

Last week we looked at who Jesus is and now we will look at why He had to come to this earth.

1. In the beginning

Read Genesis 1:26-31.

When God created us, what sort of people did he make us to be? (Genesis 1:27)

Who did God choose to put in charge of everything else he had made? (Genesis 1:26)

How did God feel after He had made us? (Genesis 1:31)

In the beginning, God created a perfect world including man (Genesis 1 v 31). God created mankind with the ability to love, and to choose. At this point in history, perfect people lived in a perfect environment in a perfect relationship with each other and in perfect harmony with God. We know that this is not even close to the situation we have today...so what went wrong??

2. If God created a perfect world then what went wrong?

Read Genesis 3:1-7. God warned man that if he sinned he would die.

In your own words, what is sin?

But as we read, Adam and Eve were disobedient and at that moment sin entered the world.

What do you think God meant when he said 'you will surely die'?

Sin bought death, separation, sorrow, pain and hardship to Adam and Eve – and it still does to us today.

Can we blame Adam and Eve for the fact we too will die one day?

Read Romans 5:12, Romans 3:10-12, Romans 3:23 and 1 John 1:8 before you answer.

3. Sin separates us from God

What is the result of our sin? (Isaiah 59:2)

God not only has the nature of perfect love, He also has the nature of perfect justice. Justice demands punishment for wrong.

What will happen to us if we continue to reject God and disobey Him? (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)

4. Separation from God is a SERIOUS problem

Some people have a relaxed attitude about sin – “so I’m separated from God, what’s the big deal?” or you may hear people say something stupid like “I don’t care if I go to hell, it will just be a big party with all my mates”

Read Romans 6:23, Romans 14:10b-12 and Proverbs 14:12. In your own words, describe how serious sin is.

5. Jesus is the answer to this problem

Through all this God still loved mankind. It was, and still is, God's ultimate desire to restore the relationship that was lost through sin. It is not God's desire for any to miss out on eternity with Him and complete fulfilment with Him in the present life (read 2 Peter 3:9).

The whole reason God came down to earth as Jesus is because he didn't want to be separated from his creation. He never intended us to die, it was *our* decision. But He loved us so much that He did something about it. His love caused Him to act in a way never seen before on earth or in heaven.

Read 1 Timothy 2:5&6, Romans 5:8 and 1 Peter 3:18 (a). How did Jesus fix the problem of sin?

In order for man to be acceptable to God the justice of God must be met. God decided to do this himself by sending Jesus to die for you and me. He took our place. He bore our punishment that God's justice might be met.

Some people think that if they simply change from now on and do 'good' then God should accept them. Yet no matter how much good we do in the future it cannot annul the wrong we have done in the past. God's justice must still be met.

When we read the Easter story and the account of Jesus' death we realize that God wouldn't have endured so much for no reason. Jesus came so that justice could be met and we could be reconciled to the Father. It is a free gift for *all* men and women (and boys and girls) and yet something is required of us. Knowing that Jesus died for us is still not sufficient. God's forgiveness is a gift. Although we may be offered a gift it never becomes ours until we receive it. What does God require of us in order to receive the gift He offers? - Repentance. We'll look at repentance next week.

Write out and memorise Romans 5:8.

What is the most important truth you have learned from this lesson?

Do you have any more comments or questions?