

# Lent 4

## The Death of Christ



**Key Scriptures:** Matthew 27:27-61

**Big Idea:** Jesus' sacrificial death gave us freedom from sin.

### Teaching Points:

+ Jesus was crowned with thorns and crucified.

Jesus the King of kings, and Lord of lords, endured the mocking of sinful men and death on the cross so that we might be saved (Heb. 12:2). The soldiers gave Jesus a crown of thorns, a scarlet robe, and a staff. They struck Jesus on the head. This was no surprise to Jesus; he knew the fate that awaited him (Is. 53:3-4).

After this suffering, Jesus was nailed to the cross and crucified. A sign was placed over His head that announced His title as "King of the Jews" (Mat.27:37). The soldiers cast lots for His clothing, and a crowd gathered to mock Him. Jesus endured crucifixion on our behalf. It was a terrible way to be executed. If the legs of a person crucified were not broken, it might take days to die an agonizing death. Once the legs of a person were broken, they could no longer support their weight to lift themselves and breathe.

+ Jesus died and was buried.

While Jesus suffered on the cross, Matthew 27:46 records that he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" For all eternity past, Jesus enjoyed sweet fellowship with his Father. Now the Father poured out His full wrath upon Christ for our sin, forsaking His Son upon the cross. John 19:30 adds that just before he died, Jesus said, "It is finished," signifying that the wrath of the Father had been fully poured out. The death of Christ was marked by earthquakes, the tearing of the temple curtain, and the resurrections of many. Those watching were terrified, some now realizing that Jesus was, indeed, the Son of God (Mat. 27:54). John 19:33 records that soldiers did not break Jesus' legs, for he was already dead. Instead they pierced His side with a spear. Joseph of Arimathea buried Jesus in his own new tomb.

### Gospel Connection:

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

The death of Christ is the heart of the Gospel. "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness for our sins" (Heb. 9:22). Jesus was the Lamb of God who was slain so that we could be forgiven for our sins. God showed us His love by Christ dying for us, even though we were still sinners. Now, since His blood has justified us, many people will be saved from the wrath of God.

As Jesus was dying, darkness came over the whole land. At the moment of His death, the temple curtain was torn in two. This curtain separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, which blocked men from the presence of God. With Jesus' death, the curtain was torn top to bottom, and the way between man and God was opened. John records this happening right before Jesus died and said, "It is finished." The wrath of God was poured on Jesus, and the way to God was opened. When Jesus cried out, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!", these words were not just for Himself; they were for all those who are "in Christ" by faith.

## **Object Lesson**

### All Our Sins Were Nailed to the Cross

#### *Supplies:*

- + paper cross posted on the wall
- + sticky notes – one for each child
- + pencils or pens

This exercise will remind the children that Jesus died for their sins personally.

Ask the children how many of them think they are sinners. Explain that Jesus is their only hope for the forgiveness of sin. Pass out the sticky notes, one to each child. Tell them to write the word SIN on their sticky note while they think of one way that they have sinned. (Use this time to remind/explain what sin is.) Explain that if they place their hope and trust in Jesus' sacrifice as atonement for their sins, they can be forgiven.

Tell them that Christ's sacrifice on the cross is sufficient to pay the penalty for all of our sins. Have them carry their sin up to the cross and affix it there. Ask the class what happens when we ask God to take away our sins when we trust in Jesus.

Do not call for a public response to the gospel; children can be too easily manipulated or eager to please. But if a child indicates their desire to trust Christ, make sure their parents (if they are Christians) know and you can all pray with them.

**Remember to take time and**

# **Pray**

### **Lent Meaning/Description:**

Today is the fourth week of our remembrance time of Lent.

"God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life." Rom. 5:8-10