

## Countdown to Easter

### *Why Did Jesus Die?*

March 15, 2026 am

HDBC

**There are multiple** references in the Bible to the death of Jesus. There are **prophetic statements** predicting His death. There are **historical narratives** describing His death. There are **theological statements** explaining the meaning of His death. There are **instructive statements** applying His death to our lives.

No one denies the death of Jesus. But not everyone views His death in the same way. For some the fact of His death means nothing. For others, it means everything. What does it mean to you?

**We are** approaching the Easter season. People will think and talk more about the death and resurrection of Jesus than at any other time of the year. This is a good thing. We want people talking about His death and resurrection. But we also want them to know the truth about those things. Misinformation is never helpful. In this ***Countdown to Easter*** we are considering five important questions that will bring clarity and truth.

Last week we asked, ***Is Jesus really the Son of God?***

This morning . . . ***Why did Jesus die?***

Before we get to the Biblical reasons for His death, let me address some **Wrong Assumptions**. Some theories that are not true.

#### 1) **Guilty and deserved to die**

They charged him with blasphemy. Maybe he was guilty of the charge and deserved to die. **He was not.**

**The witnesses** that testified contradicted each other.

**Judas** realized that he had betrayed an innocent man.

**One of the Roman soldiers** who crucified Jesus said later that day that he recognized that Jesus was the innocent son of God.

The one person who was in a position to offer an objective assessment was **Pilate**, and he repeatedly declared Jesus innocent of all charges.

Jesus was not guilty of the charges or of any crime or sin. The Bible declares not only the innocence of Jesus, but also the absolute purity and righteousness of Jesus.

### **Hebrews 4:15**

*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet he did not sin.*

### **1 Pet 2:22**

*He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.*

### **2 Corinthians 5:21**

*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

## **2) Innocent victim of mob violence**

Any time large groups of people turn violent, there is a good chance that innocent people will get hurt or killed. **This was a volatile time** in the nation of Israel and particularly in Jerusalem. Some think Jesus was simply at the wrong place at the wrong time.

**This was not the case.** Jesus own words prove this, for **He predicted His death** and indicated that it was His plan. **Peter confirmed** this when he declared that the religious leaders had killed Jesus . . . as part of the pre-determined plan of God.

## **Biblical Reasons**

Bible offers dozens of reasons why Jesus died. In fact **John Piper has written a little book indicating *Fifty Reasons Why He Came to Die***. I'm not going to share fifty reasons. But I do want to share seven.

**1. To prove God's love for us (Romans 5:8)**

*But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**Our love** for another person is best measured by what we are willing to sacrifice for them. **The death of Jesus** proves the Father's love for us. He loves His son. Of that there is no doubt. So, for Him to be willing to allow His Son to die for us, proves just how much He loves us.

**Not only does** this prove the Father's love, but also the Son's love. The early believers knew that Jesus loved them, as demonstrated by his death. Listen to the testimony of Paul in Gal. 2:20. *Christ loved me and gave himself up for me.*

**The death of Christ screams** to us that we are loved by Jesus. **The sacrifice of His life is a sacrifice of love.** I want you to bask in the wonderful truth that God loves you! He loves you personally, not simply in the abstract, but in reality. **That's why he died.**

**2. To enable us to live with Him forever (1 Thess. 5:9-10)**

*For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.*

**Remember when you were a kid, and someone wanted to have you over to their house to spend the night.** That's a great feeling, isn't it. This may come as a surprise to some of you, but Jesus wants you to stay over with Him. In fact, he wants you to live with him for all eternity. He desires your company.

**He desires it so much** that he was willing to die to make it possible. He died so you could go to Heaven. You will be in Heaven because you received a personal invitation from Jesus. This was an invitation that was paid for by His death. **That's why He died.**

**3. To redeem us from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13)**

*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.*

**In hanging on that cross**, Jesus became a curse for us, so we would not be cursed or condemned. **Jesus absorbed** the wrath of God for us.

If God is **unjust** there is no need for Jesus to die.

If God is not **unloving** there would be no willingness for Jesus to die

**But God is just and loving.**

There is a **holy curse** hanging over all sin. **But the love of God** will not allow that curse to remain over all sinful humanity. His love led him to provide a substitute who paid for our sins. **That's why He died.**

**4. To please His Father (Isaiah 53:10)**

*But the LORD was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief;*

Christ died to carry out **the will of His father**;

**The cross is a beautiful act of submission and obedience by Jesus to His father. He was not coerced, but was acting out of love for his father.**

It was not only Jesus' love for us that caused him to die. It was His love for the Father that led Him to be obedient to the Father's plan.

**That is why He died.**

**5. To ransom people from every tribe and nation (Rev. 5:9)**

*And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, **for you were slain**, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,*

**The scene is heaven.** John is on the island of Patmos for his faith.

While there he received a vision from the Lord. In the vision he saw the Lord Jesus take a scroll and open its seals. Receiving the title deed to

creation. He had purchased it with his death to redeem humanity. With his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

**Christ died to save a great diversity of people.** Sin does not discriminate. It has infected all people. All people have sinned. Every race and culture needs to be reconciled to God. In his death, Jesus reached out to the world. **Christianity is not a western religion.** It does not belong only to one culture. We are a part of a great global band of believers. **That is why He died**

**6. To cancel our sin debt (Colossians 2:13-14)**

*And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.*

**Some people believe** they can earn their way into Heaven by good deeds. But this is mere foolishness. To think that our good deeds could possibly outweigh our bad deeds and thus earn us a place in Heaven is absurd. No amount of good can undo or cancel out the bad. **That is why justice is never truly complete in this life.**

**We stand guilty, before God.** No amount of good can take away the guilt. Only a divine, judicial act of God can take away our guilt and the condemnation that comes with it. Our sins demand justice and that justice costs more than we can pay. In Christ, our debt is paid, by having it nailed to the cross in the person of Jesus.

**In those days a list of charges** against a person was written out on a note or bond. If he signed it he was admitting guilt. This was often **nailed in public place.** When debt was paid it was marked paid, left hanging for a time for all to see, then removed. When it was removed from the public place it was a sign that it had been paid in full. Furthermore, that nail print in the note was a permanent reminder of the

debt that was owed and ultimately paid. Remember that when you see the scars in the hands and feet of Jesus.

**Just as they would nail** the note to the wall for all to see, so God took our certificate of debt and placed it on Christ, then nailed it to the cross. When He later showed them the nail prints in His hands, it was proof that our debt has been paid. **That is why He died.**

**7. To secure our justification** (Romans 5:9)

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

**Being forgiven and being justified** are not the same things. Being forgiven implies that I am guilty and my crime is not being counted against me. Being justified means I have been judged and found innocent. The judge says **not guilty**.

**Justification is a legal declaration.** The normal way to be justified in a human court is to keep the law. If you keep the law, the judge and jury declare you justified. That is, they are simply stating what is true of you. You have kept the law, and their declaration of innocence, justifies you. **But in God's courtroom we have not kept the law.** We are all lawbreakers when it comes to his courtroom. Therefore we cannot be declared justified in the normal way. It would be a violation of God's justice and holiness.

**Yet the Bible declares us to be justified. How?** It is through the death of Jesus. God can declare us justified because our sin debt has been cancelled. And because the righteousness of Christ has been charged to our account. **That is why he died.**

On January 16, 2013 Andre Cassagnes died in Paris at the age of 86. He was an inventor. In his early 30's he created a plastic device with a glass screen. The inside surface was coated with aluminum powder. It had two knobs. By turning the knobs one could draw on the screen, as an unseen

stylus scraped away the powder. If you didn't like what you had drawn, or simply wanted a fresh start you could turn the device upside down and shake it. Magically all the marks would disappear and it would appear as if no marks had ever been seen. He called it ***the magic screen***.

The Ohio Art Company renamed it ***Etch A Sketch*** and began selling them. They were first seen in the U.S. market in 1960. Since then more than 100 million have been sold. It's now a classic. And it requires no batteries and no WIFI. The magic of this device is not that you can write with it, but that you can quickly and easily erase it and start over.

We are all like an ***Etch A Sketch***. As we go through life every sin leaves a mark, marring what God intended to be good and beautiful. The more you turn the knobs the more the screen is full of marks. You can't use the knobs to erase or undo. To be cleansed and start over it takes a radical transformation. And that only comes through faith in Jesus, who died so that our sins could indeed be erase.