

Jesus Saves—But How? Week 1: Substitution & Sacrifice

If someone asked you, “How does Jesus dying and rising 2,000 years ago save people today?” What would you say? Write down your best, most succinct answer.

Guiding Principles:

- 1) The “how” must match the “why”
- 2) The wrong “why” will cause confusion and division
- 3) There is more than one “how”

Overview:

- Week 1: Substitution & Sacrifice: Jesus died as our representative and sacrifice; Bearing our sin for us and removing it from us.
- Week 2: Defeat & Dominion: Jesus died and rose again to free us from slavery to Satan, the power of evil and the tyranny of death.
- Week 3: Reunion & Recapitulation: Jesus died and rose to restart the human project and to reunite estranged humanity with God.
- Week 4: Demonstration & Devotion: Jesus died and rose to demonstrate the depths of God’s love for us, to win our allegiance, and to reveal the right way to live to us.

Encouragement: You can experience nourishment without understanding nutrition.

Three Central Ways that Jesus is our Substitute

1) Jesus bore our punishment for us

Sin (Definition): _____

When you have broken something and wish to make amends, there should be: 1) confession, 2) contrition, and 3) reparation. The Old Testament sacrifices were about offering confession and contrition to God. Reparation comes through Jesus. (Romans 3:25-26)

Summary statement: _____

2) *Jesus gives us His righteousness as our High Priest*

Priest/Representative (Definition): _____

God sees us through our relationship with His Son.

“It is not just that we can see God through Jesus, but that God sees us through Jesus.” (Michael Wear)

Summary statement: _____

3) *Jesus took our sin and guilt away from us*

Scapegoat (Definition): _____

Psalm 103:12 “As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”

Summary statement: _____

Put it all Together:

Take a minute to clarify your own understanding. If someone asked you, “Jesus saves—but how?!” and you were attempting to explain all three of these aspects of the atonement, what would you want to say?

Key Verses for Understanding Jesus as our Substitute

Leviticus 16: The day of atonement: Pay attention to the fact that for the cleansing of the people, you need: two goats and one priest.

Romans 3:25-26 “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”

Hebrews 10:11-14 “Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.”

John 11:47-53 “Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. “What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “Here is this man performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation.” Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.” He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. So from that day on they plotted to take his life.”

1 Peter 2:24: “He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”

John 1:29: When John the Baptist sees Jesus, he says, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

Romans 4:25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”

Bible Study Practice Verses

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

“So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Isaiah 53:4-6

“Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

Isaiah 53:10-12

“Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

1 John 2:1-2

“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”