



WEEK 4

JESUS.

CRUCIFIED SAVIOR.



WEEK 4

GROUP DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION:

To open your group time, read the following introduction aloud.

The fact that Jesus of Nazareth was a historical person who lived and died is a universal truth. In fact, very little controversy exists about the details of His death. What is disputed is its meaning. At least four interpretations are generally offered as to the meaning of Christ's death. The first is that Jesus was a revolutionary who upset the status quo of the Jewish and Roman leadership and therefore was a martyr for a cause. He was a victim of corruption and deceit. A good man who died for speaking against power and religious hypocrisy.

The second interpretation of Jesus' death is known as the "Example Theory". This view looks at Jesus' death as a demonstration by God the Father of how much He loves humankind. Jesus' death is an example of the lengths God will go to show His creation the love He has for them. This is a religious interpretation that exclusively sees the cross as a message of love.

The third interpretation of Jesus' death is known as the "Moral Influence Theory". This view is also a religious interpretation of Christ's death. In this view the example of Jesus' death is so compelling that people who look to Jesus are moved by His example to personal acts of sacrifice and service. The death of Jesus has a moral influence on people that motivates their behavior to love and serve God.

The fourth view of Jesus's death is known as the "Substitutionary Atonement Theory". This view interprets Christ's death as a payment for sin. Jesus died as our substitute and His sacrifice made atonement for the sins of humanity. The death of Jesus is seen as both an example of God's love and also of God's justice. Jesus' death is seen as a just payment for sin and as a demonstration of love for the sinner.

While each of these views has merits and certain things they share in common, a comprehensive study of the Bible conclusively supports the fourth view. Jesus's death was a substitutionary sacrifice that made atonement for all of our sins.

VIDEO SEGMENT

Now, as a group, turn on your TV or Laptop and watch the video for Week 3,
JESUS THE BONDAGE BREAKER

2 ways to watch:

1. Go to crosslinechurch.com/mml
2. Go to vimeo.com/album/5382165

After Watching, take a moment to initially respond with your thoughts about the video.

READ:

Mark 15:33-39

At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock.³⁴ Then at three o'clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

³⁵ Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah.³⁶ One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, holding it up to him on a reed stick so he could drink. "Wait!" he said. "Let's see whether Elijah comes to take him down!"

³⁷ Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last.

³⁸And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

³⁹ When the Roman officer who stood facing him saw how he had died, he exclaimed, "This man truly was the Son of God!"

Heb. 10:11-18

Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. ¹² But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. ¹³ There he waits until his enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet. ¹⁴ For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy.

¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also testifies that this is so. For he says,

¹⁶ "This is the new covenant I will make
with my people on that day, says the LORD:
I will put my laws in their hearts,
and I will write them on their minds."

¹⁷ Then he says,

"I will never again remember
their sins and lawless deeds."

¹⁸ And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices.

Rom. 3:23-25a

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. ²⁴ Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. ²⁵ For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Answer the following questions together in your group time.

1. What do you think was the response of Jesus' disciples (and others who believed Jesus was the messiah) when they saw him die?
2. The "curtain" that is torn in Mark 15 refers to a thick curtain in the temple that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies—a room where only the High Priest could enter once a year to convene with the presence of God. What do you think was the significance of the curtain being torn upon Jesus' death?
3. Jesus' crucifixion is familiar to most people to some degree, How have you personally reacted to it in the past?
4. Why do you think Jesus had to die?
5. How does being "made right with God" change a person's life?

Now take some time to talk about any additional question or thoughts that came from the video, the reading, or the discussion

APPLY POINT

If Jesus' death makes you right in the sight of God, you are set free from the heavy burden of shame—think about what that can mean for your daily life.

GOING DEEPER

To have a deeper group or personal study around Jesus as the Crucified Savior, go to the "Going Deeper" section of week 4 starting on page 111.

PRAYER REQUESTS



NOTES



WEEK 3

DAILY READINGS

DAY 16: ONLY A DEAD FISH GOES WITH THE FLOW

Jordan Gash

Do you ever have those sweet memories that make you stop, smile and affectionately let out a good long “mmmmmm” sigh. One of those memories for me was floating down the Rogue River on trips up to Oregon as a kid. I can recall jumping in an inner tube at the headwaters, throwing on my sunglasses, laying back and enjoying the ride. There were rapids here and there, but really they were bumps that just got you wet a bit and made it fun. The flow was nothing crazy...or so I mistakenly thought. I remember a moment where I was chillin in my inner tube, kicking back and all of a sudden I saw my exit point go by me in the corner of my eye. Yikes! Time to go! As soon as I hit the water I was shocked by how fast I was moving downstream. This wasn't a “casually swim to the exit” type of scenario. This was a “furiously and unrelentingly swim or you aren't making it bro” type of scenario. Luckily I made it, but collapsed from exhaustion when I hit the shore.

Here is the deal, friends: you can choose to casually go along with the world, it's indulgent pleasures, and it's self-gratifying nature, but it's taking you somewhere I can guarantee you don't want to go. It's only when we forsake our choice to believe what the world says is true and start putting our faith in what God says is true that we realize the severity of the world's opposition against believers in Christ. Choosing to stand for Christ and His Kingdom will never be easy in our world. Though, the choice to pursue Christ with all your heart, mind and strength will achieve for you a life of fullness that is far better and eternal. The scene of Jesus' arrest, trial and crucifixion noticeably contrasts our Savior's choices to stand up for God's will against everyone else's that gave in to their own selfishness and the world's desires.

“Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate, knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead. “What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them. Crucify him!” They shouted. “Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!” Wanting to satisfy the

crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. (Mark 15:9-15)

I always am heartbroken when I read this story. For Jesus, but also for the chief priests, the crowds and Pilate. It reminds me of a statement that I read on the wall of a remote housing facility in Malawi, Africa, "Only a dead fish goes with the flow." Truth! Those that move along with the world and their flesh are perishing. Those who want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection (Phil. 3:10) furiously and unrelentingly swim toward Him against the currents. You will have many opportunities today to go with the flow of this world and I urge you to not give in, but choose life. May God's strength and peace be upon you.

PRAYER

Beautiful Savior, you are the ultimate example of courage and faithfulness amidst a world of opposition. Help me to drink deep of that courage in the Holy Spirit.

I want to know you more, even if it means challenge and suffering. I want the life that is truly life. Your life. That which defeated death on a cross.

I submit my will to you. Amen

DAY 17: OUR AMAZING KING!

Grant Gunther

“Screech!” That was the sound of the bus coming to stop behind me as I walked to my house, because that driver had just found out I had broken a window in the back. As someone who played offensive line in football, in that moment I probably had running back or wide receiver speed as I ran home to try and avoid getting caught. I was terrified of getting caught for breaking the window, because I knew I had done something wrong. There was not an ounce of courage in me to face the driver and own what I had done.

As we come to Jesus dying on the cross we see the exact opposite attitude. Whereas I was terrified to stand under the scrutiny of the authority of the bus driver because of what I had done, the crowd surrounding Jesus throughout his crucifixion was brazen in their defiant attitude toward him. Three times in Mark 15:16-32 Jesus is referred to as King (v18, 26, 32) giving him all authority, and still the people he came to save attack, insult, and eventually crucify him despite his identity as King:

They kept hitting Him on the head with a reed and spitting on Him. Getting down on their knees, they were paying Him homage. When they had mocked Him, they stripped Him of the purple robe, put His clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him. (Mark 15:19-20)

Yet, this is what makes Jesus so amazing. Despite the defiance of the people towards him as King, that was precisely why he was on the cross in the first place. Jesus died for us, in spite of our brazen actions and attitude of rebellion against his authority, in order that the sin of those actions and attitude might be forgiven.

PRAYER

*Lord Jesus you are so good towards me!
Despite my rebellious actions against You, and defiant attitude towards
You, that was precisely why You went to the cross for me.
Would my heart always be broken over Your sacrifice for me, that I
would spend the rest of my days in submission and service to my Great
King!
Amen.*

P.S. I was totally caught for breaking that window, haha.

DAY 18: LOVE'S BOTTOM LINE

Kenny Luck

At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. Then at three o'clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. When the Roman officer who stood facing him saw how he had died, he exclaimed, "This man truly was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:33-34, 37-39 NLT)

Unchallengeable, bottom-line love requires sacrifice.

The kind of love that carries the most weight is not the romantic kind filling our music downloads, the feel-good kind driving story lines in romantic movies, or the lust driven kind fueling the sex and porn industry. The most authentic kind of love is sacrificial love. That's Jesus - the man who volunteered to be crucified for you. It's that simple and that profound. The action itself does all the talking.

Jesus prophetically explained love's "bottom line" to His disciples when He said: "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." No mystery and guesswork here. Jesus wants all His followers to know this about Him: "I am willing to set my own comfort and well-being aside to secure your well-being and comfort. Remember, I am your crucified Savior and I did the one thing I could do to help you do what only you can do - trust me with your life."

The Bible says that Jesus' crucifixion is the believer's motivation. Practically, that means a Christ-follower doesn't have to pump themselves up, manufacture a feeling, or isolate themselves away to refuel their commitment to Jesus. We simply need to pause, remember, and take in the process of crucifixion one injustice, one lash, and one nail at a time and we will ground ourselves once again. A bloody Savior and lazy believer is an oxymoron and incongruent to the sacrifice. A believer honors the sacrifice.

"And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." 2 Corinthians 5:15

Where do you draw your energy to love God and find your motivation? Slow down. Remember. Reflect. Refuel. Right now.

PRAYER

Jesus today I want to honor Your sacrifice by recognizing it. Thank You for facing and then choosing crucifixion for me. I want to honor Your choice to die with a decision of my own right now. You gave all of yourself for me and right now I give all of myself back to You - all that I am, all that I hope, and all that I have I place under Your loving control. I release myself fully to You and Your plan for my life no matter what the cost. Let the rest of my life be a simple thank you for what You have done for me. In Your wonderful name I pray. Amen.

DAY 19: PAID IN FULL

Taylor Jones

An admittedly lame joke leaves my mouth about half of the time I open mail that I know will be a bill, “They only love me for my money.” Deep down, I know it’s not that funny and I’m well aware that the light chuckle that my wife gives me comes from the goodness of her heart rather than from my comedic chops. At this point, it just falls out of my mouth by force of habit—maybe I’ve got a problem. A couple of years ago, I received a pleasant surprise in a letter that I expected to be a bill. I picked up the envelope, saw that it was from the company to which I made my car payment, and muttered my usual banal quip, “They only love me for my money.” Only this time was different. Rather than a bill to be paid, enclosed in the envelope was a check made out to me in the amount of my usual monthly payment. I had recently finished paying off my car and, distracted by a particularly busy season of life, I had forgotten to cancel the automatic payments I was making to the car company. I was unnecessarily paying for something that was already paid in full.

There’s a parallel here to the way that many of us relate to God. When we become aware of our sin we often have an instinct to punish ourselves, to pay. Or maybe we think, “I just need to let God cool off for a little while before I come to Him.” So we get down on ourselves. Or we avoid God until our feeling of guilt subsides. Or we try (in vain) to make up for our sin by doing something we consider “above and beyond.” But the good news of Jesus tells a different story.

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,” then he adds, “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.” Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.” (Heb. 10:11-17)

When Jesus offered himself as an all-sufficient sacrifice for sin—the righteous for the unrighteous, the creator for the created—every sin of those who would trust in Him was paid for in full. The Holy Spirit transforms us and the right response for forgiveness is to turn away from sinful patterns, but there is no more payment to be made, no penance to complete. In the midst of whatever sin you become aware of in your life, praise God that it is paid in full. Praise God that he offers grace, upon grace, upon grace, upon grace. And let that grace transform you from the inside out.

PRAYER

Lord, thank you that all of my sin—past, present and future—was paid in full on the cross of Jesus Christ. Thank you that you remember my sin no more.

Help me to so deeply understand your forgiveness that it transforms me into the kind of person that you created me to be. In the name of Jesus, my all-sufficient sacrifice, amen!

DAY 20: WE ARE THE WORST!

Sarah Aungst

It had been a long day of errands. My sister, mom, and I had a laundry list of places to go and things to pick up before my brother's soccer game. By the time we had reached "Michael's Art Supplies, Crafts, & Framing" to grab supplies for my mom's 2nd grade class I was BORED. It was at that moment that I saw a glorious toy on the ground, a plastic grape that had fallen off one of the fake plants displayed on the next aisle over. It was squishy and bouncy and fun. Obviously I asked my mom if I could keep it and obviously she denied my ridiculous request. Disclaimer: It is at this point in the story that I must clarify that I had many wonderful toys at home and a very happy childhood. I was just SO BORED that a fake grape was moderately entertaining. Also, this was pre-cell phones and modern parent distraction tools.

Back to the story! After she denied my request I pretended to put it back but then quickly snuck it into my pant pocket! Bam, in one instant I became a shoplifter! My innocent, sweet, naïve self became a lying, stealing felon in an instant!

I know this is a silly story but it speaks to something so true about all of us; we are the worst! We are all messed up! It is easy for us to lie, steal, and cheat because that is our truest nature! In fact, Paul says just that to the Romans:

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God presented Him as a propitiation through faith in His blood, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His restraint God passed over the sins previously committed. God presented Him to demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be righteous and declare righteous the one who has faith in Jesus. (Romans 3:23-26)

We sin and we definitely fall WAY short of the glory of God. This is who we are and our very nature, our sinfulness, deserved death. Good thing Paul kept going. He goes on to mention

the redemption in Jesus. God's saving righteousness has been manifested now in the death of Jesus Christ, so that God's justice and love are reconciled in the cross. Wherever you are at today, remember that we are the worst and that Jesus is righteous and the only righteousness in us.

PRAYER

God, you are so good!

You love us even though we do not deserve it! We fall short every day and chose our selfish desires over you and yet you still love us. Thank you for sending Jesus to pay for our sins. I pray that the world may see His righteousness through me.

Amen.



WEEK 4

GOING DEEPER

FOR DEEPER GROUP OR PERSONAL STUDY, GO THROUGH PASTOR JP'S STUDY OUTLINE:

Jesus the Crucified Savior

As we get to know the real Jesus, few aspects of the Gospel are as doctrinally important as Jesus' crucifixion.

Look at it

Read the following passage:

Mark 15:9-39

"Would you like me to release to you this 'King of the Jews'?" Pilate asked. ¹⁰ (For he realized by now that the leading priests had arrested Jesus out of envy.) ¹¹ But at this point the leading priests stirred up the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus. ¹² Pilate asked them, "Then what should I do with this man you call the king of the Jews?"

¹³ They shouted back, "Crucify him!"

¹⁴ "Why?" Pilate demanded. "What crime has he committed?" But the mob roared even louder, "Crucify him!"

¹⁵ So to pacify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

¹⁶ The soldiers took Jesus into the courtyard of the governor's headquarters (called the Praetorium) and called out the entire regiment. ¹⁷ They dressed him in a purple robe, and they wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head. ¹⁸ Then they saluted him and taunted, "Hail! King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ And they struck him on the head with a reed stick, spit on him, and dropped to their knees in mock worship. ²⁰ When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.

²¹ A passerby named Simon, who was from Cyrene, was

coming in from the countryside just then, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. (Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.)²² And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means "Place of the Skull").²³ They offered him wine drugged with myrrh, but he refused it.

²⁴ Then the soldiers nailed him to the cross. They divided his clothes and threw dice to decide who would get each piece.

²⁵ It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him.

²⁶ A sign announced the charge against him. It read, "The King of the Jews."²⁷ Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.

²⁹ The people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. "Ha! Look at you now!" they yelled at him. "You said you were going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days."³⁰ Well then, save yourself and come down from the cross!"

³¹ The leading priests and teachers of religious law also mocked Jesus. "He saved others," they scoffed, "but he can't save himself!"³² Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down from the cross so we can see it and believe him!" Even the men who were crucified with Jesus ridiculed him.

³³ At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock.³⁴ Then at three o'clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

³⁵ Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah.³⁶ One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, holding it up to him on a reed stick so he could drink. "Wait!" he said. "Let's see whether Elijah comes to take him down!"

³⁷ Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last.

³⁸ And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

³⁹ When the Roman officer who stood facing him saw how he had died, he exclaimed, "This man truly was the Son of God!"

³ But instead, those sacrifices actually reminded them of their sins year after year. ⁴ For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ⁵ That is why, when Christ came into the world, he said to God,
"You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings.
But you have given me a body to offer.

⁶ You were not pleased with burnt offerings
or other offerings for sin.

⁷ Then I said, 'Look, I have come to do your will, O God—
as is written about me in the Scriptures.'"

⁸ First, Christ said, "You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings or burnt offerings or other offerings for sin, nor were you pleased with them" (though they are required by the law of Moses). ⁹ Then he said, "Look, I have come to do your will." He cancels the first covenant in order to put the second into effect. ¹⁰ For God's will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.

¹¹ Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. ¹² But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. ¹³ There he waits until his enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet. ¹⁴ For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy.

¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also testifies that this is so. For he says,

¹⁶ "This is the new covenant I will make
with my people on that day, says the LORD:
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