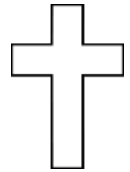


# “From Gethsemane to the Cross”



**Lesson Objectives:** Easter is the day that we commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it’s also a day for us to celebrate the **new life** that we are able to live because of Jesus Christ. The students will learn the significance of Jesus’ stop at the Garden of Gethsemane before going to the cross. They will learn how Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection enabled them to be replanted in God’s Garden, where they can become who God created them to be and live the good life that God planned for them to live. The students will learn that God’s Garden is not a specific place, but an environment in which they can be nurtured physically, spiritually, and mentally.

**Materials Needed:** A pack of seeds, a small plastic bucket half-filled with dirt, a small bucket half-filled with rocks, a small shovel, a sandwich bag, and a paper shredder.

**Preparation:** Take the seeds out of package and put them in a sandwich bag, but do not throw away the package. Study the lesson. Research gardening and pollination for fruit trees.

**Environment:** the aggregate of surrounding things, conditions, or influences; social and cultural forces that shape the life of a person or population.

This is a scripted lesson, however, studying the material prior to teaching it will enable you to present it without reading it like a book. The red, italicized words are instructions for you and are not to be read to the students.

## Introduction

**Read Matthew 26:36-39.** *Briefly discuss the scene at Gethsemane.*

- **Have you ever had a Gethsemane experience?** *Struggled with obeying God because you knew that doing it God’s way was going to cost you something: a friendship, a relationship, popularity, acceptance, a job, etc.*

Jesus knew his fate and that knowledge alone was distressing, but he also knew that billions of lives were dependent on his obedience to God. Now that was a lot of pressure.

- **During your Gethsemane experience, did you consider how your choice could affect the future generations that have been or will be birthed in the earth through you?**
- **How did Jesus’ choice in Gethsemane impact your life?**

**Psalms 139:13-16 (TLB).** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit them together in my mother’s womb. <sup>14</sup>Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! It is amazing to think about. Your workmanship is marvelous—and how well I know it. <sup>15</sup>You were there while I was being formed in utter seclusion! <sup>16</sup>You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in your book!

**Jeremiah 29:11 (TLB).** For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

**You were created by God and for His purposes. He has plans for your life. Jesus’ choice in Gethsemane made it possible for you to become all that God created you to be and pursue His plans, which will enable you to live a good, peaceful, prosperous, and fulfilled life, in the earth.** *Remind the students of God’s unconditional love for them.*

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- **What is Gethsemane?** A garden in Jerusalem.
- **What was significant about Jesus stopping at a garden, on his way to the cross?**

To fully understand the significance of Jesus going to a garden when he was preparing to die, you must understand how important a garden is to God, and not just any garden.

- **Where did God put the first man Adam after creating him?** In a Garden
- **What is a garden?** A plot of ground where herbs, fruits, or vegetables are cultivated. *Hold up the bag of seeds. Briefly discuss how fruits and vegetables originate from seeds.*

A seed doesn't look like what will become, but if planted in a garden, its identity and source can be revealed. *Ask the students to guess the identity of the seeds without showing them the package. You can make a game of it with a variety of seeds.*

**You are God's seed.**

### God's Seed

**Read Genesis 1:26.** God had this big idea to create a species called man, in His image and after His likeness, and to give them dominion over the earth and the animals.

**Read Genesis 1:27.** God didn't just envision one man, He envisioned billions of men and women occupying and ruling the earth. You were God's idea. *A student not being raised by their birth parents might feel like they were their parents' mistake. Remind them that they were God's idea and not their parents' mistake.*

An idea or vision is a lot like a seed, which means that you are God's seed. The idea of you started on the inside of God, your Creator and Father.

**Genesis 2:7.** And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

God gave the first man Adam His life, which included His seed (you) and His vision. Adam had physical seed on the inside of him, from which all of mankind originated. *Hold up the bag of seeds and tell the students that the seeds represent them.*

- **What will grow if an apple seed is planted in the right environment?** An apple tree.
- **What will grow if God's seed is planted in the right environment?**

If planted in the right environment, God's seed can grow and be like a tree, filled with God's fruit; and since God is the giver of life, His fruit promotes life in those who consume it.

**You are God's seed. You have the potential to become a tree of life in the earth, producing natural life-giving fruit in the form of offspring, and spiritual life-giving fruit, known as the fruit of the Spirit.** *Share scriptures that liken mankind to trees, such as Mark 8:24, and review the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23.*

**Genesis 1:28.** And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply...

According to **Genesis 1:26-28**, God planned for you to be:

- A picture/representative of Him in the earth (A son or daughter with the Father's image)
- A godly king or queen (A manager and good steward over the earth and animals)
- A fruitful tree of life (A producer of good fruit)

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God envisioned billions of men and women, but He started with just one. In order for Adam to reproduce the man God envisioned, he had to first become that man. Adam was God's seed, so he had the potential become that man, but having the potential to do something isn't a guarantee that it will happen. *Tell the students that the seeds have potential to become a plant/flower, but if thrown away it won't happen.*

**Genesis 2:8.** And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

God, the Husbandman, created the ideal environment within the earth for His seed. It was equipped to cultivate His seed, and the carrier of His seed. It was an environment in which God's vision could come to pass.

**The Garden of Eden was "God's Garden".** *Bury the bag of seeds, which represents the students, in the bucket of dirt that represents God's Garden.*

### God's Garden

The Garden in Eden contained everything Adam needed to survive, thrive, and become the man God created him to be.

**Genesis 2:15.** And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

While in the Garden, Adam gained knowledge of the earth and the animals, and he learned how to manage and be a good steward over all that God entrusted to him, which is the responsibility of a king.

Adam had to become a tree of life, and as with many fruit trees, he needed help producing fruit.

Pollination is required for some fruit trees to produce fruit. Some are self-pollinating, while others require pollen from another tree to produce fruit. Man is not self-pollinating, we can't produce fruit alone.

- **Which tree in the Garden of Eden could provide Adam with the pollen he needed to produce life-giving fruit?**

**Genesis 2:9.** And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden...

The tree of life is a physical representation of God's image in the earth, and thus a depiction (role model) of who man is to become. It had the pollen that Adam needed to become a tree of life. Adam was able to eat freely from the tree of life. *Briefly discuss the saying, "you are what you eat".*

The Garden of Eden was Adam's home, but two very important features classified it as **God's Garden**, and the ideal environment for God's seed: **God's presence** and the **Tree of Life**. *Share and discuss the definition of **environment** given in the Preparation section. Briefly talk about the importance of godly influences (role models), obeying God's instructions and upholding His culture or way of life, etc.*

**God's Garden is an environment in which you, God's seed, can be cultivated (spiritually, emotionally, and physically), and become the man or woman that God envisioned.**

### My Will/God's Will

God loved Adam unconditionally. He was committed to Adam and His seed (idea) that was on the inside of him, but it was a one-sided commitment, much like a father being committed to a son. In

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order for God's vision to come to pass, Adam had to love God and commit his life to God in return, but God didn't force him to do so.

- **Would you want someone to be forced to love you or to choose to love you?**

God gave mankind free *will*. Adam was free to think and choose for his self, but God the Father gave him the knowledge and information required to make a good choice, one that would enable him to live a good life in the earth, forever.

- **What were Adam's options? Read Genesis 2:9, 16-17.**

**Option A: Die to self and live for God.** Trust God with his life and obey God's instructions. Dying to self means submitting your *will* to God's *will*, and pursuing God's plans for your life.

**Option B: Live for self and die.** Disobey God's instructions and experience death and separation from God. Living for self means using your free *will* to indulge in whatever appeals to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, but the ultimate cost of living for self is death, which is un-fulfillment.

*Present Adam's options in present day terms so that the students will know that they are required to make the same choice on a daily basis.*

Adam chose Option B. He disobeyed God's instructions, and chose death for himself and for God's seed that was on the inside of him. He chose death for you.

- **Why didn't God kill Adam immediately?**

No one knows the mind of God, but we do know that killing Adam meant killing His seed that was on the inside of Adam.

**Read Genesis 3:22-24.** Adam was uprooted from God's Garden, along with the seed called man that was in him. Outside of God's Garden, it was impossible for him to be a godly king, a tree of life, and a true representative of God. Therefore, it was impossible for him to bring God's vision to pass in the earth. *Dig out the bag of seeds from the bucket of dirt, and put them in the bucket of rocks.*

Ultimately, Adam and his wife were fruitful and multiplied, but their offspring were born in the wrong environment, as servants of sin owing a debt of death. *Mention the evil and wickedness in the world caused by sin and bad fruit.*

God didn't give up on His vision, which means He didn't give up on you. He sent Jesus Christ to the earth to do what Adam failed to do, bring His vision to pass.

*Refer to the two buckets.* Jesus Christ had to free us (God's seed) from bondage to sin and death, and lead us back to God's Garden. He had to become the man God envisioned, and then reproduce himself.

**Read Matthew 1:18-21.** *Briefly discuss the conception and birth of Jesus.*

- **Why was it necessary for Jesus to be born of a virgin?** If Jesus had been born of the seed that was in Joseph, he would've been a descendant of Adam's and a servant of sin, owing a debt of death. He would not have been able to redeem us from bondage, being a slave himself.

The man Jesus was God's seed; he knew who he was and what God sent him to the earth to do. Jesus had free *will*; he didn't have to follow God's plan for his life. He had the same options that Adam had. *Review Options A and B from above.*

Jesus chose to live for God. His water baptism was an outward show of him submitting to God's *will*. He walked in his true identity as the son of God and a king. **Read Matthew 3:16-17; John 18:36.**

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Jesus had to become a tree of life for mankind and that meant suffering and dying, which brings us to his Gethsemane experience.

### Gethsemane

**Matthew 26:36.** Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

- **What was significant about Jesus stopping at a garden, on his way to the cross?** Life **began and ended** for God's seed in a garden with Adam. Life **began again** with God's seed in a garden with Jesus. Adam's choice in the Garden of Eden caused God's seed to be uprooted from God's Garden, which resulted in death. Jesus' choice in the Garden of Gethsemane made it possible for God's seed to be replanted in God's Garden, enabling us to have eternal life.

**John 10:30.** I and my Father are one.

**God, the Giver (Tree) of life**, was present on the inside of Jesus. Therefore, Gethsemane was God's Garden, and the right environment for Jesus to be empowered to become a tree of life.

**Matthew 26:37-39.** And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. <sup>38</sup>Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. <sup>39</sup>And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Jesus' struggle was real. A doctor from this day and time might have diagnosed him with depression, and put him on suicide watch.

- **Why was Jesus down in the dumps?**

Jesus was a man like us. He knew what he would have to go through to fulfill his assignment and he hoped for a different way, all the while knowing that there wasn't one.

**Matthew 26:42-44.** He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. <sup>43</sup>And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. <sup>44</sup>And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

Jesus' prayer was like a pollinator. As he prayed, the pollen from God, The Giver of Life, was transferred to him, enabling him to produce life-giving fruit.

Jesus chose Option A. He chose to give his life to God, so that God's vision to pass in the earth through him.

### The Cross

After being arrested at Gethsemane, Jesus stood trial. He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death for walking in his true identity as the Son of God and a King.

He made the difficult journey to the cross so that you could be freed from bondage to sin and death, and replanted in God's Garden.

**Are you struggling with your identity; a different person depending on the friends you're hanging with? Are you down in the dumps, battling with depression? Are you saved, but still struggling with sin? Are you battling with discontentment; you know there's more for your life but don't know what to do or which way to go to get the more? Are you worried and anxious about your future? Do you want to pursue God's plans for your life, which will enable you to live the good, peaceful, purposeful, and fulfilled life that God intended for you to live?**

If you answered yes to any of the questions, then I have a solution for you.

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**Matthew 16:24.** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and **follow me**.

*Research the definition of the Greek words for **deny**, which is “**aparneomai**”, and **cross**, which is “**stauros**”. Research the use of crucifixion in Jesus’ day so that you can discuss what the cross signifies in their life.*

Jesus Christ came to the earth to free you from bondage, and give you the power to overcome the struggles and temptations that are common in this world. If you want to claim that freedom, then you must follow Jesus, but there are a few things that you must do first.

**The first thing is to deny yourself, which means give up your right to do you.** You have free *will*, but you must be willing to submit your *will* to God’s *will*, like Jesus did. “Not my *will*, but thy *will* be done,” must be your daily sentiment.

**The second thing is to take up your cross.** *Give the students a few minutes to research crucifixion or describe it to them.*

- **What does the cross signify in your life?**

*Have the students draw a large cross on a piece of paper.*



You must acknowledge that you were born with a sin problem and are deserving of death. As long as you’re clothed in flesh, it’s possible for you to sin. If you were sentenced to death in Jesus’ day, crucifixion may have been your fate. *Tell the students to write, “My sins=death” on the horizontal beam of the cross.*

Taking up your cross means confessing your sins, the ones that God and your parents know about and the ones that only God knows about because you didn’t get caught. You must accept that the penalty for **all sin** is death. **Romans 6:23.** *Tell the students to write down any sins that they have recently committed along the vertical beam of the cross. Remind them that sin is disobedience to God. If they have disobeyed and/or dishonored their parents in any way, then they have sinned against God. Ephesians 6:1-3.*

Now let’s follow Jesus. Choosing to follow Jesus means acknowledging your need for a Savior because you know that you can’t fix your sin problem or pay your own debt, **and believing** that Jesus Christ is that Savior. Choosing to take up your cross and follow Jesus is synonymous to choosing to die to self and live for God.

Now let’s meet up with Jesus and see firsthand what he had to go through, in your place. *In order for the students to truly understand the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for them, they must follow him to the cross and see what he endured on their behalf. It’s important for them to know the true cost of their sins and freedom.*

Pontius Pilate, a Roman governor and the judge of Jesus’ trial, sentenced Jesus to death by crucifixion at the request of Jesus’ own people. He, who was without sin, took on the punishment that you are deserving of.

*Read Matthew 27:26. Explain what it means to be scourged and if possible, show a clip of Jesus being scourged. Remind the students that Jesus took all of their past, present, and future sins on the cross with him and paid the penalty for those sins. Read Matthew 27:27-34, and if possible, show the crucifixion scene.*

Jesus was nailed to your cross. He was crucified in your place.



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**John 19:30.** When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished**: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

Jesus paid your debt of death and solved your sin problem for once and for all. *Allow the students to shred their paper with their cross and sins listed on it.*

### The Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Let's continue following Jesus. **Read John 19:31-42.** They put Jesus' body in a tomb, in a garden.

**Matthew 12:40.** For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

It's no coincidence that the man Jesus, God's seed, was buried (planted) in a garden.

**John 12:24.** Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

**Read John 20:1-16.** After three days, Jesus Christ was resurrected.

**Jesus Christ came back to the earth as a Tree of Life, filled with life-giving fruit that mankind can partake of, freely.**

Now let's come back to the present. **What does this mean for you today?**

**Romans 10:9.** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

If you partake of the life-giving fruit that Jesus Christ is offering and accept God's gift of salvation through your **belief** and **confession**, then you can claim your freedom from bondage to sin and death.

**Romans 6:22.** But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

You will no longer be a servant of sin, but a servant of God and righteousness. **Read Romans 6:3-11.**

Your belief and confession that Jesus is the Son of God and that God raised him from the dead enables you to be uprooted from the bad environment, where sin and death is promoted. *Dig the bag of seeds out of the bucket of rocks.*

### Back to God's Garden

Jesus Christ gave his life to free you from bondage to sin **and** to give you access to God's Garden.

- **What two important features must be present for an environment to qualify as God's Garden?** God's Presence, Tree of Life

**1<sup>st</sup> John 4:15.** Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

**Galatians 2:20.** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Your **belief** and **confession** that Jesus is the Son of God and that God raised him from the dead gives you access to **God's presence** and **Jesus Christ, the Tree of Life**. It enables you to be replanted in **God's Garden**. *Put the bag of seeds back in the bucket of dirt.*

*Remind the students that God's Garden is not a physical location such as Eden or Gethsemane; it's simply an environment in which they can be cultivated and become the men and women God envisioned.*

## From Gethsemane to the Cross

The holiday known to the world as Easter isn't just a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, it's also a celebration of **new life** for you because Jesus Christ made it possible for you, God's seed, to be replanted in **God's Garden** where you can:

- Reclaim your true identity as a son or daughter of God, (**John 1:12**) and be God's representative in the earth.
- Become the godly king or queen that God envisioned in Genesis 1:26. (**Revelation 1:5-6**)
- Become a tree of life and share God's life-giving fruit with others. (**John 15:1-8**)

Most importantly, Jesus Christ gave you the freedom to choose eternal life for yourself. You are free to pursue God's plans and live a good, prosperous, peaceful, and fulfilled life in the earth, and eternal life with God.

*Offer the gift of salvation to the students.*

**Acts 2:38.** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The next steps after receiving the gift of salvation are **repentance** and **baptism**.

To **repent** means to change your way of thinking. You can no longer think like a servant or slave to sin; you must learn to think like a servant of God and righteousness.

**Water baptism** is symbolic of the death and burial of your old man (nature), and the resurrection of your new man, in Christ Jesus. It's a physical act showing that you have submitted your *will* to God's *will* and are choosing to follow God's plan for your life.