

date: **6/4/18**

Bible Passage: Matthew 26:1–56; Luke 22:1–53
(Jesus' Anointing, Last Supper, Betrayal)

God's Love Compels

REMEMBER VERSE

He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever—holy and awesome is his name.

Psalm 111:9

Inspire

Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives

Just before my high school graduation, I met Christ, and He turned my life upside down. Before this, I'd planned to move to Los Angeles to pursue acting and stand-up comedy. I wanted attention. I was ready to do anything in order to make a name for myself. But after I met Christ, He slowly opened my eyes to the life He was calling me to—a life devoted to proclaiming God's name to the world.

It wasn't an easy journey. God didn't bring me to this revelation overnight. But, despite how sinful and undeserving I was, God kept showering me with mercy, love, and grace. I couldn't understand such unconditional love. How could such a holy and amazing God keep pursuing me? Since I couldn't understand, I put up walls in my heart between God and me.

Eventually, God's love started to seep into my soul—right through all of the walls I had erected. His mercy transformed me. I didn't have to conjure up the will love Him ... it just came naturally. It compelled me to live differently than I'd lived before.

Christ loves us just as we are, right where we are. Nothing we do or say can ever change that. Nothing. That sort of love is groundbreaking because we aren't accustomed to receiving unconditional love. When we're met with this kind of love, we find ourselves transformed. Because of this, we live as a unique breed of people compelled by God's love.

Erika Abdelatif
ROCKHARBOR Church



Equip

Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage

So much is unique about the events that transpired in the garden of Gethsemane—events that occur nowhere else in Scripture.

Here we see the only time any of the disciples took up arms to defend the cause of Christ. In a shocking incident that surely gave the opponents of Jesus pause, Peter cut off the ear of Malchus. Jesus quickly calmed the situation by picking up the ear and reattaching it to the head of Malchus (Luke 22:49–51; John 18:10).

Then, too, in a truly unique scene, as the crowds approached with swords and torches in hand, Jesus asked whom they were seeking. They replied, “Jesus of Nazareth.” And in a moment of cosmic proportions, Jesus uttered two simple words, the power of which caused His accusers to inexplicably and involuntarily fall to the ground. Jesus declared, “*Ego Eimi*,” or “I AM”—proclaiming Himself to be the God of the universe (John 18:2–6).

And earlier, while waiting and watching in prayer, in a moment of transparent vulnerability, we see Jesus do something we see nowhere else in God’s Word. Jesus agonized. In stark contrast to the Messiah who never seemed to be in a hurry, who was never taken by surprise, whose complete trust in the providence and sovereignty of His Father provided the perfect example for us to follow—it is this Jesus we see sweating large drops of blood (Luke 22:41–44). While still trusting everything to the will of His Father, Jesus agonized over the upcoming ordeal He would face. Here we see the humanity of Jesus in full, living color.

This scene in the garden offers us a view of unprecedented, unique events that, although described in an understated manner, help us to grasp, if only in part, the magnitude of what was about to transpire. God’s love compelled Jesus to do the unthinkable for us.

Support

Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word

We see Christ’s love for humanity through His agony in the garden and His silence during the unjust trial. Throughout all of it, Christ proved that His love for us compelled Him to endure the humiliation and pain.

Second Corinthians 5:14 says, “Christ’s love compels us” as well. When we have a true relationship with God and experience His love for us, we’re compelled to live our lives in ways that please Him. In effect, we’re compelled to treat others with love as He did. Our care for others comes from an overflowing of God’s love—because God loved and respected them first.

Spend time reading through 2 Corinthians 5:16–18. This passage describes Christ’s atoning sacrifice, which allows us to be reconciled with God and makes the way for our ministry of reconciliation with others. Spend time thinking about the many beautiful images of reconciliation, such as the fact that we’re a “new creation.”

Then pray that Christ’s love will compel you to see other believers as “new creations” in Christ. Pray that His love will give you the earnest desire for unbelievers to be reconciled to God. Ask Him to fill you so fully with His love that you can’t help but be compelled to love others.



EXPLORE// 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.

Draw and Guess

In the hours leading up to Jesus' death on the cross, many important events took place in various locations. Use this EXPLORE activity to get children thinking about key elements Jesus and His followers experienced before His death.

SUPPLIES

- Paper (1 sheet per child plus 1 extra sheet)
- Scissors
- Pens
- Small basket
- Timer

SET UP

Cut a sheet of paper into slips, one slip per child. Write a word or phrase that corresponds with today's portion of The Big God Story on each slip (examples: "bottle of perfume," "coins," "bread," "cup," "house," "table," "mountain," "garden"). Fold and place the slips into the basket.

RELATE

Have children sit in a circle with the paper and pens in the middle. Choose one child to go first. Have her pull out a slip from the basket without showing anyone. Give the child 60 seconds to draw the word she saw on the slip while the children guess. The child who guesses correctly first can take a turn pulling a new word or phrase from the basket. Continue until each child has had a chance to draw.

LARGE GROUP
SECTION

DISCOVER// 30 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.

Traditions and Remember Verse

SUPPLIES

- [Remember Verse image](#) (see Resources)
- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)



RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure, and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever—holy and awesome is his name. Psalm 111:9

Connect

Question

When was a time you wanted to do something for someone you care about?

The Big God Story

Bible Passage: Matthew 26:1–56; Luke 22:1–53

Storytelling Technique: Images on the Cross

God's Love Compels

SUPPLIES

- [Timeline image](#) (see Resources)
- [Images: Last Supper, Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus' Arrest, God's Love Compels, 2 Corinthians 5:14–15](#) (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Large wooden cross
- Pushpins (at least 6)

SET UP

Print all the images except the 2 Corinthians 5:14–15 image. Place the cross center stage and place the pushpins and images nearby.

RELATE

Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds. **It was an amazing time in Jesus' ministry. People had seen Him feed thousands of people, make a blind man see, walk on water, and more! What were some of Jesus' other miracles?** Invite responses. **Jesus showed His compassion, power, and love to a world in desperate need of a Savior, and many people put their faith in Him.**

But God's love compelled Jesus to do more than heal diseases and calm the wind and the waves. God's love compelled Jesus to come to earth to pay for our sins and fix our broken relationship with God.



What does the word *compel* mean? Invite answers. It means to feel a strong desire to do something. For example, in Matthew 26, a woman named Mary loved Jesus so much that she was compelled to pour expensive perfume on His head. Jesus said this was preparing Him for when He would be buried after He died. And He died on the cross because He was compelled by His amazing love for us. Let's take a look at the last hours of Jesus' life.

When the holiday of Passover arrived, Jesus and His disciples gathered for a meal together. Pin Last Supper image to the cross near the top of the vertical beam. Jesus told His disciples He would soon be betrayed and then suffer and die.

Ask children to turn to Luke 22:39 in their Bibles and follow along as you storytell. Dinner ended, and Jesus went up to the garden of Gethsemane, located on the Mount of Olives, to pray, "and his disciples followed him" (Luke 22:39). Pin Garden of Gethsemane image to the cross underneath the Last Supper image on the vertical beam. Jesus went off by Himself and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

To drink a cup meant to go through something really hard. To Jesus, the cup was His coming death and the pain He would endure on the cross as He took on the sins of the whole world. Jesus was so worried about what He was about to face that the Bible says "his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground" (v. 44). And through all of this, the disciples fell asleep!

Just then, a large crowd with swords and clubs came ready to arrest Jesus and take Him away. When Jesus' disciples saw this, they panicked. One of them jumped up and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant! But Jesus picked up the man's ear and put it back on. He healed this servant even though the man had come to arrest and kill Him. Pin Jesus' Arrest image to the cross below the Garden image on the vertical beam. And Jesus willingly went with the men who came to arrest Him. Jesus knew it was all a part of God's plan.

Next week we'll hear what happened next as God fulfilled His plan for Jesus to die on the cross and rise again. But let's pause and remember everything Jesus went through up to this point. Motion toward images on the cross as you recap. From betrayal by His friends, to sadness on the Mount of Olives, Jesus suffered many horrible events that night because (pin God's Love Compels images across the horizontal beam of the cross) God's love compelled Him. Jesus had all of the power He needed to stop that from happening to Him. But He endured worry, sadness, pain, and separation from God because He came to fix our broken relationship with God.

The same love that compelled Jesus to die for us is the love that God puts inside us when we know Him. *Tech: Cue 2 Corinthians 5:14–15 image.* Second Corinthians 5:14–15 says, "For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." Everything Jesus went through leading up to the cross shows His love for us. Because of Jesus' love, we can let God's love compel us this week to love others. If we ask God to fill us with His love, God can help us live a life compelled by His love as we show that love to others. Share a story about a time you were compelled to show someone God's love. Or share a story about a time when someone else showed you love.

SMALL GROUP
SECTION**RESPOND//** 15 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.

Reflect: God's Love Compels

Encourage the kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

Questions for Younger Kids

- **How would you have felt if you'd been one of the disciples who saw the crowd come to arrest Jesus?**
Luke 22:47–53
- **What does *compel* mean?**
- **What did Jesus pray for in the garden?** Luke 22:42
- **How does it feel to know Jesus went through many hard things because He loves you?**

Questions for Older Kids

- **How would you have felt if you'd been one of the disciples who saw the crowd come to arrest Jesus?**
Luke 22:47–53
- **What does *compel* mean?**
- **What did Jesus pray for in the garden?** Luke 22:42
- **What happened while Jesus was praying?** Luke 22:44
- **How does it feel to know Jesus went through many hard things because He loves you?**

BLESS// 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- [Heart template](#) (see Resources)
- Bible
- Scissors

SET UP

Print one copy of the Heart template for each child. Cut out the hearts.

RELATE

Open a Bible and read Psalm 105:1–3:



Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

Give a heart to each child. Invite the kids to hold out the hearts in front of them and think about what Jesus did on the cross for them. Then have each child roll his heart into a cone shape to make a megaphone. The megaphones will remind the children to tell the world about Jesus. As the kids hold their megaphones, offer the following blessing:

May you have great joy as you remember that Jesus died on the cross to pay for your sins. May God's amazing love compel you to tell the world about what He's done.

