



4

The Crucifixion

Key Theme

- God's plan of redemption was in place before time.

Key Passages

- John 19:17–37; Romans 5:6–9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:1–12

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe what happened to Jesus on the Cross.
- Explain what was accomplished on the Cross.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Write on the board, "What was accomplished on the Cross?"



Studying God's Word

Jesus was beaten and mocked. A crown of thorns was placed upon His head, and He was told to carry His cross to Golgotha. Nailed to the Cross, Jesus suffered the Father's wrath and paid the penalty for the sin that was laid upon Jesus. Knowing that He had completed the task the Father had sent Him to do, Jesus said, "It is finished," and died.

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.



Activity: A Prophetic Death

Students will examine some of the prophecies that were fulfilled in the death of Jesus and look at their significance for apologetics.

- Student Guides
- Pencils
- A Prophetic Death Answer Key from the Resource DVD-ROM



Activity: Truth Be Told Review Game (Optional)

The students will review the lesson by playing a board game.

- Truth Be Told Game Board and Answer Key
- Truth Be Told Question and Number Cards
- Game pieces for each team
- Poster putty



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

The sinless Son of Man had come to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). He would be led like a lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). He would not open His mouth but willingly accept and finish the plan the Father had in place since the beginning of time. After the illegal and unjust arrest and conviction of Jesus, He was sentenced to death—crucifixion on the Cross (John 19:16).

At the time, this was one of the most disgraceful and humiliating forms of death. Pilate had Jesus scourged, and He was mockingly crowned with a painful crown of thorns that was pressed into His head (John 19:1–2). In a very weakened state He was led out to carry the very cross He would be nailed to and killed upon. He was headed to Golgotha where the crucifixion would occur (John 19:17). Because of His weakened state, the authorities compelled Simon, a Cyrenian, to assist Jesus with the Cross (Mark 15:21). Jesus was offered wine with myrrh in order to lessen the pain He was about to endure, but He refused it (Mark 15:23). He was nailed through His hands and His feet to the Cross. He was crucified between two criminals (John 19:18). The title Pilate assigned to Him, “King of the Jews” was placed on the Cross (John 19:19). As He hung in agony, soldiers cast lots for His clothes (John 19:23–24), and people shouted insults at Him (Mark 15:29–30). In the midst of all of this, Jesus looked at His mother from the Cross, spoke to her, loved her, and left her in the care of His friend and apostle John (John 19:26–27).

After this, knowing that all things were now accomplished, Jesus said, “I thirst!” This was the final Scripture to be fulfilled (John 19:28).

As Jesus suffered, many heard Him cry out to His Father, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mark 15:34). And finally, as He gave up His spirit, Jesus said, “It is finished” (John 19:30).

Jesus was physically distressed, no doubt. But when He felt that His Father had forsaken Him, this was a distress that went beyond the physical. What did Jesus mean? What was He feeling? It may have been at this point after suffering so immeasurably, knowing that He would soon die, that He also felt the weight and extent of God’s wrath on Him for sins He did not, nor could He ever, commit!

In this act of bearing God’s wrath upon Himself, Jesus finished the work the Father had sent Him to do;

the work of redemption was now complete. The punishment for sin had been poured out on the perfect Lamb of God. The debt for sin was paid in full for all who would follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the wonder of the gospel! God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. We are justified by His blood. And because Jesus was willing to take the wrath upon Himself, we shall be saved from the wrath due us for our sin (Romans 5:6–9).

In God’s gracious and merciful plan, He made His only Son, Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us. Jesus took the sin, the wrath, and the punishment. In exchange, believers receive the precious righteousness of God that is the very nature of Jesus Christ and the promise of eternal life with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:21).

As we meditate on the truth of Jesus’s death and what it accomplished for sinners who would one day believe, we can see what led the Apostle Paul to declare in his letter to the Romans,

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

“For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?”

“Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?”

For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen (Romans 11:33–36).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

People sometimes ask who killed Jesus. Who was responsible for His death? Was it the Romans, the Jewish leaders, the Jewish people? The answer is yes . . . and more.

Certainly, the Jewish leaders had a hand in Jesus’s Crucifixion. God tells us in His Word that it was the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people who plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him (Matthew 26:3–4). The Jewish leaders demanded that Jesus be killed rather than the criminal Barabbas (Mat-

threw 27:20). The power and reputation of Jesus threatened these Jewish leaders. They felt compelled to be rid of Him and plotted his death (John 11:47–50, 11:53).

The people of Israel also participated in the death of Jesus as they shouted, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” during His trial (Luke 23:21).

However, in the end, it was the Romans, under the authority of the governor, Pontius Pilate, who actually authorized the Crucifixion. Jesus’s death was physically carried out by Roman soldiers, who erected the Cross, drove the nails into His hands and feet, and pierced His side (Matthew 27:27–37).

This corporate responsibility for Jesus’s death is confirmed in Scripture. It was Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel together who cooperated to kill Jesus (Acts 4:27). And this was an unusual conspiracy as these groups were often at odds with one another, but united together to murder the Savior. And let us not forget that we, too, caused the Savior’s death. It was our sin for which He died.

But that is not the only answer to the question of who killed Jesus. As we search God’s Word, we will come to understand that, amazingly, the death of Jesus Christ was ordained and accomplished by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God Himself (Acts 2:23, 4:28).

The prophet Isaiah spoke of Christ’s torture and death nearly 700 years before it occurred. And Isaiah wrote that it pleased the Lord to bruise Him and put Him to grief. God’s plan had always been that His Son’s soul would be an offering for sin (Isaiah 53:10).

In what sense did it please the Lord? God the Father was pleased that His eternal plan of salvation was fulfilled (Ephesians 1:4). He was pleased that the death of his Son would bring eternal life to many (Matthew 1:21). He was pleased to demonstrate His love for sinners through such a magnificent sacrifice (Romans 5:8).

Yes, it ultimately was God Himself who determined, before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8), to send His Son to live a perfect life, to die, and to be raised again from the dead so that sinners could be forgiven. In fact, this would be the ONLY possible way sinners could be reconciled to the holy, perfect, righteous God.

And yet, here lies the paradox—the tension between man’s responsibility and God’s sovereignty. For in spite of God’s pre-determination of Christ’s death, each man will be held responsible for the role he played in completing God’s plan. It was still an act

of “lawless hands” as Peter said (Acts 2:23). And Jesus Himself said He must go as had been determined, but woe to the one who betrayed Him (Luke 22:22).

The death of God the Son—Jesus Christ—on the Cross is undoubtedly the most horrific sin ever committed. And yet in it, we see the absolute sovereignty of God. In spite of the evil perpetrated, God’s infinitely good and eternal plan was perfectly fulfilled. The Cross shows us more clearly than anything else that God’s perfect purposes will be accomplished in spite of, and even through, the evil intentions of sinners (Romans 8:28).

We cannot leave the topic of the Crucifixion—and who was responsible for it—without a careful examination of our own hearts. We who have come to faith in Christ are also guilty of His blood, shed on the Cross for us. He died to pay the penalty for our sins (Romans 5:8, 6:23). Therefore, we should live in way that shows gratitude for what Jesus has done. He has redeemed us by His precious blood (1 Peter 1:18–19). He bore our sins in His own body on the tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds we have been healed (1 Peter 2:24–25).

If you belong to Christ, you may rejoice! For this is an amazing plan of God—that through the perfect life and death of Jesus Christ, He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21). Oh, what a Savior we serve! And what hope we have in Him!

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, you have your love upon us! You became sin so that we sinners could escape the wrath of God we deserve. This plan of redemption was in place from before the creation of the world—and you kept your promise. Your perfect plan wove through thousands of years of history until on the Cross, the promised Savior finished the work you sent Him to do. Jesus, you took the wrath of God I deserve! How can I do anything but humbly worship you with my life in gratitude? Compel my students to see your great love and respond in a similar way. To you be the glory!

Review

All that we have been studying over the past two and a half years is about to reach its climax. The sin that corrupted the originally perfect creation is about to be paid for, and the resolution to the problems it created is about to become certain. While there is much more to securing our salvation than what Jesus did on the Cross, all of those things would fall into place over just a few short days at this crucial moment in history.

We return today to where we left off two weeks ago. Jesus had been trotted through

the six trials before the various Jewish and Gentile rulers, had been scourged by Pilate, mocked and beaten by all, and sentenced to one of the cruelest methods of death ever devised by the hearts of men. But the physical torment Jesus faced was only a part of the agony He endured. While our lesson today deals with a dark day in history, it is also a day on which the seed of the hope of eternal life was planted.



- Write on the board, "What was accomplished on the Cross?"

John 19:16–37

- The abbreviation INRI often seen on crucifixes is shorthand for the Latin inscription, "Iesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum," which Pilate had written as the accusation against Jesus. In Greek, it would be INBI, "Iēsūs ho Nazōraēos ho basileūs tōn Iudaēōn."

Mark 15:25



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

As we read today, we are going to use John's account of the Crucifixion. Remember that there are many more details included in the other Gospel accounts, and we will refer to a few of those cross-references today. Let's read John 19:16–37 together. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? **What did Jesus carry?** *He was carrying His cross. This was likely just the cross beam, called the patibulum, that was carried. We also learn from Matthew 27:31–32 that a man named Simon also helped carry the cross part of the way.*
- ? **Where was He led?** *He was led to the "Place of the Skull" also called Golgotha. In Luke 23:33 it is also referred to as Calvary.*
- ? **Where was this place?** *It was near the city, but outside of the gates and walls of Jerusalem. This fact is also pointed out in Hebrews 13:12 where the connection is made to the sacrifices offered in the Old Testament being burned outside of the camp (Leviticus 4:12).*
- ? **How many others were crucified at the same time?** *There were two others, one on His right and one on His left. We learn from Matthew 27:44 that these two were robbers.*
- ? **At what time did this happen?** *Mark indicates it was at the third hour, or what we would refer to as 9 a.m.*
- ? **What was written on the sign on the Cross?** *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.*

- ? **How many languages was it written in?** *Three: Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.*
- ? **Who had ordered this title?** *Pilate, the governor.*
- ? **What was the purpose of this sign?** *This was the accusation against Jesus that was displayed so that those who saw Him on the Cross would know why He was hanging there. Both Matthew 27:37 and Mark 15:26 identify this as an "accusation." It was likely hung around His neck as He walked from the governor's residence to Golgotha and then nailed to the Cross.*
- ? **How did the Jewish priests respond to the accusation?** *They asked Pilate to change the title to say Jesus had claimed to be the King of the Jews.*
- ? **How did Pilate respond to them?** *He denied their request. Some suggest Pilate was doing this to spite the Jews for their coercion to crucify Jesus.*
- ? **Verses 18 and 23 refer to the soldiers crucifying Jesus without any description. What did this process involve?** *As Thomas alludes to in John 20:25, there were nails driven through the hands and feet of the person who was fixed to a cross beam. It was likely that the hands were nailed to the cross beam, the beam was hoisted into place, and then the feet were nailed to the upright section.*
- ? **How did the soldiers treat the garments of Jesus?** *They divided them among themselves and then cast lots for the tunic.*
- ? **What is significant about the division of the garments?** *It was a fulfillment of a prophecy from Psalm 22:18.*
- ? **Who did Jesus see from the Cross?** *His mother, aunt, and two other Marys along with John, who refers to himself as the disciple Jesus loved.*
- ? **What role did Jesus give to John?** *He gave John the care of His mother, Mary.*
- ? **What happened between noon and 3 p.m. (the sixth and ninth hours)?** *Mark records that there was darkness over the whole land.*
- ? **What did Jesus say when He recognized that He had accomplished His task?** *"I thirst!"*
- ? **What Scripture was fulfilled with this phrase?** *Psalm 22:15 is likely in view here. Remind students to look in the footnotes of their Bibles to identify these references.*
- ? **What were Jesus's final words?** *"It is finished."*
- ? **How long had He been on the Cross?** *Based on Mark's timeline, it had been six hours (from the third hour to the ninth hour).*
- ? **How is His death described?** *John says that "He gave up His spirit."*
- ? **Why did the Jews ask for the legs of those on the crosses to be broken?** *They did not want the bodies there on the Sabbath. Death on a cross typically came by asphyxiation. The victims would need to raise their bodies up to take a breath. With their legs broken, they could not raise their bodies and would die more quickly.*
- ? **Why were Jesus's legs not broken?** *The soldiers determined that He was already dead, so there was no need to break His legs. Also, they were not broken to fulfill the prophecy of Psalm 34:20 described in verse 36.*
- ? **How did the soldiers ensure that Jesus was dead?** *One of them stuck a spear into His side.*

Mark 15:33

- ? **How was His death verified?** *John records that blood and water flowed out of the spear wound. This spear thrust was likely directed at the heart where clear fluid in the chest cavity would have been accumulating and flowed out along with the blood if the heart were pierced.*
- ? **How does John seek to verify Jesus's death?** *He includes a personal testimony that he witnessed these things to affirm that Jesus had truly died on the Cross.*
- ? **What do verses 36 and 37 reveal about God's plan for these events?** *These verses refer to passages that were written hundreds of years before the Crucifixion. So, these things were all in God's plan for the Crucifixion long before it happened. This was all part of His plan.*

Discover the Truth

As Jesus struggled toward Golgotha, the flesh on His back peeled open from the scourging. He stumbled and had to have help from Simon to finish the journey. Once on the hill outside the city, He was stripped naked and laid with His raw back against the crossbeam as nails were driven through His hands. Secured there, the beam was lifted into place and fastened to the upright post to which His feet were then nailed. From that position, every breath was taken in agony as He lifted His body to be able to fill His lungs, His raw flesh scraping the beam with each gasp.

During the six hours that Jesus hung there, He was mocked by those hung with Him and by the Jews who demanded He prove He was the Messiah by freeing Himself. But they didn't get it. Had He come down from the Cross, He would have failed in His mission. He knew that this was the redemptive plan that the Father had prepared before the foundation of the world. Included in that plan were the prophetic words that had to be fulfilled to the letter. While all of this physical suffering was a necessary part, there is another more important part of the work Jesus did on the Cross that we will discuss later.

- ? **What attribute of God is clearly demonstrated in bringing these events to pass according to His plan?** *God's sovereignty is on display as He directed all of these events to happen just as He intended.*

In all of this suffering, Jesus was demonstrating His love for sinners by dying in their place. He had come to seek and save the lost and to die as a ransom for many. Knowing that He had accomplished that goal, He was able to cry out, "Tetelestai!" "It is finished!" He committed His spirit to His Father and gave up His spirit. Jesus chose to die. In His death we find the hope of redemption.

In proclaiming His work was finished, Jesus was acknowledging that His Father was satisfied. In other ancient documents, the word *tetelestai* was used to mark bills for taxes that had been paid in full. And that is exactly what happened on the Cross—the debt of sin had been paid in full. But how did that happen? That's what we want to look at next.



SOVEREIGN

LOVE

READ THE WORD

We know that there was a lot of physical suffering on the Cross, but there was another aspect that we must also consider. We know from Scripture that God's wrath against sin abides on sinners (e.g., Psalm 7:11; John 3:36). Physical pain and death could not atone for this wrath. There was also a spiritual element to the payment Jesus made on the Cross—the wrath of God was poured out on Jesus by the Father. We are going to look at several passages that help us understand this idea. Interestingly, the place this idea is expressed most fully is in Isaiah 53, rather than a New Testament text. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

Isaiah 53:1-12

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? **What do we learn about Jesus in verse 2?** *There was nothing "beautiful" about His appearance that would have attracted people to Him.*
- ? **How did people treat Him according to verse 3?** *He was despised by men and rejected by them.*
- ? **What idea is repeated multiple times in verses 4 through 6?** *Jesus took our sins/sorrows/grief upon Himself. This idea is repeated in parallel form in these three verses.*
- ? **Who was responsible for laying our iniquity (sin) upon Jesus?** *God the Father (the Lord).*
- ? **How did Jesus respond to this treatment according to verse 7?** *He did not open His mouth in His own defense.*
- ? **How was Jesus treated at His death according to verses 8 and 9?** *He was killed with the wicked (the two thieves), but buried in a rich man's tomb (Joseph of Arimathea).*
- ? **Had Jesus done anything to deserve this treatment?** *Verse 9 makes it clear that He had done nothing violent or deceitful.*
- ? **Who was responsible for bruising/crushing Jesus and putting Him to grief?** *God the Father (the Lord).*
- ? **In verse 10, what was made an offering for sin?** *His soul was made an offering for sin.*
- ? **What does verse 11 add about the soul?** *The labor of His soul was seen by the Father.*
- ? **What else do we learn about the work of the soul in verse 12?** *His soul was poured out to death.*
- ? **What did this accomplish according to verse 11?** *Many were justified.*
- ? **What word is used in verse 12 to describe what Jesus did for sinners?** *Jesus made intercession for transgressors.*
- ? **How does this word describe what Jesus did on the Cross?** *He was acting as an intermediary between God and man. Rather than sinners receiving the wrath of God, Jesus took that wrath upon Himself.*

Romans 5:6–11

? **What idea do you see repeated throughout this passage?** *The idea of the Messiah bearing the sins of others (borne our griefs; carried our sorrows; laid on Him the iniquity; bore the sin of many; etc.) is repeated.*

Paul offers us several clear descriptions of what was accomplished on the Cross. Let's look at two passages from Romans and 2 Corinthians. First let's look at Romans 5:6–11. *Have someone read Romans 5:6–11.*

? **What connection does this passage from Romans have to what we just read in Isaiah 53?** *The idea of Jesus dying in the place of sinners is in both passages as well as the idea that it was God's plan to demonstrate His love toward us.*

? **When did Christ die for us?** *While we were still ungodly sinners.*

? **What did His death save us from?** *He saved us from the wrath of God the Father.*

? **What words are used to describe what His death accomplished?** *Justified through His blood; saved from wrath; reconciled through His death; reconciled to God.*

2 Corinthians 5:12–21

Now let's look at 2 Corinthians 5:12–21. *Have someone read 2 Corinthians 5:12–21.*

? **What is the connection between the message Paul was preaching and what Isaiah wrote about?** *Paul is proclaiming the truth that God has reconciled people to Himself through the death of Jesus.*

? **According to verse 21, how was this reconciliation accomplished?** *God the Father made Jesus, who was sinless, to be sin for us. This mirrors the language from Isaiah of being wounded for our transgressions and being bruised for our iniquities.*

? **What exchange is described in that verse?** *Our sin was placed on Christ, and His righteousness was placed on those who are in Christ.*

Discover the Truth

If we were to summarize this chapter in a sentence we might say: God the Father was pleased to pour out His wrath against sinners on His perfect Son who satisfied the wrath of God to justify the sins of many. The perfect, righteous Son of God willingly poured out His soul on the Cross to absorb the wrath of His Father that was poured out on Him so that the plan of redemption could be completed.

Justice was satisfied. Wrath was appeased. Mercy was extended. Love was demonstrated. Redemption was accomplished. Salvation was made available to all who would repent and trust in Jesus's finished work on the Cross.

While they have certain nuances to them, we use words like reconciliation, redemption, pardon, forgiveness, atonement, salvation, ransom, propitiation, and others to describe what was accomplished on the Cross. The essence is summarized in the "Great Exchange" of 2 Corinthians 5:21 where Paul writes, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." The Father saw the labor of the Son and was satisfied (Isaiah 53:11).





A Prophetic Death

MATERIALS

- Student Guides
- A Prophetic Death Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

As we have been reading the accounts of Jesus’s interaction with the disciples on the final night they shared together, we have seen a lot of quotations from the Old Testament. Often, these quotes are framed with statements like, “that the Scripture might be fulfilled” (e.g., John 19:24).

I trust that you have heard that the Crucifixion of Jesus fulfilled many different prophecies. You will find an activity entitled “A Prophetic Death” in your Student Guide. For each of the Old Testament prophecies, give a short description of how they were fulfilled, and try to identify a passage of the New Testament that describes the fulfillment.

Have the students work on the activity in groups.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Let’s talk about what you concluded. *Use the A Prophetic Death answer key to discuss the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus’s Crucifixion.*



Truth Be Told Review Game (Optional)

MATERIALS

- Truth Be Told Game Board
- Truth Be Told Question Cards
- Truth Be Told Question Answer Key
- Truth Be Told Number Cards (or game spinner or dice)
- Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team
- Poster putty

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide your class into teams. Teams will take turns drawing a Truth Be Told Question Card. Team members will take turns answering the questions. They will quickly determine an answer and give it. If they are correct, they will draw a Truth Be Told Number Card and move that number of spaces on the game board. As play proceeds, follow the directions on the game board. Alternate between teams as long as time permits.

We are going to review now by playing “Truth Be Told.” I’ll put you into teams.

Teams will take turns picking a question card and answering the question. If the answer is correct, you will draw a number card and move your game piece that many spaces. All directions on the board must be followed. Return the used cards to the stacks. *Answers to the questions are provided on the Truth Be Told Question Answer Key on the Resource DVD-ROM.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

The Bible tells us how Jesus—in an amazing act of love—suffered and died on the Cross. All of this was God’s plan from the beginning. God had promised to send a Savior, so sinful people could be reconciled to the perfect, holy God. And Jesus perfectly fulfilled that plan. He finished His work on earth and made a way for sinners to have eternal life.





Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

As Jesus hung on the Cross, He faced an amazing amount of physical torment. Movies have been made that attempt to depict this reality, but these movies cannot capture the real nature of what was happening at the level of the soul. Jesus had not known a moment of displeasure from His Father. During eternity past, the Father and Son had lived in perfect fellowship with the Spirit, and Jesus had never sinned while on the earth to break that fellowship or face any displeasure. But the perfect, sinless Lamb of God faced the wrath of sin as it was poured out on Him while He hung there.

There is no wonder He cried out in anguish, feeling forsaken by His Father as He faced the wrath of mankind's sin. The cup of wrath was held to the lips of the Son by the Father's hand, and He drank it to the dregs (Psalm 75:8; Matthew 26:39, 26:42).

When He knew that His work of enduring the Father's wrath was completed, Jesus cried out, "It is finished!" And it was. The debt owed for sin from the Fall of Adam to the Consummation was paid for on the Cross. And unlike the sacrifices that had to be continually offered by the priests to cover sin, the blood of Jesus was a perfect sacrifice that would never need to be repeated (Hebrews 9:11–15).

For those who believe in this finished work of Jesus on the Cross and repent of their sins, eternal life in the presence of God is their future. For all of those who do not acknowledge these truths, the penalty of God's wrath abides on them (John 3:36), and their future is one of suffering for their sins in hell (Romans 2:5–11).

But we also need to remember that Jesus's death was not the end—His Resurrection is also an important part of our redemption and justification. But, we will have to save that for another lesson.

► There are different views within orthodox Christianity on the extent of the application of the atonement. You may wish to teach your church's view as you wrap up this lesson and work it into the application questions.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

- ? Knowing that all of the suffering Jesus faced on the Cross was part of God's plan before time began and was prophesied throughout the Old Testament, has there ever been a more loving act done for you? *Without question, there is no act more loving than Jesus dying on the Cross for our sins. Jesus even stated in John 15:13 that laying down one's life is the supreme demonstration of love.*
- ? How could you incorporate the love demonstrated by Jesus on the Cross to encourage believers and call unbelievers to trust in Christ? *1 John 3:16 and*

4:10–11 use the death of Jesus to encourage us to do the same for our brothers and sisters in Christ. For unbelievers, we can use this idea to repent and turn to Christ, knowing that it is the goodness and kindness of God that leads people to repentance (Romans 2:4; Titus 3:4–7).

? **It seems almost blasphemous, but Scripture says that it pleased the Father to crush His Son (Isaiah 53:10; Acts 2:22–24). How can we explain this in a way that is consistent with God’s character?**

We must remember that God demonstrates all of His attributes perfectly and completely. He is not 42% love, 18% mercy, etc. God had planned to bring the redemption of sinners as Jesus paid for those sins on the Cross. This plan was in place before He created, so it was His good pleasure to bring about His own plan that He would be glorified in all of it. God’s love, mercy, grace, holiness—all of His character—was working together to glorify Himself in the death of Jesus and the redemption of sinners.

? **While God was ultimately in control over the death of Jesus, in what way are you and I responsible for the death of Jesus?**

It is our sin that was laid upon Him on the Cross and our need for forgiveness that made His death necessary. As we think about the work of Jesus on the Cross, we cannot forget that it was our sin that He was bearing, and the wrath of God that we deserve was poured out on Him.

? **If Jesus died on the Cross, and His work is finished, what does this mean about our own efforts to cover our sins?**

Nothing that we can do can cover the smallest part of our sin. It is only through Christ’s death, and subsequent Resurrection, that we have redemption (Ephesians 2:8–10).

? **The prophecies of Jesus’s Crucifixion are not something that can be easily ignored. How can these prophecies be used with believers and unbelievers?**

Believers should find great comfort in knowing that these prophecies demonstrate the sovereignty of God throughout all of history and the truthfulness of Scripture. For unbelievers, these can be used to point them to the authority of the Old Testament in predicting the future. While we should not expect people to turn from their sins upon hearing these predictions, they may be part of a conversation that includes proclaiming the gospel and trusting that the Holy Spirit will bring conviction of sins.



MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 28:18–20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for sending His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- Praise God for choosing to redeem a people for His own glory.
- Ask God for a realization of our sinfulness and a heart of repentance in light of the Cross.

