

JESUS, THE PERFECT SACRIFICE

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

ALIVE SACRIFICE DIED DEATH GRATEFUL SUFFERED

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Hebrews 9:23-10:14, 19-25; 1 John 4:10

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students understand that Jesus' death was the best sacrifice possible, and they should be grateful that Jesus died for them

MEMORY VERSE

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit" (1 Peter 3:18, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The previous two sessions prepared the way for this one. In those, the students saw how complex and costly it was for the people in the Old Testament to maintain a relationship with God. While the sacrificial system was a gift of God's grace that made it possible to restore their relationship with him, it's unquestionable that this was not the Lord's final answer to the question of sin.

This lesson will make it clearer how privileged we are to live in "the culmination of the ages" (Hebrews 9:26), with the arrival and sacrifice of Christ. In a way not experienced by people in the Old Testament, we have access to the permanent, powerful and effective forgiveness of sins provided by Christ. The students need this kind of forgiveness. Some, despite their young age, have already practiced some kinds of very serious sins. Others suffer a perpetual state of guilt, which results from a legalistic interpretation of the biblical requirements for a holy life.

When preparing this lesson, pray that your students feel Christ's love for them and know how to reciprocate. For some, this means offering praise to God for Jesus; for others it will mean seeking the salvation that only he can provide.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

One of the most frequent comments they made about me as a child was: "She is original." Looking back, I suspect they were mainly referring to my disconcerting habit of saying what I thought. I was an expert in expressing myself clearly, inappropriately, and at the worst possible time. It was a true miracle that my mother didn't succumb to shame before I reached 10 years of age.

Usually when we talk about something original, compared to a copy, we're referring to something positive. Our passage in Hebrews compares Christ's finished work for our salvation (the original) with the provisional sacrificial system of the Old Testament (the copy). We'll see why.

In the same way that a mother's work never ends, the work of the high priest in the Old Testament never ended. Every day, year after year, the priests offered the same sacrifices. On the contrary, the work of Christ is finished, finished. Christ sacrificed his life once and for all time, then ascended to heaven and "has sat down at the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12) to show that his work is complete.

The work of Christ is "perfect." For most of us, the word "perfect" means "absolutely perfect," "without any fault." But in the book of Hebrews, as in other parts of the New Testament, "perfect" means "something that fulfills the purpose for which it was designed." It's like saying: "you're perfect for this task" and meaning you're the right person for this task.

Christ's sacrifice was perfect for who he is. No lamb or sheep could serve as a substitute for a human being made in the image of God. Jesus, as a man without sin, and at the same time God, was the perfect sacrifice for us.

Christ's sacrifice was perfect because he offered what God most desired, total obedience to his will. Unlike the Old Testament worshipers, Christ obeyed God perfectly in everything, and thus became the perfect sacrifice for sin.

Finally, Christ's sacrifice was perfect for what he made possible; he brought sin and guilt out of us. The Old Testament sacrifices provided a way to deal with sin and receive forgiveness until God sent the perfect sacrifice. But by the same repetition, those sacrifices became more of a reminder than a means to avoid sin. Jesus' sacrifice defeated both: the guilt and power of sin in the life of the human being.

The work of Christ "perfects". Hebrews 10:14 says: "For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy." This describes the work of our justification, by which our sin is removed and we're put in proper relationship with God. But, this sacrifice not only makes us acceptable in the eyes of the Lord, it also makes us holy. This refers to the process of sanctification by which believers are made more and more like Christ. For us, this is to fulfill God's purpose, that is, we're to be perfect.

Take time to reflect on what Christ did for you and express your true gratitude.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

What did you bring to church?

Hand out Student Activity Sheet #395-A. Ask the students to make a list or small drawings of everything they brought to church. Then ask some volunteers to tell the group what they wrote or drew. Pay attention to items that have to do with church and worship (Bibles, hymnals, pencils, notebook, offering, etc.). Emphasize the picture of the girl who is pulling the cow into the sanctuary. Ask: "Did anyone bring something like this today? Why or why not?"

Ask volunteers to read the notes on the page and answer or comment on the questions. Talk with them about their answers as to why we don't bring such sacrifices. It's possible that some understand well the fact that we no longer need to do so because Christ died on the cross for our sins.

Say: "The verse of Hebrews 10:10, '...we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all' gives us the idea of what today's study will show us; why Christians don't sacrifice animals. We'll also discover why Jesus' sacrifice is so much better than Old Testament sacrifices."

TEACH THE LESSON

The seriousness of sin and its consequences

Give the students Student Activity Sheet #395-B (Sin is Serious and Brings Sad Consequences!). Say: "This lesson demonstrates the seriousness of sin. It also points out that in the Old Testament, for some sins, there were no sacrifices provided and, therefore, weren't forgiven."

Assign students all passages in the Bible study (Numbers 15:32-36; Deuteronomy 13:6-16;

Deuteronomy 21:18-21; Leviticus 20:9). Once they find and read the passages, ask the students to say what was the consequence of each sin committed.

Working on the Sabbath: death by stoning

Worshipping other gods: complete destruction of the city, people and their property

Disobeying parents: death by stoning

Cursing parents: death

Then lead the students to Leviticus 5:1-7. There they'll discover that there were sins that weren't intentional. And the offering for such sins was a lamb or a goat. And if they didn't have money for that offering, it could be a turtledove or two pigeons (v. 7).

Mention that today, when we hear so much about the God of love and forgiveness, it can be difficult for us to understand such drastic penalties for sin. But we must remember that God was trying to teach the people - who had lived in great sin for centuries - about his holiness and the need for them to have clean lives. Each of these sins was deliberate disobedience to a clear command given by God. Finally, have all the students read John 1:29. Then ask them: "Why do you think John compares Jesus to a lamb?" (Because as the lamb for sacrifice, he gave his life for the sinner.)

Also mention that Jesus' sacrifice for the sin of the human race achieved what animal sacrifices never made possible. Although there is forgiveness for our sin today, we must not continue to sin on purpose against God.

A day at Ruben and Sara's house

Ruben - Sara, I have to go to the temple tomorrow and take an offering.

Sara - And what did you do now?

Ruben - I made a false oath to our neighbor Elias. Now I realize that I sinned and I must take that offering to God.

Sara (Looking at her husband carefully) - What will you take as an offering this time?

Ruben - I'm very sorry Sara, but I'll have to take Tamara, your favorite goat. I know that you love her very much for all the milk she gives us ... she is also the only one who is in a position to be offered. She isn't lame, nor is she blind.

Sara - Well Ruben, what can I do? I don't think you have sinned on purpose; you also have to obtain God's forgiveness.

Ruben - Yes, it's true. I want so much to stop disobeying God. Also, I always wonder when I give a sacrifice if I'm really forgiven and clean.

Sara - And I wonder what will become of us when we no longer have animals to offer ...!

This situation with Ruben and Sara could have been a very common and worrisome situation in Old Testament times. And if you were children at that time, you might wonder if that would end someday. These types of offerings, sacrifices and situations were every day, every week, every month, for more than 1,500 years.

But there were also special days that required a variety of offerings. Can you imagine the amount of sheep, goats, cows, and pigeons that died because of sins?

But those offerings weren't God's final plan to deal with sins. The wonderful day arrived when the Son of God, Jesus Christ, came into the world to be the perfect sacrifice, and with this the need for thousands and thousands of offerings ended. So many sacrifices would no longer be necessary. Christ was THE SACRIFICE par excellence. His blood shed on the cross of Calvary covered "multitudes" of sins. He brought to the cross ALL the sins of those who repent, ask forgiveness with faith, and believe in the perfect sacrifice, Christ the Son of God.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Good News from the book of Hebrews

Pass out Student Activity Sheet #395-C (Good News from the Book of Hebrews). Ask them to read Hebrews 9:24-28 and follow the instructions. Discuss their answers as a group.

How many sacrifices are necessary to pay for your sins?

Pass out Student Activity Sheet #395-D (How many sacrifices are necessary to pay for your sins?). Read the instructions with

them. Explain: "You are to write a prayer to God, thanking him for sending his Son, Jesus, to cleanse you from your sins. After everyone is done, ask for volunteers to share their prayers with the group."

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

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Make a race track of "biblical text" in the courtyard or other open space. Separate girls from boys to make two teams. If the teams are unequal, determine how many from the smaller team must repeat the activity. Make a finish line with something. Have another adult stand at it. Tell them that they should run quickly to the finish line, say the memory verse well and in an understandable way. When one has finished saying it, another will run and repeat the passage. If someone makes a mistake, forgets or omits some part, they must return to the end of the line until their turn comes again.

The team that finishes first with all its members next to the "finish line" will be the winner. Warning: nobody can help their teammates. If someone does, the two students will return to the end of the line for not complying with the rules.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Ask them to pray for you, and then finish by you praying for them. Everyone can give thanks to the Lord because it's no longer time to make sacrifices of animals. Also, give thanks for the perfect sacrifice made by Christ on the cross of Calvary. Give thanks for the blood of Christ shed for each one of us.

Encourage

Encourage your students to sing praises for the complete and forever Sacrifice: Christ Jesus!

Invite

As they depart tell the group the next session will be the last lesson in this unit and encourage them to attend. Remind them to welcome visitors.