

Week 6 – Cross

Up to this point, we have talked about the history of the world and people. We've heard how God **created** the world and made everything good, but sin came and **corrupted** the world and kept man from having a relationship with God. Sin continued to spread until God sent a **catastrophic** flood on the earth to punish all living things, leaving only Noah and his family. God commanded the people to fill the earth, but refused, so God **confused** their languages causing them to spread out to take care of the earth.

After all of that, a long time passed until our next **C**-event. There were many prophecies and promises of the coming **Christ** who would come to defeat sin and redeem the relationship that God wanted to have with people. About 2,000 years ago, an angel was sent to a woman named Mary saying that the baby she would have was the promised Christ who would defeat sin and be called the Son of God.

When we were born, we inherited from our parents what is known as a sin-nature. That means that we have the instinct to sin. We don't have to be taught to do bad things because we are automatically sinful and selfish. We are born thinking that we are the most important thing in the world instead of God. We are enemies of God's because we don't worship Him as our Creator like we should. And because of that sin-nature we deserve punishment from God.

The Bible says that the punishment for sin is death (Romans 6:23). Because we sin, we deserve to be separated from God and to die. And to make things worse, there is no way that we can work our way out of that punishment. We can try to do good things or treat others well, but no amount of good things we do can ever wipe away any sin from our lives. Sin is a permanent sin for us that we cannot remove. That is why Christ came. Jesus was born without a sin-nature and came to make it possible to defeat sin.

While Jesus was on the earth 2,000 years ago, he did many amazing things. He did miracles to prove that he was God and he never did anything wrong. The people were amazed by him, but the most important thing that Jesus did was to sacrifice himself so that our sins could be removed and forgiven.

It wasn't easy. God knew what our problem was. He knew how serious and devastating our sin was. And He loved us too much to let us have that punishment of death with no way out. Jesus was without sin, so he never deserved any kind of punishment, but he chose to die on a wooden **cross** so that we wouldn't have to die and forever be without a relationship with God. The Bible says that "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Jesus Christ came to earth for the purpose of dying. He came and taught people all about himself and what he was doing. He showed the people his power and their weakness. He showed that he alone could rescue and restore. And he willingly chose to take the punishment for our sin upon himself when he died on the **cross** so that we wouldn't have to.

Because of what Jesus did on the **cross**, we can be saved. He took the punishment for us, but that doesn't mean we just automatically go to heaven. The Bible says that we need to understand that we can't save ourselves, but need him as Savior. We have to believe that Jesus' sacrificial death on the **Cross** is the only thing that can take away our guilt before God. We'll talk about that more next week.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the punishment for sin?
- Why is the **cross** so important?
- How can we be forgiven for our sins and have a relationship with God?