

# Good Friday Small Group Guide

## "Jesus Died for Your Sins: Understanding the Why"

### Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by thanking God for sending Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice and asking the Holy Spirit to open your hearts and minds to understand the depths of what Christ accomplished on the cross.

### Ice Breaker Question

**When you hear the phrase "Jesus died for your sins," what comes to mind? What questions have you had about what that really means?**

### Sermon Summary

This Good Friday message explored the "why" behind Jesus' death. From Genesis 3 onward, humanity lost access to God's presence, the garden, and eternal life. Throughout the Old Testament, God promised to send a Son who would sacrifice himself to reopen the way back to God. Jesus is revealed as:

- The fulfillment of the promised sacrifice
- Jacob's ladder—the access point to heaven
- The true temple of God
- The Good Shepherd who lays down His life to lead His sheep through the gate

His death wasn't just a nice gesture—it was the necessary payment to grant us access to eternal life in God's presence.

### Key Scripture References

- Genesis 3:15, 21 (The promise and the first sacrifice)
- Genesis 28:10-17 (Jacob's ladder)
- John 1:29, 51 (Jesus as the Lamb and the ladder)
- John 3:3-16 (Born again through the Spirit)
- John 7:38-39 (The Spirit given after glorification)
- John 12:23-24, 31-33 (Jesus' glorification through death)

# Discussion Questions

## Understanding the Story (15-20 minutes)

1. How does understanding the Genesis 3 story (the fall and expulsion from the garden) change the way you understand Jesus' death on the cross?
2. The sermon traced the theme of sacrifice from Genesis through the Old Testament. Why did God establish this pattern of animal sacrifices before sending Jesus?
3. What does it mean that Jesus is "Jacob's ladder"? How does John 1:51 connect to Genesis 28:10-17?

## Going Deeper (20-25 minutes)

4. Jesus said in John 3:5 that no one can enter the kingdom without being born of water and the Spirit. How does Jesus' death and resurrection make it possible for us to receive the Spirit?
5. The sermon explained that Jesus' "glorification" was His death. Why is this significant? How is this different from how the world defines glory?
6. Read John 14:6 together: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." In light of this sermon, what does this verse mean in a new or deeper way?
7. The pastor's college friend said, "That's nice, bro. I didn't ask him to do that for me." How would you respond to someone who says this? How does understanding the "why" help us answer this objection?

## Key Takeaways

✓ **Jesus' death wasn't random or optional**—it was the necessary sacrifice to reopen access to God's presence and eternal life.

✓ **The entire Old Testament pointed forward** to the coming Son who would die to grant us access to the garden.

✓ **We cannot enter God's presence without the Spirit**, and the Spirit is given only through belief in Jesus' sacrifice.

✓ **Jesus is simultaneously** the gate, the temple, the ladder, the sacrifice, and the shepherd who leads us through.

✓ **Good Friday is "good"** because it accomplished what humanity has needed since Genesis 3 —the way back to God.

✓ **We live in the "already but not yet"** —we have access to God through prayer and the Spirit now, but we await the day when we will physically enter His presence forever.

## Prayer Prompts

Close your time together by praying for:

- **Gratitude** for Jesus' sacrifice that opened the way to God
- **Understanding** for those who have heard "Jesus died for your sins" but don't know why
- **Boldness** to share the full gospel story with others
- **Hope** as we wait for the day when we will enter God's presence forever
- **The Spirit's work** in our lives today as a foretaste of the eternal life to come

## Looking Ahead

**Resurrection Sunday is coming!** Jesus' death opened the gate, but His resurrection proves that eternal life is real and available. Come ready to celebrate the hope we have because the tomb is empty!

## Additional Resources

- Read Leviticus 16 (Day of Atonement) to understand the Old Testament sacrificial system
- Study Hebrews 9-10 to see how Jesus is our ultimate High Priest and final sacrifice
- Reflect on Revelation 21-22 to envision the new heaven and new earth—the garden restored