



# THE PURPOSE OF THE CROSS

## Study 4 Reconciliation

In ancient times people would sacrifice a sheep in order to heal their empty feeling of separation from God. Intuitively people knew that things were

not right with him and something needed to be done. Today is not much different except that our sacrifices are of a different kind. We think that, if we do enough good things we will somehow please him.

But the ancient law said, *“without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” (Hebrews 9:22 NIV)* God wanted to drive home to us in a stark and unmistakable way that only life could pay the ransom for another’s life - only the innocent could die for the guilty. It was called ‘substitution.’ People used to understand this.

During the time of Christ there was a strange prophet by the name of John. One day while speaking to a large crowd he pointed out past them and called, *“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29 KJV)* The people turned and stared. It was Jesus.

We know now that Christ’s death on the cross is how he took away the sin of the world. Certainly, it was more than just a sentimental story.

Before reading about it, (Pages 18-21) it would be worth remembering that the giant heavy curtain hanging in the temple represented the ‘barrier’ separating God from man. But what happened to the curtain when Jesus died?



The message of the cross has been called the gospel, the good news and the ‘greatest story ever told.’ It is recorded by four separate writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. But what makes Mark’s account especially amazing is that Jesus **knew all along** that he had come into the world to die. He knew why he had to die. He knew how he had to die.

From the highlighted blue boxes on pages 18-21 read some of the things Jesus knew in advance were going to happen to him. Write the appropriate verse reference next to the correct statement. (Note: Some references may be the same)

- He accurately predicted his betrayal. \_\_\_\_\_
- He understood in advance how he had to die. \_\_\_\_\_
- He knew exactly where he was going and why. \_\_\_\_\_
- He claimed he would rise after three days. \_\_\_\_\_
- He knew the Jewish leaders would reject him. \_\_\_\_\_
- He predicted the role of Gentiles in his death . \_\_\_\_\_

So why did Jesus do it?



Here's why!

1 Peter 3:18 (Page 24)

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The purpose of the cross was to **reunite us with God!** Isaiah explains the problem frankly,

*"It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away." (Isaiah 59:2)*

Then, when we try to reach God on our own, nothing bridges the gap. Even our best efforts fall far short of Him. Write Romans 3:23 here. (Page 24)

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This is why Christ provided the sacrifice that paid the penalty of our sin, so that we can enter uncondemned into a new relationship with God. Write 1 Peter 2:24. (Page 25)

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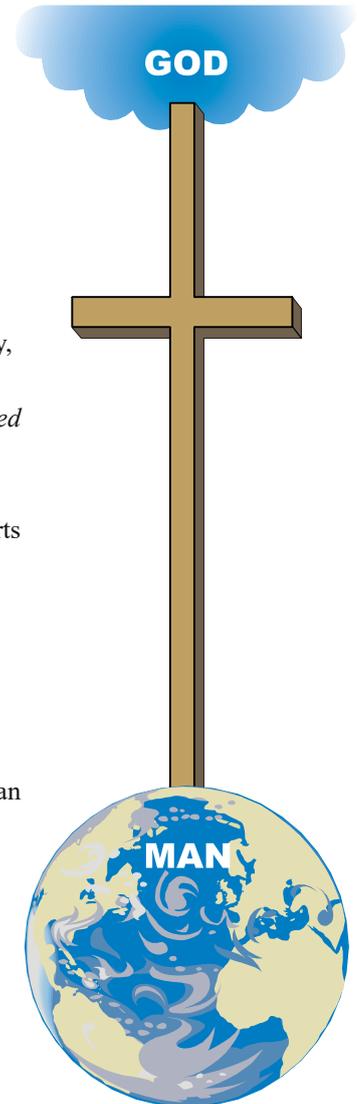
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Fill in the missing line from Colossians 1:19,20 (Page 25)

*"For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God*

*He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross."*

THE CROSS WAS NOT JUST A SAD ACCIDENT.



THE CROSS WAS A SACRIFICE !