

CHRIST CHURCH CLIFTON

Small Group Resources – Teaching Series: 'Sin and Salvation', Spring 2018

THE CENTRALITY OF THE CROSS

- The early believers were all Jews – why did Judaism throw them out?
- The essence of all preaching – 'We preach Christ crucified' (1 Corinthians 1:23)

METAPHORS (WORD PICTURES) OF THE CROSS

What did the Cross achieve? Why is it a triumph?

The New Testament presents a number of ways of understanding the power of the Cross

Covenant (A **binding** agreement made by one party in favour of another)

*This is my blood of the **covenant**, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Matthew 26:28 (1 Corinthians 11:23–25)*

Q: Have you fully understood the triumph of the Cross in your own life, experience and hope? Do you truly believe that, because of the Cross you are guaranteed salvation purely because of what Jesus has done?

Sacrifice (The shedding of **blood** to affect **forgiveness**)

*The next day John saw Jesus coming towards him and said, Look, the **Lamb** of God, who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29*

*Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast – as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been **sacrificed**. 1 Corinthians 5:7*

*Then I saw a **Lamb**, looking as if it had been **slain**, standing in the centre of the throne Revelation 5:6*

*For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a **sin offering**. Romans 8:3*

*But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the **blood** of Christ. Ephesians 2:13*

*and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and **sacrifice** to God. Ephesians 5:2*

Q: Have you fully understood the triumph of the Cross in your own life, experience and hope? Do you truly believe that, because of the Cross the demand for blood to secure forgiveness has been met?

Hebrews 9 & 10

- Sin is defiling
- Sin requires purification
- The death & blood of the victim are crucial
- Salvation is at a cost
- Spiritual sacrifices are required in return

¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. ² Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1-2

Q: What spiritual sacrifice can you offer to God this week in grateful response to the gift of Jesus Christ?

Day Of Atonement

- Leviticus 16
- Hebrews 9 & 10
- Then annual, in Christ 'once and for all'

Passover

The Sovereign act of God to **deliver** his people – Exodus 12

⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was *led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.* Isaiah 53:6-7

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming towards him and said, Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ... ³⁶ When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, Look, *the Lamb of God!* John 1:29, 36

Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast – as you really are. For *Christ, our Passover lamb*, has been sacrificed. 1 Corinthians 5:7

¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of *Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.* 1 Peter 1:18, 19

Redemption (Paying a price / ransom to secure **freedom** / deliverance)

and are justified freely by his grace through the *redemption* that came by Christ Jesus. Romans 3:24

In him we have *redemption* through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace Ephesians 1:7

*It is for **freedom** that Christ has set us **free**. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1*

*He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal **redemption**. Hebrews 9:12*

- Secular use in the ancient world (valuable POWs, the releasing of slaves)
- 'Kinsman' 'Avenger of blood' 'Redeemer' all translations of one Hebrew word
- In the Exodus, the Lord is seen as the Redeemer (

³³ *This is what the LORD Almighty says: The people of Israel are oppressed, and the people of Judah as well. All their captors hold them fast, refusing to let them go. ³⁴ Yet their **Redeemer** is strong; the LORD Almighty is his name. He will vigorously defend their cause so that he may bring rest to their land, but unrest to those who live in Babylon. Jeremiah 50:33–34*

- Ransom – paying a price in exchange for a life

*A man's riches may **ransom** his life, but a poor man hears no threat. Proverbs 13:8*

- Jesus seen as a ransom

*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a **ransom** for many. Matthew 20:28*

*who gave himself as a **ransom** for all 1 Timothy 2:6*

*For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance— now that he has died as a **ransom** to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. Hebrews 9:15*

- Redemption looks to the future

²⁷ *At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your **redemption** is drawing near. Luke 21:27-28*

*Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the **redemption** of our bodies. Romans 8:23*

*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of **redemption**. Ephesians 4:30*

Hebrews 11

¹⁷ Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. ¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were **redeemed** from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 1 Peter 1:17-19

- Christians as free slaves

¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman; similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave. 1 Corinthians 7:22

- People are by nature slaves to sin
- Christ paid the price of freedom (NOTE – not paid to anyone)
- The redeemed are free to live God's way

You were called to be **free**. But do not use your **freedom** to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. Galatians 5:13

Q: Have you fully understood the triumph of the Cross in your own life, experience and hope? Do you truly believe that, because of the Cross the price of setting you free has been paid on the nail?

Reconciliation

Making enemies friends **once more**

¹⁸ All this is from God, who **reconciled** us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of **reconciliation**: ¹⁹ that God was **reconciling** the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of **reconciliation**. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be **reconciled** to God. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in this one body to **reconcile** both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. ¹⁹ Consequently, you are

no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. Ephesians 2:13–22

- Sin is a barrier & must be dealt with
- There is real hostility between God & sinners

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. Colossians 1:21

You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred towards God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. James 4:4

- Reconciliation is God's work, proceeding from his love for us

*⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, when we were God's enemies, we were **reconciled** to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been **reconciled**, shall we be saved through his life! Romans 5:8–10*

- Reconciliation must be received

*We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be **reconciled** to God. 2 Corinthians 5: 20*

Q: Have you fully understood the triumph of the Cross in your own life, experience and hope? Do you truly believe that, because of the Cross you have been changed from being an enemy of God into a friend of God?

Propitiation ('hilaskomai' = the turning away of **wrath**)

- The modern 'problem' with the wrath of God
- In the OT more than 20 Hebrew words for & more than 580 references to God's wrath
- God cannot abide sin

*²⁷ See, the Name of the LORD comes from afar, with burning anger and dense clouds of smoke; his lips are full of **wrath**, and his tongue is a consuming fire. ²⁸ His breath is like a rushing torrent, rising up to the neck. He shakes the nations in the sieve of destruction; he places in the jaws of the peoples a bit that leads them astray. ²⁹ And you will sing as on the night you celebrate a holy festival; your hearts will rejoice as when people go up with flutes to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel. ³⁰ The LORD will cause men to hear his majestic*

voice and will make them see his arm coming down with raging anger and consuming fire, with cloudburst, thunderstorm and hail. Isaiah 30:27–30

⁸ I am about to pour out my **wrath** on you and spend my anger against you; I will judge you according to your conduct and repay you for all your detestable practices. ⁹ I will not look on you with pity or spare you; I will repay you in accordance with your conduct and the detestable practices among you. Then you will know that it is I the LORD who strikes the blow. Ezekiel 7:8-9

¹ You have rejected us, O God, and burst forth upon us; you have been angry – now restore us! ² You have shaken the land and torn it open; mend its fractures, for it is quaking. ³ You have shown your people desperate times; you have given us wine that makes us stagger. Psalm 60:1–3

- God's wrath cannot be turned away by human action
- In NT, again many references

*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptising, he said to them: You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming **wrath**? Matthew 3:7*

*How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and **wrath** against this people. Luke 21:23*

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's **wrath** remains on him. John 3:36*

*The **wrath** of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, Romans 1:18*

*Let no-one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's **wrath** comes on those who are disobedient. Ephesians 5:6*

*They called to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the **wrath** of the Lamb! Revelation 6:16*

Christ as propitiation, offering himself to make atonement in our place

*God presented him as a **sacrifice of atonement**, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished Romans 3:25*

*Since we have now been **justified by his blood**, how much more shall we be saved from God's **wrath** through him! Romans 5:9*

*For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make **atonement** for the sins of the people. Hebrews 2:17*

¹ My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ² He is the **atonement sacrifice** for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:1-2

*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an **atonement sacrifice** for our sins. 1 John 4:10*

The death of Jesus Christ was an act of substitutionary atonement (he died in my place)

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter 2:24-25

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, 1 Peter 3:18

Q: Have you fully understood the triumph of the Cross in your own life, experience and hope? Do you truly believe that, because of the Cross the wrath of God is turned away from you?

Justification (Declaring to be **righteous** / Acquittal in a court of law)

¹⁸ Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry for ever but delight to show mercy. ¹⁹ You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. Micah 7:18-19

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. ²⁰ Therefore no-one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. ²¹ But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished ²⁶ – he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Romans 3:19–26

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! Romans 5:9

For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. Romans 5:19

Q: Have you fully understood the triumph of the Cross in your own life, experience and hope? Do you truly believe that, because of the Cross you have been legally acquitted of all charges against you?

- Received by **faith**

God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished. Romans 3:25

Q: Is the Cross central to your life? If it is, what are the hallmarks by which this is evident? If not, what needs to change?

Q: Which of the metaphors (word pictures) which the New Testament uses of the Cross appeals most to you and why?

Q: Spend some time thinking about the wonder of your salvation. What does it mean to be justified? What difference does it make to know you are 'saved from God's wrath?' How would you describe to a non-believing friend what it feels like to 'have peace with God.'

THE REALITY OF THE CROSS

Psychological and emotional torment

- anticipation ('My soul is overwhelmed' – Matthew 26:38, 39)
- arrest as a common criminal ('a large crowd armed with swords and clubs' – Matthew 26:47)
- betrayal ('Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And kissed him' – Matthew 26:49)
- desertion ('Then all the disciples deserted him' – Matthew 26:56)
- false accusation ('Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence' – Matthew 26:59–61)
- betrayal ('I don't know the man' – Matthew 26:74)
- a crowd baying for blood ('They shouted all the louder, "Crucify him"' – Matthew 27:23)
- humiliation ('They stripped him' – Matthew 27:28)
- mocking ('They knelt in front of him and mocked him' – Matthew 27:29)
- intimidation ('They spat on him ... and struck him ... again and again' – Matthew 27:30)

Physical trauma

- sleep deprivation (implied in all the texts)
- hunger and thirst (John 19:28)
- the crown of thorns (Matthew 27:29)
- beating (Matthew 27:30)
- flogging (Matthew 27:26)

- crucifixion

Spiritual Desolation

- 'My God, my God, WHY have you forsaken me?' (Matthew 27:46)

Q: For your worship time, read through one of the gospel accounts of Jesus' death in its entirety as a group together, perhaps taking a section of the text each. You can find them in Matthew 26:36–27:61; Mark 14:32–15:47; Luke 22:39–23:56; or John 18:1–19:42. Pause awhile after each section and imagine what it must have been like for Jesus. Look out for the moments of psychological, physical and spiritual trauma listed in the sermon notes. Spend some time thanking Jesus for being willing to go through all that suffering just for you.