11/01/26 Message

Part of FollowJourney of Discipleship
October 31, 2026

Message: Why the Cross

Series: Follow

Background

> *I'm approaching this series as if we are all in the same stage of our journey with Jesus, at the beginning. For some, this will be a review, but for most it will be a guide for what comes next. For all of us, if we'll let God work in and through us, we'll grow closer to Jesus and each other.*
>
> *—Pastor Chad*

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)
19 "Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

> *It's a circle of life with Jesus at the center. When you jump on the circle, it should be your goal to reach out and grab everyone you can and pull them on the circle with you. There's a lot more to it, but it's a great illustration. When you commit your life to Jesus and you commit to following Jesus, then you become His disciple. It's like being a student. You're only a student as long as you choose to be. That's the problem with this thing we call the spiritual journey. So many of us choose Jesus when we need Him, but when life is good, we forget all about Him. We stop being a student!*
>
> *—Pastor Chad*

- The spiritual journey is intended to be a LIFELONG commitment where you start and never stop.

The Cross is Central to Our Faith

> *In the first century, the cross wasn't beautiful. It was a place of torture, humiliation, execution. It was our modern-day electric chair. The term crucifixion is an ancient method of capital punishment where a condemned person is tied or nailed to a large wooden cross or beam and left to hang until they died. The Romans used crucifixion to punish criminals in a very public way to demonstrate their power. The cross represented suffering, shame, and death. But today, the cross represents forgiveness, hope, salivation, and life! To understand how a method of execution has become the greatest symbol of life, we have to understand what happened before Jesus hung on the cross.*
>
> *—Pastor Chad*

Romans 3:23
For all have sinned and fall short of God's glory.

Why the cross?

- Sin has a PRICE

Romans 6:23 (NLT)
For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

> *Sin earns me death, and I owe my life because of it! I owe a life of being eternally separated from my creator. I can't un-do my sin. In God's eyes, I am guilty because of my sin. In God's eyes, you are guilty because of your sin.*
>
> *—Pastor Chad*

- God LOVES us

Romans 5:6-8 (NLT)
6 When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. 7 Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good.

8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

Read ***John 3:16 (TLB)***

- God's forgiveness costs <u>BLOOD</u>

Leviticus 17:11 (NLT)
For the life of the body is in its blood. I have given you the blood on the altar to purify you, making you right with the Lord. It is the blood, given in exchange for a life, that makes purification possible.

> *If you read the OT, it's reflective of the old covenant. A covenant is a binding agreement, and this was a binding agreement God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai through Moses. The sacrificial system was established, and it required sacrificing an animal and pouring its blood on the altar to atone or to pay the price for sin. But it only covered certain sins, and the more you sin, the more it had to be done. More sin, more blood required. Payment for sin requires one life being given for another. Because sin isn't a small mistake, it's rebellion against the giver of life and the consequence is death. It's the sacrifice of a life, poured out in death by shedding its blood. The sacrifice screams out sin is deadly, forgiveness is costly, and sinners need mercy they can't come up with on their own.*
>
> *—Pastor Chad*

Read ***Exodus 12***

Read ***John 1:29***

- Old sacrifices pointed to a <u>PERFECT SACRIFICE</u>

Hebrews 10:1-4 (NLT)
1 The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come, not the good things themselves. The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship.
2 If they could have provided perfect cleansing, the sacrifices would

have stopped, for the worshipers would have been purified once for all time, and their feelings of guilt would have disappeared.
3 But instead, those sacrifices actually reminded them of their sins year after year.
4 For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Read ***Hebrews 9:11-14 (NLT)***

Read ***Hebrews 9:22 (NLT)***

- Jesus took <u>OUR PLACE</u>

Isaiah 53:5-6 (NLT)
5 But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.
6 All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.

> *God laid on Jesus the sins of us all, he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins, beaten so we could be whole, whipped so we could be healed, died so we could be saved! Centuries before Jesus was hung on a cross, the Bible told us a savior would come who would pay the price for our sin.*
>
> *—Pastor Chad*

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT)
For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

> *Sin separates me from God, so I've got to deal with the sin problem first, then I can focus on building the relationship. But I can't deal with the sin problem, I need someone without sin to deal with my sin problem. And that person is Jesus! He's the only one who can pay for my sin! Good news is, he already has! Debt paid in full. All I have to do is believe in him enough to trust him and trust him enough to follow him, and he'll lead me straight to my Father in heaven! The one who saves us must be able to accomplish what we can't. A sinner can't pay the*

penalty for someone else's sin. But Jesus can! And Jesus did!

—Pastor Chad

- Jesus paid in FULL

John 19:30 (NLT)
When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Read ***Hebrews 10***

The old covenant required sacrifices to be repeated over and over but never able to provide perfect cleansing; meaning never able to fully save. Because if it could fully save, the sacrifices would have stopped, the worshipers would have been purified once and for all. But Jesus offered himself as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time! For by that one offering he made perfect those who are being made holy. And when sins have been forgiven, there is no need to offer any more sacrifices. And because of that, if you place your faith and trust in Jesus, you can boldly enter heaven's most holy place because of the blood of Jesus.

—Pastor Chad

Hebrews 10 (NLT)
19 And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's
Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus.
20 By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the
curtain into the Most Holy Place.
21 And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house,
22 let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully
trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with
Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed
with pure water.
23 Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God
can be trusted to keep his promise.
24 Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and
good works.
25 And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do,

but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.
26 Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice that will cover these sins.
27 There is only the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies.
(cont.)
29 Just think how much worse the punishment will be for those who have trampled on the Son of God, and have treated the blood of the covenant, which made us holy, as if it were common and unholy, and have insulted and disdained the Holy Spirit who brings God's mercy to us.
(cont.)
35 So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you!
36 Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.
(cont.)
39 But we are not like those who turn away from God to their own destruction. We are the faithful ones, whose souls will be saved.

- The cross changes the way we <u>LIVE</u> (or it should)

  Sin separates us from God, but Jesus made a way for us to return. But the purpose of the cross is greater than simply keeping us out of hell. Jesus died to restore our relationship with God and transform the way we live. Because of Jesus, we can approach God personally, we come to God the Father, through God the Son, Jesus! He wants us to choose him and to spend time with him each and every day, growing closer, and following Jesus. Because of the cross, because of Jesus, we can be forgiven, we can be accepted, and we can be adopted into his family!

  —Pastor Chad

– The cross changes our relationship with God
– The cross changes our relationship with sin

1 Peter 2:24 (NLT)
He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed.

Look Up at Jesus

– and see what he did for you

> *Imagine yourself at Golgotha. You're at the foot of the cross looking up at Jesus. The crown of thorns. The wounds. The nails. The blood. Why would he do that for you? Because he loves you so much!*
>
> *—Pastor Chad*

Because of the cross, choose Jesus!