They had courtyard gardens within the city or gardens outside the city walls, where they could go in the cool of the evening. There was not merely one garden of Gethsemane, but a large number of them, where the wealthy citizens of Jerusalem used to go in the evening, on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives. The garden featured in the last hours of Jesus' life may well have belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. He also provided the Savior's tomb, in a garden. (See Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times* [Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1987], pp. 303, 304.)

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Choices</i> B. <i>Asleep or Awake?</i>	paper money, coins of small and large value, Bibles slips of paper, pen, tape, Bibles
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> simple offering device relating to field of mission emphasis none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	square piece of paper, pillows and blankets (optional), (prepare in advance) choice maker (see p. 149) paper cups, slips of paper, tape Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Unpleasant Cup</i>	small strips of paper, picture of Jesus, sheet of paper or poster board (optional)
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Thank-You Cup</i>	small white paper cups, small pieces of paper, ribbon, pencils, pens, hole punch, scissors

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Collect the “Favorite Sabbath Activities” pages assigned last week. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Then have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- lowest value coin in local currency
- highest value coin in local currency
- paper currency of larger value than either coin
- Bibles

A. Choices

Show one of the children two coins, one the smallest amount possible, the other the largest amount in your currency. Explain that you are going to give them a choice. Explain that if they choose the one worth the least, you will give them a second choice. If they choose the other coin, they will get that coin, but no more choices. Have the child choose. If they choose the larger amount, give it to them, replace the coin, and repeat the activity with another child. If the second child chooses the smaller amount, give it to them and the opportunity to have a second choice. Replace the smaller amount and replace the larger coin with paper currency worth much more. Then let them make their second choice.

Debriefing

Ask the two children who made choices: **Are you happy with the choices you made?** (yes, no) **Why?** (Wait for responses.) **Can you think of other choices in life that might seem hard now, but which are better in the long run?** (Choosing to be honest when you have done something wrong; doing homework instead of watching TV, etc.) **Our lesson story today is about a hard choice that Jesus made. Let’s find and read Luke 22:42.** Read aloud. **It was difficult for Jesus to choose to pay the price for our sins. But He did. And that leads me to our message:**



I THANK JESUS FOR CHOOSING TO SAVE ME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- slips of paper
- pen
- tape
- Bibles

B. Asleep or Awake?

Before Sabbath School begins, tape slips of paper to the bottom of the chairs. The papers should say either “asleep” or “awake.” Have the children remove their slips of paper to see if they are “asleep” or “awake.” Ask them all to find a comfortable place in the room and sit as if they are resting. Then go around the room, pat every child, and say, “I need you. Are you asleep or awake?” The children who have the “asleep” slips do not respond, but go on resting. The children with “awake” slips jump up and say, “I’m awake. What can I do?” They follow you until you have collected all the “awake” students. Give the children who were “awake” a small task to do, such as distributing the songbooks. Have all students return to their seats.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why is it good to be awake when someone needs you?** (So I can help that person with their needs.) **In today's Bible lesson, Jesus needed some help. He had a very hard decision to make, and He wanted His friends to pray with Him. Let's find and read our memory verse, Luke 22:42.** Read aloud. **Jesus had to decide if He would really go through with dying for our sins. Since all His disciples kept falling asleep, there was no human friend to comfort Him during this difficult time. He was alone with no one to help Him as He made a choice that would make a big difference for all of us. And that leads us to today's message:**



I THANK JESUS FOR CHOOSING TO SAVE ME.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise Any Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Bless His Holy Name" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 9)
- "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)
- "O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28)
- "Jesus Loves Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 27)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **Our offering goes to help people in (name of place where offering will go) learn that Jesus chose to save them from sin.**



Prayer

Besides the regular requests, ask the children for the names of persons who have a difficult decision to make. Assign each request to a different volunteer to pray for. When all the requests have been prayed for, close by thanking Jesus for the choice He made to save us. Also, ask Him for strength and wisdom for each person in your Sabbath School to be able to support others facing difficult decisions.

You Need:

- simple offering device relating to field of mission emphasis

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- square piece of paper
- pillows and blankets (optional)
- (prepare in advance) choice maker (see p. 149)

Experiencing the Story

In advance, make a “choice maker.” Take the square of paper and fold it according to the illustrations and instructions on page 149.

(Optional: You may want to scatter pillows and blankets for students to pretend to be sleepy disciples as you tell the story.)

Read or tell the story with the “choice device” as follows:

Jesus had just finished the Passover meal with His disciples. Now they were on their way to Gethsemane, their favorite garden. Jesus wanted to pray. When they arrived, eight of the disciples found a comfortable place to rest. *[Show “disciples” written on the choice maker.]* But Jesus went further into the garden with Peter, James, and John. *[Show names.]* He asked them to pray with Him. Then He went still a little further to pray alone.

Jesus had a hard choice to make. He wanted to save all the people of the world. But if He made the choice to do that, He would suffer terribly. *[Have children make choices from numbers 1 to 4 by lifting the flap with the number of their choice.]* There would be lies told about Him. He would be beaten and treated unfairly. And He would go through all of this alone.

Jesus didn’t want all the people to die for their sins. But the only other choice was to die in their place. He needed strength to make a decision. He wanted His closest friends to help Him pray for

strength. He went to Peter, James, and John. They were asleep, so they were no help. Jesus was left alone. *[Tear off square with Peter’s name. Repeat for James, John, and disciples, tearing out a square each time.]*

Jesus asked God if it would be possible for Him not to have to go through all the pain and suffering. He called it a bitter cup. But God knew that Jesus would want to make the sacrifice since it was the only way to save us. Jesus loved us too much to lose us all to Satan.

Suddenly a group of soldiers arrived with one of Jesus’ disciples—Judas. All of the sleeping disciples awakened. Judas kissed Jesus and the soldiers then knew who to arrest. The disciples were surprised and angry as they saw the mob and watched as Jesus’ hands were tied. But Jesus was not surprised or angry. He quietly went with the soldiers. Jesus knew what was ahead for Him—the cross. *[Unfold the paper to reveal a cross.]*

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

Why did Jesus choose to follow God’s will? Do you think it was a hard choice for Him? What do you think about His choice? Did He suffer for you? What do you want to do in response? (Thank and praise Jesus; live for Him; tell others how wonderful He is; stay close to Him.) **Let’s say today’s message like we really mean it:**



I THANK JESUS FOR CHOOSING TO SAVE ME.

Memory Verse

In advance, divide the memory verse as follows: (1) Father, (2) if you (3) are willing, (4) take this cup (5) from me; (6) yet not (7) my will, (8) but yours (9) be done. (10) Luke 22:42.

Attach one word cluster to each paper cup. Put the cups in the correct order. Read the memory verse together.

Mix the cups up. Invite the children to arrange the cups in the right order and then say the memory verse again. Repeat until the children know the verse.

You Need:

- ten paper cups
- slips of paper
- tape

Bible Study

Say: **Open your Bibles to Matthew 26.**

You Need:

- Bibles

Ask: **Why did**

Jesus take His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane? Ask a child to read Matthew 26:36. (to pray)

What request did Jesus ask of God? Have a child read verse 39. (May the cup be taken from Him, if possible.) Discuss the meaning of *cup* as used in this instance.

What did Jesus tell God after His request? Verse 39b. (He would do things the way God thought best.) **Why?** (He was unselfish, and wanted to do whatever it took to save people.)

How could the disciples have been a help to Jesus? Verse 38. (Jesus was overwhelmed with sorrow. He needed His friends to stay with Him and pray for Him.)

Jesus was both sad and troubled that night in Gethsemane, yet He told God that He would do whatever it took to save the people they had created. What does that tell you about the love Jesus and God the Father have for us? Let's read Romans 8:38, 39.

Debriefing

Ask: **How can we, through our worship, tell Jesus that we love Him and thank Him for what He has done for us?** (Say it in prayer, in song, in writing, in speech, by our actions.)

How do we know what love is? Let's read 1 John 3:16. (Jesus chose to lay down His life for us.) **What do you think about Jesus' gift of love to us? Let's respond with today's message:**



I THANK JESUS FOR CHOOSING TO SAVE ME.

Now let's turn our message into a thank-You prayer: "Thank You, Jesus, for choosing to save me."

Say that with me.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- small strips of paper
- picture of Jesus.
- Sheet of paper or poster board (optional)
- adult helper

Unpleasant Cup

Say: **When Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane and asked God to take the “cup” away from Him, Jesus wasn’t talking about an ordinary cup with something unpleasant to drink. He was talking about dying, and Jesus didn’t want to die and be separated from His Father. But Jesus told God that if He must die to save all the people He and His Father had created together, He would do it, for He loved each person very much.**

Ask: **Have you ever felt angry or jealous? Have those feelings ever made you hurt someone by something you said or did? What are some wrong things people do that caused Jesus to have to die?**

Have an adult helper write the things the children mention on small strips of paper. Then give a strip to each child. Say: **We say and do wrong things because we are sinners, and we live in a sinful world.**

Now, this is what Jesus did for us in Gethsemane. Jesus was very afraid and sad that evening. Yet he agreed for God to treat Him as if He had committed all the sins people had committed and would ever commit. He died so that if we believe in Him, and asked forgiveness, God would treat us as if we have not sinned. Have the children tape their strips to the picture of Jesus or the word “Jesus” on a large sheet of paper or poster board.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why do you think Jesus was willing to have everyone’s sins put on Him.** (Because He loves us.) **How do you feel about that? What do you want to tell Jesus? Remember today’s message:**



I THANK JESUS FOR CHOOSING TO SAVE ME.

Say that with me—if you really mean it.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Thank-You Cup

Let the children decorate white paper cups.

Then have the children write a short “Thank You” note to Jesus on small pieces of paper. Punch a hole in the note. Thread the ribbon through the hole in the note. Punch a hole in the top of the paper cup and attach the note with the ribbon.

As the children work, ask them to think of someone they want to share their cup with. Encourage them to take their cups home and tell someone else about Jesus’ cup and how much He loves them.

Say: **Jesus’ love for you is amazing and wonderful. He chose to suffer and die for you because He didn’t want to lose you. Let’s worship Jesus by singing “Wonderful, Wonderful”** (*Sing for Joy*, no. 39). **This cup can help you remember to thank Him every day. Then share your cup with someone else so they can be thankful too.**

Debriefing

Comment on the appearance of the cups the children have made. Ask for volunteers to tell about their cup and to whom they will give it.

Ask: **Do you want others to know about Jesus? Why? What will you say?**

Offer a short prayer asking Jesus to help the children tell others about Jesus’ gift of love for us.

Let’s say our message one more time:

I THANK JESUS FOR CHOOSING TO SAVE ME.



Closing

Make a prayer circle and thank Jesus for choosing to save us.

Remind the children to use their Bible Study Guides every day and to do the daily activities.

Note: At some point this week or next, compile the “Favorite Sabbath Activities” papers returned by church members to make an e-book or make copies as needed to prepare a “Favorite Sabbath Activities” booklet for each child to take home. Copy and use the cover they made last week. Copy or make additional books to share with other church members. Let the children help prepare these booklets.

You Need:

- small white paper cups
- small pieces of paper
- ribbon
- pencils, pens
- hole punch
- scissors

A Bitter Choice

References

Matthew 26:36-56;
 Mark 14:32-50;
 Luke 22:39-53;
 John 18:1-12;
The Desire of Ages,
 pp. 685-697

Memory Verse

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42, NIV).

The Message

I thank Jesus for choosing to save me.

Have you ever been punished for something you did not do? If you were, how did you feel? In our Bible story today we will learn about a choice Jesus made, a choice to be punished for something He didn't do.

The Last Supper was over. Jesus and His disciples walked to the Mount of Olives. They climbed to the Garden of Gethsemane, a place where Jesus often prayed.

Jesus led the disciples a little way into the garden. "Wait here," He said.

Then Jesus asked Peter, James, and John to go further into the garden with Him. "Watch and pray," Jesus told them.

Jesus moved on a little further. Quietly He prayed, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me." He longed for someone to share His sorrow. He returned to the three men. But they slept. Three times He prayed that

same prayer. Three times He sought comfort from the three disciples.

A bright light shone from Jesus' direction. A shining angel cradled Jesus in his arms, talking quietly. Jesus became calm and serene. He had been strengthened to meet the cross.

"Get up," said Jesus to Peter, James, and John. "It is time to go. My enemies are coming."

They hardly reached the other disciples when lights of a mob approached. Many soldiers, people, and some leaders of Israel were led into the garden by Judas. Judas greeted Jesus with a kiss.

"Whom do you seek?" Jesus asked the mob.

"Jesus of Nazareth," they answered.

"I am He," Jesus replied.

Jesus could have escaped, but He chose to stand before the mob. The disciples watched, silent with wonder.

The mob quickly gathered around Jesus. He spoke again. "If you seek Me, let these others go their way," He said, pointing to the disciples. Then the soldiers used ropes to tie Jesus' hands together.

The disciples couldn't believe their eyes. They thought Jesus would just walk away. He had done that before. But this was different. The mob began to move back down into the valley. They were taking Jesus toward the high priest's palace! This was unbelievable!

The disciples turned and ran away. They couldn't understand why Jesus would let Himself suffer like this.

It was amazing love that led Jesus to choose to suffer—love for all those His Father had created. Love for you and for me.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go for a Sabbath walk with your family in a park or woods. If the weather is nice, take blankets, spread them out, lie down, and rest.
- Read your Bible lesson story together. Then read and discuss Luke 22:42.
- Sing "Alleluia" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 16) before prayer. Thank Jesus for His great love.

Sunday

- With your family, read and discuss Matthew 26:36-39.
- Make a diorama (scene in a small box) of Jesus and His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane. Place a rock in it with Jesus praying nearby. Place trees and flowers in the background.
- Teach your memory verse to your family.
- Sing "O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28) before prayer.

Monday

- During family worship read Matthew 26:40. Ask a family member to help you find information about sleep. Tell three new things you learned. How many hours of sleep do you need each night? _____ Thank Jesus for rest.
- Say your memory verse together. Then sing "Thank You, Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 101).

Tuesday

- Read and discuss Matthew 26:42-46 for worship.
- How many times did Jesus pray? (verse 44) _____
- Write Jesus' prayer (your memory verse) on a

paper cup. Decorate the cup and keep it where you can see it often. What does this memory verse mean to you?

- Before prayer, sing "More About Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 38). Thank Jesus for choosing to die for you and your family.

Wednesday

- Together with your family, read and discuss Matthew 26:47-54. Which one of the disciples betrayed Jesus? (verses 48, 49) What is a betrayer? Use a dictionary if you don't know.
- Why did Judas betray Jesus? Read Luke 22:3-6 and *The Desire of Ages*, page 716. How do people betray Jesus today?
- Pray that you and your family will stay true to Jesus and not betray Him.

Thursday

- For family worship read Matthew 26:55, 56.
- Read Matthew 26:41. Draw a picture of Jesus and His sleepy disciples in the garden. On your picture write what Jesus said to His disciples when He found them sleeping. Cut your picture into a puzzle. Assemble the puzzle. Why do you think it is important to take time to pray and worship God every day?
- Say your memory verse for your family. Thank Jesus for choosing to save you.

Friday

- Ask your family to help act out your Bible story. Tell the story as they act it out. Say your memory verse during your story.
- Sing your favorite praise song to Jesus.
- Read and discuss Philippians 2:5-11. What is your response to what Jesus did for you?