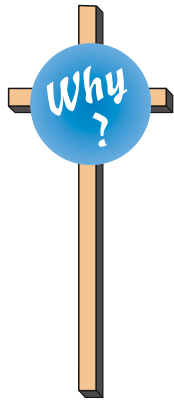




THE PURPOSE OF THE CROSS

Study 2 Atonement



Jesus' death wasn't an accident. He knew all along that he had to come to the world to die.

He knew **why** he had to die. _____

He knew **how** he was going to die. _____

(Mark 10: 32-34, Mark 10: 45. Place correct reference next to each fact above)

In fact, the death of Christ was **planned** by God from before the beginning.

(See Revelation 13: 8) Fill in the missing words.

"This man was handed over to you by _____
and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross." (Acts 2: 23)

THE PURPOSE OF THE CROSS

God's purpose in the cross was to **reconcile** us to himself - to bring us from separation and enmity, to peace and new relationship with him. Scriptures show that ...

"...we were God's _____ (but) we were _____ to him through the death of his Son."
(Romans 5: 10)

"... you who once were _____ have been _____ by the blood of Christ."
(Ephesians 2: 13)

"... you were _____ and were enemies in your minds ...
but now he has _____ you by Christ's physical body through death." (Colossians 1: 21-22)

Christ came to earth for the purpose of going to the cross! But more specifically, it was God in Christ **reconciling** the world to himself. Study 2 Corinthians 5: 18-19. Now write Colossians 1: 19-20 below.

THE PREREQUISITES OF THE CROSS

There are however two things which the cross first had to do in order to reconcile us to God. They could be called the "two sides of the cross." One side is what God requires of it, and the other side is what we require of the cross. (See diagram on the next page.)

Requirement

1

The cross had to **SATISFY** God's justice.

God's law isn't just rules to be broken! Sin is an offence against God himself and carries an automatic penalty. What is that penalty? (Ezekiel 18: 4) _____

Furthermore, God will not cheapen justice by "turning a blind eye" or just "letting off" those who sin. (Job 34: 11-12, Psalm 7: 11) God **never** passes over sin! Yet 2 Corinthians 5: 19 says, *"that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them."*

How can God do this (on what legal grounds?) without compromising his own justice? Write the answer from verse 21 here:

In other words, the cross **satisfied** God's justice by punishing our sins in Christ, who died for us. Romans 3: 25 says, *"God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement. (a propitiation)"*

Why did God do this? Write the answer from verse 26 here:

Requirement

2

The cross had to **PAY** man's debt.

In Old Testament days, if someone needed money badly enough, they could sell themselves as a slave. Later, if things got better, they could buy back their freedom. This was called "redemption." (Refer Leviticus 25: 47-55) The Bible uses this as an illustration of how we have "sold ourselves" into slavery to sin. Look at Romans 6: 16 and compare it with Romans 7: 14.

The problem is that no one has the price to redeem himself. The Bible asks, *"What can a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Matthew 16: 26) Mankind is hopelessly in bondage to sin and in debt to God's law. Therefore before anyone can be reconciled to God, we need someone to pay our debt. This is what we require of the cross, and indeed, this is what the cross has done. When Jesus died he ...

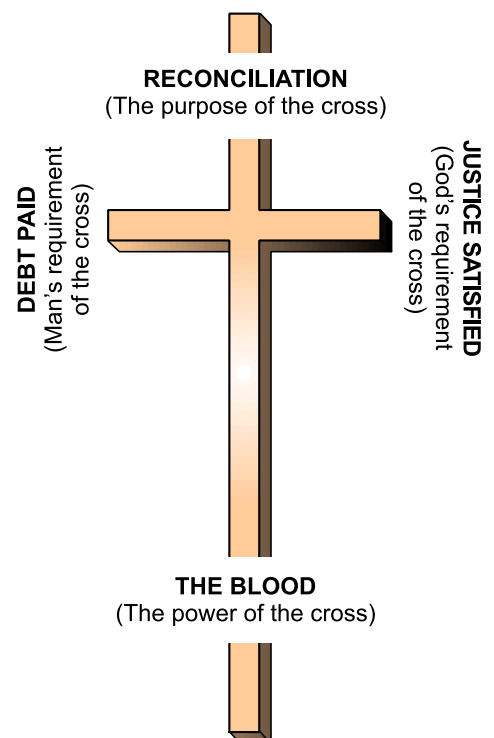
... **redeemed us from sin** (_____)

... **paid the ransom** (_____)

... **and set us free.** (_____)

Study these aspects of redemption and put the verse reference next to the appropriate statement above.

(Matthew 20: 28, Colossians 1: 13-14, Titus 2: 14)



THE POWER OF THE CROSS

How does the cross achieve these things? After all, it was only a piece of wood. It is **the blood** which is the power of the cross! Since the beginning of creation the way back to God has always been through a substitutionary death by the shedding of blood. (See Hebrews 9: 22) Can anyone be forgiven without the shedding of blood?

Yes

No

However the blood of animals never really satisfied God. Such sacrifices were only a shadow of the perfect sacrifice to come. Then Jesus died on the cross.

His blood SATISFIED God's justice!

Write Isaiah 53: 5 in the box and **learn it off by heart**.

His blood PAID our debt!

Read 1 Peter 1: 18,19 then complete these truths.

- You were redeemed from _____
- The payment was not with _____
- But you were redeemed with _____

His blood RECONCILED us to God!

"God ... reconciled to himself all things ... by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." (Colossians 1: 20)

Yes it is **Jesus' blood** which is the power of the cross! Write down the last line of 1 John 1: 7.
