

DISCOVERING CHRIST

Lesson 2 — Why Did Jesus Come?

The Big Question: Why did Jesus come into the world?

Purpose of This Study

In our first study, we asked the most important question: **Who is Jesus?**

We saw that the Bible presents Jesus as far more than a good man or religious teacher. He is the Word who became flesh, the Son of God, the Messiah, Creator, and Lord.

But that raises another question: **If Jesus really is the Son of God, why did He come to earth?**

Why would the Creator enter His creation?

Why would the Son of God become flesh?

Why would Jesus willingly suffer and die?

The answer takes us directly to the heart of the gospel.

1. DISCUSSION STARTER: “Why Would Someone Do That?”

Think of a time when someone went out of their way to help another person. Maybe they sacrificed their time, money, comfort, plans, or even took a risk to help someone else. What makes a person willing to make that kind of sacrifice?

What if the person receiving the help couldn't repay you? Would that change your willingness to help?

Most of us can understand sacrificing for someone we love. But the story of Jesus is much more remarkable. Jesus did not come because humanity had earned His help. He came because **God loved people who needed saving**. So tonight we're going to ask: **Why did Jesus come?**

2. JESUS CAME TO SEEK AND SAVE

This is the story of Zacchaeus. As we read, watch for what Jesus was doing that was different from what the crowd expected.

Read Luke 19:1–10

Discussion Questions

1. What do we learn about Zacchaeus in verses 1–4?
2. Why do you think Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus?
3. What did Jesus do when He reached the tree?
4. How did the crowd react to Jesus going to Zacchaeus' house?
5. What does verse 7 reveal about the way the crowd viewed Zacchaeus?

6. What does Zacchaeus' response in verse 8 tell us about what was happening in his heart?
7. What does Jesus say in verse 9?
8. Now look carefully at verse 10. What does Jesus say was His purpose?

Key Observation

Jesus says: **“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”**

According to Jesus Himself, why did He come?

Personal Reflection

What does the word “lost” suggest about the condition of a person who is separated from God?

3. JESUS CAME BECAUSE GOD LOVES

As we read the text together, ask yourself:

Who loved? Who was loved? What did that love lead God to do?

Read John 3:16–17

Discussion Questions

1. Who does John say loved the world?
2. How much did God love the world?
3. What did God do because of that love?
4. Why do you think John emphasizes God's gift of His Son?
5. According to verse 17, why did God send His Son into the world?
6. What does verse 16 tell us about the relationship between God's love and salvation?
7. What does it mean to “believe in” the Son?
8. What does Jesus say happens to the person who believes?
9. Why is it important that Jesus came not simply to condemn the world but to save it?

Christianity begins with God's love. We did not persuade God to love us.

We did not become worthy enough for God to send Jesus. **God loved, and because He loved, He gave.**

What does that tell you about God's attitude toward people who are far away from Him?

Do you think God has changed his mind about those he loves? After all, John 3 was written over 2000 years ago. We somewhat believe everything changes, but has God changed the way he loves?

4. JESUS CAME TO SERVE

Read Mark 10:35–45

Discussion Questions

1. What did James and John want from Jesus?
2. What does their request reveal about their understanding of greatness?
3. How did the other disciples react?
4. What does Jesus say about the way worldly rulers exercise authority?
5. How does Jesus say His followers should be different?
6. Now look at verse 45. What does Jesus say about His own purpose?
7. What does the phrase **“the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve”** tell us about Jesus?
8. What does He mean by saying that He came **“to give his life as a ransom for many”**?

Discussion

What is the difference between someone who wants to be served and someone who comes to serve?

What does it tell us about Jesus that He willingly chose the second?

Key Thought: Jesus didn't come demanding that humanity serve Him first. **He came serving humanity.** And His service ultimately led Him to give His own life.

5. JESUS CAME TO DIE FOR US

We've talked about God's love and Jesus' willingness to serve. Now Paul explains just how extraordinary that love really was.

Read Romans 5:6–11

Discussion Questions

1. How does Paul describe humanity in verse 6?
2. What does verse 7 suggest about how unusual it is for someone to die for another person?
3. What makes God's love different according to verse 8?
4. When did Christ die for us?
5. Were we already good enough when Christ died for us?
6. What does Paul mean by saying Christ died for sinners?
7. According to verse 9, what does Christ's blood accomplish?
8. According to verse 10, what were we before being reconciled to God?
9. What does “reconciled” mean in this context?
10. According to verse 11, what is the result of being reconciled to God?

Important Observation

Paul doesn't say Christ died because we were already worthy. He says: **“While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”**

Why is that statement so powerful?

Key Thought: The cross is not God's response to people who had made themselves worthy. It is God's expression of love toward people who needed saving.

6. WHAT DID JESUS ACCOMPLISH THROUGH THE CROSS?

Read: 1 Peter 2:24

Questions

1. Who bore our sins?
2. What does “bore our sins” mean?
3. What does Peter say Jesus accomplished by doing this?
4. What does it mean to “die to sins”?
5. What does Peter mean by “**live for righteousness**”?
6. How does this verse connect Jesus' death with a changed life?

Connect the Thought: Jesus didn't merely come to teach us how to live. He came to deal with the problem that stood between us and God. **Our problem was sin. Jesus became the answer to that problem.**

7. THE GOSPEL IN ITS SIMPLEST FORM

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1–4

What are the central events he identifies?

Discussion Questions

1. What does Paul say he preached?
2. What had the Corinthians received?
3. What does Paul say Christ did “**for our sins**”?
4. What are the central events Paul identifies as a part of the gospel?
5. What happened to Jesus after His death?
6. Why is the resurrection essential to the gospel?
7. What does Paul mean when he says Christ was raised according to the Scriptures?

JESUS DIED

↓

FOR OUR SINS

↓

HE WAS BURIED

↓

HE WAS RAISED

If you had only a few sentences to explain Christianity to someone who knew nothing about it, why would these facts be at the center of your explanation?

8. WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?

What have we discovered?

Luke 19:10 - Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

John 3:16–17 - Jesus came because God loved the world.

Mark 10:45 - Jesus came to serve and give His life as a ransom.

Romans 5:6–11 - Jesus died for us while we were still sinners.

1 Peter 2:24 - Jesus bore our sins so that we might live differently.

1 Corinthians 15:1–4 - Jesus died, was buried, and was raised according to the Scriptures.

9. PERSONAL REFLECTIONS:

1. Why do you think the Bible describes people as “lost”?
 2. What does it mean that Jesus died **for our sins**?
 3. How does knowing that Jesus willingly died for sinners affect the way you think about Him?
 4. Does God's love mean that sin doesn't matter? Why or why not?
 5. If Jesus came to save people from sin, what does that suggest about how seriously God takes sin?
 6. What do you think God wants people to understand when they look at the cross?
 7. Which passage tonight speaks most strongly to me? Why?
 8. If Jesus really came to seek and save the lost, what does that mean for someone who recognizes that he or she is lost?
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11. CLOSING THOUGHT

In our first study, we asked, “Who is Jesus?”

Tonight we've asked, “Why did Jesus come?”

The answer is both simple and profound.

Jesus came because we were lost.

Jesus came because God loves us.

Jesus came to serve us.

Jesus came to bear our sins.

Jesus came to die.

And Jesus came to rise again.

But there is one question we haven't answered yet. If Jesus came to save the lost, **what exactly are we being saved from?** And perhaps even more importantly: **Why do we need to be saved in the first place?** That's where we'll go in our next study.
