

AT ONE MOMENT

The Cross of Christ





How to use this book



Personal Devotions

- Use this book to help you read your Bible every day. You will find a guide that will help you read through scriptures related to our sermon series. Scribble down your thoughts and questions, and remember to pray and ask God to speak to you by His Spirit, through His Word. Additionally we've recommended a verse to memorise each week.
- We have also suggested a 'song of the week'. So listen on Spotify by searching for the 'Church by the Bridge and St Augustine's - Songs We Sing' playlist.
- Please make note of and pray too, for the mentioned 'what's on' events each week.



Connect Groups

- Take this guide with you to your Connect Group each week. There are Bible Studies based on each Sunday's Bible talks and space to write down both prayer points that come from the study that week and prayer requests from the members of your group.



Church

- Keep this guide with your Bible and bring it with you to church.
- Scribble down sermon notes in the space provided

Dear Church by the Bridge & St Augustine's,

In Paul's final letter, 2 Timothy, he leaves his young disciple with this last imperative "Preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:2). There is nothing more important in the growth of God's kingdom than the proclaiming of God's word – the preaching of the gospel to bring people into the kingdom, the preaching of the gospel to keep people in the kingdom, and the preaching of the gospel to grow people in their knowledge and love of God.

This term we are looking at the Cross of Christ – that one moment in history when God demonstrated his most extraordinary love for us in sacrificing his one and only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps the most famous verse in the whole bible is John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." I'm so looking forward to unpacking all the multi-faceted benefits and implications of the cross, enlarging our understanding and deepening our delight in the Lord.

We have so much to be thankful for looking back on the last quarter of the year: people coming to faith in Christ, all our gatherings welcoming new people, so many connections with the surrounding community through our Mega Mondays, election BBQs, our regular Playtime, Bridge Kids and Ignite ministries, our visits to Aged Care and Greenway, our parenting seminars and well-being program, Christianity Explored and our Compassion trip to Indonesia. Please do praise God for this ongoing kindness to us in growing his church here in Kirribilli and Neutral Bay.

Looking forward to this next quarter, our big event is Winter Escape, our all church weekend away, 9-11 August. We have an outstanding speaker in Richard Coekin (from Co-Mission in the UK), an amazing kids speaker in Emma Collett (from Youthworks), great worship and breakout sessions, and most importantly we are aiming for over 400 people of all ages and stages, from all 8 of our congregations, gathered around God's Word for mutual encouragement and adoration of our great God. I'm so excited to see what God will do through this important weekend.

Also coming up we have another Building a Safe and Strong Marriage Course, Working Bees, Central Prayer Gatherings and our One Question for God sermon series. A reminder that our next Alpha Course starts on Tuesday 30th July, so please be praying for people to invite.

Finally, in our year of being on mission with a Courageous Faith, please keep praying for those 5 people in your life you long to see come to know Jesus, and be bold in talking to them about Jesus.

I'm so thankful for the ongoing privilege of pastoring and leading the flock at both Kirribilli and Neutral Bay, and continue to pray for you all regularly.

With love in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P D Dale". The letters "P" and "D" are large and blocky, while "Dale" is written in a more fluid, cursive style. A long horizontal flourish extends from the bottom of the "e" in "Dale".

Paul Dale
(Senior Pastor)

Series Overview

Why did Jesus die?

Of all the symbols that could have been used to capture the essence of Christianity, the cross is surely the best one. That being said, it is also a very unusual one. For the cross in the Roman world was a symbol of shame, horror and humiliation. Manetho describes in the 3rd century what took place... "Punished with limbs outstretched, they see the stake as their fate; they are fastened (and) nailed to it in the most bitter torment, evil food for birds of prey and grim pickings for dogs."

And yet, it captures the purpose and heart of what Jesus was on about. Without the cross you do not get Jesus. Peter the apostle tried this in Mark 8, in declaring that Jesus was the "Messiah", but then rebuked Jesus for even mentioning that he would die. Jesus, quick as a flash responds "Get behind me, Satan!... You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." Mark 8:33, revealing one thing, that God's plan from the beginning was for Jesus to die.

But what happened on those two pieces of wood outside Jerusalem as Jesus was nailed there? We often say something along the lines of "Jesus was dying for my sins."

That is very much the case. But if that is all we think is happening, then we miss out on so much. When the Bible speaks about the atoning work of Christ, it includes sacrifice, substitution, the wrath of God, cleansing and victory over Satan.

As we explore this important topic, we will be asking certain questions along the way, like:

Where did my sin go?

Was there another way for us to be saved? Did Jesus need to die?

Was it immoral for God the Father to send his Son to die?

What is with God's wrath and anger at the cross?

What did Jesus death achieve?

Plus, as we delve into God's word and come out the other side, we will again be utterly amazed at how glorious the Cross of Christ is.

What is Crucifixion?

Crucifixion was considered a disgusting and horrific business in the Roman world. It was a shameful and painful form of torture that always took place publicly. This would normally take place on high ground, a crossroad, theatre, or in the place where the crime occurred. Crucifixion had one

purpose — deter others. Rather than being buried, the criminals would hang on the cross for days and weeks, becoming food for wild beasts and birds of prey. Sending a message to others ‘Do not mess with Rome!’

When Jesus was in Gethsemane, he spoke these words to his disciples “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death” (Matthew 26:38), reflecting the anguish at facing crucifixion. He had every reason to be overwhelmed. Crucifixion was a slow and painful way to die. Criminals were nailed to two planks of wood through their hands and feet which left the victim with great difficulty in breathing. With the weight of the body pressing down on the lungs, it took great effort to simply breathe. In addition to this, blood would drain from the wounds inflicted upon them. The tactic by the Romans was that the criminal would die a slow death and it took normally took them weeks to die.

As crucifixion was reserved for slaves and criminals, the idea that the Messiah, the Son of God, would undergo this, was seen by all as ludicrous and foolish. Which gives us a window into why Paul states, “we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews

and foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Corinthians 1:23). Jesus’ death on a cross was outrageously offensive in the 1st century and yet this is the very heart of Christianity. For by this horrific event it reflects ‘the power of God and the wisdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:24).

Key Verses on the Cross of Christ:

I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.
1 Corinthians 2:2

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:6–8

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 53:5–6

There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 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.
Romans 3:22–26

The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
Mark 10:45

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.
1 Peter 1:18–19

He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.
Colossians 2:13–15.

Theological Term Definitions:

Atonement: A term that encapsulates everything Jesus achieved on the cross. That God has responded to our sin by providing the means of restoring our broken relationship, bringing both sides to a place where they are at one again (“at-one-ment”).

Substitution: Jesus Christ died as the replacement for sinful humanity, taking humanity’s place on the cross. (Isaiah 53:4–6, Romans 5:6, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24)

Propitiation: The satisfaction of the righteous demands of God in relation to human sin and its punishment through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ upon the cross, by which the penalty of sin is cancelled and the anger of God averted. (Romans 3:25–26, 1 John 2:1–3)

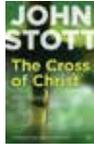
Expiation: The removal of the guilt of sin in God’s sight by the offering of a vicarious sacrifice, which, in its death, bears the sin of the

individual or nation concerned.
(Leviticus 16:3-34; Hebrews 9:7)

Justification: The acquittal, or declaration of being righteous, before God as judge. It is a central aspect of Paul's understanding of what God achieved for believers through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (Romans 3)

Redemption: The buying back or release of an object or person. In Scripture redemption refers to God's ransoming of believers, only through the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross, and to all the benefits that this brings. (Ephesians 1:7, 1 Corinthians 1:30)

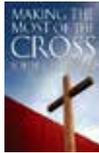
Recommended Books



The Cross of Christ
by John Stott
(Very in-depth read)



The Truth of the Cross
by R C Sproul
(Medium Read)



Making the Most of the Cross
by John Chapman
(Easy read)



Living the Cross
Centered Life: Keeping
the Gospel the Main
Thing
by C. J. Mahaney
(Practical)



A Doubter's Guide to
Jesus
by John Dickson
(Historical)

Quotes about the Cross...

Is it not wonderful news to believe that salvation lies outside ourselves?
— Martin Luther

If we want proof of God's love for us, then we must look first at the cross where God offered up His Son as a sacrifice for our sins. Calvary is the one objective, absolute, irrefutable proof of God's love for us.
— Jerry Bridges

God proved his love on the cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, 'I love you.'
— Billy Graham

It costs God nothing, so far as we know, to create nice things; but to convert rebellious wills cost Him crucifixion.
— C. S. Lewis

It was not nails that held Jesus to that wretched cross; it was his unqualified resolution, out of love for his Father, to do his Father's will—and it was his love for sinners like me.
— D.A. Carson

Before we can begin to see the cross as something done for us, we have to see it as something done by us.
— John R.W. Stott

Take away the cross of Christ, and the Bible is a dark book.
— J.C. Ryle

God takes our sins – the past, present, and future - and dumps them in the sea and puts up a sign that says NO FISHING ALLOWED.
— Corrie ten Boom



Sermon 1

Notes



WEEK BEGINNING: Monday 29th July

Song for the week:

Living Hope

Bible readings:

Monday: Leviticus 16

Tuesday: Isaiah 53

Wednesday: Matthew 26

Thursday: Matthew 27

Friday: Romans 8:31-39

Memory verse: Isaiah 53:5-6

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.

What's on:

Tue 30th: Alpha Course (wk 1 of 9)

Thu 1st: First Time Mums Group

Sat 3rd: Central Prayer Breakfast

Sat 3rd: Working Bees

Sermon 2

Notes



WEEK BEGINNING: Monday 5th August

Song for the week:

In Christ Alone

Bible readings:

Monday: Mark 14

Tuesday: Mark 15

Wednesday: Ephesians 2

Thursday: Romans 3:9-20

Friday: Romans 3:21-31

Memory verse: Ephesians 2:4-5

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

What's on:

Tue 6th & 13th: Alpha Course (wk 2 & 3 of 9)

Wed 7th: Central Prayer Evening

Fri 9th – Sun 11th: All Church Winter Escape Weekend Away

Thu 15th: God & Science Event

Winter Escape Weekend: Friday 9th - Sunday 11th August

Sermon 3

Notes



Sunday 18th August

WEEK BEGINNING: Monday 19th August

Song for the week:

This is Amazing Grace

Bible readings:

Monday: Luke 22

Tuesday: Luke 23

Wednesday: Acts 4:23-31

Thursday: Romans 5:1-11

Friday: Romans 5:12-21

Memory verse: Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

What's on:

Mon 19th: Marriage Course (wk 1 of 5)

Tue 20th: Alpha Course (wk 4 of 9)

Sermon 4

Notes



WEEK BEGINNING: Monday 26th August

Song for the week:

Jesus Paid it All

Bible readings:

Monday: John 18

Tuesday: John 19

Wednesday: John 10:20-33.

Thursday: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Friday: Galatians 3:1-14

Memory verse: 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.

What's on:

Mon 26th: Marriage Course (wk 2 of 5)

Tue 27th: Alpha Course (wk 5 of 9)

Tue 27th: Belonging Course (wk 1 of 3)

Sermon 5

Notes



WEEK BEGINNING: Monday 2nd September

Song for the week:

Praise the King

Bible readings:

Monday: Philippians 2:1-11

Tuesday: Colossians 1:15-23

Wednesday: Hebrews 9

Thursday: Hebrews 10

Friday: 1 John 4:7-21

Memory verse: 1 John 4:10

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

What's on:

Mon 1st: Marriage Course (wk 3 of 5)

Tue 2nd: Alpha Course (wk 6 of 9)

Tue 3rd: Belonging Course (wk 2 of 3)

Wed 4th: Central Prayer Evening

Thu 5th: First Time Mums Group

Sat 7th: Central Prayer Breakfast

Sat 7th & Sun 8th: Table for 8 Meals



Bible Studies

Our series on Atonement – The Cross of Christ, is topical. That means on Sundays, rather than looking at just one book of the bible and moving through it passage by passage, we'll explore what the bible says about a topic from multiple passages. The same thing will happen in Connect Groups.

There are 5 studies written for our series, each looking at a topic related to the cross.

Unlike most terms (because of where the school dates and Winter Escape fall), for most groups this term, studies will precede the topic that will be preached on the upcoming Sunday, rather than following it. However, please feel free to be flexible with the suggested schedule below and do what works best for your group:-

Date (Sunday)	Sunday Topic	Connect Groups
21st July	Holiday Series	Study 1 – Sin and Salvation
28th July	Sin and Sacrifice	Study 2 – Sacrifice
4th August	Sacrifice	Central Prayer Week
11th August	WINTER ESCAPE	Study 3 – Substitution and Propitiation
18th August	Substitution and Propitiation	Study 4 – Ransom and Reconciliation
25th August	Ransom and Reconciliation	Study 5 – Victory and Expiation
1st September	Victory and Expiation	Central Prayer Week

Some of the questions have been referenced from For Our Sins: The Cross by Matthew Jensen (Matthias Media, 2013).

Study 1: Sin and Salvation

Introduction: If you had to explain what sin was to a non-believer, what would you say? What are some synonyms that might be used to describe sin?

Read Romans 3:9-20

What are some repeated ideas/concepts? What is the repetition trying to achieve?

What does the word 'righteous' mean in this context (v10)?

What is some of the imagery that is used to describe the hopelessness and ugliness of sin in v13-18? Which do you find the most confronting? Why?

What does 'law' mean in v19-20? What is the observance of the law able to do for our righteousness?

Read Romans 3:21-26

What has changed in terms of our righteousness in v21? Was this an unexpected development?

Draw the logical flow of v22-24:

What is Jesus' blood able to accomplish? (v25-26) Why was this necessary for God?

What does the word atonement mean?

Discuss:

Why was Jesus' death necessary? What is it about God's justice that he couldn't just forget about our sins? Why did he require punishment?

Why is it difficult to talk about sin? Why do both Christians AND non-Christians find it hard to talk about?

But why is it necessary for us to talk about sin – both to our Christian brothers and sisters and to our non-Christian friends and family?

Pray:

- Praise God that he supplied the solution to our problem with Sin
- Praise Jesus that he was willing to sacrifice himself to atone for our sins

Study 2: Atonement

Introduction: When we have wronged someone, how do we repair the relationship with the person that we've wronged?

Read Leviticus 4:27-35

What happens to the goat or lamb?

Why does the sinner place his/her hand on the head of the animal?

How is atonement made?

Read Hebrews 2:14-18

Why did Jesus need to be like us in every way? How does this relate to Jesus being able to make atonement for our sins?

Read 1 John 1:5 – 2:2

How does John claim that we can deceive ourselves and make God out to be a liar?

On what basis does God forgive us and cleanse us from sin?

Discuss:

What place should confession of sin play in our lives?

Read 1 John 4:7-12

How did God show his love to us?

How is this to be shown in our everyday living?

Discuss:

When do you find it hard to love other people? Why did John appeal to the cross to encourage us to love each other?

Pray:

- That God's perfect plan involved Jesus becoming human, identifying with us and was therefore able to atone for our sins
- God will help us to love each other as sacrificially as Jesus did

Study 3: Substitution

Reflecting on previous weeks: Why is our sin a problem?

Read Leviticus 16

What was the role of the priest in the ritual?

What happens to the goat in vs 15? Why?

Why does Aaron lay hands on the goat in vs 20?

How is atonement made?

Read Hebrews 10:1-18

What was wrong with the Day of Atonement ritual?

How is what Jesus offers better?

Why can't God just forgive us? Why does there need to be a sacrifice?

Is it fair for Jesus to be our substitute?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:21

Draw or diagram what it says below. How does it describe substitution? What is the outcome?

Discuss the following quote from John Stott:

‘The concept of substitution may be said, then, to lie at the heart of both sin and salvation. For the essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man. Man asserts himself against God and puts himself where only God deserves to be; God sacrifices himself for man and puts himself where only man deserves to be. Man claims prerogatives which belong to God alone; God accepts penalties which belong to man alone’.

What implications might this have for you and me?

Study 4: Jesus Redeems & Reconciles

A) Jesus Redeems

Read Exodus 6:1-9

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt. What does God promise to do? Why did he promise this?

What will be the result of God's action?

Read Titus 2:11-14

How does this passage say we have been redeemed?

How does our redemption shape the way we live?

Reflection:

What changes do you think you need to make in your life to live as God's redeemed person?

B) Jesus Reconciles

Discuss:

How would you describe 'reconciliation'? When has reconciliation been important in your own life or in those around you?

Read Colossians 1:21-23

What was our relationship with God like before we were a Christian? Why?

How does Jesus' death reconcile us?

Now we are reconciled, how does God see us? And how does he call us to live?

Given that we're reconciled with God, how should that change the way we relate to others, particularly in moments of conflict?

Pray:

- Spend some time praising and thanking God for how he has redeemed and reconciled us through Jesus.

Study 5: Victory

Introduction: What are some movies or books that depict the battle against good and evil? What is the world's perception of the war between good vs. evil?

Read Genesis 3:1-7

What was the serpent's role in what happened? Why did he do this?

Read John 12:20-33

How is Jesus' death, and the prince of this world's judgement, related?

What impact does this have on the rest of mankind?

Read Revelation 12

What are some of the names used to refer to Satan in this passage? What was his mission for the world?

Who is the victor of this war? Is it an equal fight?

What was the means by which Satan was able to be defeated? (v11)

What does the dragon do after it lost the battle? How does it (symbolically) portray what is happening now?

Who are Satan's enemies now? Is this going to be an eternal fight?

Discuss:

Do we give too much attention to Satan, or too little? What could happen with doing either one of these things?

How is the Bible's portrayal of the battle of good vs. evil different to what the world thinks?

How is Jesus' death on the cross, related to this battle? What did his death achieve?

Pray:

- Praise God that Jesus' death on the cross meant victory over the tempter, Satan
- That we may take seriously the attempts of Satan to divide us from God
- Praise God that whilst Satan is strong, Jesus has already triumphed over him and that his limited power over us is only temporary

Further Personal Reflection

How has our series on the Cross of Christ changed your view of:

- God – Father, Son & Spirit?
- Yourself?
- The world in which we live?

What is one area you have changed?
(in your thinking or actions)

What is one question that you still have?



KNOWING **CHRIST** & MAKING HIM KNOWN **TOGETHER**

LIVING FOR
JESUS
LOVING LIKE
JESUS



CHURCH BY THE BRIDGE
Kirribilli



ST AUGUSTINE'S
Neutral Bay