

ALPHA: Session 3 – Why did Jesus die?

Big Idea

This session is all about the question, why did Jesus die? Although sin has real consequences, Jesus' death and resurrection are the solution to the problem of sin. The cross shows us that God loves us, death has been defeated, the power of sin has been broken and we can have a relationship with our heavenly Father.

Intro Questions

- 1) What is the best (or worst) thing you've ever made?
 - 2) How do you see sin in the world around you?
 - Where do you see evil in your school, your city, your country, the world?
 - How has sin affected you personally?
 - 3) What does forgiveness mean to you?
 - Think about a time you had to forgive someone. Why did you do it?
 - Why do you think the message of forgiveness is so central to Christianity?
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Further questions

- 4) Did anything from the episode stand out for you? What comes to mind when you think about the cross?
- 5) When the hosts talked about the four consequences of sin (partition, penalty, power, pollution), which stood out most to you? Why?
- 6) What do you think about the claim that Jesus is the solution to our problem of sin? How did you feel about the scene at the end with the father and the son?

Key Quotes & Scriptures

Why is the cross the symbol of Christianity?

"The Son of God... loved me and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20

"...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God". Romans 3:23

"Jesus' death and resurrection are God's solution to the problem of sin. ...the Lord has laid on him [on Jesus] the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6

God loves you, Jesus died for you, and through the cross, we are invited into a relationship with God.

The Problem:

'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.' (Romans 3:23).

- **Pollution** of sin (Mark 7:20–23)
- **Power** of sin (John 8:34)
- **Penalty** for sin (Romans 6:23)
- **Partition** of sin (Isaiah 59:2)

The Solution:

- 'The self-substitution of God' (1 Peter 2:24)
- Agony of the cross (Isaiah 53:6)

The Result:

The cross shows:

- - You are infinitely valuable to God
- - Jesus is the supreme example of love (John 15:13)
- - God is not aloof from suffering
- - The powers of evil have been defeated: the resurrection wasn't the reversal of a defeat; it was the manifestation of a victory
- The **partition** has been removed (2 Corinthians 5:19)
 - Reconciliation with God and in other relationships
- The **penalty** has been paid
 - Justified ('Just-as-if-I'd never sinned')
- The **power** of sin has been broken
 - If the Son sets you free, you really will be free' (John 8:36, NLT)
- The **pollution** has been removed
 - '... the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.' (1 John 1:7)
 - When you are forgiven, you want to forgive

Recommended Further Reading

The Cross of Christ

John Stott

Searching Issues

Nicky Gumbel

Mud, Sweat and Tears

Bear Grylls