

Jesus' Crucifixion & Death

Matthew 27:27-61; Mark 15:16-47; Luke 23:23-56; John 19:16-42

PPT Title

Jesus' Crucifixion & Death

Main Point: Jesus died to take away the sin of the world.

Key Verse: *For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.* - 2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT

Props: Crown of thorns; Sign that says: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews"; large candle, lighter or match; a cloth with many sins written on it: Lie, Cheat, Murder, etc.

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Say: Jesus left heaven and came into our world. Earth was filled with sin. Ask: Who can name some sins? Sin also caused sickness and death on earth. Our world was a spiritually dark place. **Teacher:** Dim lights. Jesus stepped into the kingdom of darkness to show us the way out. Light a large candle and read John 8:12. **Say:** Jesus came to light our way. He came to tell people about God's wonderful kingdom, and to make it possible for us to enter. Jesus was truly a Light in the darkness. Set the candle in a prominent place while you teach.



Say: But some people loved the darkness instead of the light (John 3:19). Judas was one of those people. After Judas betrayed Jesus, Jesus was arrested and put on trial before the Jewish leaders. When Jesus said that He was the Christ, the Son of God, the Sanhedrin said He was a liar, or blasphemer. They wanted Him put to death for lying. **Ask:** Did Jesus lie? **No!** **Say:** 1 Peter 2:22 says, "He didn't commit any sin. No lies ever came out of His mouth." Other people were lying about Jesus! (Matthew 26:60)



Next, they took Jesus to the Roman governor, Pilate, who was ruling over the Jews at that time. Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent, so he did not want to kill Jesus. Pilate offered to release any prisoner that the people chose. He hoped they would choose Jesus. **Ask:** Can anyone remember whom the crowd cheered for? *Barabbas*. Barabbas was a famous criminal. He was guilty of murder. **Say:** They shouted for Pilate to let Barabbas go, and for Jesus to be crucified. The words of the people must have stung the ears of Jesus. He was hated and despised by the ones He had come to save (Isaiah 53:3). Eventually, Pilate gave in to the people's demands to release the murderer, Barabbas. Jesus would take the punishment that Barabbas deserved.



JESUS' BLOOD (Matthew 27:26-27, John 19:1)

Say: The soldiers took Jesus away. They whipped Him across His back, over and over. The blood of our Savior began to be poured out, just as Jesus had told ahead of time to the disciples (Luke 22:20).

Let's stop here for a minute and look at what was so important about **Jesus' blood**.

In the Old Testament, God required His people to kill an animal to cover their sin temporarily. None of us likes to talk about killing an animal. This seems very strange and harsh to us, but God is very serious about sin. Romans 6:23 tells us that **sin brings death**.

Listen to what the Bible says about blood: *The life of each creature is in its blood. So I have given you the blood of animals to pay for your sin on the altar. **Blood is life. That is why blood pays for your sin.*** - Leviticus 17:11



The Bible says that life is in the blood of an animal. This is a fact that has been well known by doctors for years and years. You may have seen a bumper sticker or t-shirt that says "Give blood, Give life." People donate blood to help save the lives of others. (Once again, modern science confirms what the Bible told us thousands of years ago!)

The life that is in the blood of an animal sacrifice covered the death that came from people's sin. The Bible says, "Without the spilling of blood, no one can be forgiven." (Hebrews 9:22b)

From the beginning of time, Jesus' death and resurrection was God's plan to save everyone in the world from being separated from Him. The animal sacrifices that God required were a picture of what Jesus was going to do. Jesus' perfect blood was going to completely take away the death of peoples' sin (Galatians 3:8).

MOCKED BY SOLDIERS (Matthew 27:27-31, Mark 15:16-20)



The soldiers also beat Jesus with a wooden staff, and they made fun of Him. They placed a crown made of sharp thorns on His head to mock Him, because they did not believe He was the King of a new kind of kingdom. **Teacher: Hold up the crown.**

Note to Teacher: Pilate handed Jesus over to be scourged, as was the custom, before He was crucified. Scourging was a particularly cruel and brutal tradition. The Roman scourge, or "flagrum" was a short whip made of several strips of leather attached to a handle. The strips were knotted with pieces of metal or bone. The criminal was whipped across his back, quickly removing flesh and exposing muscle. Due to excessive bleeding, the scourging left the criminal near death. With no legal limit to the amount of blows that could be administered, the scourging stopped just short of killing the criminal, so he could be subjected to the public humiliation of the cross.

THE CROSS (Matthew 27:32-44; Mark 15:21-32; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:16-27)



Say: Being hung on a cross was called crucifixion. It was the way the Romans punished criminals back in Jesus' time. Anyone who was guilty of a crime, such as stealing, murder, or rebelling against the government, was crucified. It was a very humiliating, shameful way to die because the person was hung for everyone in the town to see. (**For older students:** The person was forced to lay on top of the cross with his arms outstretched. The soldiers would tie or nail the person's hands and feet to the cross. Then several soldiers hoisted the cross upright and jolted the bottom of it into a hole that had been dug in the ground. Most people died of suffocation, because they could not catch their breath while hanging with their arms out. Sometimes it took several days for the person to die.)

They took Jesus to a place called Golgotha, which means the Place of the Skull (Matthew 27:33). There, the soldiers nailed Jesus' hands and feet to the cross (John 20:25). The soldiers offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh. This mixture was like medicine that would help relieve some of the pain. But Jesus did not take it (Mark 15:22).

Pilate ordered that a sign be placed on the cross above Jesus. **Teacher: Hold up the sign.** It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, The King of the Jews." (John 19:19) The religious leaders complained, saying it should say that Jesus *claimed* to be the King of the Jews. But Pilate refused to change the sign. This may be further proof that Pilate believed Jesus was who He said He was.



When the soldiers hung Jesus on the cross, Jesus prayed these amazing words: *Jesus said, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing."* - Luke 23:34a

Just imagine, through His pain, Jesus prayed for the men who had beaten Him and nailed Him to the cross; Jesus prayed for their forgiveness. By saying they didn't know what they were doing, Jesus meant that the soldiers did not understand the full impact of what they were doing. They thought they were just doing the same job they did day after day - hanging criminals. They did not know that they were crucifying the very Son of God. They did not realize who Jesus was until after His death (Matthew 27:54).

In our human mind, it is almost impossible to imagine Jesus praying for the people who tortured Him. But we must remember, forgiveness was the very reason Jesus came and the reason that He willingly died on the cross (John 12:47).



Many people were very sad about Jesus (Luke 23:27), but some yelled insults at Him.

In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders made fun of Him. "He saved others," they said. "But He can't save Himself! He's the King of Israel! Let Him come down now from the cross! Then we will believe in Him. - Matthew 27:41-42

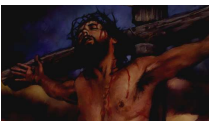
Note to Teacher: These taunts and jeers are very reminiscent of Satan's temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. In essence, Satan said, "If you are the Son of God, prove it! Show off your power." Satan attempted to snare Jesus in the same way he, himself, was tempted: pride. In the wilderness, as at the cross, Satan tried to derail God's plan for the salvation of man. Satan did not take into account Jesus' perfection. He was without the sin-nature that we have. Jesus did not falter. "For the joy set before Him, (He) endured the cross, scorning its shame." (Hebrews 12:2b NIV)

Ask: Could Jesus have stopped the men from doing what they did to Him? **Yes!** **Say:** This is sort of like asking if a person can stop an ant! Jesus could have stopped them at any time. The men had NO power over Him (John 19:11). Jesus was the one with ALL the power, but He held back His power and allowed the men to arrest Him, lie about Him, whip Him, and nail Him to the cross. Hebrews 12:2 says, "He paid no attention to the shame of the cross. He suffered there because of the joy He was looking forward to." **Ask:** Can anyone guess what JOY He was looking forward to? *Listen for answers.* Jesus was looking forward to bring people back to God!

JESUS' DEATH (Matthew 27:45-56; Mark 15:33-41; Luke 23:44-49; John 19:28-37)

Point to the candle. Ask: What did Jesus call Himself? *The Light of the world.*

Say: That Light was about to leave the world. God gave the people there a dramatic picture of this: He made the sun stop shining in the middle of the day.



It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun stopped shining. - Luke 23:44

Scientists now have the technology to track what was happening in the sky during any given day in history. Today, scientists know that the sky became dark just as the Bible says (*The Star of Bethlehem*, Stephen McEveety).

The disciple Matthew was a witness to everything that happened that day. He tells us: *About three o'clock, Jesus cried out in a loud voice. He said, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" This means, "My God, My God, why have You deserted Me?"* - Matthew 27:45-46

Jesus was quoting an Old Testament verse. (See Psalm 22:1.) We can't imagine that God would ever leave Jesus. God, the Father, LOVED His Son. Why would God ever leave Jesus, or seem far from Him?

The answer is SO important to us: It was at this point, that **Jesus willingly took on the sins of the entire world** (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Teacher: Call up two volunteers: one student, one adult. **Say:** (Name of student volunteer) will represent mankind, for each one of us. The Bible says that every one of us has sinned. We have lied, cheated, hated, disobeyed our parents. **Hold up cloth with sins written on it.**

The Bible says: ***It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, He has turned away and will not listen anymore.*** - Isaiah 59:1-2 (NLT)
Place the cloth on the student volunteer - covering his/her head, but not his/her face. Sin separates us from God because God is perfect and holy. **Motion like "God" is above the volunteer. Motion back and forth between the volunteer and "God."** Our sin comes between us and God. Because of our sin, God has to turn away from us. If our sin remains on us, we will be separated from God forever. This is a tragic state for us, and it breaks God's heart (2 Peter 3:9).

Say: Enter Jesus. **Point to your adult volunteer. Say:** Jesus never sinned (2 Corinthians 5:21). Nothing came between Jesus and the Father (Mark 1:11). **Motion back and forth between "God" and "Jesus," signifying that they have a relationship.** They abided with each other. Their relationship was perfect. **Say:** But then...**Have the adult volunteer hold out his arms, as Jesus did on the cross. Say:** At three o'clock that afternoon, Jesus cried out to God. At that moment He took on the sin of the world. Take the "SIN" cloth and transfer it to your "Jesus" volunteer. 1 Peter 2:24 says, "He personally carried our sins in His body on the cross." (NLT) When God saw the sin that Jesus had taken on, He had to turn away from Jesus. This was SO painful for Jesus because He had never ever been separated from God (John 10:30) - until that very moment. This separation from His Father cut Jesus deeper than the wounds on His back or the nails in His hands and feet.

Application: **Say this while volunteers are still in place. Refer to volunteers.** Each one of us has sinned. Jesus was willing to take on my sin, and your sin. If you place your faith in Jesus, then when God looks at you **point to first volunteer**, He no longer sees your sin. **Motion from volunteer up to "God."** Your relationship with Him is restored. **Thank your volunteers.**

The disciple John tells us Jesus called out, *"It is finished!"* The plan had been fulfilled. Jesus took on our sin, offering each of us the opportunity to be made right with God.

Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit My spirit." When He had said this, He breathed His last. - Luke 23:46

Blow out your candle. Say: With that, the Light of the world was extinguished. Jesus, who had never sinned, took on our sin and received our punishment.

PPT Key Verse

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. - 2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT

JESUS' BURIAL



Say: When the soldiers were certain that Jesus was dead, they took Him down off the cross. Two men who believed in Jesus asked Pilate if they could bury Jesus. They lovingly wrapped up Jesus' body and placed Him in a tomb carved out of rock.



The next day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to speak to Pilate. They told Pilate that Jesus had predicted that on the third day, He would come back to life. The leaders were afraid that Jesus' disciples would steal Jesus' body and then tell everyone that He had been raised from the dead. Pilate sent soldiers to seal the tomb with a huge boulder and guard it (Matthew 27:62-66).



But death could not hold onto Jesus! An entire league of Roman soldiers and all the boulders in the world are no match for the power of God! Wicked schemes cannot derail the plan of God! Next week we will look at the most important victory in all of history!

This week I want you to understand, Jesus' perfect blood washed away the death of our sin. When we turn from our sin (repent) and trust Jesus, our sin is forgiven and we are made right with God. We enter into His everlasting kingdom! We begin the most amazing, adventuresome life possible!

PPT Main Point

Main Point: Jesus died to take away the sin of the world.