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The Cross Of *Christ*

Cross in the Old Testament



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To show how Jesus and the Cross are reflected in the Garden of Eden.
- To motivate children to express gratitude for their Robes of Righteousness.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Psalms 8:5-8; Genesis 3 (The Cross in the Garden of Eden).



MEMORY VERSE

Isaiah 61:10 (ESV): "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness ..."



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.



INTRODUCTION

The central message and ministry of the Church is the Cross of Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:17-18 says, “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

In fact the very reason why Jesus came to the earth was, to die on the Cross. So we will attempt to make a detailed study of the Cross, and how it can change our lives, over the next seven weeks.

Note to the Facilitator

We see many ‘Shadows’ of the Cross of Christ in the Old Testament. We will be covering only three of them during these sessions:

- **Primary Level:** God’s Prophecy about Jesus in the Garden of Eden.
- **Junior Level:** Slaughter of innocent animals to clothe Adam and Eve.
- **Senior Level:** The Passover Lamb and Jesus.



ATTENTION GETTER

Quiz: Adam and Eve

Go through the quiz along with the children, discussing each question and clearing doubts, if any.

Why did Adam call his wife ‘Eve’?

- She was the firstborn among women.
- She was a helpmate fit for him.
- **She was the mother of all living.**
- She was taken out of man.

Which two trees grew in the midst of the garden?

- The tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of joy and despair.
- **The tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil**
- The tree of life and the tree of death.
- The tree of death and the tree of joy and despair.

Adam and Eve were prohibited from eating the fruit of which tree?

- Tree of Life Everlasting.
- **Tree of knowledge of Good and Evil.**
- Tree of Evil Borne by Satan.

What would happen to anyone who touched the forbidden fruit?

- **They would become all-knowing.**
- They would be able to bear children.
- They would know for themselves the difference between right and wrong.
- They would die.

To whom did God give the command not to eat of the fruit?

- Adam only
- Eve only
- **Both Adam and Eve**
- Neither of them

Who was present when the serpent tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit?

- Eve only

- **Adam and Eve**
- God, Adam, and Eve

The serpent that tempted Eve was ...

- A real serpent, acting on its own.
- **A real serpent, acting as a tool of Satan.**
- Satan disguised as a serpent.
- None of the above.

After both Adam and Eve had eaten the fruit, what was the first thing they did?

- **Put on clothes**
- Worship the tree
- Eat more fruit
- Tremble under God's wrath

What kind of leaves did Adam and Eve use in an attempt to cover their nakedness?

- **Fig**
- Sycamore
- Palm
- Olive

Why did Adam hide himself from God?

- He wanted God to prove to him that He can see all.
- **He was scared because he realised he was naked.**
- He was ashamed of his wife's disobedience.
- He wanted to see if he could outsmart God.

What did God NOT do as a result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve?

- Cause them to work the ground for food.
- Give them the ability to feel emotion.
- **Kill them instantly.**
- Cast them out of Eden and His presence.

How did Adam/Eve become similar to God after sinning?

- They could feel joy and sorrow.
- **They could know good from evil.**
- They could create life.
- They would live forever.

Why did God protect the Tree of life?

- So that Adam and Eve would not lose the ability to bear children.
- So that man would live forever.
- To ensure that He could never be destroyed.
- **So that man couldn't obtain the means to live forever.**

What did God place at the east of the garden of Eden to guard the Tree of life?

- **Cherubims and a flaming sword.**
- A pit of poisonous serpents.
- A seraph with six wings.
- A dragon with seven heads.

What did God do for Adam and Eve before He exiled them?

- **He clothed them.**
- He allowed them to rest.
- He fed them.
- He armed them with weapons.

What animal skin was used to make Adam and Eve's coats?

- Leopard
- Bear
- Elephant
- **Not specified**



TEACHING CONTENT

Introduce Topic to the Children

Many people think that Jesus accidentally died on the Cross when things got out of control, and the religious leaders had Him killed. But this is wrong thinking!

God planned to sacrifice Jesus (so that He could save us); and He prepared this plan even before the world was created!

In fact God launched this salvation plan into action, in the Garden of Eden itself. So we will take a closer look at the Creation Story of Adam and Eve, and we will discover for ourselves how Jesus was already mentioned even in the Garden of Eden!

Psalms 8:5–8: Creation of Adam and Eve

Read Aloud

Psalms 8:5-8: “You have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.”

These verses talk about Adam and Eve, and their descendants (which includes all of us). God created birds, animals and fish for us, and placed them under our rule.

Clothed in Glory

Verse 5 also specifically says that God originally crowned Adam and Eve with glory and honour, which they lost after they sinned.

The original Hebrew word for “crowned” here is “thotreu,” which means “to encircle,” “to surround.” In other words this text says that Adam and Eve were surrounded by glory. They had been clothed with the glory of God and did not need natural clothing. This is why Genesis 2:25 says that they felt no shame even though they were naked. They did not have anything to be ashamed of!

However, when they sinned, they lost this covering of glory, and immediately realised that they were naked. Feeling both scared and ashamed to suddenly find themselves in this condition, they tried to rectify the situation by covering themselves with fig leaves.

Glory Replaced by Sin

Adam and Eve thought the only consequence of their sin was the nakedness, and they immediately tried to fix it. They failed to realise that far more terrible things happened in that horrible moment when they sinned against God. The shameful nakedness was just one of the results.

God had warned them that they would die if they ate the forbidden fruit, and this is what happened.

- Their sin separated them from God; and the moment they were separated from God, their spirits died within them. They became spiritually dead.
- Also, their physical bodies started deteriorating from that moment onwards. One day their bodies would get too old and decayed to survive any longer, and then they would die physically as well.
- And after physical death, they were destined to go to hell, because they were separated from God.

Not aware of these more serious implications, Adam and Eve thought a bunch of fig leaves could fix the damage they had done by sinning.

God's Love

God could have left them in this condition. Because Adam and Eve had separated themselves from God through their sinful act, God could have chosen to leave them. Without His protection and care, Adam and Eve would probably have been killed by a wild animal within days. Then they would have spent eternity in hell, separated from God forever and ever.

However, God is Love (1 John 4:8). He knew their useless fig leaves wouldn't even begin to repair the situation. It's like trying to put together a wrecked car with some cello tape. That's impossible!

Then they heard God coming, and were terrified. They thought He would not notice the drastic change in their appearance, and realise what they had done. To avoid this, they hid themselves.

However, the simple truth is that God already knows everything. God said to Adam, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" (Genesis 3:11)

First Mention of the Cross in the Eden Garden

Then, God spoke judgment upon all those involved in this first act of human sin:

- He told the serpent what would happen to it, (because Satan had deceived Adam and Eve, using the serpent.)
- He prophesied what would happen to Satan in future.
- And He told Adam and Eve of the great hardships they would face in their lives, because of their sin.

This was God's prophesy to Satan, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

In other words, God said to Satan, “One of the woman’s descendants will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” When God spoke these words, He was in fact speaking about Jesus and the Cross.

This is the first mention of the Cross in the Bible. The same way a snake tries to kill people by striking them with its poisonous fangs, Satan would also try to kill Jesus by having Him put on the cross. But God predicted that when Satan tried to do this, he would only end up having his ugly head crushed!

Second Mention of the Cross in the Eden Garden

Genesis 3:21 says, “The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.”

Why do you think God made garments of animal skin for Adam and Eve? Is it because He preferred animal skins to fig leaves?

No! Rather, God was trying to show Adam and Eve that the Glory-Covering couldn’t be simply replaced by fig leaves. Fig leaves could NOT make them acceptable to God, the way the holy Glory-Covering had made them acceptable.

A lot more would have to be done to make them acceptable!!

How God Made Adam and Eve Acceptable

The punishment for sin is death and eternal separation from God. Instead of placing this punishment on Adam and Eve, God placed this punishment on innocent animals, and killed them. Then He used the skin of these animals to make clothes for them.

These innocent animals represented Jesus Christ who would one day hang on the Cross, and take the punishment of Adam and Eve upon Himself. Jesus took their sinfulness, and gave them His righteousness. So the animal skins represented the Robes of Righteousness which Jesus would give to all believers one day. Only God’s glory and righteousness can make us acceptable to Him.

In this way, we see the “Cross of Christ” being mentioned twice in the Garden of Eden.

The Shadow of an Object helps us understand what the Object looks like. God’s prophesy to Satan, and the animal skins were ‘shadows’ which helped Adam and Eve understand what Jesus would do for them on the Cross, one day.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

Why do you think the Old Testament Israelites offered animal sacrifices? Why don’t we do it today?

The animal sacrifices represented what Jesus Christ would do on the cross one day. When the Israelites offered these sacrifices, it reminded them what God would do through Jesus, and that He was willing to forgive all the Israelites who confessed their sins and sincerely repented of them.

Today, we do not need animal sacrifices anymore because Jesus has finished coming to the earth as God’s sacrifice, to die on the Cross for us. So we simply confess our sins to Him, and make a formal commitment to follow Him sincerely in future.

Tarun copied in the Maths Exam, and passed. But he felt guilty about what he had done. So he tried to make God happy by putting all his pocket money into the offering bag at Church on Sunday.

Would you say that Tarun is clothed in Jesus’ Robe of Righteousness or in Fig Leaves? Why?

We may try different methods to repair the damage done by our sinfulness.

- Some people promise to fast and pray.
- Some people give money to the poor.
- Some people go on pilgrimages to holy places.

But none of these efforts can make us acceptable to God. God can still see the dirt of our sins, and we can't hide it. It's like trying to cover our shamefulness with fig leaves.

Instead, we must frankly admit to Jesus that we have sinned. We must make a firm commitment to, not repeat our sin, but to follow Him sincerely in future. And we must ask Him to forgive us. When we do this, Jesus' blood washes away our sin, and His Robe of Righteousness covers us.

This alone can make us acceptable to God. So Tarun must confess his sin to God and make a commitment to follow Jesus in future. Only this will make Him acceptable to God.

Based on what we have studied, can you guess why godly people of other religions don't make it to heaven, in spite of all their good deeds?

Good deeds are good. But they can't cover the shamefulness and dirt of our sins.

Only Jesus' blood can wash away our sins, and only His Robe of Righteousness can cover our spiritual nakedness.

So irrespective of whether a person belongs to the Christian religion or some other religion, they will NOT enter heaven unless they have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Only His blood and His righteousness can make a person acceptable to God.



APPLICATION

Innocent animals had to die so that Adam and Eve could be clothed. The skin garments covered both their physical nakedness and their spiritual nakedness.

In the same way, Jesus had to die so that we too could be clothed. It cost Jesus His life, to clothe us in the Robe of Righteousness. This robe has covered our spiritual nakedness and made us acceptable to the Father.

How will you show your gratitude to God this week, for all that He has done for you? Reflect on this, and make a commitment to God before you leave the class.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



The Cross Of *Christ*

Jesus Talked About the Cross



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explain that Jesus compared His crucifixion to the tearing down of the Temple.
- To show why Jesus called His body the ‘Temple.’
- To motivate children to live clean lives, as a holy God lives in them.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

John 2:13-22; Exodus 29:42-43; John 14:6,23 (Temple—the Meeting Place)



MEMORY VERSE

John 14:23: “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Which two ‘Shadows’ of the Cross do we see in the Garden of Eden?
- This week, how did you show your gratitude for Jesus’ Robe of Righteousness? Give examples.
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Isaiah 61: 10).



INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered whether Jesus knew what would happen to Him, when He came to the earth? Do you think He knew that He would be crucified? Do you think He knew when He would die?

The fact is Jesus openly discussed His death on many occasions while living on the earth. When talking to outsiders, He referred indirectly to His death on the cross. But when speaking to His disciples and close followers, He described His upcoming death in great detail.

Last week, we looked at what the Old Testament had to say about the Cross. This week, we will look at what Jesus Himself had to say about it.

Note to the Facilitator

Jesus talked about the Cross on various occasions, during His time on earth. However, we will look at only three aspects during these sessions.

- **Primary Level:** Jesus compared Himself to a Wheat Kernel.
- **Junior Level:** Jesus compared Himself to the Temple.
- **Senior Level:** Jesus compared Himself to a Bronze Serpent.



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: The Jerusalem Temple

Ask

Do you know where the largest man-made platform in the world is located (NOT railway platform)?

It is located in Jerusalem. Herod constructed this platform, so that he could build the Jerusalem Temple on top of it. This platform can easily accommodate twenty four football fields!

Note: The temple was razed to the ground in 70 AD, but the platform exists even today. The Muslim mosque, “Dome of the Rock,” stands on this platform now.

Show and Say

The Student Workbook contains a Model of the Jerusalem Temple. Show this to the children, and share some of the interesting trivia about the temple.

Trivia about Herod and the Temple

- Herod persuaded the Roman Emperor into appointing him as King of Israel.
- As he was not an Israelite, most of the Jews hated him.
- He murdered many close relatives, including his own two sons, because he was scared they would grab the throne from him.
- He murdered 46 Jewish Leaders belonging to the Sanhedrin.
- Because the Israelite people hated him so much, he decided to please them by building a grand Temple for them.
- The Temple Complex he built was one of the grandest architectural works existing in those days.
- Herod took 46 years to build this Temple. Some construction work continued even after his death in 4 BC. (It continued for another 60 years, finally being finished in 63 AD).

- Just seven years after the completion of the construction work, it was razed to the ground by the Romans in 70 AD.
- Portions of the Temple were built with thick-gold plating, while the rest was built with expensive white marble.
- The floors were made of Carrara Marble, its blue tinge giving the impression of a moving sea of water.
- The Jews were very proud of their Temple because every year, hundreds of tourists from all over the world came to admire it.
- Almost 7 million Jews gathered at the Temple during the Passover each year.

Identify the Different Portions of the Temple

Help the children identify different portions of the Temple. This will help them understand why Jesus was upset with the money changers and merchants who had turned the Temple into a market place.

1. Court of the Priests

Surrounding the Temple was the Court of the Priests which contained the Altar of Burnt Offering, and the Laver. Only the Priests in performance of their daily duties were permitted inside the Priests' Court. Around (and exterior to) the Priests' Court was the Court of Israel, accessible to all Jewish males.

2. Court of Women

Both Jewish men and women were permitted into this area. This area is called the Court of Women because Israelite women were allowed to enter the temple area only up to this point. They could assemble here and listen to the reading of The Law.

3. Court of the Gentiles

The outermost court was the Court of the Gentiles. Many Gentiles who believed that Jehovah was the one, true God, gathered in this

outer court, to worship God. But they could hardly concentrate because the insensitive Jewish leaders had turned this area into a market place.

Soreg: The Soreg was a low latticed screen or railing that prohibited Gentiles from crossing into the inner courts. No Gentile was ever supposed to cross this railing.

Explain

If we had lived in Jesus' times, we would have stood in the outermost Court of the Gentiles (because we're not part of the Israelite Community).

Food for Thought

Let us assume that you were one of the Gentiles who travelled from Persia to Jerusalem every year for the Passover Festival. You travel many weeks in a caravan to reach the Temple!

Finally, after reaching the Temple, you are not allowed anywhere near the building. You have to stand far off, in the outermost courtyard.

You close your eyes and lift up your hands to worship God. But all around you is the noise of people, buying and selling. Someone is bargaining loudly in a nearby stall. An ox brushes against you as it is led away. And in the corner, a heated argument breaks out between a money changer and a customer.

You have travelled so many long weeks, to come and pray to the God of Israel; but now you are not able to even concentrate. **How would you feel standing there in that crowded courtyard?**

(Encourage the children to share their opinions and views.)



TEACHING CONTENT

What Jesus Said About the Cross

Jesus compared His death on the cross to the tearing down of the Temple!

- What did Jesus mean when He said this?
- Which Temple was He referring to? Herod's Temple or some other Temple?
- How can the tearing down of some temple somewhere benefit us?

We will discover the answers to these questions in today's session.

Jesus Cleared the Temple (John 2:13-22)

When the Passover Feast, celebrated each spring by the Jews, was about to take place, Jesus traveled up to Jerusalem. He found the outer court of the Gentiles teeming with people selling cattle and sheep and doves.

The money changers were also there in full strength. These money changers were needed because of the pilgrims. The pilgrims carried coins from their home towns, most bearing the images of Roman emperors or Greek gods, which Temple authorities considered idolatrous. The money changers exchanged these coins for shekels (shekels were considered acceptable in the Temple). However they cheated the pilgrims by charging very high exchange-rates. In the same way, the people selling sacrificial animals also charged very high rates, taking advantage of the people.

Jesus was so filled with anger at the desecration of the Court of the Gentiles that He took some cords and wove them into a small whip. He ran about, knocking over the tables of the money changers, spilling coins on the ground. He drove the exchangers out of the area, along with the men selling pigeons and cattle.

He said, “Get your things out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a marketplace!” That’s when his disciples remembered the Scripture, “Zeal for your house consumes me.”

But the Jews were upset. They asked, “What authority do you have to do this?” Jesus answered, “Tear down this Temple and in three days I’ll put it back together.”

This made them very indignant: “It took forty-six years to build this Temple, and you are going to rebuild it in three days?”

Jesus Described His Cross-Experience As the Tearing and Rebuilding of the Temple

The Jewish leaders thought that Jesus was referring to Herod’s grand temple. But in reality God was referring to His own body. He promised them that His body would be torn down and built up again in three days.

Later, after He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered He had said this. They then put two and two together, and believed both what was written in Scripture and what Jesus had said.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

Why do you think Jesus called His body the ‘Temple’?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)

Why do you think people visited the Temple in those days? To do what?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)

Why do we go to Church every week? To do what?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)

Exodus 29:42-43 says, “For the generations to come this burnt offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, before the LORD. There I will meet you and speak to you; there also I will meet with the Israelites, and the place will be consecrated by my glory.”

According to these verses, why did God want the Tabernacle/Temple to be set up?

God wanted the Tabernacle/Temple to be set up, so that He could meet with the people.

This is why people used to travel from distant foreign lands to visit the temple in those days. They wanted to meet with God and pray to Him.

This is also one of the reasons why we attend church today. The church serves as a meeting place where all believers can come together as a family, and meet with their heavenly Father.

Why do you think Jesus called Himself the ‘Temple’?

Jesus called Himself the ‘Temple’ because we meet God *through* Him. He is the “meeting place” through which we come to God.

This is why Jesus said in John 14:6, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Why do you think Jesus wanted to be the Temple, when already there was a grand Temple-building available?

Jews and Gentiles used to travel long distances to meet with God. But the Jewish people were allowed to enter only the Court of the Israelites. They could not enter the Court of the Priests, let alone enter the actual Temple building. As for the Gentiles, they could not even come near the building.

But now, through Jesus Christ, we have direct contact with God! God does not live anymore in a building in Jerusalem, inside the Holy of Holies. He lives inside our hearts! This became possible only because of what Jesus did on the cross.

Many of the godly leaders of Israel longed for this kind of direct contact with God; but they couldn't have it because Jesus had not yet sacrificed His life on the cross. We have the privilege today that the Old Testament prophets could only dream about!

So Jesus is a much better Temple than Herod's Temple Complex.

How did Jesus' death on the cross, make "direct contact" with God possible?

In Old Testament times, nobody could enter the Holy of Holies. Only the High Priest could enter once a year to offer the blood of the Atonement sacrifice; and He did it after going through a lot of purification rituals.

All these restrictions had to be obeyed because God is holy; and anybody entering His holy presence would be destroyed (because nothing sinful can last for even a second in God's holy presence.)

However today, we are not destroyed in spite of God's direct presence inside us. This is because on the cross Jesus took the punishment for our sins. By washing away all our sins, He made us completely holy.

So Jesus made it possible for us to have direct contact with God.

It cost Jesus His life to make us clean. It cost Jesus His life to make it possible for God to live inside us.

After such a great sacrifice, how do you think Jesus feels when we deliberately dirty ourselves once again by doing sinful things?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)



APPLICATION

Jesus chose to become the Temple. He chose to become the Meeting Place, through whom we could directly meet with God.

- Are we using this privilege to meet with God every day? Do we have a Quiet Time with God?
- Also, are we keeping ourselves clean from sin? Or are we insulting God by making Him live inside a sin-filled life?

Recommit your life to God, so that Jesus' sacrifice is not wasted in your life.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



The Cross Of *Christ*

Wisdom of the Cross—Redemption



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach the meaning of ‘redemption.’
- To explain what God expects from those whom He has redeemed.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Ephesians 1:7; Romans 6:16-18; 1 Corinthians 6:20; Titus 2:14 (Jesus’ Redemption Plan)



MEMORY VERSE

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



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- How did Jesus’ death on the cross, make “direct contact” with God possible?

- Did you make “direct contact” with God this week, by spending time with Him? Describe some of the things you learnt from Him during your Quiet Time.
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (John 2:19).



INTRODUCTION

1 Corinthians 1:18 says, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

Some people consider the Message of the Cross as ‘foolishness.’ How could it be that God would allow His own creatures to nail Him to a cross? Why did God use the cross as the means of delivering His people from their sin? How is it possible for life to come from death? These are some of the questions that they raise.

Today, we will look at the great wisdom that God in fact displayed, when He chose the method of the Cross to save people.

Note to the Facilitator

The Cross becomes Wisdom only when it is seen through Divine Eyes, through a Divine Gaze. The purpose of this session is to help children see the great wisdom God displayed on the Cross, by briefly acquainting them with some of the important aspects of Christ’s work on the Cross.

- **Primary Level:** God’s Wisdom in providing Atonement for humans.
- **Junior Level:** God’s Wisdom in gaining Redemption for humans.
- **Senior Level: Senior Level:** God’s Wisdom seen in Substitution, when He took our place.



ATTENTION GETTER

Today, we will look at two imaginary scenarios that will, hopefully, help us understand better what Jesus did for us on the Cross.

Scenario 1

Imagine that you have a cat at home. The cat runs away and you are worried. You make enquiries for a week, and discover that your cat has been impounded at the Municipal Animal Control Centre.

Your cat is to be electrocuted one week from now. On the appointed day, it will be dragged into a “pound-chamber” where a wire will be placed around its neck, and the switch thrown. The electric current will go through its body, badly scorching its neck in the process and causing blood to leak out of the eyes, ears and nose. In other words, your cat will die a painful death.

You are horrified, and beg the Municipality to set your cat free. But they inform you that the cat must be electrocuted because it attacked a little child and killed him!

The Municipality offers to release the cat if you are willing to take its place, and have the electrocution wire placed around YOUR neck.

- What would your decision be?

(Ask the children to give their decision.)

Scenario 2

In the second scenario, the circumstances are slightly different. This time, it is your younger brother who has run away from home. And after making enquiries everywhere, your family learns that he has been placed in a Juvenile Home, under arrest.

He too is scheduled for a death sentence the following week, as he attacked and killed a little child.

The Supreme Court generously offers to release your brother if you, the older sibling, is willing to take his place.

- In this case what would your decision be?

(Ask the children to give their decision.)

Recap

(The Student Workbook contains a Summary Table. Help the children fill it up even as you recapitulate the story.)

What was the crime committed by the cat and by your brother?
Murder of a little child.

In the above scenarios, what was the punishment designated for murder?

Death sentence

As a result of their crime, who gained control over them? Your family or the authorities?

The authorities, who placed them under arrest.

What option is available to enable them to escape from the authorities and escape the death sentence?

Someone must be willing to help them.

If someone is willing to help them, how much should they pay the authorities? Will one lakh rupees do? Or do they have to pay more than a crore?

No amount of money will secure the release of the prisoner. The only acceptable payment is the sacrifice of your life in exchange for the prisoner's life.

Discuss

(As you discuss, the children can write down their answers in the Student Workbook.)

How many of you are willing to pay by sacrificing your life? If you had to choose between your cat and your brother, whom would you die for?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)

Why did some of you choose the cat or choose the brother? What motivated your choice?

Love is usually the motivating factor:

- You love the cat more than your brother OR
- You love your brother more than you love the cat OR
- You may choose not to die for either because you love your own life more than you love them.

Let's assume that you decide to make the Supreme Sacrifice, and go to the Animal Control Center. You want to see your cat one last time before you sacrifice your life.

- The cat is brought to you... but the ungrateful cat scratches your face
- How will you feel at this Supreme Rejection?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)

On the other hand, let's assume that you decide to sacrifice your life for your brother. You go to the Central Jail where you are to be hanged, and you wish to see your brother one last time before you die.

- Your brother sends word that he's too busy to meet you, as his friends are throwing him a big bash after his miraculous rescue from prison.
- How will you feel at this Supreme Rejection?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)



TEACHING CONTENT

How God's Wisdom Was Displayed

We are all very familiar with the Story of the Cross. But sometimes we fail to understand the deeper implications involved. We fail to see the great wisdom God displayed when He used the Cross to save us. We will study this topic in greater detail right now.

The Cross

Even as you discuss, the children can write down their answers in the Student Workbook.

What are some of the more common sins we commit in our everyday lives?

(Ask the children to name sins which THEY tend to commit. Murder and adultery would probably not figure in THEIR everyday list of sins.)

These are NOT serious sins like murder. So what's the punishment for these smaller sins, according to the Bible?

Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The wages (the payment) for sin is 'death.' It doesn't matter whether a sin is big or small. The payment we have to make for every sin is 'death.'

This 'death' affects our lives in three ways:

- Those who sin are spiritually dead. This means we are separated from God, and are not part of His family.
- We experience death in the form of destruction, in our everyday lives. Bad things happen to our families, our finances, our studies, our friendships, etc.
- Finally when we die physically, we will be separated from God forever, in hell.

Observe

The cat was given a death sentence because it killed a little child. But you and I are given a death sentence even if we have spoken one little lie! This is the punishment laid down in the Bible for every sin.

When the brother sinned, who gained control over his life? In the same way, when we sin who gains control over our lives?

When the brother sinned, the Jailer at the Juvenile Home gained control over his life.

- He could administer the death sentence to the brother.

In the same way, when we sin, Satan becomes our Jailer and gains control over us.

- He administers death to us in the three ways discussed above.

What option was available to the brother, to escape from the Jailer and the death sentence? In the same way, what option is available to us, to escape from Satan and the death sentence?

If his sibling was willing to exchange places with him, then the brother could escape. In the same way, if someone was willing to exchange places with us, we too would be able to escape.

Explain

Jesus was willing to exchange places with us. On the cross, He took our sins upon His own shoulders, and took our punishment. When He did this:

- Jesus was separated from God—just like we were supposed to be separated from God.
- The destruction resulting from our sins, including sickness, suffering, poverty, rejection, etc., were placed upon Him, and He suffered on our behalf.

Because Jesus took our place, we don't have to be separated from God anymore. If we accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour, we can become part

of God's family and enjoy all His blessings, including the eternal gift of living with Him in heaven forever and ever.

In the imaginary scenario, the brother accepted the sacrifice being offered by his sibling; but he felt no love or gratitude towards him.

How do you think Jesus would feel if we treated Him in a similar manner?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)

Observe

Just like the brother, we are very eager to accept Jesus' sacrifice, maybe because we are afraid of hell. However, some of us are not too interested in spending time with Him, or obeying Him. In fact sometimes we forget His existence, until some prayer need arises!

This is hardly the attitude we should have towards someone who has made the supreme sacrifice for us!

Redemption

There's a big word in English which describes what Jesus has done for us. It's called 'Redemption', and means that Jesus "delivered us by making a payment."

Ask

When we sinned, who gained control over us? Who became our Jailer? Satan

What payment did Jesus make to set us free from this Jailer? Did Jesus pay with a thousand tons of gold?

Romans 6:23 explains that "... the wages of sin is death." According to the Bible, the only acceptable payment is death. So Jesus had to die when He took our sins upon Himself. He paid for us with His very life-blood!

This is why Ephesians 1:7 says, “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace ...”

Explain

As we have seen above, Redemption involves two things:

- It involves payment. Jesus paid for us with His life-blood.
- When payment is made, the Jailer has to let us go. Satan cannot control us anymore.

So Jesus ‘redeemed’ us by paying for us with His life, and delivering us from Satan’s control.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

When we say “Jesus has redeemed us,” what do we mean by these words? What did Jesus do?

- When we sinned against God, we became prisoners of Satan. He gained control over our lives.
- He used this ‘control’ over us, to bring sickness, poverty, suffering, etc., into our lives.
- Jesus set us free from Satan’s control by dying for us and paying with His life-blood.
- Now Jesus offers us a new life of blessings, in His presence.

Romans 6:16 says, “Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?”

According to this verse, people who sin are whose slaves?

People who sin are slaves of sin. In other words, they are slaves of Satan.

When you and I sin, whose slaves are we? God's slaves or Satan's slaves?

Satan's slaves.

If Jesus has 'redeemed' us, how can we be Satan's slaves? Didn't Jesus pay for us and set us free from Satan?

Romans 6:16 says, "Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey..."

If we choose to obey Satan by sinning, then we become his slaves. It's almost like saying to Satan, "Jesus has set me free from your prison. You're no longer my Jailer. But I enjoy sinning so much! So please make me your prisoner once more, and keep me under your control."

Every time we sin, we automatically invite Satan to be our Jailer and control us once more. So, even though we have become God's children, instead of enjoying His blessings, we continue to 'enjoy' Satan's destructive weapons like sickness, suffering and failure.

Inviting Satan to be our Jailer once more, is the height of foolishness! Yet many Christians choose to live this way!

What must we do to become God's slaves instead of Satan's slaves?

Romans 6:17-18 says, "But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness."

When we begin to obey God with all our hearts, we become slaves of God. And we start enjoying all the blessings of obedience.

Are we Slaves of God or are we Children of God?

Jesus paid for us with His life-blood. In this sense, we are God’s slaves ... because Jesus bought us, the same way a slave is bought at a price.

However God doesn’t treat us like slaves. The Holy Spirit teaches us to think of God as our own father, and to address Him as ‘abba’ or ‘papa.’ A mere slave would never be given this kind of a privilege.



APPLICATION

Read each of the following verses and write down what God expects from us:

- **1 Corinthians 6:20:** “... you were bought at a price. Therefore **honor God with your body.**”
- **Titus 2:14:** “[Jesus Christ,] who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, **eager to do what is good.**”
- **Romans 12:1:** “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to **offer your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.”

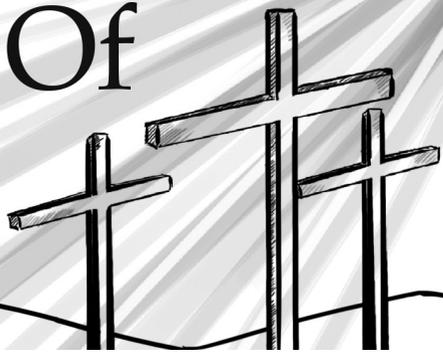
Because Jesus has ‘redeemed’ you, make a commitment to meet these expectations of God. Choose not to be like the ungrateful brother who rejected the very person who saved his life.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



The Cross Of *Christ*



Power of the Cross



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that Christ broke sin's power over our lives.
- To show that we were 'in' Christ when He did this for us.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Romans 5:12, 6:6-23; Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24
(Christ's victory for us)



MEMORY VERSE

Hebrews 2:14: "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil ..."



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- When we say "Jesus has redeemed us," what do we mean by these words? What did Jesus do?

- This week, how did you honour God with your body? Give examples.
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Ephesians 1:7).



INTRODUCTION

Through the fall, mankind became a slave to sin and Satan. They gained mastery over the human race. But the power of the Cross broke the dominion of sin and Satan over our lives.

We will find out today how Jesus did this for us on the Cross.

Note to the Facilitator

On the Cross we see many aspects of God's power displayed. However, during this session, we will focus on three specific aspects:

- **Primary Level:** God's Power is released to us through Identification.
- **Junior Level:** Christ broke sin's power over our lives.
- **Senior Level:** Christ annulled Satan's power over our lives.



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: Pouch Services 24 / 7

The Student Workbook contains pictures of five animals. Ask the children to **'tick'** those animals which carry their young in pouches. (**Note:** All five animals are Australian marsupials and carry their young in pouches. After the children finish give them the below explanation.)

Explain

Some of you must be surprised to learn that God created so many animals with pouches for their young. You probably thought only kangaroos have pouches.

In fact there are 334 species of marsupials (with 200 of them existing in Australia)!

Did you know?

- When a European explorer first went to Australia, he asked a tribal, “What is that strange animal?” Unable to understand his language, the tribal replied, “Kan ga aroo” which means “I don’t understand.” The explorer thought this was the name of the animal. That’s how the kangaroo got its name!!!
- Although an adult kangaroo will grow to stand about five feet tall, when they are born, baby kangaroos (called joeys) are only about one inch long!

The one-inch joey is born blind and helpless. So it stays inside the pouch, drinking its mother’s milk and growing bigger and stronger.

Ask

Let’s assume that a mother-kangaroo is taken on a world tour to 30 different zoos, in different parts of the world.

According to you, how many zoos would you say that the kangaroo has visited?

Thirty

According to you, how many zoos would you say that the joey in its pouch has visited?

Thirty

Explain

Even though the little joey is too weak to take even one little hop, we confidently say that it has visited 30 zoos. Why?

Because its mother carried it! The little joey travelled the whole world without taking a single skip or jump!

Jesus Christ did something very similar for us when He came into the world. We will learn more about this today.



TEACHING CONTENT

The First Adam

When God planned to create people, He said, “Let Us make **man** in Our image ... let **them** have dominion ...” (Genesis 1:26)

God spoke of creating one man, and He referred to this one man as ‘them.’

- Our English Bible is a translation of the original Hebrew Bible ... the original Bible that Jesus used to read. In the Hebrew Bible, we clearly see that God referred to the creation of one single man (‘adm’), and He deliberately called this one person “them” (‘ath.m’).
- The word for a single man is ‘adm.’ The word for ‘men’ (plural) is ‘e.adm.’
- God specifically referred to the single man as ‘them.’

God did not speak this way because His knowledge of grammar is defective. Rather, in God’s mind, He was truly creating just one single person. All other persons would “come out of” this one person (including Eve).

In other words, in God’s mind, He saw the entire human race, including you and me, as being ‘in’ Adam. (You can try to picture this in kangaroo-terms. Imagine Adam with an imaginary pouch, carrying the entire human race.)

This is why when Adam became contaminated by sin, all the rest of us, who were ‘in’ Him, also became contaminated by sin.

It would be similar to a kangaroo and its joey. If the kangaroo jumped into a pool of water and got soaked to the skin, the joey inside its pouch would also get soaked automatically.

- When Adam chose to jump into sin and get soaked by it, all of us got soaked as well.

- This is why all of us begin to display a sinful nature from a very young age. A three-year-old tells lies without having been taught ‘how’ to do it ... she automatically sins because she has a sinful nature just like Adam’s.

So because of Adam, all of us became sinful. And according to the Bible, a sinful person can only end up in hell. They can never, ever gain access to heaven.

Romans 5:12: “... sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned ...”

Romans 6:23: “For the wages of sin is death ...”

The Last Adam

Because the First Adam condemned the entire human race to hell, God decided to send a Second Adam.

- God’s idea was that while the First Adam carried all of us into sin, punishment and destruction, the Second Adam would carry all of us into righteousness, blessings and hope.
- Jesus became the Second Adam, and came to live with us on the earth.

First Adam vs. Last Adam

When the First Adam was tempted, he failed. He gave in to the temptation, and Satan gained control over him. In this way, Satan gained control over all the people in Adam’s imaginary pouch as well.

- But when the Last Adam, Jesus, was tempted, He defeated Satan. So Satan could never gain control over Jesus.
- **Hebrews 2:14-15:** “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”

On the Cross, God placed all the humans ‘in’ Jesus. You can try to picture this in kangaroo-terms. Imagine Jesus with an imaginary pouch, carrying the entire human race.

- When Jesus carried the entire human race on the cross, He automatically carried all their dirt as well. All their filthy sins came upon Him.
- **1 Peter 2:24:** “He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”

The punishment for sin is:

1. Death, and
2. Separation from the Heavenly Father.

When Jesus carried us (and our sins), the punishment for sin came upon Him. The Father turned away from Jesus, causing Him to cry out in agony, “My God why have you forsaken me?”

In that moment He couldn’t address God as ‘Father’ because God cannot be the Father of someone carrying the sins of the whole world. A holy God cannot tolerate sin.

Romans 6:23 explains that the wages of sin is death. So, because Jesus was carrying our sins upon Himself, even though He was utterly innocent, He died.

However, death couldn’t hold Jesus captive, because Jesus was utterly innocent. So He was able to resurrect to life once again.

- When Jesus defeated the power of sin and death, and rose to life, He was still carrying all of us in His imaginary pouch.
- So, when He became victorious over sin and death, we too became victorious over sin and death.

Because of what was done on the cross, today each of us sitting in this class, can have victory over sin and temptation. Every one of us, was present inside Jesus’ imaginary pouch, on the cross.

- We were there with Him while He was suffering and paying the punishment for us.
- And we were there with Him when He rose to life once again, defeating sin and death forever.

So now nobody can use the silly excuse that temptation is too powerful to defeat. Jesus gave us this power 2000 years ago, and He expects us to use it every day, to overcome temptation.

No Longer Under Satan’s Control

Last week, we discussed how we are no longer under Satan’s control. Jesus paid the punishment for our wrongdoings. He bought us for Himself by shedding His blood.

- So now we must allow ourselves to be ruled and controlled by Him.
- We must no longer allow ourselves to be ruled and controlled by Satan.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

Romans 6:6-7: “For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.”

According to these verses, we were ‘with’ Christ, when He was crucified. What part of us died on the cross with Jesus?

Our old self was crucified with Him.

What do you think is the “old self” that was crucified? Is it our physical body, our soul or our spirit?

Every human has been created in the image of God. We are spirit-beings just like God.

When Adam sinned, his spirit died. God had warned that he would die if he ate the forbidden fruit. That moment onwards, his spirit died to Godly things. It came under the control of Satan and ungodly things.

On the cross, when Christ was crucified, our sinful spirits were crucified along with Him.

When Christ was resurrected, we too were resurrected with new spirits. So now we have new spirits that are no longer under the control of Satan or sin.

When Christ was resurrected, do you think everybody received a new spirit? If so, shouldn't everybody go to heaven?

Christ carried 'everybody' on the cross.

- Christ paid the punishment for everybody.
- Christ defeated the power of sin and death over everybody.
- Christ designed new spirits for everybody who would like to be set free from their old sinful spirits.

Christ did these things for everybody because everybody in the human race was 'with' Him on the cross.

However, only those who BELIEVE all this is true, will benefit from it.

- They must believe that Jesus alone has defeated sin and death. We must believe that we can have victory over sin and death **only through Him**, by accepting Him and as Lord and Saviour.
- Only such people will receive the new spirit that God has planned for them to have. And only they will enter into heaven.

Only those who BELIEVE and APPLY these truths to their lives will benefit.

- Many Christians say the salvation prayer, but continue allowing sin and Satan to control them. Their actions show that they never really wanted to make Jesus their Lord and Saviour.
- Such Christians will not enter heaven, because they still have the old sinful spirit. A person with a new spirit, cannot continue living in sin week after week, because His new spirit will not allow Him to live in a sinful condition, continually.

1 John 3:9: “No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in Him; they cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.”

Romans 6:11-12: ... **count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.”**

According to these verses, we must “count ourselves dead to sin but alive to God.” What do you think these verses are asking us to do?

According to these verses, we must BELIEVE that the old sin-controlled spirit is dead.

We must BELIEVE that we truly have a new spirit that loves God and wants to obey Him.

We must ACT OUT what we believe, by refusing to sin, every time temptation comes.

Romans 6:13: “Do not offer any part of your body to sin as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer parts of your body to him as an instrument of righteousness.”

According to these verses, what should we do every day?

We must use our mind and body to serve God and honour Him.

- I must allow myself to think only thoughts that would please God. For example, if somebody is rude to me, I must not entertain a grudge against them. With God's help, I must forgive the person and forget what they have done.
- In the same way, I must speak only words that honour God. For example, I must refuse to discuss people behind their backs, and say bad things about them.
- Moreover, I must use my eyes to watch only things that are clean and holy. I must use my ears to listen to only wholesome things. I must use my feet to only go to places that would please God.

In this way, I must use every part of my being to honour God, rather than be controlled by sin or Satan.



APPLICATION

- We must BELIEVE that our sin-controlled spirits died on the cross, along with Jesus.
- We must BELIEVE that when Jesus rose from the dead, we rose up with Him; and He has now given us brand-new spirits that love Him and wish to honour Him.

When we BELIEVE these truths, and accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour, He makes these things a reality in our lives. We will see ourselves having more and more spiritual victories.

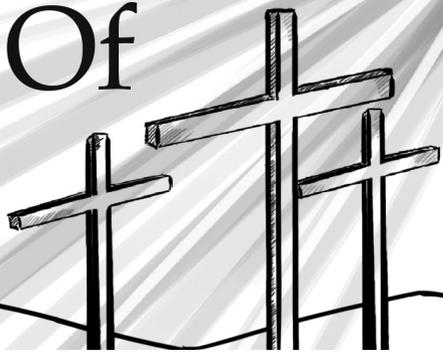
However, God does not force us to honour Him. If we make a conscious choice to continue offering our minds and bodies to Satan and sin, they will continue to control us. The choice is ours!



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



The Cross Of *Christ*



From the Cross to the Throne



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that Jesus is now our High Priest.
- To explain the role of human priests, and Jesus' Special Role today.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Exodus 25:8; Romans 2:4, 8:34; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 4:15
(Jesus Our High Priest)



MEMORY VERSE

Hebrews 4:15: "For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin."



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- How did the First Adam harm us? How did the Second Adam repair the damage done?
- This week, did you “think of yourself as dead to the power” of any particular sin? Give examples.
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Hebrews 2:14).



INTRODUCTION

After sacrificing Himself on the cross for us and returning to heaven, Jesus did not forget us. He continues to work on our behalf even today. We will now study in what way Jesus is ministering to us at present.

Note to the Facilitator

Jesus is seated at the right-hand of God today; and in His current position of King of Kings He is still ministering to us. Will study certain specific aspects of this ministry during this session:

- **Primary Level:** Jesus is our advocate.
- **Junior Level:** Jesus is our high priest.
- **Senior Level:** Jesus is our intercessor and mediator.



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: No Entry

The Student Workbook shows a house with two doors. Which door should be used to enter the building? The door to the right OR the door to the left?

The Notices on the two doors are written in code. Each number depicts an alphabet:

- 1=A, 2=B, 3=C, and so on.

The first student to correctly identify the door which permits entry, is the winner. The winner must be able to explain what each of the 'Notices' say.

Answers: The first door says "Entry Barred." The second door says "Enter Please."

Discuss

Have you noticed Parks in the city with a "No Entry" Sign nailed to the gate? Yet we see people eagerly climbing the fences to gain entry.

On the other hand, have you noticed that graveyards generally don't have any "No Entry" Sign nailed to the gate? Yet very few people bother to go in.

Why do you think people are so eager to enter forbidden parks, but reluctant to enter a graveyard with open gates???

(Ask the children for their opinions. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.)

Explain

People hesitate to enter certain places ... even when there are no gates to block their entry ... because they sense danger in that place.

We see one such place mentioned in the Old Testament. Nobody dared to enter into that particular room.

Can you guess which room this was?

(Clue: We discussed this place three weeks ago in Lesson 2 of the Cross Module—"Jesus Talked About the Cross.")



TEACHING CONTENT

In the Old Testament, God said to Moses, have them (the Israelites) make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them (Exodus 25:8).

We studied some of the details about this sanctuary in Lesson 2. As we already know, the main temple building was divided into two portions—the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. A heavy curtain, four inches thick, separated the two portions and served as a boundary.

Nobody dared to cross this boundary line, or even take a peek through the heavy curtain, because God’s holy presence dwelt inside the Most Holy Place. The burning fire of His holiness would automatically consume anything unholy entering this area. So nobody ever dared to enter.

The four-inch thick curtain was like a “NO ENTRY” sign which no one wished to disobey!

The High Priest

Only one person was permitted to enter the Most Holy Place.

Just once a year, the High Priest was allowed to enter God’s awesome presence, so that he could offer the blood of the Atonement sacrifice before God. He had to make very careful preparations for this solemn occasion. He had to wash himself, put on special clothing, bring burning incense to let the smoke cover his eyes from a direct view of God, and bring blood with him to make atonement for sins.

How do you think it felt to be the only living person on earth allowed to cross the heavy “No Entry” curtain and walk inside?

Ask

Why do you think God gave the High Priest this special privilege?

- Was it because the High Priest was a more holy man than the others?
- Was it because God loved the High Priest more than He loved the others?

Why do you think he was given this special privilege?

(Ask the children for their opinions.)

Explain

The High Priest probably led a more godly life than others; but no human is completely sinless. Moreover, God loves all people equally and does not show partiality to a few.

So in reality, the High Priest was given this special privilege only because he had a very important job to do.

To put it simply, it was the High Priest's job to keep the Israelites alive!

Understanding the High Priest's Role

God made a commitment to live in the Jerusalem Temple, among the people of Israel.

However God is absolutely holy. He cannot tolerate even a trace of sinfulness.

On the other hand, the millions of Israelites living in and around Jerusalem probably sinned almost every day, due to their sinful human nature. How do you think they managed to survive in the presence of such a holy God? Why didn't He wipe them out?

The only reason God spared their lives every day is because the High Priest faithfully offered sacrifices on behalf of the people every morning and every evening. This was his main duty!

He also sincerely performed all the other sacrifices that were required for the Sabbath days and other special days.

Over and above all these regular sacrifices, he was also required to make the Atonement Sacrifice once a year. On this special day, he was permitted to enter the Most Holy Place and sprinkle a few drops of the sin offering before God.

In this way, God maintained His peace with the people, and didn't destroy them for all their sinfulness.

Day of Jesus' Crucifixion

We don't have detailed records of what took place on the day of Jesus' Crucifixion, but based on the Scriptures, we can form quite a clear picture of the series of events that unfolded that day.

Evening Sacrifice at the Temple

Jerusalem was very crowded that particular weekend because it was the Passover Week. People had even travelled from foreign countries, to attend this important annual festival.

As a result, a large group was gathered in the temple courtyard that day, waiting for the Daily Evening Sacrifice to begin ... only it didn't seem like an "Evening" Sacrifice, because there was no setting sun in the sky. A totally unexpected solar eclipse had snuffed out all the sunlight in the afternoon, and so now the "Evening" Sacrifice was taking place in darkness.

Outside the city gates, the crucifixion of Jesus was in progress; and many had gone there to watch. But the more religious folks, especially visitors from outside, had stayed back for the Evening Sacrifice.

At the appointed time, two priests went into the Holy Place, to trim the lamps and prepare the incense altar. The High Priest, in the meantime, readied the sacrificial lamb, tying it securely to the altar. Even as he raised his knife and plunged it into the neck of the lamb, outside the city gates, Jesus gave up his spirit and died.

Inside the Holy Place, the priests were quietly going about their work, careful as always not to go anywhere near the “boundary line” (the curtain dividing the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place). Suddenly, they heard a loud ripping noise, and watched in shock even as some invisible force began to tear open the four-inch curtain, right from the top, down to the bottom. Before they could recover from the shock of this supernatural happening, the ground under their feet began to shake. Terrified, they stumbled out into the courtyard, even as the gathered worshipers scattered in panic.

The Torn Curtain

History doesn’t record what the priests did with the torn curtain. We don’t know whether they repaired it, or got themselves a new curtain instead.

The wise thing, of course, would have been to ask God WHY the curtain tore, and learn from the experience. However, the religious leaders tried to cover up the truth rather than learn from it.

The Truth About the Torn Curtain

The simple truth proclaimed by the torn curtain was that people no longer needed a human High Priest to represent them before God. In other words, Caiaphas, the High Priest, was no longer needed.

As we discussed earlier, the High Priest’s main job was to offer sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. Once a year, he was allowed to go into God’s presence behind the curtain, to offer the blood of the Atonement sacrifice to God. Because of these sacrifices, God was willing to forgive the sins of the Israelites.

However, after Jesus sacrificed His life on the cross, the need for a human High Priest ceased.

- Caiaphas used to offer animals as sacrifices. But when Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice, He became a more perfect sacrifice than any animal could ever be.

- In fact, Jesus' sacrifice was so perfect that the sins of the whole world were completely forgiven! And because they were completely forgiven, people were no longer separated from God. And because they were no longer separated from Him, there was no need to separate Himself from them using a four-inch curtain.
- In other words, God tore the curtain open to declare that anybody and everybody could now directly come to Him. They no longer needed Caiaphas or any other High Priest to represent them. Instead they could meet with God personally, on their own!

In this way, Jesus took Caiaphas' place, and became our High Priest in heaven.

Romans 8:34 says, "... Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."

It is as if Jesus is constantly reminding the Father, "I took the punishment for X (name of a student in the class) on the cross, and died in his/her place. So now, I request you to bless this person in every way and answer all their prayers."

If a mere human High Priest, especially a corrupt one like Caiaphas, was able to keep the Jews forgiven and alive, imagine what a High Priest like Jesus can accomplish for us today! If Jesus is personally interceding for each of us, then what rich hope we have!



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

God tore open the curtain to show that everybody is forgiven, and everybody can now directly go to God.

Does this mean all the people of the world are now spiritually saved?

Because of Jesus' perfect sacrifice everybody in the world was forgiven. Romans 2:4 explains 'why' God forgave everyone in this generous manner ... forgiving even evil people who had cruelly murdered innocent persons.

Romans 2:4: "Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?"

God forgave all people so that everybody would have a chance to live in a new and different way. God forgave people so that He could give them the power to live a pure and holy life.

1 Peter 2:24: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness ..."

However, many people are not interested in obeying God or living holy lives. They just want a ticket to heaven. God's forgiveness does not apply to such people, because they have no desire to change.

So, God's forgiveness covers only those who come to Jesus and make a commitment to follow Him the rest of their lives.

Romans 8:34 says that Jesus is 'interceding' for us at God's throne. What exactly does this mean? Does it mean He is sitting at the right hand of God, saying prayers for us?

As we learnt earlier, the High Priests' main task was to offer sacrifices on behalf of the Israelites. Each morning and evening, God looked at the sacrifices being offered and forgave the people. And because the people were forgiven, they received help and answers to prayer.

Now we don't offer animal sacrifices anymore because of Jesus' work on the cross. Jesus, who is seated at the right hand of God, constantly reminds the Father that all of us stand forgiven as a result of His sacrifice. On the basis of this forgiveness, Jesus requests the Father

to help us in our daily lives, and answer all our prayers.

So the answer is ‘yes.’ Jesus does pray for us every moment of every day. What a comforting thought this is!

Hebrews 4:15 says, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin ...”

What does ‘sympathizing’ mean? Does it mean that Jesus feels sorry for us?

According to this verse, Jesus understands the hardships of life.

- He knows how ordinary people like us feel when we are faced with serious problems, because He too experienced many serious problems.
- He knows how it feels when big temptations attack us, because He too encountered similar temptations.
- He knows the pain of being ill-treated, the struggle involved in showing love to unloving people, and the sufferings of poverty.

Because Jesus experienced each of these things first-hand, He knows exactly the kind of help we need when facing different circumstances. So when we pray to God, He intercedes on our behalf, and obtains for us from the Father, exactly the kind of help that we need.

So He ‘sympathizes’ with us in the sense that, He knows exactly what to ask the Father for us, in each specific situation.



APPLICATION

We have learnt to day that Jesus, as our High Priest, presents our prayer requests before the Father, and obtains for us the help we need. But that isn’t all that He presents before the Father. He also places our worship before the Father.

Has Jesus ever presented praise and worship before God and declared, “This has been specially presented to you by ‘X’ (name of a student), or by ‘Y’ (name of another student).”

Or have you always provided Jesus with only long “shopping lists” of prayer requests.

Have you ever made the Father feel like saying, “Jesus, you have brought me another list of prayers from X. But didn’t she send me any worship? Not even a few words of thanks?”

God forgave us and made us His children. He tore the curtain that separated us from His holy presence, so that we could directly go to Him. Now even as He eagerly waits for us to come to Him, let us go into His presence with not just shopping lists, but also abundant amounts of deep gratitude, love, praise and worship.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



The Cross Of *Christ*

Blessings of the Cross



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that we have forgiveness and healing only because of Jesus' sacrifice.
- To explain the connection between forgiveness and healing.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Matthew 8:5-16; Isaiah 53:4-6; Mark 16:16-18 (Forgiveness and Healing)



MEMORY VERSE

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



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- In what way does Jesus ‘intercede’ for us at God’s throne?
- How many of you spent time in worshipping God this week? Why is it important to do so?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Hebrews 4:15).



INTRODUCTION

The four Gospels of the New Testament describe various benefits that are ours because of Christ’s sacrificial death. Each Gospel highlights some blessing that the atonement brings, and together they give us a complete picture of what Christ accomplished for us. Today, we will look at one of these blessings in greater detail.

Note to the Facilitator

What blessings and what benefits do you and I receive from what happened on the cross?

We will discuss certain specific blessings at each of the three levels:

- **Primary Level:** The blessings of Abraham.
- **Junior Level:** Forgiveness of sins; Healing from sickness and disease.
- **Senior Level:** New Covenant with better promises; Wholeness.



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: Who’s the Boss?

Ask

Let’s assume for a moment that you ask your School Principal to clean the desks. What do you think his/her response would be?

(Ask the children for their responses.)

Explain

You must have noticed that usually it's the people at the top who give orders. Those at the lower levels have to obey these orders.

For example in a **School**, the levels of authority will be as follows:

Principal [1]

|

Teachers [2]

|

Students [3]

- The teachers take orders from the Principal and give orders to the students.
- The students, on the other hand, cannot give orders to either the Principal or the teachers!

Can you guess who gives orders to whom:

- In the Army
- In a Private Company
- In the Police Force

Instructions: Ask the children to complete the “Who’s-the-Boss Worksheet” in the Student Workbook. They must number the officers in the order of importance (The number can be entered in the given bracket). The highest officer is ‘1.’ The most-junior person is ‘3.’

Clues

Army: General > Captain > Jawan

Private Company: Executive President > General Director > Manager

Police Force: Police Commissioner > Inspector > Constable



TEACHING CONTENT

Story: Jesus Heals the Centurion's Servant (Matthew 8:5-16)

One day Jesus was entering the city of Capernaum. A Centurion in the town whose servant was very sick came to Jesus asking for help. A Centurion was a Roman soldier, a person who was in charge of a 100 soldiers and lots of servants.

The Centurion told Jesus that his servant was paralysed and was suffering terribly. Jesus told him that He would go to his house and heal him.

The Centurion told Jesus, "Lord I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed." For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

When Jesus heard this, He was amazed! He turned to the people with Him and said, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith."

When the Centurion returned to the house, he found his servant well! Jesus had healed the centurion's servant even without going into the house.

Many Others Were Healed

Immediately after this miracle, Jesus went to Peter's home. There, He healed Peter's mother-in-law and made her completely well. Then, in the evening, many people with demons in them were brought to Jesus. And with only a word He forced out the evil spirits and healed everyone who was sick.

Matthew records all these healings in His Gospel. Then He concludes by saying:

“This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: ‘He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases’ (Matthew 8:17).

Fulfillment of Isaiah’s Prophecy

More than 700 years before Jesus was born, Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would come to forgive our sins and heal our diseases:

Isaiah: 53:4-6: “Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. 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.”

This prophesy was fulfilled when Jesus came to the earth 700 years later. Wherever He went, people began to be healed!

Do we have the Authority to heal today?

Sickness and disease entered the world when Adam sinned. When Adam sinned, he gave authority to Satan to harm him and his descendants. In this way, Satan gained control over the whole human race, and made them suffer in countless ways.

When Jesus was born into the world as a human being, Satan tried to make Jesus sin too (because Jesus would come under Satan’s authority and control if He sinned). However Jesus did not sin even once! So Satan could never gain control over Jesus.

This sinless and perfect Jesus sacrificed Himself on the cross, and took the punishment for your sins and my sins upon Himself. Because He was sinless and perfect, the Father accepted His sacrifice and forgave all of us sinful human beings.

So now that we have been forgiven, Satan cannot control us anymore. He cannot inflict us with sickness and disease any longer.

Now we have the authority to rebuke sickness and disease, every time Satan tries to bring it upon us.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

If God has forgiven us, and Satan no longer has authority over us, then why are so many Christians suffering from diseases?

When Adam sinned, Satan gained authority over humans and began inflicting sickness upon them.

So the Key Culprit is 'SIN.' Whenever we entertain sin in our lives, Satan regains control over us. And He uses this to bring sickness into our lives ... so that we will be weak and sick, and not be able to fulfill God's purposes for our lives.

So some Christians are sick because they have allowed Satan to gain 'control' through some sin or the other.

On the other hand, many other Christians are sick simply because they don't know that they have the authority to defeat sickness.

According to the Roman Centurion, sickness left whenever Jesus ordered it to leave, because Jesus is the Boss. Sickness has to obey Jesus' orders. But why would sickness take orders from us. Do we have any authority over it?

In Mark 16:16-18 Jesus said, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; ... they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

So after forgiving us of all our sins, Jesus gave us the authority to overcome the works of Satan. Therefore, in the same way that sickness had to obey Jesus' orders, it has to now obey our orders when we speak out these orders in Jesus' Name, using Jesus' authority.

What are some things that could block healing in our lives?

Some factors that may block healing:

- Unbelief (Doubt that Jesus' work on the Cross applies to me personally).
- Generational Curses (Sometimes curses get passed down from one generation to the next. These need to be consciously cancelled in Jesus' Name).
- Hidden unconfessed sins.
- Unforgiveness in our hearts.

What if I pray for healing for an entire month and nothing happens? Does this mean God doesn't want to heal me?

When Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the whole world, He died for my sins too. So, when I confessed and repented of my sins, and committed myself to live under His Lordship and Covering, He forgave ALL my sins—my past, present and future sins.

Now, as a result of what Christ did on the Cross:

- Hell cannot have a hold on me anymore. When I die, I will go to heaven to be with Jesus.
- Sickness and disease cannot have a hold on me either. Jesus already took all of my sicknesses (including my incurable disease) upon the cross, and DEFEATED them.

So the simple Biblical truth is that Jesus got me both Salvation and Healing through His victory on the cross. If I believe that Jesus wants me to have Salvation, I must also believe that He wants me to have Healing.

It would be foolish for me to **accept Jesus' salvation** and **reject Jesus' healing**. He got me **BOTH** on the cross. Why should I reject one of them?



APPLICATION

Are we claiming the healing that is ours in Christ, on a daily basis? We must do so.

Also, identify some people who are down with sickness, and share these wonderful truths with them.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



The Cross Of *Christ*

The Way of the Cross



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explain the difference between a Friend of the Cross and Enemy of the Cross.
- To show that when we love the world, the love of God cannot be in us.
- To warn that Enemies of the Cross are headed for hell.



SCRIPTURE PORTIONS

Philippians 3:18-19; 1 John 2:15-16 (Who are Enemies of the Cross?)



MEMORY VERSE

1 John 2:15: “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Can you recollect any of the truths that we learnt about healing?
- What if I pray for healing for an entire month and nothing happens? Does this mean God doesn't want to heal me?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Isaiah 53:5).



INTRODUCTION

Over the last few weeks we have been studying the Cross of Christ in great detail. Jesus died on the Cross so that He could wash away our filthy sins and clothe us in His Robe of Righteousness. He made “direct contact” with God possible. He has redeemed us and delivered us from Satan’s control. These are some of the benefits we enjoy because of the Cross.

Today, we will look at what our response and responsibility should be towards this Cross. When God has done so much for us, what can we do for Him in return?

Note to the Facilitator

How does the Cross affect our daily lives? We will look at some of the challenges that we need to take up for God, in showing our gratitude to Him. Different points will be covered at different levels:

- **Primary Level:** Separation from the world; Not crucifying Christ once again.
- **Junior Level:** Living as a Friend of the Cross rather than its Enemy.
- **Senior Level:** Willingness to Suffer for God.



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: Dangerous Flock

The Student Workbook contains the picture of a flock of sheep. The discussion questions are based on this picture of “wolves in sheep’s clothing.”

Discussion Questions

- What do you think is wrong with this flock of sheep?
- Is this flock safe? What danger exists?
- Why do you think there is any danger involved? Aren’t the wolves sincerely trying to be sheep?
- Is it really possible for a wolf to become a sheep? Yes or No? Why?

Explain

However hard a wolf may try to behave like a sheep, it’s not possible for it to *always* behave like a sheep. Some day when the shepherd isn’t around, and a plump, juicy lamb is standing next to it, what are the chances that the wolf will be able to resist the temptation???

Deep down in the heart of a wolf, its deepest love is for lamb chops! Wolves love lambs the way some people love chicken and mutton. And usually the heart rules! Where the heart goes, the rest of the person ultimately follows!



TEACHING CONTENT

Enemy or Friend?

In Philippians 3:18, Paul says, “... as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.”

Paul warns that not everybody in the church is really a sheep belonging to Jesus the Shepherd. He describes them as follows:

- “Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things” (Philippians 3:19).

According to this verse:

- The Enemy-Christians are mainly interested in satisfying their own desires—not God's desires.
- The Enemy-Christians' main focus is on worldly things—not on the things of God.
- The Enemy-Christians are proud of some of the sinful things they are doing, and do not like to be corrected.

Paul describes these Christians as “enemies of the cross.”

Are You A Secret Enemy?

The question we need to ask ourselves is: Am I truly a friend of the cross or am I a secret enemy?

- Most of the time, do I do what pleases God, or what pleases me?
- Do I find worldly things more attractive and interesting than the things of God?
- Have I been corrected many times for doing something sinful, but am still happy to continue doing it?

If any of these points are true about my life, I may be a secret enemy of the cross—not its friend.

Wolf-Christians

A wolf in sheep's clothing looks almost exactly like a sheep. It may get so used to talking like a sheep and walking like a sheep that it almost forgets that it's a wolf.

However as mentioned earlier, deep down in the heart of a wolf, its deepest love is for lamb chops! One day this 'love' for lamb chops will cause the wolf to show its true colours.

Many Christians are like this. They talk like Christians and behave like Christians whenever they happen to be in a Christian gathering.

But deep down in their hearts, their deepest love is for the things of this world. And where the heart is, the rest of the person follows.

This is why 1 John 2:15-16 says, “ ... If **anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**” For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.”

If I love the world more than I love the things of God, then I am really a wolf. I may sing Christian songs and pray beautiful prayers in public, but deep down in my heart, I’m a wolf with wolf-desires. I’m an enemy of the cross, and this enmity against God will show up in the worldly choices I make.

Why Their Destiny is Hell

Paul bluntly says about the enemies of the cross that “Their destiny is destruction” (Philippians 3:19). Paul is essentially saying in this verse that such people will go to hell!

Why is He speaking so harshly?

You see, a true Christian no longer has a wolf heart. God takes out his wolf-heart and gives him a new heart that loves God. Such a Christian may feel strongly attracted to sinful things on many occasions; he may in fact yield to temptation and fall sometimes.

But every time, the Holy Spirit within will convict him of his sin, and urge him to repentance. Gradually he will find himself changing. He will notice that worldly things don't seem as attractive as they used to earlier. This change happens because God has placed a new heart within him.

However, on the other hand, some people simply say a salvation prayer and do not make any real commitment to Jesus. They put on sheep’s clothing in the sense that they start talking and acting like Christians. But deep down inside, their desires and attitudes have not changed. They focus on doing what pleases them—not on what pleases God. There is no real change in their choices and decisions; they continue to live in sin.

If this is true about any of us seated in this class, we need to cry out to Jesus to save us from our sins! He will hear our cry and take away our wolf-hearts. He will place a new heart inside us that loves God and feels bad when it fails to please Him.

- We do not become Christians by talking or acting like other Christians.
- We become Christians only when God takes out the wolf-heart that loves sin, and replaces it with a new heart.

That's why true Christians are called 'born-again.' They are created into a new person and think differently from the people of the world.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

According to Philippians 3:19, what are the three qualities of an Enemy Christian?

- The Enemy-Christians are mainly interested in satisfying their own desires—not God's desires.
- The Enemy-Christians' main focus is on worldly things—not the things of God.
- The Enemy-Christians are proud of some of the sinful things they're doing, and do not like to be corrected.

What do you think is the main difference between a true Christian and an enemy Christian?

A true Christian is one whose heart has been changed by God. He is able to start changing and becoming more like Christ.

An enemy Christian, on the other hand, pretends to be a Christian by talking and acting like a real Christian. But his heart has not been changed by God. So he continues to love worldly things more than

God. And given a choice between pleasing God and pleasing himself, he will choose to please himself.

If a Christian commits a sin, does this mean he is an Enemy? Does it mean he never got truly saved?

A person who accepts Jesus as Lord and Savior is like a new-born child. He has to start learning how to live like Christ.

So in the beginning he may fall a lot (the same way a baby falls a lot while learning to walk for the first time). But gradually as the months go by, the Christian begins to grow stronger. He is able to defeat temptation more and more, and he actually begins to find sinful things very unpleasant and uncomfortable. He no longer feels comfortable doing such things. He starts changing into a new person.

So if a person sins, it doesn't automatically prove that he isn't a born-again believer. But if no visible changes can be seen in his lifestyle and choices even after many months, if he continues to live freely in regular habitual sin, maybe he should make sure whether or not he got truly saved.

If a person is unable to give up a sinful habit, does this mean he is a secret enemy or wolf-Christian?

Some people genuinely become Christians, but they don't grow after that.

This is because they do not bother to meditate on the Word of God and renew their old thinking. They continue to watch and listen to 'unchristian' things that portray unbiblical values, and hang out with unchristian people.

In other words, they meditate day and night on what the world is teaching, rather than meditate on what God is teaching in His Word. So instead of becoming like God, they continue to be like the world.

If this continues for a longer duration, they may even begin to love the world more than God. They become Satan's prisoners, addicted to some sin or temptation. And ultimately they turn their backs on God and become enemies of the cross.

So yes, a person unable to give up a sinful habit will ultimately turn into an Enemy of the Cross, if they choose not to feed on God's Word and allow it to change them.



APPLICATION

We have seen clearly that the 'heart' of a person determines whether he is a friend or enemy of the cross. Wherever the heart is, there the rest of the person follows.

So, ask yourself whether you truly became a Christian or not.

- Did you cry out to Jesus to forgive your sins and give you a new heart?
- Did you make a sincere commitment to serve Him only, and not serve sin anymore?

If you are indeed a 'born-again' Christian with a new heart, then begin to grow in God. Are you practicing the 7 essential steps that are needed to grow as a Christian?

- Step 1: Establish a Quiet Time
- Step 2: Pray
- Step 3: Make Christian Friends
- Step 4: Find a Church
- Step 5: Learn to Give/Serve
- Step 6: Memorise God's Word
- Step 7: Find an Accountability Friend

Even as you sincerely follow these steps, you will observe your love for God beginning to increase. Then you will be able to have much greater victory over sin and temptation.

Choose to be a Friend of the Cross—not its enemy!



CLOSE WITH PRAYER

