

The Passion of the Christ

Study Guide

This study guide follows The Passion movie.

Before the movie:

The Passion of the Christ movie gives us an historically accurate picture of how Jesus died on the cross. After watching the movie, many people ask the question, “Why did Jesus die this way? Why would God do this to his only Son?” So that we can know without a doubt that this was God’s plan, we’ll examine a prophecy from Isaiah written over 700 years before Jesus was even born. This prophecy describes how the Savior would die and explains why God allowed him to die this way.

⁴ He suffered and endured great pain for us... ⁵ He was wounded [pierced]¹ and crushed because of our sins; by taking our punishment, he made us completely well. ⁶ All of us were like sheep that had wandered off. We had each gone our own way, but the Lord gave him the punishment we deserved. ⁷ He was painfully abused, but he did not complain. He was silent like a lamb being led to the butcher, as quiet as a sheep having its wool cut off. ⁸ He was condemned to death without a fair trial.... His life was taken away because of the sinful things his people had done. ⁹ He wasn’t dishonest or violent, but he was buried in a tomb among cruel, rich people.

¹⁰ The Lord decided his servant would suffer as a sacrifice to take away the sin and guilt of others... He did everything the Lord had planned. ¹¹ By suffering, the servant will learn the true meaning of obeying the Lord. Although he is innocent, he will take the punishment for the sins of others, so that many of them will no longer be guilty. ¹² The Lord will reward him with honor and power for sacrificing his life. Others thought he was a sinner, but he suffered for our sins and asked God to forgive us. (Isaiah 53, CEV)

Now you’re ready to watch the movie!

If you don’t have time to watch the entire movie,
we recommend watching scene#16 through the end (1 hour).

After the movie:

Now that you know how and why Jesus died on a cross, it’s even more important to know that he did this personally for you. Why would Jesus do this for me? Isaiah explains that as well:

¹ Now here is what the Lord says, ... “Don’t be afraid, because I have saved you. I have called you by name, and you are mine...⁴ You are precious to me. I give you honor, and I love you. So, I will give other people in your place. I will give other nations to save your life. ⁵ So don’t be afraid. I am with you... ⁶ Bring my sons from far away. Bring my daughters from faraway places.... ⁷ I made them for my glory....” (Isaiah 43, ICB)

¹ A more accurate translation is “pierced” according to “2490.chalal,” *Brown-Driver-Briggs, Hebrew and English Lexicon*, unabridged, electronic database (Biblesoft, 2006), <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/2490.htm>.

According to this passage, how does God feel about you? Go through each verse.

Why does God feel this way about you? What does he call you? (vv. 1, 4, 6-7)

If you were the only one Jesus could save, do you think he would have still died for you? Explain.

Many people want to know why Jesus's death had to be so violent. Think about these questions to understand:

What are some examples of sins that Jesus died for?

Think about who Jesus died for. What level of punishment would that require? Think about the people who crucified Jesus, those who start wars, and those who hurt children. Is he dying for their sin too?

What does sin do to our relationship with God? How does Jesus's sacrifice show how much he loves you?

What does God want you to feel and understand about sin from how Jesus died?

We've already studied how God first used animal sacrifices to help his people understand how sin separates us from God and causes death to our relationship with him. In Hebrews 1, we see how Jesus's sacrifice for us was different from animal sacrifices and was God's ultimate and final plan for our sin and the sins of the world: past, present and future!

¹¹ 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. ¹² But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God... ¹⁴ By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy... ¹⁸ And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

How is Jesus's sacrifice different from the animal sacrifices?

If you receive Jesus's sacrifice for sin and follow him, how does God see you now? (vv. 14, 18)

From this passage, how does God want you to feel about yourself?

We learn from Hebrews 1, that Jesus's sacrifice for our sins was complete. Jesus is able to take away all our sins and make us whole and right with God. We are now back in the Garden, and our relationship with God is fully restored. Our sin is completely covered, and we are forgiven. We are free to walk with God every day of our lives as his perfect children! While we might feel shame or guilt when we sin, we

no longer have to hide from God. We can come to him with confidence because we know that he has already forgiven us. We confess our sins to him and to each other not because of shame but because we know that confessing our sins will help us to turn away from the things we now hate and gives us more power over sin! Our heavenly Father now sees us as his perfect children who are both holy and ones who are being made holy as we learn what it means to follow Jesus.

Now that we know how Jesus died, why Jesus died, and how God feels about us, let's learn more about how he wants us to respond to his sacrifice:

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus... ²² Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵ Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God... ³⁵ So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. ³⁶ You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. ³⁷ For in just a very little while, “He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.” ³⁹ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved. (Hebrews 10, NIV)

How does Jesus want us to respond to his sacrifice? Make a list of things you notice in the second and third paragraphs.

How do you want to respond to Jesus's sacrifice and love for you? In what areas do you want or need to grow? What sins do you need to overcome? Talk about what that will look like.

This Week:

- Write in your journal to Jesus about how you feel about him and how he feels about you.
- Think and write about how you want to respond to Jesus's death on the cross and what this will mean for your life. What specific changes do you want to make in your life to respond in greater ways to his sacrifice for you? Pray to Jesus about those changes.
- Are there any sins in your life you need to renounce? Ask Jesus to help you, and make a plan to yourself and strengthen your walk with God. Ask a trusted friend to help you.
- Do you want to know how Jesus's followers responded to his death on the cross? Start reading the book of Acts to find out!