

SPECIAL LESSON

Bible Study: Red Sunday - You are the Church Stand Up for Your Faith

Bible Study Preparation and Materials Needed:

Reflecting on: the importance of standing up for what you believe

Verses used in this Bible Study

John 15:13: *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends”*

Hebrews 12:2–3: *“For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, scorning its shame... Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”*

Matthew 10:32: *“Whoever acknowledges Me before others, I will also acknowledge before My Father in heaven”*

Psalms 40:1: *“I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry.”*

1 Corinthians 16:13: *“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.”*

Memory Verse:

**“There is no fear in love,
but perfect love casts out fear.”**

1 John 4:18

Bible Study Lesson

Open with prayer:

Իմաստութիւն Յօր՝ Յիսուս, տո՛ւր ինձ իմաստութիւն, զբարիս խորհել եւ խօսել եւ գործել առաջի Քո՝ յամենայն ժամ. ի չար խորհրդոց, ի բանից եւ ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Eemasdootyoon Hor Heesoos, door eents eemasdootyoon uzparees khorel yev khosel yev kordz arachi ko hamenayn jham. Ee char khorhrtos, ee paneets yev kordzots prgya zees yev voghormya ko araradzots eents pazmameghees. Amen.

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

For Students

There are moments when standing up for what is right feels easy — when your friends support you, when your decision is praised, or when your faith is understood. But there are also moments when doing the right thing feels like walking alone. Maybe it means telling the truth and losing popularity. Maybe it means choosing kindness and being seen as weak. Maybe it means being honest about your faith and being laughed at or misunderstood.

In those moments, where does real courage come from? What gives someone the strength to speak truth when silence feels safer? What allows a heart to keep shining when everything around seems dark?

Red Sunday is a day that invites us to pause and remember a kind of love that is stronger than fear. It is the kind of love that Jesus showed us on the Cross — a love that chose to endure betrayal, hatred, and suffering not because He had to, but because His love could not be silenced. Jesus said, *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13)*. His bravery was not born from pride or power, but from love — a love that never gave up, even in pain.

As you reflect on this, **ask yourself:** *have you ever experienced a moment when love gave you courage? Perhaps you stood up for someone being treated unfairly, or admitted a mistake because it was the right thing to do. How did you feel afterward — ashamed, proud, changed? What motivated you in that moment?*

In the life of Jesus, we see what it means to be brave through love. The Apostle Paul writes in **Hebrews 12:2–3**, *“For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, scorning its shame... Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”* Christ faced mockery, torture, and death — yet He did not lose heart. His strength came from love, and His joy was found in saving us.

The early Church understood that kind of bravery well. **Saint John Chrysostom** once said, *“The love of God makes a brave soul invincible.”* This love does not erase fear, but it overcomes it. That is why so many saints chose to suffer rather than deny Christ. Their stories were not about seeking pain, but about seeking truth — a truth they loved more than their own safety.

One such saint was **Hripsime**, a young woman who refused to marry a pagan king and instead chose to remain faithful to Christ. Her choice cost her her life. But her heart was already won by someone greater than a king — her Savior. Jesus had said, *“Whoever acknowledges Me before others, I will also acknowledge before My Father in heaven” (Matthew 10:32)*. Hripsime’s courage challenges us today: would we be willing to lose something — even a little comfort — in order to stand with Christ?

And then there is **Saint Gregory the Illuminator**, who spent over a decade imprisoned in a dark pit. Alone and forgotten by most, he still trusted that God had not forgotten him. His faithfulness in isolation brings to mind **Psalm 40:1**: *“I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry.”* Gregory did not let bitterness grow in the darkness. Instead, he became a vessel of light — the man who would later bring the light of Christ to the Armenian nation.

Another example is **Saint Vartan Mamigonian**, who led the Armenian people into battle not for land or glory, but for the right to worship freely. He and his soldiers chose to defend their faith, even knowing the cost. His leadership echoes the words of **1 Corinthians 16:13**: *“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.”* Vartan’s boldness inspires us to **ask ourselves**: *when do we stand up for our beliefs, and when do we stay silent?*

Let’s reflect: *Are there places in our lives where we need to be more faithful and less afraid?*

Each of these saints faced moments where fear could have won. But their love for Christ gave them something stronger than fear — something that made them brave.

So what about us today? The battles we face may not look like swords or prisons, but they are real. It might be the pressure to fit in by laughing at a cruel joke. It might be the fear of being labeled for sharing your beliefs. It might be the temptation to hide your faith just to avoid trouble. These moments may seem small, but each one is a real decision between light and darkness.

Saint Gregory of Narek once prayed, *“Clothe me with the strength of the victorious, make me a warrior of light.”* That is your calling, too — not to fight with fists or anger, but to live with a heart so full of Christ that even fear cannot put out its light.

Ask yourself honestly: *what fears are keeping you from living your faith openly? Are you afraid of being judged, excluded, or misunderstood?*

Name those fears in your heart. Bring them to Christ in prayer, and ask Him to begin casting them out. Remember the promise: ***“Perfect love casts out fear.”***

The good news is you don’t have to be perfect to be brave. You only have to be willing. Even one small act of love — one word of truth, one moment of kindness — can shine brightly in a dark place. Maybe this week, that means reaching out to someone who is lonely, choosing not to join in gossip, or saying a prayer when you feel alone. Whatever it is, trust that Christ is already walking with you.

Which of the examples of the Saints spoke most to you today? Was it the quiet courage of Hripsime? The long faithfulness of Gregory? The bold leadership of Vartan? Or the unwavering love of Christ Himself? Let that story take root in you. Let it be a spark.

Reflection Questions

1. When was a time you stood up for what was right, even when it cost you something?
2. What fears keep you from living your faith openly?
3. How does Jesus’ love give you courage when you’re afraid or uncertain?
4. Which saint’s story speaks to your heart the most — and why?
5. What is one brave step God may be calling you to take this week?

Close with prayer:

Պահապան ամենայնի Քրիստոս, աջ Քո հովանի լիցի ի վերայ իմ, ի տուէ եւ ի գիշերի, ի նստիլ ի տան, ի գնալ ի ճանապարհ, ի ննջել եւ ի յառնել, զի մի երբեք սասանեցայց եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Bahaban amenayn Kreesdos, ach Ko hovanee leetsee ee vera eem; ee dveh yev ee keesheree, ee nsdeel ee dan, ee knal ee janabarh, ee nunchel yev ee harnel, zee mee yerpek sasanetsayts yev voghormya Ko araradzots yev eents pazmamyghees. Amen.

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.