



Do you have any questions from last week?

Recap

In Week 1, as we explored JESUS' LIFE, we saw...

- The three main sources of information about Jesus.
- The authority of Jesus demonstrated in the way that he called people to follow him, taught, forgave, healed, and raised people from the dead.

Last week, as we explored JESUS' MESSAGE, we saw that...

- Jesus came to proclaim 'Good News' that God's Kingdom was bursting into the world through him, the long-awaited King.
- That everyone is invited to become a member of God's Kingdom by turning back to God.

Was this a Surprise?

**Why do you think the cross is a key symbol of Christianity?
Do you find this strange or odd?**

Whilst the cross is one of the key symbols of Christianity, Jesus' death on the cross was **not** expected by his disciples. However, whilst a surprise to others, Jesus knew that his death was part of his purpose in coming into the world. In fact, on many occasions, Jesus warned the disciples of the fate which he willingly faced. Jesus not only understood his death as necessary, but also that his death would not be the end.



Read Mark 8:31-33



Read Mark 9:32-37



Read Mark 10:32-40

How do the disciples respond to Jesus' foretelling that he will die? Why do you think they found this so hard to understand and believe?

As you look through Mark's Gospel, what (approximate!) percentage of it is concerned with the events leading up to, or surrounding Jesus' death?

What does this indicate about how significantly Mark understood Jesus' death to be?

The Problem of Sin

The Pervasiveness of Sin

Ever since the fall, the worldview of the Bible understands that the problem of sin is in fact a problem for everyone. This is not simply a 'negative' view of humanity, but a unifying truth and honest reflection that each of us is imperfect.



Read Mark 7:20-23

By saying that 'sin' is not just the things that we do wrong, but a deeply personal and powerful problem in our hearts, what does this mean for us?

For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)

**Who do you think is the 'best' person who has ever lived?
Who do you think is the 'worst' person who has ever lived?
Where would you place yourself on the scale?**

If that's how humanity rates, what is God's standard?

The Effect of Sin

Sin fractures our relationships with the world, other people, and with God. Sin also causes damage to ourselves. Sin means that we fall short from loving God with all of our heart, mind, and strength.

What are the consequences of sin that we see in relationships with other people? How about in the world?

Jesus warned people that such sin has a dangerous effect not only because it impedes our relationship with God, but also because in order for there to be justice, sin has a penalty.

Paul summarises it in one of his letters:

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

The Solution of Jesus' Death

Jesus Came to Bring Forgiveness

The Good News is that part of Jesus' purpose was to call sinners and to open up a way for forgiveness to be made possible! God did not simply see our sin and leave us to our own devices, but sent his son in order that we may be set free and forgiven.



Read Mark 2:1-12

What had the men hoped to receive from Jesus?

How did Jesus actually address the crippled man's even greater need?

Jesus Makes this Possible through His Death



Read Mark 10:41-45

What do you think is meant by Jesus giving his 'life as a ransom for many'?

Jesus' death shows us that we are phenomenally loved by God, that a way for relationship with God has been opened, that the penalty for sin has been paid, that we are free from the power of sin and the stranglehold it has on us.

A Case Study: The Temple Curtain



Read Mark 15:25-38

- 1. What stands out for you in this account?**
- 2. What do you think is signified by the darkness?**
- 3. What is the significance of Jesus' cry?**
- 4. What did the curtain signify? What does its tearing show us has now been achieved through Jesus' death?**

Next Steps this Week



Read Mark Chapter 11-16

As you read these chapters, note anything that **doesn't make sense**, anything that **surprises** you, or any **questions** that you think of.

Other Helpful Resources

The Cross of Christ (by John Stott)

This classic book by John Stott explains the significance of Jesus' death and what it means to follow a crucified and risen King.

Why did Jesus have to die? (by Marcus Nodder)

This short guide explores this question along with other related questions about the cross of Christ and its meaning for us today. It's part of a broader series entitled, "Questions Christian Ask".

Video on 'Sacrifice and Atonement' (by the Bible Project)

The Bible Project produces helpful short videos on a range of topics and the Bible. This video provides an excellent overview of how God's mission seeks to remove all evil and injustice.