

Session 7: John 19:1–42

SESSION GOALS

Every session has specific goals—things you want your group to walk away knowing, feeling, and committing to do.

Main Idea

Jesus offered himself as our substitute, freeing all who trust in him from the penalty of their sin.

Head Change

To know that Jesus's suffering and death satisfied God's justice.

Heart Change

To feel grateful for Jesus's love—a love that sent him to the cross to save us.

Life Change

To celebrate Jesus's deep love for us by worshipping him and telling others the good news of salvation.

OPEN

When have you finished something—a work task, a piece of art, a house project—and felt good about the results? What unique challenges or struggle did it take to finish that project?

We all accomplish simple projects every day—going to work, cleaning the house, or make dinner. These tasks usually aren't even worth remembering. But the things that matter most to us usually stretched our capabilities, taught us something new, or changed us in some way. Those accomplishments tend to matter the most to us.

The greatest work of Christ's life was a mission few would ever accept and no other could ever accomplish. His entire life pointed to his death, a cruel and unjust execution. But when he finished his work, it changed history. As you hear Dr. Evans describe Jesus's final hours, consider how your response to the cross changes your life—and your eternity.

READ

Read John 19:1–42. If you are short on time, read verses 4–11, 15–19, 28–30, and 38–42.

WATCH

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Dr. Tony Evans's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.

Why did the Jewish authorities want to kill Jesus?

From where do all governments derive their power?

What did Jesus's death achieve?

Show Session 7: *John 19:1–42* (13 minutes).

DISCUSS

As John 19 opens, Jesus remains in Pilate's custody. He has not been found guilty of any crimes, but he is still being treated as a criminal. Despite Pilate's desire to free him, the people want to see him crucified. Read John 19:1–3.

Jesus was forced to wear warped symbols of royalty designed to humiliate him—a purple robe and a twisted crown of thorns. Though he truly was the king of the Jews, the people abused him verbally and physically. And yet, he did not reply to their mocking. He did not retaliate. **As you observe Jesus's unjust suffering, how would you describe the depth of his love for his people?**

Read John 19:4–15.

We may wonder why Jesus was able to remain so calm in the face of injustice and physical pain. In verse 11, Jesus reveals to both Pilate and us why he was not fighting against his captors: “You would have no authority over me at all, if it hasn't been given you from above.” Even in his darkest hour, Jesus knew that God was in control. **How do you typically react to people and God in moments of suffering?**

In hard circumstances, what could you do to trust in the Father's authority? What could help you remember that you are always in God's hands?

The Jews did not recognize their Messiah, rejecting Jesus and putting their trust in the authority of Rome. Instead of trusting God to fix their circumstances, they sided with their oppressors. **What authority do you think politics should have over your decisions? In what ways are you tempted to trust political leaders rather than trusting God to change your circumstances?**

As Dr. Evans said, political rulers are temporary and only have the power that God himself gives them. That should give us peace, even in our divided political climate. But politics remains one of the greatest sources of anxiety and fear for Christians. **What do you think is a healthy way for Christians to participate in politics?**

Read John 19:16–24. Crucifixion was an abhorrent means of execution, torturous and humiliating, meant to deter

would-be criminals or revolutionaries from standing up to Rome. Jesus voluntarily accepted crucifixion, not as an example of Rome's cruel power, but to reveal God's deep love for criminals, spiritual revolutionaries, and his enemies. **Do you think sin—our own and that of the worst sinners—deserves a punishment as intense as crucifixion? Why, or why not?**

What does it mean to you that Jesus endured such trauma for your sake?

Jesus was crucified between two common criminals. Dr. Evans mentioned that the two men reacted differently to Jesus: one mocked him and the other called on Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom (Luke 23:42). We are asked to do the same: to place our faith in Jesus, who alone can forgive our sins and make us right before God. **Have you put yourself in God's hands, trusting him to rescue you from the penalty of sin? If not, why not? What questions do you still have about Jesus and what it means to know him as your king?**

***Note:** To learn more about atonement in the Old Testament, go to **Go Deeper Section 1** at the end of this study.*

In his final moments, Jesus gave his mother to the care of his disciple. Read John 19:25–27.

Jesus (who had four younger brothers) indicated the important bond of spiritual family. Many times, our biological family does not share our faith and we need a "faith family" to support us in our spiritual journey. **What benefit have you found to be in community with fellow Christians (whether relatives or not)? In what ways have you provided one another with practical, emotional, and spiritual support?**

Read John 19:28–37. Jesus's death fulfilled, or gave deeper significance to, multiple Old Testament passages, many of which Dr. Evans pointed out in the video. When we see the connection between Jesus's death and Scripture, we can clearly see that Jesus is the prophesied Messiah. **How is your faith enriched by understanding the connection between Jesus and the Old Testament passages about the Messiah?**

***Note:** To learn more about specific Scriptures that Jesus fulfilled during his passion, go to **Go Deeper Section 2** at*

the end of this study.

In verse 35–37, we read that everything Jesus endured was to fulfill the scriptures so that “you also might believe.” Every fulfilled prophecy is another confirmation of God’s love for us. **When you read the account of Christ’s crucifixion, what do you learn about God? What new insight do you have into the breadth of God’s love for you?**

The men who cared for Jesus’s body were secret disciples, men of influence who were afraid of the social consequences of following him. Read John 19:38–42.

Unlike Peter, the men who buried Jesus stepped out of the shadows and publicly associated themselves with Jesus when it was most dangerous to do so. **What are some consequences of associating yourself with Jesus today? Whose rejection have you been afraid of? What would it look like to humbly proclaim your faith in the face of disapproval?**

This could have been the end of the story—a broken Messiah laid in a tomb while his closest disciples were silent and scattered. While we know what will come in the next chapter of John, try to put yourself in the shoes of Jesus’s followers on this day. Maybe it is not hard—maybe you have felt like your faith is fruitless, like it has all come to nothing. **Where do you turn when the future seems hopeless?**

We don’t have to live without hope because our redeemer lives. His death is a fulfillment of Scripture and how promises are sure. Despite what we may feel, hope is never far away. **What could you do to remind yourself and the people around you of the hope we have in Christ?**

LAST WORD

Jesus's passion, his suffering and crucifixion, remains the hinge event of history—and the central element of our salvation. He came to earth in order to die for us, the substitute sacrifice uniquely able to pay the price for our sins. He gave himself as a gift out of his great love for us. How we respond to him will dictate our lives today and eternally.

The Gospel of John was written so that you might believe in Jesus: the light of the world, the way, the truth and the life. Do you believe?

GO DEEPER

The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material. We've highlighted a place where each of the following segments could fit in the Discuss section of the study guide.

But you can also use these sections as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting and deepen your study of the Gospel of John.

1. Atonement and Old Testament Sacrifices

Atonement is the process of two estranged parties being reunified or “at-one” with each other. Because our sin separates us from God, we must atone, or be forgiven, for our sins before we can be at one with him. Our atonement came through the death of Jesus. But how did atonement work in the Old Testament, when people sinned but had no redeemer to take away their sin?

In the Old Testament, God's covenant included animal sacrifice, a pathway for the forgiveness of sins. The punishment for sin was always death (see Romans 6:23), but God allowed an animal—bulls, sheep, goats, and birds—to take the place of the sinner offering the sacrifice.

Read Leviticus 1:1–4.

God gave Moses detailed guidelines on how to correctly go about sacrificing an innocent animal on behalf of a sinful person.

Throughout the rest of the Old Testament, through the days of Jesus, Hebrew priests were constantly making animal sacrifices for God's people, because no matter how many sacrifices were made, people kept sinning. Read Hebrews 9:11–14.

The blood of bulls and goats was an incomplete sacrifice, unable to take away sin once and for all. It could only cover a Hebrew until they sinned again. **How soon would we have to make another sacrifice if every one of our sins required a new atonement?**

This passage lists a few ways Jesus is a better and final sacrifice. **What makes Jesus a more complete**

atonement for us?

Read Hebrews 10:8–14. Jesus is the final sacrifice for sin. We do not need to punish ourselves or make new atonements when we fail God. **In what ways do we try to atone for our sins instead of trusting in the complete work of Christ?**

Jesus is also our good high priest, who is seated at the right hand of the Father. Unlike human priests, his work is finished. **When you trust in Christ for atonement, what security can you have that was not available to Old Testament saints?**

If you have trusted in Jesus, you don't have to pay for your sins. That work is finished. You only need to trust in the one who has overcome the sin that plagued the world since Genesis. **In what ways, if any, do you try to pay or "make up for" your sins? What would it look like to trust in Jesus's finished work instead of your own efforts?**

2. The Scriptures Jesus's Crucifixion Fulfilled

Throughout John's account of Jesus's death we find allusions to prophecies about the Messiah, noting how Jesus fulfilled each one. John's record meticulously shows that Jesus is the prophesied Messiah and that his death was no accident. It was his destiny, which he knew and accepted (John 18:4). As the promised king, he had come to fulfill the Old Testament that pointed toward him, Israel's long-awaited savior.

In the following Scripture comparisons, notice who is fulfilling ancient prophecy.

Read Psalm 22:18, then John 19:23–24.

Read Psalm 34:20, then John 19:31–33, 36.

The soldiers had no idea their actions were fulfilling out long-foretold prophecies. Their actions validated God's plan of salvation. **What do you learn about God as you see enemies of Jesus act in ways that directly fulfill his Word?**

Psalm 22 contains a variety of statements that allude to the Messiah's suffering. Read 22:1–8, 16–18. **What parallels do you see with the accounts of Jesus's passion in John 19 and Psalm 22?**

Ancient texts written by and for Israelites in the time of David connect directly with events and people during Jesus's lifetime. The Bible's continuity is one evidence of its reliability. Sixty-six books written over a span of 1,500 years in three languages combine to tell one grand story, God's plan to redeem his people.

Take a moment to thank God for giving us his Word, telling us his story, and showing us his character through it. **What have you read that makes you worship God today?**