

# THE CRUCIFIED KING

## + SESSION OUTLINE

1. Jesus, the crucified King, extends forgiveness to the executioners (Luke 23:32-38).
2. Jesus, the crucified King, promises salvation to the repentant (Luke 23:39-43).
3. Jesus, the crucified King, entrusts Himself to the Father (Luke 23:44-49).

Background Passage: Luke 23

## + WHAT WILL MY GROUP LEARN?

Jesus gave up His life to provide salvation to all who repent of their sin.

## + HOW WILL MY GROUP SEE CHRIST?

Jesus willingly took up His cross and suffered the judgment our sins deserve. At the moment He died, the curtain in the temple sanctuary was torn in two, signifying that sinners have access to God through the blood of Christ. The crucifixion of Jesus is the center of history, revealing God's holiness and justice, our sinfulness and unrighteousness, and Christ's humility and love.

## + HOW SHOULD MY GROUP RESPOND?

Because Jesus died in our place to pay for our sins, we not only proclaim to the world that Jesus died on the cross but also why He died.

# GROUP TIME

**Group content** found in the Daily Discipleship Guide is included in the shaded areas throughout the session.



## SCRIPTURE HANDOUT

Scan this QR code for a reproducible handout of this session's Scripture passages.

## INTRODUCTION

**ASK:** As participants arrive, ask: **What difficult time in your life made the day seem to last forever?** (often it is the days filled with horror or extreme pain that seem the longest to us; sheer exhaustion or hunger also make a day go by slowly; boredom can make time tick at a snail's pace)

**TRANSITION:** Even our longest, most horrible days don't come close to the agony Jesus experienced. Not only were His last hours before the crucifixion filled with pain, His anguish was multi-layered. Christ came to save us and endured physical, spiritual, and emotional affliction so that He could provide a perfect sacrifice.

**SUMMARIZE:** Help your group understand the **setting** for this session.

- Only a handful of hours into His last day before death, Jesus had already been falsely accused and wrongly condemned to death. He was flogged by officials, forsaken by His followers, and left so weak that He could not even carry His cross as He marched to the place of His execution. Yet the emotional anguish and physical pain He bore could not keep Him from obediently fulfilling God's purpose. Christ came to be a ransom for sinners so that those who believed could become part of the forever family of God.



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# POINT 1

## JESUS, THE CRUCIFIED KING, EXTENDS FORGIVENESS TO THE EXECUTIONERS (LUKE 23:32-38).

**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Luke 23:32-38** from his or her own Bible.

**32** Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. **33** And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. **34** And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. **35** And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" **36** The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine **37** and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" **38** There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

**GUIDE:** Call attention to Golgotha (#9) on **PACK ITEM 2: PASSION WEEK MAP**, and guide your group to picture the scene at hand—Jesus hanging on the cross with a criminal on each side. Then using the notes below, explain from **verses 32-34** the following truth (DDG p. 110):

On the cross, Jesus's love and mercy compelled Him to pray for forgiveness for those involved in His execution.

- Crucifixion was a form of execution carried out by the Roman Empire. The criminal was fastened to a wooden cross and left to die due to suffocation. This was accomplished either through attachment by ropes or by large spikes through the hands and feet.<sup>1</sup> It was a visual warning to prevent others from being criminals as they watched the punishment for crime.
- Crucifixions could be done in batches with other criminals. Jesus, the guiltless yet falsely condemned One, hung between two convicted criminals. This particular detail is a fulfillment of messianic prophecy in Isaiah 53:12: "He poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sins of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors."
- We've seen Jesus's willing submission to the Father's will even though He knew it would lead to His death. Now we see that He also interceded for those who were against Him. These two actions point to the character of Jesus, His loving, merciful, compassionate character.
- But don't think that He was calm and smiling through it all. Both Matthew and Mark describe at this similar point in time that Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34), alluding to David's prayer in Psalm 22. Jesus was truly in anguish and sorrow.
- Roman custom allowed soldiers to cast lots, akin to flipping a coin, for the clothing of those crucified. Crucifixion had become so frequent that the soldiers could attain personal gain from prisoners' leftover articles.



### THE SKULL

Also known as Golgotha or Calvary, this was the place where executions and crucifixions happened. It was near Jerusalem, outside the city walls, where travelers could see the punishment for crimes committed.

### VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"Forgiveness does not consist of remission of penalty. . . . To forgive is to restore to the old relationship . . . so the forgiveness that Christ wins for us is not chiefly a remission of penalty; it is the restoration to the affectionate intimacy of sons with their Father."<sup>4</sup>

—William Temple  
(1881–1944)

**ASK:** Pass out copies of **PACK ITEM 13: CROSS CONNECTIONS**, highlighting how events in Jesus's crucifixion alluded to and fulfilled aspects of David's prayer in Psalm 22. Then ask (DDG pp. 106,110):

From Day 2 in the DDG: **When in the midst of suffering and persecution, what are your prayers typically geared toward?** (if we are honest, most of our prayers are selfish ones; we ask for relief from that which is causing us pain; we long for the suffering to go away; we may even ask for justice if our suffering is due to the sin of others)

**EXPLAIN:** Using the content below, explain from **verses 35-38** the following (DDG p. 110):

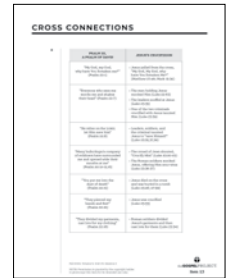
As some ridiculed Jesus on the cross, little did they know that He was there to forgive and save the world.

- As if Jesus hadn't endured enough, many began to scoff at and ridicule Him. The arrogance of the crowd was on display through their response to the crucifixion. They wanted a sign, telling Jesus to save Himself. Little did they know that Jesus was dying on that cross to save them and the world.
- Luke also noted the inscription above Jesus's head. It was common for a wooden placard, called a *titulus*, to be placed on the cross above the head of the accused.<sup>2</sup> Again, one purpose of these very public executions was to intimidate the people to avert further trouble. As people walked by, they would see the terrible suffering each criminal endured as well as the sign describing the crime committed. All of this communicated: "Don't do this, or you'll end up here."
- The statement **"This Is the King of the Jews"** (v. 38) pointed to the crime Jesus supposedly committed. It is likely that Pilate had the inscription chosen in hopes of having the last word in the power struggle he had with the Jewish leaders.<sup>3</sup> Ironically, the statement shows what we truly know, that Jesus is the King, here to forgive and save us from sin.

**DISCUSS:** Jesus forgave His enemies despite their ridicule. Ask (DDG p. 110):

**Why is it difficult to forgive others?** (we think we want justice; we want those who wronged us to suffer too; we don't think people should get away with doing something bad)

**TRANSITION:** During His execution, Jesus interceded on behalf of the executioners who were ignorant of the vast importance of those passing hours. It is remarkable that He had the wherewithal to think past the immense pain He experienced. After this, Luke mentioned the criminals on the crosses on either side of Jesus. One would prove himself to be as spiritually blind and hardhearted as the crowd, while the other found salvation through faith and repentance.



### SCOFF

The Greek word for *scoff* in the New Testament is used only by Luke and only twice. Once here in 23:35 and the other earlier in 16:14, where the Pharisees scoffed at Jesus. The meaning is to ridicule, sneer, and to turn up one's nose at something.<sup>5</sup>

## POINT 2

### JESUS, THE CRUCIFIED KING, PROMISES SALVATION TO THE REPENTANT (LUKE 23:39-43).

**BRAINSTORM:** Invite the group to call out answers to this question: “When sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with others, what are some possible responses we may receive?”

**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Luke 23:39-43** from his or her own Bible.

**39** One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” **40** But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? **41** And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” **42** And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” **43** And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

**INSTRUCT:** Use the content below and **verses 39-41** to explain the following essential truth (DDG p. 110):

Any sinner can find salvation by acknowledging that God is to be feared, we deserve punishment for our sins, and Jesus is every soul’s only hope for salvation.

- The crowd, the soldiers, and a thief on the cross ridiculed Jesus. Juxtaposed to the scoffing scoundrel, another condemned culprit saw Jesus as the Messiah. To be crucified, these thieves must have done something horrific. One commentator suggests that a better translation of the original Greek for “criminal” is that of “rebel” or “insurrectionist” (precisely what Jesus was accused of being).<sup>6</sup> Whatever his crimes, instead of hurling insults, the second sinner threw himself on the mercy of the Messiah.
- There are four components of the second criminal’s response to Jesus. First, he rightly feared God (v. 40). Second, he recognized he deserved his punishment because of his wrongdoing (v. 41). Next, he understood Christ as the source of salvation (v. 42). Last, he acted on what he knew: Jesus was his only hope for deliverance from eternal judgment (v. 42). Many gospel tracts follow this pattern. This is the gospel message and what it means to trust and accept Jesus into your life.
- Through Jesus’s perfect sacrifice, God provided the only way for sinful people to be brought near to His holy presence for eternity. Jesus paid the penalty for our transgressions; more than this, Jesus gifted us His righteousness.

**ASK:** Looking at the previous truth, ask (DDG p. 110):

**Which of these three truths do you think our culture struggles with the most, and why?** (“God being feared” because some want to think God is just about love; “we deserve punishment” because some don’t feel guilty; “Jesus is our only hope” because people want to believe there are many options)

**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read the following doctrine (DDG p. 110):

**Key Doctrine #59: Christ as Propitiation:** Because of God’s righteousness and holiness, humanity’s sins must be atoned for in order for people to be reconciled to God. As the propitiation for sins, Christ’s death is the appeasement or satisfaction of God’s wrath against sin. Christ’s propitiation for our sins demonstrates both God’s great love toward sinners (1 John 4:10) as well as the necessary payment that results from the penalty of sins (Rom. 3:26).

**EXPLAIN:** Use the content below and **verses 42-43** to explain that the second criminal became a believer because he accepted Jesus’s sacrifice as the propitiation for his sins:

- When we tell people about the good news of Jesus, we try to end with a call to action: accept Jesus as Savior and Lord. This acceptance is a surrendering that involves repentance and acknowledging Jesus is the only way to salvation, the only way to appease God’s just wrath. This is what the second criminal did; he accepted Christ as the propitiation for his sins.
- Both thieves responded to Jesus. One offender did so in disbelief and disregard for the Messiah. The other responded in repentance and faith. The second man’s cry to Christ is evidence that even the most wicked of individuals can be saved. The second criminal recognized Jesus as supreme Lord of an eternal kingdom. His final appeal was filled with humility and desperation as he reached out to his only hope.
- Jesus’s response affirmed the sincerity of the second sinner’s plea. Paradise is a reference to the place where the righteous go after death. In contrast with Gehenna, or hell, it is one of two destinations for every person. Jesus claimed that both He and this dying, repentant lawbreaker would see each other in their new eternal home in paradise.<sup>7</sup> This is only possible because Christ’s death satisfied God’s wrath against sin; His death was the propitiation for our sins. Jesus’s sacrifice turns away God’s wrath from us and reconciles us back to God when we trust in Him.

**TRANSITION:** With the promise of paradise on His lips, Jesus held fast to the Word of God, which held the assurance that this agony-filled day was simultaneously filled with immense purpose (Isa. 53:10a). Jesus, in His last moments, would still have His eyes fixed on the Father.

# POINT 3

## JESUS, THE CRUCIFIED KING, ENTRUSTS HIMSELF TO THE FATHER (LUKE 23:44-49).

**READ:** Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Luke 23:44-49** from his or her own Bible.

**44** It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, **45** while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. **46** Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. **47** Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" **48** And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. **49** And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

**EXPLAIN:** Using the content below, explain from **verses 44-45** the following truth (DDG p. 111):

When Christ died, the veil was torn, revealing that God's people, now being the priesthood of believers, could have direct access to God.

- During the time of day when the sun should shine the brightest, it failed to illuminate the land. As Jesus spent His last hours in anguish on the cross, an astonishing gloom fell on the earth. In a sense, the earth mourned the approaching death of Jesus. This frightening physical murkiness may have visualized the divine spiritual anguish Jesus was experiencing as He bore the wrongdoing of the world on His shoulders and suffered the eternal wrath of God against that sin being aimed squarely at Him.
- Next, Luke noted that the temple curtain was torn in two. The curtain in question had physically separated God from His people because of His holiness and people's sinfulness. On the Day of Atonement, after ceremonial cleansing and sacrifices to cover his own sins, the high priest would enter the holy of holies through the curtain as the mediator between God and His people "that atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of all their sins" (Lev. 16:34).
- The veil that separated sinful individuals from the holy presence of God was torn in two, removing the barrier between God and man. Mark states: "Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom" (Mark 15:37-38). The veil was thirty feet tall and very thick. No human could have torn it from top to bottom. This was yet another supernatural event pointing out the significance of Jesus's crucifixion. When Christ breathed His last and died, His sacrifice for sins ended the veil's protective purpose.<sup>8</sup> Hebrews 10:19-20 affirms that we now "have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh."

### THE CURTAIN OF THE TEMPLE

The heavy drapery that hung in the Jerusalem temple, which isolated the holy of holies from the rest of the temple. This inner sanctum is where the ark of the covenant—the symbol of God's presence—would have rested. No one was allowed in this most holy of places except once a year on the Day of Atonement lest they drop dead as sinners before the purity and power of God (Num. 18:7).

**DISCUSS:** Let's not take our access to God for granted. Ask (DDG p. 111):

**What are the benefits of having direct access to the Father?** (we can have an intimate relationship with Him; our prayer life is richer not needing earthly mediators; we can ask for and be forgiven for our sins at any time; we know a personal, almighty God who is always for us)

**SAY:** "Jesus constantly used Scripture to define Himself and to speak to others and to the Father."

**HIGHLIGHT:** Invite a volunteer to read Psalm 31:5. Then using the content below, explain from **verses 46-49** the following (DDG p. 111):

As others responded to Jesus's death in their own way, Jesus's last words were those of Psalm 31:5, committing His spirit and entrusting His life to the Father.

- Some of Jesus's last words were a quote of Psalm 31:5: "Into your hand I commit my spirit." But the second half of that verse is pertinent as well: "You have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God." Even in Jesus's final moments, the faithfulness of His Father permeated His thoughts. This psalm was a popular Jewish bedtime prayer. As Jesus went to sleep one last time in this mortal state, He entrusted His life to the goodness of God.<sup>9</sup>
- Once again, Luke showcased the responses to Jesus. At least one of the soldiers understood that Jesus was innocent of the crimes for which He had been crucified. Among the crowds of people, some beat their chests. Earlier in the Gospel, Luke recounted the response of the repentant tax collector, who demonstrated the same action (Luke 18:13). It is likely this action was a sign of grief and contrition by some of the souls who sent Christ to His death.
- Lastly, we encounter the ones who knew Jesus. Though Luke mentioned their presence, he did not provide what they were thinking or feeling. We can imagine the shock they might have experienced as they watched their loved One be mercilessly beaten, wrongly condemned, and horrifically crucified. But we know that they stood at a distance watching.

**CHALLENGE:** Knowing Jesus filled His words with Scripture, ask (DDG p. 111):

**What are ways we can fill our thoughts and words with Scripture?** (more reading and study of Scripture; Scripture memorization; hang up framed verses in our homes; sticky notes with Scripture written on them in high-traffic places like the bathroom mirror or on our car's dashboard)

**TRANSITION:** Though His last moments before death were bleak, Jesus unwaveringly held to the faithfulness of God to finish His plan. The cross was not the end of the story. It was the dawn of a new beginning.



# MY RESPONSE

**SAY:** Jesus willingly took up His cross and suffered the judgment our sins deserve. At the moment He died, the curtain in the temple sanctuary was torn in two, signifying that sinners have access to God through the blood of Christ. Because Jesus died in our place to pay for our sins, we not only proclaim to the world that Jesus died on the cross but also why He died.

## HEAD:

Jesus knew the will and purpose of the Father, in both intention and implications. He lived a perfect life (which we could never achieve) so that He could die a sinner's death (which we deserved) and make right what was lost through the fall of humanity. This was a strategy no mere man could have concocted or completed. But Jesus in His infinite perfection and obedience fulfilled every part of the Father's plan.

**What part of Jesus's perfect obedience are you most grateful for?**

## HEART:

The words we hold in our hands in the Bible that tell of the sufferings of Jesus are a mere shadow of the fullness of Christ's crucifixion. Our finite minds can only comprehend a fraction of the purpose-filled pain Jesus experienced so that you and I could have abundant life. There is no comparison to the amount of love that spilled out of Jesus's literal bleeding heart. It was a love for the Father and for sinners that held Him to the cross.

**How can you thank Jesus today for His sacrifice on the cross?**

## HANDS:

God's heart is for His glory to be made known throughout the nations. Jesus endured the shame and pain of the cross so that the message of the Father's love, mercy, grace, and glory would be spread from soul to soul until all have heard of His fame. The end goal of the cross was not simply salvation for those who witnessed Jesus's death. The purpose of the crucifixion was to defeat the power of sin and death so that the salvation of God would be propelled throughout the ages to every tribe, tongue, and nation.

**With whom can you share the good news of Jesus this week?**

**PRAY:** Jesus, You endured pain and the cross for us. You also tore the veil that separated us from the Father. You did it to save us, to reconcile us to the Father, so that we may have a relationship with You. We are forever grateful. Let us show You our joy by sharing this good news through our words and actions with all those we encounter. Amen.

### VOICES from THE CHURCH

"The cross is not just about one chapter of the Christian faith; it casts its shadow and stamps its form upon all of that theology."<sup>10</sup>

—Alister E. McGrath

# EXTRA

## **POINT 1: JESUS, THE CRUCIFIED KING, EXTENDS FORGIVENESS TO THE EXECUTIONERS (LUKE 23:32-38).**

### **+ COMMENTARY**

“Then Jesus spoke and said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing’ (23:34). Jesus utters a prayer from the cross asking the Father to bestow his grace, mercy and forgiveness on those who at that very moment were killing him. . . . They had the Scriptures and the prophets and the signs and miracles that Jesus performed. They had no excuse, but Jesus is pleading with his Father to take their ignorance into consideration and be merciful to them and forgive them. He doesn’t ask for them to be exonerated—he acknowledges their guilt and asks that they be forgiven. The same statement is made later on in Paul’s writings when he talks about the people who delivered up the Lord of Glory out of ignorance; they should have known, but they did not understand fully. Jesus is concerned about the eternal destiny of his tormentors even though he is close to death.”<sup>11</sup>

### **+ ILLUSTRATION**

Sibling rivalry is a real struggle. If you’re a skeptic, throw a few kids in a car for a long period of time and you’ll see the strife erupt before the first pit stop. There is something about that environment that showcases conflict. “He’s kicking my seat and bothering me on purpose!” “She’s breathing too loud to annoy me!” “It’s my turn to choose a song. He always gets to pick.” We are innately selfish beings. We are also, by that same trait, superb at believing the worst about people. In the earlier car scenario, one sibling takes the simple swinging of a leg as a vendetta. Another takes routine and necessary respiratory activity as a personal attack. Brothers and sisters excel at misinterpreting someone’s actions—at a melodramatic level!

Believing the worst about people comes naturally to most of us. As adults, hopefully we have grown out of the silliness of familial in-fighting, but it is still easy to take offense from some of the smallest things. This is especially true when it comes to people we don’t know. Just look at any heated social media discussion—Exhibit A on worst-case-scenario thinking, and sometimes toward someone who had zero ill intentions.

We see the opposite through the example of Jesus. He was quick to forgive, slow to anger, and unceasingly full of mercy. Instead of putting up walls and hurling insults, He prayed for those who put Him to death. He showed compassion on them, interceded for them, and died for them.

# EXTRA

## POINT 2: JESUS, THE CRUCIFIED KING, PROMISES SALVATION TO THE REPENTANT (LUKE 23:39-43).

### + COMMENTARY

“The changed thief goes on to make the point that they two are punished justly. They have broken the law and their suffering must be seen in the light of that. Not so Jesus: he has done nothing wrong. Such a recognition of Jesus’ innocence must have been widespread. . . . Then the thief asked Jesus to remember him, i.e. remember him for good. . . . It is not easy to see how fully the penitent thief could have entered into an understanding of Jesus’ Person and work. But these words show that he realized at least that death would not be the end of everything for him and that beyond death was the kingdom. Jesus’ words of reassurance gave him more than he had asked for. Not only would he have a place in the kingdom, whenever that would be established, but that very day he would enter Paradise. Truly marks the following words as emphatic and important . . . Today is occasionally taken with the preceding words, but there seems no reason for this. Almost all scholars agree that it refers to being in Paradise.”<sup>12</sup>

### + ILLUSTRATION

Through the interaction between Jesus and the repentant thief on the cross in Luke 23:39-43, we are given the essence of the gospel: repentance, faith, and grace. A guilty thief, who was staring down death, encountered Jesus and saw Him for who He really is: the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Through a repentant heart and a faith-filled proclamation, this condemned sinner was completely saved. He never had the chance to do anything in response to His salvation. His entire Christian life happened in mere moments. Like all of us, he went from sinner to saint instantly. But unlike us, he directly went from earthly sinner to heavenly, glorified soul.

Whereas most of us get a lifetime to live out our faith, this man’s justification, sanctification, and glorification occurred in an almost immediate sequence. He had no time to show off his salvation with the fruit of the Spirit, be a part of the Great Commission, or prioritize the gathering of believers. Yet Jesus was clear that the thief on the cross would get to spend eternity with God. Jesus promised this man that paradise was around the corner for them both. Death that day would not be the end. They would see each other soon.

The thief was given eternal security from the very lips of God, even though the only things this fellow had time to do were repent of his sins and trust in Jesus to save him. That’s it. A sinner repents of his sins and trusts in Jesus. Then Jesus freely lavishes grace on that undeserved sinner. What a gift!

## POINT 3: JESUS, THE CRUCIFIED KING, ENTRUSTS HIMSELF TO THE FATHER (LUKE 23:44-49).

### + COMMENTARY

“Jesus was unjustly crucified and killed by wicked men (Acts 2:23; 7:52). Yet he was holy and righteous (3:14), God’s holy Servant (4:27, 30), the Righteous One (22:14). He was totally innocent

as Pontius Pilate confessed three times before all (Luke 23:4,14,22). Herod Antipas, who was familiar with Jewish customs, also confessed his innocence (23:15). But others who were in a position to know also confessed this. A criminal crucified with Jesus admitted that although he himself was guilty and deserving of death, Jesus was innocent (23:41). Finally the centurion who witnessed all that took place also confessed Jesus' innocence (23:47). Luke's readers therefore need not be embarrassed or confused because the Object of their faith died a criminal's death, for all who were in a position to know witnessed to his innocence. Why Luke emphasized this theme is not clear, even if the fact that he did so is.

This account also stresses the eschatological nature of Jesus' death. This was not just a prophet's death, although it was that. This was the death of God's Anointed, the Messiah/Christ, the King of the Jews, the Son of God, the Lord, the Son of Man. The eschatological nature of this death is seen by darkness coming upon the land, for this was a sign of God's entrance into history to fulfill his purpose . . . Added to this is the report of the tearing of the temple curtain in two. These portray Jesus' death as the eschatological event that inaugurates a new covenant (22:20). Luke did not describe fully how Jesus' death brings all this about. He presented no developed theory of the atonement. What he did say was that Jesus came for the lost (19:10) and that because of his death he was able to forgive sins."<sup>13</sup>

## + ILLUSTRATION

In an iconic scene, Indiana Jones, on a frantic search for the Holy Grail, finds himself at a dead end. Through the guidance of his father's diary, which is filled with notes of his research about the Holy Grail, Indiana has so far been successful in deciphering the clues to help him navigate creepy cave puzzles and avoid booby traps. Next, he faces an impassable chasm, a gap so vast even an Olympic long jumper would fall short to his death. But the hand-drawn instructions tell him to leap. With his father's life on the line, he is forced to push through his fears and step out in faith. About twelve inches into his descent, he stops. Jones opens his eyes in wonder and discovers a land bridge concealed by an optical illusion. Donning his dusty brown hat, and a renewed hope in his ability to save his father, Indiana Jones crosses the impassable canyon and continues his crusade.

Though Jesus's faith in God was not a blind one, He still had choices to make. Every step toward the cross was an exhibition of the confidence He had in the Father's plan. Even as Christ hung on the cross, facing a sense of abandonment from His Father, He steadfastly endured the pain and shame, knowing that a faithful God would make a way for sinners to be saved.

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