

WHY DID JESUS SUFFER AND DIE?

Note to the speaker:

By skillful use of the Scriptures, help audience to appreciate what was accomplished by Jesus' coming to earth, suffering, and dying on the stake. Explain the ransom as a loving provision of God and Christ. Especially point out to new ones how they can benefit from it

YOUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT JESUS (5 min.)

Most religious artwork depicts Jesus as frail, halo-encircled, effeminate, and melancholy (*g*98 12/8 5-6)

A close examination of the Scriptures reveals that Jesus was vigorous, manly, joyful, and certainly not sanctimonious (Mr 6:3; Lu 2:52; Joh 2:14-16; Ac 2:26-28)

Just as most religious artwork is misleading, so are most religious teachings about who Jesus was and why he suffered and died

In our quest for accurate knowledge about Jesus, we must turn to a reliable source, the Word of God (Lu 1:1-3; 1Th 2:13; 2Pe 1:16)

Bible-based knowledge about Jesus is vital because it alone can lead us to a happy future and everlasting life (Joh 17:3)

God's Word provides answers to important questions, such as: Who was Jesus? Why was he persecuted? Who was responsible for his suffering and his death? What vital role does his death play in our relationship with God and our hope for life?

WHO JESUS REALLY WAS (5 min.)

Jesus knew who he was and where he came from

He spoke a number of times of his prehuman existence (Joh 3:13; 6:38, 62; 8:23, 42, 58; 17:5)

Before angelic or human life existed, God directly created Jesus in spirit form (Re 3:14)

He was thus God's Son, the firstborn of all creation (Col 1:15-17)

Through him God created all other things, including the earth and the first humans, Adam and Eve

At the appointed time, Jehovah transferred the life of his heavenly Son to the womb of Mary, a Jewish virgin (Lu 1:30, 31, 34, 35; Ga 4:4)

Jesus was born a perfect, sinless human (*it*-2 56)

About 30 years of age, he was anointed with holy spirit, and he was begotten as God's spiritual Son on earth as well as the promised Messiah (Mt 3:16, 17; Lu 3:23; Joh 4:25, 26)

WHY JESUS SUFFERED (15 min.)

Jesus knew that his godly course in life would lead to his being persecuted and finally killed (Mt 16:21)

It was foretold that he would be a victim of the hostility described symbolically at Genesis 3:15

The reason why Jesus suffered involved his upholding of Jehovah's sovereignty despite all the efforts of Satan to break His integrity (*cl* 144)

Jesus settled with dramatic finality the issue of the integrity of God's servants (Heb 7:26; *w*91 2/15 14-15)

Despite being the object of vicious opposition, Jesus fulfilled his commission with dignity, humility, and self-control because of his great love for God (1Pe 2:22, 23)

In this way he proved Satan to be a base liar and conquered the world under the Devil's control (Joh 16:33)

Jesus' sufferings also served to perfect him for his role as High Priest for mankind (Heb 2:10, 18; 4:15)

He was hated because he spoke the truth about God and was no part of the world (Joh 7:7; 8:40; 15:18, 19; 17:16)

Jesus learned obedience by the things that he suffered (Heb 5:8)

At his death he was able to cry out triumphantly: "It has been accomplished!" (Joh 19:30)

JESUS DIED TO GLORIFY GOD AND TO SAVE MAN (15 min.)

Jesus died, not for doing wrong, but for proclaiming the truth and glorifying Jehovah God (Joh 8:46, 47; 17:4)

His foremost desire was to sanctify God's name (Mt 6:9; Joh 12:27, 28)

By remaining faithful to God, Jesus gave the finest evidence in favor of the rightfulness of Jehovah's universal sovereignty (Job 1:6-12; 2:2-6; Re 3:14)

During his short ministry, Jesus demonstrated his love for people by teaching them about God's Kingdom and by healing those who were suffering (Mt 4:23)

His greatest act of love for people was his willingly giving his life as a ransom for mankind [Read 1 Timothy 2:5, 6] (Joh 15:13; *w*95 6/15 14-15)

This was "a corresponding ransom," which means that his perfect life *corresponded* exactly to the perfect life that Adam forfeited for himself and for his offspring when he sinned (Ro 5:12, 18, 19; *w*99 2/15 13-18; *cl* 141-3)

If Jesus had been God or part man and part God, he would not have been a *corresponding* ransom

Jesus tasted death for every man (Heb 2:9, 17)

The ransom was provided for the world of mankind (1Jo 2:2)

To benefit from it individually, we must exercise faith in this marvelous and loving arrangement [Read John 3:16, 18, 36]

By accepting the ransom and by obeying Jesus' teachings, we come out from under the wrath of God and into His favor

TRUST GOD'S WORD, AND FOLLOW JESUS TO LIFE (5 min.)

The Holy Scriptures paint an accurate picture of Jesus and reveal that "he was full of undeserved kindness and truth" (Joh 1:14)

They verify that Jesus was resurrected from the dead and that he has become "the Chief Agent of life" (Ac 3:15; 1Co 15:3-8)

He is the "one mediator between God and men" (1Ti 2:5)

Jesus has not changed but remains full of mercy and undeserved kindness (Heb 4:14-16)

He invites people of all national origins and ethnic groups to follow him and benefit from his teachings (Mt 11:28-30; 28:19, 20)

A study of the Bible reveals the key identifying mark of Jesus' true followers today [Read John 13:34, 35; 17:25, 26]

Regardless of attitudes that prevail in the world, Jehovah's Witnesses imitate Jesus and manifest love for one another (g98 10/22 6)

To embrace the hope of life eternal, we must study the Bible and learn more about Jesus' role in God's purpose [Read John 20:31]

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)