

CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS
NOVEMBER 01 2025

my way versus God's way

Scripture Story: Matthew 26:20-29; Mark 14:17-25; Luke 22:14-23; John 13:18-38; 14–17.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapters 72; 73.
Key Text: John 13:33-35.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

In this lesson we learn about Jesus' sacrifice and the gift of salvation. We will discover that to truly surrender to God we must be humbled, as was Jesus. We learn that at the Lord's Supper He instituted the tradition to remember Him and His sacrifice. To fully accept His death, we must surrender our lives to His will, and in humility walk according to that will. Judas didn't fully surrender. He loved money and had pride as well. He betrayed Jesus even though Jesus loved him. Jesus would have saved Judas had he surrendered. But Judas chose a path of greed rather than of salvation. Judas could not bring himself to surren-der to the will of a humble Messiah. He wanted a fighting warrior. Judas wanted his way and not God's way.

When we partake in the Lord's Supper, we should seek to have our hearts right with God. James 4:6 says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble" (NIV). As a teacher, explain to the students what humility is, how it's an awareness of our own weaknesses and a need of God's grace in our lives. A humble person is one who is willing to learn from others, aware that they still have a way to go in growing.

The point of this lesson is to show the students the mistakes that Judas made and that we can learn from those mistakes and not make them ourselves. Help the students realize that the need of grace in our lives should make us humble before God and others.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Realize the importance of humility and God's sacrifice in order for us to gain salvation. (*Know)*
- Feel a need to surrender fully to God. (*Feel)*
- Submit fully to God's will for their lives. *(Respond)*

III. EXPLORE

The Lord's Supper, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 16: "The Lord's Supper is a participation in the emblems of the body and blood of Jesus as an expression of faith in Him, our Lord and Saviour. In this experience of communion Christ is present to meet and strengthen His people. As we partake, we joyfully proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again. Preparation for the Supper includes self-examination, repentance, and confession. The Master ordained the service of foot-washing to signify renewed cleansing, to express a willingness to serve one another in Christlike humility, and to unite our hearts in love. The communion service is open to all believing Christians. (Matt. 26:17-30; John 6:48-63; 13:1-17; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:23-30; Rev. 3:20.)"

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? *section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.*

After going over the *What Do You Think?* section, divide the students into an even number of groups. Give them each paper and pens and ask them to write down the top 10 things that they think could bring someone to Christ. Afterward, have each group read aloud their top 10 things and then discuss them as a whole group together.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

It was said by Plutarch that once when Caesar was crossing the Alps, he and his band of men came across a small and desolate native village that had hardly any inhabitants. It looked like a morbid, miserable place. While his friends joked and laughed among themselves, saying, "No doubt here too one would find people pushing themselves forward to gain office, and here too there are struggles to get first place and jealous rivalries among the great men." Caesar then replied to them in utter seriousness: "As far as I am concerned, I would rather be the first man here than the second in Rome."

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

This struggle for position and power didn't begin with Caesar. It began in the heart of Lucifer, the most beautiful of all God's created beings. Even Jesus' disciples experienced this struggle.

Mark 9:35 states clearly: "Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all' " (NIV).

This struggle is also evident in our society today. It's easy to forget about God's grace. It's easy to get caught up in a world that is far away from God's kingdom. It's easy to forget that we are called to be servant leaders. Remembering Christ's sacrifice helps us to humble ourselves and surrender fully to Jesus. This can be difficult for many reasons (pride, love of the world, a desire to do one's own thing, etc.). While the Lord's Supper reminds us of Jesus' death and sacrifice for our sins, Judas' story can remind us of where straying from Christ can lead to. After all, who wants to wind up like Judas?

Out of the Story *for Teachers*

After you read the Into the Story *section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.*

- What did Jesus mean when He said to His disciples: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29, KJV)?
- What do you think made Judas choose to betray his Master? Or was Jesus ever truly his Master? In what way did he portray a greedy heart?
- What do you think was going through Jesus' mind when He knew He was eating with someone who would soon betray Him?
- What kept Judas from truly surrendering to Christ?
- What is humility? Is there a counterfeit humility? Explain.
- Are there things that can keep us from displaying humility in our lives? If so, what are they? Are there different things for different people? Explain.

Use the following as other teachable passages that relate to today's story: Psalm 147:6; Proverbs 22:4; Galatians 6:14.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

History of the Passover

When Jesus ate with His disciples in the upper room, they were celebrating the Passover, one of the most ancient of all Jewish festivals, one that the Jews all over the world still celebrate today. Wherever there are practicing Jews, there will be during the springtime the celebration of this sacred Jewish

Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

RABBI 101

Increase Relevance

Some ways to make the lesson more relevant would be to: Focus on what personal spiritual lessons the students can take away from what you're talking about. Ask what it means to be "under the blood on the door posts" today. How can we get under the blood?

Visit a local synagogue (if there is one in your area) and ask the rabbi to explain to the class his understanding of the meaning of the Passover, or pull it up from the internet.

Think about what changes the students could make to their lives as a result of what they have learned. Try to make the lesson as practical to their lives as possible. What have they learned that can improve how they live? How, then, can they make those changes in their own lives?

holiday.

The origins of this sacred ceremony are found in the book of Exodus. "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever" (Exodus 12:12-14, KJV).

The Israelites in the time of Exodus had been told to sacrifice an unblemished lamb and roast it without breaking any of its bones. They were then to apply the blood on the doorposts of their houses. This would protect them from the angel of death, who would pass through the land and kill every firstborn son in every home. This was the first step in the whole process by which God would save them from Egypt, and from the slavery they had suffered under for so long.

The fascinating thing about this was that the blood saved them; the angel of death would see the blood and "pass over" their house. This, of course, was a powerful symbol of salvation by faith in the blood of Jesus. They were protected by the blood. Not that the blood of an animal itself would save them, but the blood was a symbol of the blood of Jesus, which would be shed for all humanity. That's why, centuries later, the apostle Paul could write: "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7, KJV). In the Passover celebration we are given a type, a symbol of the plan of salvation. When God's final judgment falls upon

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**
  Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.
- **Flashlight**
  Read the Flashlight *statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week's story found in the book* The Desire of Ages. *Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from* Out of the Story.
- **Punch Lines**
  Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week's story. Have them share the verse that speaks most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.
- **Further Insight**
  Ask them how the quote in Further Insight *conveys the point of the story in this lesson.*

the world, those under the blood, those who by faith claim the salvation found in Jesus, will be spared.

True Versus False Humility

Humility is not low self-esteem. It is not allowing oneself to be a "doormat." And it is not denying one's giftedness. True humility is our not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought, but equal to how God views us (Romans 12:3). This distinction is most important for this topic—an often misunderstood one.

Obedience is an aspect of humility that would be helpful to also discuss with the students. We see this revealed in Philippians 2:8, which talks about Jesus humbling Himself and becoming "obedient to death" (NIV).

In John 13 we see humility lived out in Jesus' life. Jesus walked with spiritual power and giftedness, a strong sense of identity, and unending purpose. And we can do that as well. Humility acknowledges the source of these characteristics: God.

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Have the students try to find as many verses that talk about pride or humility in a certain amount of time. Concordances are helpful. After they have done this, have them read out loud to the class what they've found in the Bible about this topic. Afterward, discuss it as a class. What does the Bible say about these topics? How can we get rid of these attitudes if we see them in ourselves? How can we, by looking at Christ's example, learn important lessons about what it means to be humble, and how we can avoid pride?

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Jesus was a perfect example of humility and grace. Often we tend to see Him as a glorious and affluent God but, in reality, when He descended to this earth He took upon Himself a lowly status. Many times we strive to be first. We want the glory and honor. That is so different from the attitude Jesus displayed. Mark 9:35 says: "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all" (NIV). We must come to Christ with a humble spirit and be willing to surrender to His will. If we can't let go of our pride, then we will have a big struggle. God died for us. He was a sacrifice for us. If we accept His death on our behalf, come before Him in humility, and truly ask for salvation—it is ours.



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *The Desire of Ages (*or *Humble Hero*), chapters 72, 73.

Humble Hero is book 3 in a special adaptation of the Conflict of the Ages series, created by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Read more about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books

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STUDENT LESSON

Scripture Story: Matthew 26:20-29; Mark 14:17-25; Luke 22:14-23; John 13:18-38; 14-17.
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my way versus God's way



Photo by Colleen Cahill

keytext

"My children, I will be with you only a little longer. . . . Where I am going, you cannot come.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

(John 13:33-35, NIV)

flashlight

"Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering, that He would thus bring to an end the system of types and ceremonies that for four thousand years had pointed to His death. As He ate the Passover with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was to be the memorial of His great sacrifice. The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever. The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 652).

what do you think?

On a scale of 1 to 10, list the things that you think can lead people to stray from God and to deny what He's done for them through Jesus (1—the most likely and 10—the least).

____ pride
____ lack of self-discipline
____ tragedy
____ lack of trust
____ wanting to do their own thing
____ fear that they aren't good enough
____ indifference
____ lack of care about eternal life
____ unbelief
____ anger

did you know?

Passover is a Jewish festival. Its purpose is to remember God's intervention in sparing the Jews when He killed the firstborn of Egypt. The word translated "Passover" comes from a Hebrew word, *pesach*, meaning "to pass over," which is what God did when the angel of death passed over every Jewish house that had the blood on their doorposts. It is followed by the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, which recalls the Exodus from Egypt and the freeing of the Israelites from slavery.

Passover starts on the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan, the full moon of that month, the first month on the Hebrew calendar's festival year. The first and last days of this seven-day feast were observed as legal holidays or holy days. The people would also hold special prayer services as well as holiday meals. Jews were known to have observed the festival for eight days. Most still do. If you know some practicing Jews, they might invite you to their house for a Passover seder, the practice of celebrating the Passover.

INTO THE STORY

"Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

"And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

"And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

"And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

"The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

"Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

(Matthew 26:20-29, KJV)



OUT OF THE STORY

What does Jesus mean when He says, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom"?

_____
_____
_____

What do you think went through the disciples' minds when they heard these words of Jesus?

_____
_____

What do you think possessed Judas to betray Jesus? How do greed and pride fit into this story?

_____
_____
_____

How do you think Jesus felt knowing that He was eating in the presence of someone who would betray Him?

_____
_____

What do you think initially led Judas away from accepting Christ?

_____
_____
_____

What do you think keeps people from coming to God with humility and full surrender?

_____
_____
_____

Why do you think Jesus used the bread and wine to represent His body and blood?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" **(Philippians 2:12, NKJV).**

"Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. Better to be lowly in spirit along with the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud" **(Proverbs 16:18, 19, NIV).**

"For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory" **(Psalm 149:4, NIV).**

"If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness" **(2 Corinthians 11:30, NIV).**

further insight

"And if we consent, [Christ] will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses."

—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 668

Sabbath

Read Matthew 6:24.

Jesus was the sacrificial Lamb for the world. He let the people kill Him in order to save all humanity. Do you think that Judas truly understood this? Why do you think he let money and power reign in his heart? Judas is a good example of what Matthew 6:24 is saying: "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money" (NIV). Judas never truly served Christ. He let money and greed rule over him. He never let himself be humble enough to accept Christ's love and sacrifice. He simply threw it all away for some silver.

Write down in your journal a few things that can lead us away from salvation.

Sunday

Read Proverbs 16:18, 19.

Many times when people are led away from Christ, it's because of their own selfishness or pride. Many don't want to humble themselves and surrender fully to God. Others simply don't want to change their way of life in order to follow Him.

To be humble is to understand our own weaknesses and need of God; to know that we are not perfect, that we are sinners, and that we need to learn and grow—and are willing to do just that.

What are some ways in which we can go about daily surrendering to God?

_____

_____

_____

Monday

Read John 13:33-35.

Today, page through your Bible looking for stories and prophecies that speak to these topics: salvation, humility, greed, sacrifice. Find at least one example of each.

In your journal or notebook, write in your own words some parallels between those stories and today's story about Judas. What do you think initially puts greed or pride into people's hearts? What is it that steers them away from salvation? What do you think can bring a person back to accepting Jesus as their Savior?

_____

_____

_____

Tuesday

Read Psalm 149:4.

Salvation is a gift. We can accept it or reject it. Nobody, not even God, can force it on us. Humility is one of the first things that leads to salvation. If we have pride in our hearts, then we will try to be self-sufficient and have trouble relying on the Lord. Humility is also a gift. Yet we can make choices that will impact the presence of humility in our lives.

Write down on the lines below three ways in which we can increase humility in our lives.

_____

_____

_____

Wednesday

Read Hebrews 9:28.

Why do you think the Passover is so important to the Jews today? What are the similarities between the Passover and the Lord's Supper?

_____

_____

_____

Thursday

Read Philippians 2:12.

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 (NIV) states it clearly: we are all God's children if we receive Him and accept Him. It has nothing to do with anything that we ourselves could possibly do, but what Christ has done for us. Because of His sacrifice on our behalf, we can have eternal life. Jesus told His disciples that He was going to die, and He instituted the Lord's Supper as a reminder of Himself and His death in our behalf. How seriously do you take the Lord's Supper when it's offered in your church?

Friday

Read Luke 22:18.

Jesus promised His second coming when He said: "For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes" (Luke 22:18, NIV). We have assurance of knowing that Jesus died and will return. The Lord's Supper is a way by which we can remember truly the depth of His sacrifice and come to understand salvation and what it means for us. Titus 2:11-13 states: "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (NIV). God gave His Son out of grace. His Son humbled Himself and obeyed His Father. The best way to go is to accept that grace and humility, and remember the sacrifice that was made for us.

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages or (*Humble Hero*), chapters 72; 73.

*A special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, entitled *Humble Hero*, has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: www.cornerstoneconnections.net. By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.