

Teach: Jesus & the Cross

Intro

Our theme this year is GO FIRST! Last year we learned how to REACH the lost, the broken and the hurting. This year we will build upon that foundation to become people of great faith and boldness. In order to learn how to GO FIRST we must first study the greatest One of them all: Jesus Christ.

KEY THEME VERSE: **Matthew 28:19**, *“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...”*

Jesus knew that the cross was before Him. He chose to GO FIRST and follow the plan and purpose of God. Jesus came with one purpose: to die on the cross for our sins so that we may be forgiven and restored to relationship with Him.

We need to follow His footsteps and GO FIRST!

1. The Purpose of the Cross

The cross and the victory from sin found through Jesus' death and resurrection are the most important part of who we are as Christians. Without the redeeming work of the cross we would be lost because Adam and Eve fell to sin and were separated from their relationship with God. Sin had now entered into humanity and separated us from God. Jesus came to pay the penalty for our sin because we couldn't do so ourselves,

Jesus knew that we could not be redeemed without His blood being shed in our place.

Isaiah 64:6b *“And all our righteousneses are like filthy rags...”*

- The imagery speaks of our “righteous acts” as being seen by God as repugnant as a soiled feminine hygiene product.
- With the fall of Adam, sin entered into the world and separated us from God. Because He is perfect and cannot be in a relationship with sin. It's like oil and water: the two cannot mix.

- Without Jesus dying on the cross we were condemned to death as we could not achieve righteousness in any way.

2. The Purpose of Jesus

John 12:23-27, But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. **24** Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. **25** He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. **26** If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. **27** “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? **But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28** Father, glorify Your name.”

Those who GO FIRST must be willing to pay a steep price. For Jesus, He understood that price to be the cost of His life. He saw that His sacrifice would produce “much gain” by this He is saying that His life was worth it so that there could be a great harvest of saved souls. That is you and me! The sacrifice was worth it to Jesus because it brought you and me back to relationship with Him! His GOING first to the cross brought glory to God’s Name. When we are obedient to God, we bring glory to God’s name.

3. The Road to the Cross

Leader’s note: Please spend time reading the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection in the meeting. Have each person read a verse aloud until you have finished the story. End in thanksgiving and worship for what Jesus has done.

Mark 15:21-47,

Mark 16

Prayer

- Pray for the release of Jesus’ great love into each and every heart, mind, and body.
- Pray for deliverance and healing.
- Let the touch of Jesus minister to all.
- Pray for the upcoming March of Hope, Good Friday Service, Reach Day, and Resurrection Sunday.

Action

- This week, look for opportunities to GO and touch people with the love of Jesus.
- On Wednesday 5 April we will have our March of Hope.
- On Saturday 15 April we will have our Reach Day: Street Evangelism in all our campuses.