Sunday School Lesson

The Passover Lamb: Understanding the Sacrifice That Changes Everything

Based on Mark 14:12–26
For Middle School and High School Students | 30–35 Minutes

Overview

In this lesson, students will explore how the Passover points to Jesus and why his sacrifice matters today. Through Jesus' final Passover meal with his disciples, we discover five truths: we need a Savior, obedience matters, God can use what we surrender, our hearts need examination, and Jesus established a new covenant through his blood.

Lesson Goal: Help students understand that following Jesus involves trusting his sacrifice, obeying his Word, and responding with genuine devotion.

Supplies: Bibles and optional paper and pens.

Teacher Note: Everything needed takes place during class. Allow approximately four minutes for each discussion section. Start with the first question in each section; use the second as time allows. Students may keep personal reflections private.

Key Takeaways

- **We cannot rescue ourselves from sin.** Jesus is the perfect Passover Lamb who gave his life to save us.
- **We can obey God without knowing every detail.** We trust his character and follow what he has made clear in Scripture.
- **God can use what we surrender.** Our time, abilities, possessions, and everyday opportunities can serve his purposes.
- **Being around Christianity is different from trusting Jesus.** Church attendance and Christian friendships cannot replace personal faith.
- **The Lord's Supper reminds us of Jesus' sacrifice and his promised future.** We remember what he has done and look forward to his return.

Discussion Questions

Opening Question — 3 Minutes

Think about following a coach's directions, learning a new game, or getting help with a difficult assignment.

Have you ever needed to trust someone's instructions before you understood why they mattered? What helped you trust that person?

Transition: In today's passage, Jesus' disciples follow his instructions to prepare a Passover meal. During that meal, Jesus helps them understand something much bigger than dinner.

Read the Passage — 3 Minutes

Read **Mark 14:12–26** together. Consider dividing the reading among three volunteers:

- Mark 14:12–16
- Mark 14:17–21
- Mark 14:22–26

Ask students to listen for what Jesus tells the disciples to do and what he says about himself.

Section 1: A Sacrifice Was Required — 4 Minutes

Explain:

Passover reminded the Israelites that God rescued them from slavery in Egypt. In Exodus 12, God instructed families to sacrifice a lamb and place its blood on their doorframes. God spared those households from the judgment that struck Egypt.

This rescue points us toward Jesus. Our problem is sin—turning away from God in our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. We cannot erase sin by being popular, doing good deeds, or trying harder. Jesus, who was without sin, willingly gave his life for us.

Read aloud: 1 Corinthians 5:7.

1. People sometimes say, "I'm a pretty good person." Why can't being good enough fix our relationship with God?
2. How does knowing Jesus willingly gave his life for you affect the way you see your value?

Main Point: Salvation is God's gift through Jesus. We receive it through faith; we cannot earn it.

Section 2: Obedience Is Essential — 4 Minutes

Explain:

Jesus gave two disciples specific instructions for finding the place where they would celebrate Passover. They followed his directions and found things just as he had told them.

We do not always know how a situation will turn out, but we can follow what God has already made clear: tell the truth, love others, forgive, and turn away from sin. Obedience does not guarantee an easy outcome. It expresses our trust in God.

3. Imagine your friends are making fun of someone in a group chat. What would obeying Jesus look like, even if you do not know how your friends will react?
4. Why do we sometimes wait to do the right thing until we know it will be comfortable or popular?

Main Point: We can take the next faithful step without seeing the entire path.

Section 3: Surrender Is Necessary — 4 Minutes

Explain:

The owner of the house provided a furnished upstairs room for Jesus and his disciples. Mark does not tell us the owner's name, but the room became the setting for a significant moment in Jesus' ministry.

Students do not need a house, a job, or a large bank account to serve God. They can offer their time, creativity, athletic ability, musical gifts, kindness, and willingness to include someone.

Surrender means allowing God to direct how we use what we have.

5. What is something a middle or high school student already has that God could use to help someone else?
6. Imagine you have free time planned for yourself, but someone needs encouragement or help. What might surrender look like? How could you respond wisely?

Main Point: You do not have to wait until adulthood to make yourself available to God.

Section 4: Betrayal Exposes the Heart — 4 Minutes

Explain:

Judas spent time with Jesus, heard his teaching, and witnessed his miracles. Yet he chose to betray him.

When Jesus announced the betrayal, the disciples began asking whether he meant them. Their response invites us to examine our own hearts before judging everyone else.

Someone can know Bible answers, attend church, or have Christian parents and still need to place personal faith in Jesus. Genuine devotion includes honesty about our sin and willingness to turn back to him.

7. What is the difference between knowing facts about Jesus and personally trusting him?
8. Why is it easier to notice someone else's wrong behavior than to admit our own? What could an honest prayer of self-examination sound like?

Teacher Note: Keep the discussion focused on personal reflection. Do not ask students to identify classmates whose faith they question or share private sins publicly.

Main Point: Jesus calls us to personal faith and honest hearts.

Section 5: A New Covenant Was Established — 4 Minutes

Explain:

A covenant is a solemn commitment that establishes a relationship. During the meal, Jesus connected the bread with his body and the cup with his blood, pointing to his approaching death.

Through Jesus' sacrifice, God provides forgiveness and brings believers into a restored relationship with himself. The new covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:31–34 includes God's instruction written on hearts, knowing him, and forgiveness of sin.

The Lord's Supper helps believers remember Jesus' sacrifice. Jesus' words about drinking again in God's kingdom also direct our attention toward the future.

9. Why do you think Jesus gave his followers a shared meal to help them remember his sacrifice?
10. How could remembering both Jesus' death and his promised future change the way someone approaches the Lord's Supper?

Main Point: The Lord's Supper calls us to remember Jesus with gratitude and look ahead with hope.

Practical Applications — 4 Minutes

This Week, Choose One of the Following

Give students a quiet minute to choose one response and write down a specific step. Invite a few volunteers to share if they wish.

Examine Your Heart
Pray: "Jesus, am I simply going through the motions, or am I trusting and following you?" Ask him to show you an attitude or action that needs to change.

Identify Your Upper Room
Choose one resource you can offer God this week: your time, a talent, a possession, or an opportunity. Decide how you will use it to serve someone.

Take One Step of Obedience
Identify something Scripture clearly calls you to do that you have been avoiding. You might apologize, tell the truth, include someone, or ask a trusted adult for help.

Remember Jesus' Sacrifice
Read Mark 14:22–26 again during the week. Write one sentence thanking Jesus for what he has done and one sentence about the hope he gives you.

Share the Hope
Pray for one friend who does not know Jesus. Look for a natural opportunity to explain why you trust him or invite that friend to church.

Closing Reflection — 3 Minutes

The disciples prepared a room and a meal. Jesus was preparing to give his life.

He knew betrayal, suffering, and the cross were ahead. Still, he shared the meal, gave thanks, and sang with his disciples. His love moved him toward the sacrifice we could never provide for ourselves.

Ask:

Which truth from today do you most need to remember: Jesus saves, obedience matters, God can use what you surrender, your heart matters, or Jesus gives you hope? Why?

Following Jesus begins with trusting him. If you have questions about faith or what it means to follow him, you can talk with your teacher or a pastor.

Closing Prayer:

"Jesus, thank you for giving your life to rescue us from sin. Help us trust you personally, obey what you teach, and offer what we have for your purposes. Show us where our hearts need to change. Help us remember your sacrifice with gratitude and look toward your return with hope. Amen."