

Leaders' Guide, BS 4: The Cross: A Demonstrated Love

Goal: That the student would understand the reality of Christ dying on the cross in the place of the sinner.

Scripture: Romans 5:6-11

Leaders: You may or may not want to read this quote. It does a great job of summing up the point of this study. It may be better to start with the general questions and return to this quote some time during your discussion. Use your discretion.

“We have located the problem of forgiveness in the gravity of sin and the majesty of God, that is, in the realities of who we are and who he is. How can the holy love of God come to terms with the unholy lovelessness of man? What would happen if they were to come into collision with each other? How then could God express simultaneously his holiness in judgment and his love in pardon? Only by providing a divine substitute for the sinner, so that the substitute would receive the judgment and the sinner the pardon. We sinners still, of course, have to suffer some of the personal, psychological and social consequences of our sins, but the penal consequence, the deserved penalty of alienation from God, has been borne by Another in our place, so that we may be spared from it.”

—John R. W. Stott, *The Cross of Christ*

Getting to know you

Hook:

*Leaders: Everyone should be able to answer these questions, but you may need to ask them in different ways to draw people out. Let this discussion go on long enough that you have set a good tone to talk about the demonstrated love of God through Christ. **If there are still a lot of new people you may want a fun ice breaker.***

- ☐ What is the most amazing, loving thing anyone has ever done for you?
- ☐ How do you show your friends and family that you care?

Vision (use own words...)

One of the main goals of this group is to know the real Jesus of the Bible. We believe that Jesus is God, and that He came down to earth as a man and lived a sinless life. We also believe that He died and rose from the dead. **Why do you think that Jesus did this? Why would He leave heaven to come to earth and die on a cross?**

Bible Discussion

Book:

Throughout His life Jesus told His followers why He came to earth as a man.

Leaders: This section is an overview of what the Bible teaches on Christ's purpose in death. It would be good to have different people in the room look up the passages and read them out loud. This is not the main portion of Scripture, but it will be a useful tool to set the stage and provide background to the topic as a whole.

Jesus' Stated Purpose

- ☐ Matthew 20:28
- ☐ Luke 19:10
- ☐ John 3:16-17
- ☐ John 10:10
- ☐ John 12:44-46

What another Biblical author said about the purpose of Jesus

- ☐ 1 Timothy 1:15
- ☐ 1 Timothy 2:3-6

A Closer Look

Read Romans 5:6-11

Leaders: After you read the text, make sure you say something about the context of the passage. The author, Paul, is making a legal argument about the justification of sins through the death of Jesus Christ. Paul has already established the need of the sinner (as we hopefully saw last week) and is now explaining the legal solution.

Look:

Leaders: These questions are suggestions. Add and subtract as necessary.

Observation: What do I see? (Context is key).

Let these questions get you started, but try to ask even more questions to observe the passage.

- ☐ What are the key words of the passage?
- ☐ What do we learn about man (us)?
- ☐ What do we learn about Jesus?
- ☐ What do we learn about God?
- ☐ What point is the author trying to make?

Interpretation: What does this passage mean?

- ☐ What do you believe is the main meaning the author is trying to convey in this passage?

- ☐ What is the state of man as Christ goes to the cross?
- ☐ What does God demonstrate to us?
- ☐ What do you think the term “justified” means?
- ☐ What do you think the term “reconciliation” means?

Took:

Application: What does this mean for me?

- ☐ What does this tell you about the love of God?
- ☐ Do you believe that this act of Christ could have been performed for you?
- ☐ Is it hard for you to allow anyone, especially Christ, be a substitution for you?
- ☐ What are some ways that you try to earn your salvation?
- ☐ What keeps you from accepting His sacrifice?
- ☐ What are some ideas or questions that you still have surrounding the person or actions of Jesus?

Close in prayer. Have a few people pray for one another.

Vision

We want to grow closer as a group outside of study as well. This Friday we will be having a Barn Dance... Invite to the dance. If there is no dance, this would be a great time to plan your own party with the other small group in your dorm.

Note to the leaders: Next week we will be moving on to what is true of us as followers of Jesus. If there are a lot of questions about Jesus being God or the validity of the resurrection you may want to cover that next week. If there are just a few questions, you could probably handle it individually. There are a couple of Bible Studies on the website that can help you with this.