

Session 6: Do This

A Kingdom of Priests: Priesthood in the New Covenant

Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim

Reveal night. The group brings five weeks of sealed curiosity into the upper room and discovers that the Last Supper is a sacrifice being instituted: a Passover meal, a body "given for you," a "blood of the covenant poured out," and a command, "Do this in remembrance of me," spoken to the Twelve, that hands the memorial of the one sacrifice into human hands. Mid-session, the guesses are unsealed: Melchizedek, priest-king of Salem, brought out bread and wine; and on the night before he died, the priest for ever after his order took bread and wine and made them the offering of the New Covenant. The room should feel the click. Tonight also answers Session 5's open question: by whose command does the Church enter the one sacrifice? By his.

Catholic Touchstone

The Catechism teaches that at the Last Supper, in order to leave his Church a visible sacrifice by which the bloody sacrifice of the Cross would be made present, its memory perpetuated, and its saving power applied, Christ instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and resurrection, and instituted his apostles as priests of the New Covenant (CCC 611, drawing on the Council of Trent; see also CCC 1337). It further teaches that in the biblical sense, memorial is not merely the remembrance of past events but their proclamation and, in the liturgy, their being made present (CCC 1363 to 1364). The whole session lives inside those paragraphs, discovered from the text upward.

What You Need to Know

Frame first: the Supper is a Passover. Luke is explicit: "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15). So before the upper room, take the group back to Exodus 12: a lamb without blemish, slain, its blood applied, and, easy to miss, EATEN: "they shall eat the flesh" (Exodus 12:8). The blood on the doorposts is the stated sign of deliverance (12:13), and the eaten lamb belongs to the same commanded rite: slaying, blood, and meal are one ordinance. And the whole rite is fixed as a permanent liturgy: "This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance for ever" (Exodus 12:14). The Hebrew idea behind "memorial" (zikkaron) is richer than recollection: in Jewish observance, to this day, the Passover is kept as participation; Jewish tradition teaches that in every generation each person is bound to regard himself as having personally come out of Egypt. Present that honestly as Jewish tradition (it is the classic teaching of the Passover haggadah), not as a Bible verse. The point stands on Exodus 12:14 alone: God builds memorials that generations ENTER, not memories they merely consult. Paul closes the frame with one line: "Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival" (1 Corinthians 5:7 to 8): a sacrificed lamb, and therefore an ongoing feast.

Then the institution itself. Read it in stereo: Luke 22:14 to 20 and Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 11:23 to 26, which Paul says he "received from the Lord" and "delivered" to the church, our earliest written witness. Weigh the words like gold, because every word is doing sacrificial work. "This is my body which is GIVEN FOR YOU": given-for is offering language. "This cup which is POURED OUT for you is the new covenant in my blood": poured out is what happens to sacrificial blood at an altar, and "blood of the covenant," carried verbatim in Matthew and Mark's cup-word ("this is my blood of the covenant," Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24) and echoed in Luke's "new covenant in my blood," points to a scene the group will find live: Exodus 24:8, Moses dashing

sacrificial blood on the people to seal the covenant, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you." Jesus, cup in hand, is placing his final night inside Israel's covenant-sacrifice grammar on purpose. And then the command: "Do this in remembrance of me" (Greek anamnesis, a word at home in the Greek Old Testament's sacrificial-memorial vocabulary, as at Leviticus 24:7). "Do this" is an imperative creating an ongoing rite; "in remembrance of me" names it a memorial in the Exodus 12 sense; and it is spoken not to the crowds but to the Twelve, reclining as the new covenant's table is set. This is why the Church, from Trent to the Catechism, says that in this hour Christ instituted both the Eucharist and the priesthood of the New Covenant: the offering, and the men commanded to make it.

The reveal: run it as a small ceremony (the Discussion Guide scripts it). Guesses are opened and read aloud with no mockery and no grading; five-week-old guesses are acts of trust. Then three texts in sequence, no commentary between them: Genesis 14:18, Psalm 110:4, Luke 22:19. Then one question: what do you see? Most groups get there unaided: the priesthood "after the order of Melchizedek" is a priesthood whose offering is bread and wine; and the bread and wine of the New Covenant are what Jesus declared them to be, his body and blood, the one sacrifice under the forms Melchizedek carried out to meet Abraham. St. Cyprian made exactly this argument in the third century (Letter 63); your group will have made it themselves first. One honesty note, and make it: Genesis 14 does not SAY Melchizedek's bread and wine were a sacrifice; the text simply sets a priest and bread and wine side by side and says nothing more. It is the whole sweep (Genesis 14, Psalm 110, the Supper, and the Church's ancient reading) that lights the verse up. Typology is read backward from Christ; that is how the Church has always read, and being honest about the direction of the reading makes the claim stronger, not weaker.

The steelman tonight is the memorialist reading, and give it real muscle: "It was a farewell meal. This is my body is a metaphor, like I am the door or I am the vine; do this in remembrance means think of me when you eat together. Sacrament, sacrifice, priesthood: all of it read back into a simple goodbye." The answer works from Paul, the earliest witness: (1) Passover memorial was never spectator recollection (Exodus 12:14); (2) 1 Corinthians 10:16 to 21: "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation (koinonia) in the blood of Christ?", and Paul's whole argument bans idol-feasts BECAUSE eating from an altar is real participation in the sacrifice, "the table of the Lord" set against "the table of demons": the parallel only works if the Lord's table is sacrificial; (3) 1 Corinthians 11:27 to 30: eating unworthily makes one "guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord," and Paul attributes real consequences to it. Paul's guilt-and-judgment language is hard to square with a mere figure of speech.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

Tonight harvests three plantings at once: Genesis 14:18 (Session 1, Thread A) meets its fulfillment; Exodus 12 (the lamb eaten, the memorial for ever) frames the meal; Exodus 24:8 (the blood of the covenant) is discovered live inside the cup-word. Note for your own delight what the group has now watched happen: the study's Old Testament spine (garden, fathers, Levites, Melchizedek, Passover, covenant blood) has converged on one table in one room on one night.

Voices of the Church

VOICE OF THE CHURCH St. Cyprian of Carthage

St. Cyprian, writing around the year 253 on how the Eucharist must be celebrated, teaches that in Melchizedek, priest of God Most High who offered bread and wine and blessed Abraham, we see the sacrament of the Lord's sacrifice prefigured: what Melchizedek carried in figure, Christ, the true priest after his order, fulfilled when he offered bread and wine, that is, his own body and blood. Your group made Cyprian's argument tonight before they heard his name. (Faithfully summarized from his letter on

the Eucharist.)

Letter 63

VOICE OF THE CHURCH St. Ignatius of Antioch

St. Ignatius, on the road to martyrdom around the year 107, warned against those who "abstain from the Eucharist... because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins." Within one lifetime of the upper room, the test of real belief was what you confessed the Eucharist to BE. The bishop of Antioch, one of our earliest witnesses, did not talk like a memorialist.

Letter to the Smyrnaeans

VOICE OF THE CHURCH St. Justin Martyr

St. Justin, describing Christian worship to the Roman emperor around the year 155, wrote that "not as common bread and common drink do we receive these," but that the food over which thanksgiving has been made by the word of prayer that comes from Christ "is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh." In the surrounding chapters (65 and 67) he then describes what your parish still does on Sunday. This is the earliest surviving outsider-facing description of the Mass, and it is recognizably the Mass.

First Apology, chapters 65 to 67

Catechism Connection

- CCC 611: at the Supper, Christ instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his sacrifice and instituted his apostles as priests of the New Covenant.
- CCC 1337: knowing his hour had come, he washed their feet, gave the commandment of love, and instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and resurrection, commanding his apostles to celebrate it until his return, thereby constituting them priests of the New Testament.
- CCC 1363 to 1364: in the biblical sense, memorial is not merely recollection of the past but proclamation and, in the liturgy of the Church, the making-present of the one sacrifice.

Thread Watch (leader only)

- THREAD A: RESOLVED TONIGHT. Run the reveal ceremony exactly as scripted. Afterward, the thread converts into the study's standing image: read from the Supper backward, Melchizedek's order offers under bread and wine.
- THREAD B (serve and guard): resting; Gethsemane already carried it this arc.
- THREAD C (the firstborn): one quiet note if the moment offers itself: the Passover was the night God spared the firstborn; the true Firstborn is not spared, he hands himself over.
- THREAD D (kingdom of priests): "Do this" is spoken to the Twelve, not the crowd; the ordered-ministry side of the tension takes a decisive step tonight. Do not editorialize; Sessions 8 to 11 harvest it.

Session Goals

1. The group frames the Supper as Passover from Luke 22:15 and Exodus 12, and can say why an eaten lamb and a perpetual memorial matter.
2. The group discovers Exodus 24:8 behind "blood of the covenant" with the texts open.
3. The reveal ceremony lands: guesses opened with honor, three texts in sequence, the click articulated by the group, and the honesty note about typology stated by you.
4. The memorialist steelman is built at full strength and answered from 1 Corinthians 10 and 11.
5. The group hears clearly, from CCC 611, what the Church claims happened to the Twelve in that room, as the study's bridge into the coming sessions.

Timed Plan (90 minutes)

- 0:00 Welcome and opening prayer (5 min)
- 0:05 Win questions (10 min)
- 0:15 Build I: Passover frame, Exodus 12 (15 min)
- 0:30 Build II: The institution in stereo, and the covenant blood discovery (20 min)
- 0:50 THE REVEAL (15 min; do not rush it)
- 1:05 Build III: The memorialist steelman (15 min)
- 1:20 Send (5 min)
- 1:25 Live It, memory verse, closing prayer (5 min)

Pre-chosen cuts for a 75-minute room: drop the Dig Deeper, compress Build I by summarizing Exodus 12:1 to 13 yourself and reading only verses 8 and 14 aloud. Never cut or shorten the reveal; if the night runs long, the steelman may be carried as the opening of Session 7 instead.

Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Leader: Lord Jesus, on the night you were betrayed you took bread. Tonight we take up five weeks of questions and bring them to your table. Open the Scriptures and break them open for us, and let our hearts burn within us. Amen.

Win

1. What is a meal you will remember for the rest of your life? What made it more than food?
2. Guesses on the table, still sealed: on a scale of one to ten, how confident are you in yours tonight, and has your number changed since Session 1?

Build I: The Frame Is Passover

Read Luke 22:14 to 15 aloud. Then go back: read Exodus 12:3, 5 to 8, and 12:14, divided around the room.

Q1. From Exodus 12: what must happen to the lamb besides being slain? And what does verse 14 command Israel to do with this night, for how long?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

The lamb must be EATEN: "they shall eat the flesh." Blood on the doorposts as the stated sign of deliverance (12:13), and the lamb consumed as part of the same commanded rite: God joined deliverance to a meal. And the night is fixed as "a memorial day... an ordinance for ever," a feast every generation keeps. Note honestly what Jewish tradition has always taught about keeping it (this is the classic teaching of the Passover liturgy, not a Bible verse): in every generation, each person is to regard himself as having personally come out of Egypt. God builds memorials that generations enter. Jesus chose THIS night, of all nights, to say the words he is about to say.

Build II: The Institution, in Stereo

Read Luke 22:19 to 20 aloud, then Matthew 26:26 to 29. Then read 1 Corinthians 11:23 to 26, noting that Paul, writing within about twenty-five years of the event, says he received this from the Lord and delivered it to the church.

Q2. Underline every word or phrase in these two passages that belongs to the vocabulary of sacrifice rather than of an ordinary meal. What did you find?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

"Given for you": offering language. "Poured out for you": what happens to sacrificial blood at an altar. "The new covenant in my blood": covenants are cut in sacrificial blood. "Do this": an imperative instituting an ongoing rite, spoken to the Twelve. "In remembrance of me": anamnesis, a Greek memorial-offering word; the CATEGORY is Exodus 12:14's entered memorial (Hebrew zikkaron), whatever the exact Greek vocabulary there. Jesus is not reaching for meal vocabulary with a poetic flourish; he is speaking altar grammar at a table.

LIVE DISCOVERY. Say: "Matthew and Mark's cup-word, my blood of the covenant, is a quotation. It was spoken once before in Israel's story, at the foot of a mountain, with basins in hand. Find it in Exodus 24:3 to 8: who says it, and what is he doing as he says it?"

Q3. What happens in Exodus 24, and what is Jesus doing by quoting that exact phrase with a cup in his hand?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Moses seals the Sinai covenant in sacrificial blood, throwing half against the altar and half on the people: "Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you." The people are joined to God through applied sacrificial blood. Jesus lifts a cup and, in Matthew and Mark's wording, says the same words with one change that changes everything: "MY blood" (Luke's "new covenant in my blood" carries the same covenant-sacrifice grammar). He is deliberately standing his final night inside Israel's covenant-sacrifice grammar: a covenant is being cut, in blood, and the blood is his, and this time the people do not have it dashed on them; they drink it.

The Reveal

Run this as a ceremony, unhurried. First: everyone opens their sealed guess and reads it aloud, in turn, exactly as written. No grading, no laughing except with delight; a five-week-old guess is an act of trust. Thank each person. Then say: "Three texts, in order, no commentary." Read aloud, slowly: Genesis 14:18. Then Psalm 110:4. Then Luke 22:19. Then ask the one question:

Q4. What do you see?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Let them say it; most rooms will. A priest-king of Salem, the first priest in the Bible, appears with BREAD AND WINE and blesses the father of the covenant people. A thousand years later God swears that the Messiah is a priest for ever AFTER THE ORDER of that man. And on the night before he died, the Messiah took BREAD AND WINE, declared them his body given and his blood poured out, and commanded, "Do this." Read backward from the Supper, as the Church has always read, Melchizedek's order is a priesthood whose offering appears under bread and wine; and at the Supper, the priest for ever made bread and wine the bearers of his one sacrifice. St. Cyprian argued exactly this in the year 253; you argued it first tonight.

Then the honesty note, stated by you, plainly: Genesis 14 never SAYS the bread and wine were a sacrifice; it sets a priest and bread and wine side by side and falls silent. Typology is read backward from Christ: it is the whole sweep, Genesis to Psalm to Supper to the Church's ancient reading, that lights the verse up. We say so out loud because the claim is stronger honest than inflated.

DIG DEEPER

On the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13 to 35), the risen Jesus is known "in the breaking of the bread," Luke's name for the Eucharist (Acts 2:42). Luke has built a pattern: opened Scriptures, burning hearts, and recognition at the table. Your group has spent six weeks in the first half of that pattern.

Build III: Just a Metaphor? The Steelman

STEELMAN: BUILD IT UP. Full strength: "A thoughtful memorialist says: it was a farewell dinner. This is my body is a metaphor, exactly like I am the door and I am the vine; nobody checks Jesus for hinges. Do this in remembrance of me means what it means at every memorial dinner in history: think of me when you gather. It is an instituted ordinance, a covenantal proclamation of his death, for many of us a real spiritual communion; what it is not is a sacrifice or a change in the bread. Everything else was read back in by later centuries. Notice how serious and biblical that position is; millions of earnest Christians hold it."

Q5. Take the earliest witness we have: Paul. Read 1 Corinthians 10:16 to 21, then 11:27 to 30. Does Paul talk about the Lord's table like a man describing a metaphor? Be specific from the text.

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

No, and specifically: (1) "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?" The word is *koinonia*, real communion, and Paul's entire argument in chapter 10 depends on it: he forbids idol feasts BECAUSE eating from an altar is real participation in the sacrifice, setting "the table of the Lord" against "the table of demons." The parallel collapses unless the Lord's table is sacrificial and its food joins you to the sacrifice. (2) In chapter 11, eating and drinking unworthily makes a person "guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord," to be discerned on pain of judgment. Paul's severity, guilt "of the body and blood of the Lord" with judgment attached, is very difficult to square with a merely symbolic account; his words treat the sacrament as something one can actually violate. (3) And the door and vine comparisons cut the other way: no one at any table was ever commanded to eat the door. The Supper words come with an imperative, a rite, and consequences. Our earliest surviving witnesses heard them accordingly: within about a lifetime, Ignatius could define the heretic as the one who denies the Eucharist is the flesh of Christ.

Send

1. Tonight you watched a five-week-old question resolve into something bigger than your guess. Where else in your life might God be working on a timeline longer than your patience?
2. "Do this in remembrance of me" was spoken over a table you can still approach this Sunday. What would it change to walk into Mass this week knowing what room you are walking into?

Live It This Week

- At Mass this week, listen for the exact words of tonight's texts in the Eucharistic Prayer ("this is my body, which will be given up for you... the blood of the new and eternal covenant... do this in memory of me"). You now know where every phrase was born.
- Read the Emmaus story (Luke 24:13 to 35) once, slowly, and note the two-part rhythm: Scriptures opened, bread broken. Which half of that rhythm is stronger in your life right now?
- Keep your opened guess sheet. Put it in your Bible at Genesis 14. Someday, show it to someone and tell them this story.

Memory Verse

"This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Luke 22:19 (RSV2CE)

Closing Prayer

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, on the night you were betrayed you took Melchizedek's ancient sign, bread and wine, into your own hands and filled it with yourself. Thank you for answering questions we did not know how to ask. Make us hungry for your table, reverent before your sacrifice, and grateful beyond our words. Amen.

Leader Reference Card: Session 6

Every passage used tonight, in order:

- Luke 22:14 to 15 (Build I, read aloud)
- Exodus 12:3, 5 to 8, 14 (Build I, read aloud)
- 1 Corinthians 5:7 to 8 (Build I, leader reference)
- Luke 22:19 to 20; Matthew 26:26 to 29 (Build II, read aloud; memory verse source at Luke 22:19)
- 1 Corinthians 11:23 to 26 (Build II, read aloud)
- Exodus 24:3 to 8 (Build II, live discovery)
- Genesis 14:18; Psalm 110:4; Luke 22:19 (The Reveal, read in sequence)
- Luke 24:13 to 35; Acts 2:42 (Dig Deeper)
- 1 Corinthians 10:16 to 21 (Build III, read aloud)
- 1 Corinthians 11:27 to 30 (Build III, read aloud)