

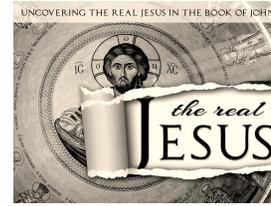
Community Group Questions:

1. "Why couldn't God just forgive us without killing His Son?" is a common question asked about the death of Christ. How should we respond to this question?

2. Let's think about the different roles between a substitute and a representative as framed in the message. A pinch hitter in a baseball game is a substitute but not a representative of the batter he replaces, however a proxy of a corporate meeting has the right to speak and act on another's behalf. How would we understand Jesus fulfilling both of those roles?

3. How should we respond to Jesus call in Luke?

"If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. Luke 9:23,24



Jesus Explains Why He Must Die John 12:20-36

Some Greeks who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration ²¹ paid a visit to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee. They said, "Sir, we want to meet Jesus." ²² Philip told Andrew about it, and they went together to ask Jesus. ²³ Jesus replied, "Now the time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory. ²⁴ I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. ²⁵ Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity. ²⁶ Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me. ²⁷ "Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, 'Father, save me from this hour'? But this is the very reason I came! ²⁸ Father, bring glory to your name." Then a voice spoke from heaven, saying, "I have already brought glory to my name, and I will do so again." ²⁹ When the crowd heard the voice, some thought it was thunder, while others declared an angel had spoken to him. ³⁰ Then Jesus told them, "The voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹ The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out. ³² And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." ³³ He said this to indicate how he was going to die. ³⁴ The crowd responded, "We understood from Scripture that the Messiah would live forever. How can you say the Son of Man will die? Just who is this Son of Man, anyway?" ³⁵ Jesus replied, "My light will shine for you just a little longer. Walk in the light while you can, so the darkness will not overtake you. Those who walk in the darkness cannot see where they are going. ³⁶ Put your trust in the light while there is still time; then you will become children of the light." After saying these things, Jesus went away and was hidden from them.

What is Jesus saying in these 16 verses?

And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." He said this to indicate how he was going to die. John 12:32,33

Jesus listeners knew what it meant to be lifted up. The idea of being lifted up had become synonymous with crucifixion in their day.

Therefore, the crowd then asked him this:

The crowd responded, "We understood from Scripture that the Messiah would live forever. How can you say the Son of Man will die? Just who is this Son of Man, anyway?" John 12:34

They knew the Son of Man was the Messiah, but they also thought the Messiah would never die, the idea of Jesus definition of the Son of man didn't jive with their own understanding.

Jesus replied, "Now the time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory." John 12:23

Jesus is telling us, "I have to die."

How is that accomplished? By being our substitute, and as our substitute Jesus was punished in our place and bore the suffering we deserved.

Substitution alone isn't enough to save us. Jesus also is our representative before the Father, so that his punishment became our punishment.

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. 2 Corinthians 5:21

He appeared to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 1 John 3:5

No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. John 10:18

Therefore, Jesus life example could give no life to us.

His teaching by themselves could give no life.

His miracles could give no spiritual life.

His transfiguration could give no life.

Had He been translated into heaven like Enoch, or had He been taken to heaven in a chariot of fire like Elijah, there would be no people in heaven. Jesus had to die according to the Scriptures.

John MacArthur Pastor and Author

I. Jesus saw the spiritual harvest of His death.

I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives.

John 12:24

II. At great cost did Christ die, but there is also a cost for us.

Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity.²⁶ Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me. John 12:25,26

First part is that this is *hard*.

- Verse 24: the grain of wheat must die.
- Verse 25: Jesus calls us to hate our lives in this world.
- Verse 26a: Jesus calls us to follow him—on his Calvary road, leading to death.
- verse 26b: he calls us to serve him.

Second part is that it is *glorious*.

- Verse 24: Yes the seed must die, but "if it dies it bears much fruit."
- Verse 25: Yes, if we love our life, we will lose it; That we may keep it to eternal life.
- Verse 26a: Yes, we follow him to Calvary. But my servants must be where I am.
- Verse 26b: Yes, we must become his servants. But the Father will honor all who serve.

...Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory. Romans 5:2

"The gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few." Matthew 7:14