

The Cross Overview Study Guide Understanding 2.0

Philippians 2:8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

The cross of Jesus Christ is one of the most amazing events in world history. God accomplishes so many things as he demands his Son to be sacrificed. Today we study a partial list of what was accomplished in heaven and on earth through the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. The goal of this list is to make us aware and prepare our hearts for the study of each individual item on the list. It is essential that we have a thorough understanding of the magnitude of what God has done through his death on the cross.

At the cross, Jesus completes the Old Testament sacrificial system:

Hebrews 10:11 And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. **12** But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,

Judaism sacrificed innocent animals for centuries as God had commanded. The blood was shed, but as Hebrews 10 says, the blood of animals can never take away sins. The whole sacrificial system was put in place by God to foreshadow the ultimate sacrifice: God Himself. When Jesus died on the cross of Calvary as the Lamb of God, he fulfilled or completed the Old Testament sacrificial system.

At the cross, Jesus fulfills or completes the Passover:

Exodus 12:12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. **13** The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

God's angel of death passed over every household that had the blood of the lamb smeared across its door posts. As God executed his final judgment or plague against Egypt for placing his people into the bondage of slavery, he foreshadows Jesus' death on the cross by saving the life of each firstborn through the blood of the lamb.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Jesus delivers from a bondage much more severe than enslavement to another. Jesus, through the cross, delivers everyone who is willing to repent and believe in him from the bondage of sin and death.

At the cross, Jesus proves God is love:

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

Offering one's life on behalf of another is the greatest act of love available to us. Jesus does exactly that as he offers himself to be sacrificed for our sin.

At the cross, Jesus proves God is a just judge:

God is not willing to leave sin unpunished. He is just. But his heart is to save us, not condemn us. So instead of punishing the sinner, God himself, in the person of Jesus, receives the punishment sin deserves. God demonstrates his justice at the cross. Sin is punished severely. Jesus is the one punished. Everyone willing to repent and believe in Jesus escapes punishment through the cross. The cross is the intersection of God's justice and God's love.

Isaiah 53:10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

At the cross, Jesus satisfies the wrath of God against sin:

God declares himself to be furious over sin every day:

Psalms 7:11 God is a righteous judge, and a God who feels indignation every day.

God also tells us that he plans to destroy evil. He will pour out his wrath on the day of judgment. His wrath is so severe against sin that he will go so far as to destroy creation as we know it today and create a new heaven and a new earth without the presence of evil.

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

If God, in his mercy, does not spare us when he pours out his wrath and destroys evil, no one will survive. But thanks be to God, through the cross of Jesus, all who repent and believe are saved from the wrath of God.

1 Thessalonians 1:10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

At the cross, Jesus provides justification for all who surrender their lives to Him:

Romans 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

To be justified is to be legally declared not guilty. This is not the same as being declared innocent. To be innocent means no offense was ever committed. To be not guilty, legally speaking, means the penalty for the offense has been paid.

We who believe will stand before God on judgment day and be declared not guilty. We are not innocent of sinning against God, but our penalty has been paid through Jesus' death on the cross. By faith in Jesus Christ we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

At the cross, Jesus provides forgiveness:

Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,

At the cross, Jesus provides redemption:

Hebrews 9:12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

At the cross, Jesus provides atonement:

1 John 2:2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Propitiation means appeasement or atonement. The idea is that the debt of the guilty is paid. The offended one no longer seeks retribution from the offender because the debt has been paid. Jesus makes atonement for all who repent and believe in him through his death on the cross.

At the cross, Jesus provides sanctification:

Hebrews 10:14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

At the cross, Jesus provides freedom from the bondage of sin:

Romans 6:17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, **18** and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

At the cross, Jesus provides adoption:

Ephesians 1:5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

At the cross, Jesus provides the ultimate example of obedience and trust:

Matthew 26:39 And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

At the cross, Jesus provides the ultimate model of self-sacrifice for us to follow in doing God's will:

1 John 3:16 By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

These things only partially describe what God has done through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. Just know that God loves you as no one else. He desires that none of us should perish. Through faith in Jesus all these things and more can be yours. Are you willing to believe? Are you willing to repent?

Study Guide Questions:

- 1) Why did God institute the sacrificial system in the Old Testament? Was it effective? What was it pointing to?
- 2) How does the Father sending the Son to his tortuous death prove that God is love?
- 3) How does the death of Jesus on the cross satisfy God's justice? How does it satisfy his wrath?
- 4) Why is God able to forgive the sinner who repents and believes?
- 5) Passover delivered God's people from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. What does the death of Jesus on the cross deliver God's people from?