

## Why did Jesus die? - (Alpha 3) – Sunday 22 January 2017

### Notes for Home Groups

Read Isaiah 53: 1-6

Why did Jesus die? Answer, because he loves us, he died that we could fully live; he died to save us.

In order then for Jesus death to have any meaning and relevance for us personally, we need to understand and acknowledge that we, like everyone else, need 'saving'.

1. When we compare our lives with say a murderer or armed robber we might think we compare favourably, so these other folk need saving, but we are doing alright.

(a) Do you think this comparison is reasonable? What do you think Jesus takes into account should he make such a comparison?

(b) Are honesty and integrity characteristics that can be measured in absolute terms? Can someone be 'mainly honest'? What characteristics or behaviours are there that can be socially acceptable yet may not be exactly honest?

2. Read Romans 3: 19-25

Verse 23, 'for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God'. Most of us are a mixture of both good and bad characteristics and behaviours, and just about all we do and say has consequences; so what are the consequences for our bad stuff?

(a) The consequences for our self-esteem?

(b) The consequences for our relationship with God?

(c) How hard is it to stop those things we do or say which we know 'fall short'?

3. Read Ephesians 2: 1-10

God is completely just, so there is a penalty to be paid for every wrong doing. If this was not so, then God would not be just. But God so loves us that he wants to offer to pay the penalty himself for our wrong doing, leaving us free to live life in all its fullness. The execution of Jesus is the penalty God paid (in advance) for all our wrong doing. The penalty has been paid in full, and the release from personally paying the due penalty is a free gift with love from God, offered to all who will commit themselves in faith to Jesus Christ.

(a) How do you feel about this 'free gift with love? How are you aware of, how do you feel this love God has for you?

(b) Have you ever tried to explain these feelings/love to a non-Christian searcher? If you have then what did you say; if not, then what would you say?

4. Accepting that we need/needed to be saved, and that Jesus died to save us, has consequences for how we live our lives. Our wrong doing may have worldly consequences but the guilt has been removed by Jesus – this is true freedom.

(a) What do you think God wants us to do in this 'freedom'?

(b) Read 1 Peter 2: 9-17

Prayer

We thank you Lord, for your transforming grace at work in the world.

Even in the darkness of what remains to be done, your reign already brings truth, kindness and healing.

We thank you for martyrs, missionaries, pastors and teachers, saints of prayer and action, good Christian men and women in high places and ordinary jobs who fly heaven's flag on earth.

Lamb who died, Christ our King, we praise you.

*(Jamie Wallace)*