

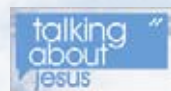
talking about jesus



Walking With Jesus

Leader's Guide

For this course you will need -



and



Talking About... is an innovative video resource for clergy, youth workers, small-group leaders, evangelists and Christian communicators. Every DVD in the series is packed with short films combining images, music, discussion and words from the Bible on a particular aspect of Christian life. These films make an ideal resource for small groups, but can also be used in sermons or other talks. **Talking About... Jesus** is one DVD in the series, looking particularly at the life and teaching of Jesus. This Leader's guide is designed to help you use the DVD in a five session course, but can be adapted for use in shorter courses. When you run your **Walking With Jesus** Lent course, you will find it helpful to use our Members' booklets with your group. These provide daily devotional material for course participants to use between meetings, as well as notes for use in each session of the course. Members' booklets can be purchased online from www.damaris.org/shop

Talking About... Jesus contains the following videos, organised into six series of three films to allow for focused study on particular aspects of Jesus' life and ministry.

1. Jesus' incarnation

4

(1.1 what?)

5

(1.2 what does this mean?)

6

(1.3 what does this mean for me?)

7

2. Jesus' miracles

9

(2.1 what?)

9

(2.2 what does this mean?)

10

(2.3 what does this mean for me?)

12

3. Jesus' teaching

15

(3.1 what?)

15

(3.2 what does this mean?)

16

(3.3 what does this mean for me?)

18

4. Jesus' attitudes

20

(4.1 what?)

21

(4.2 what does this mean?)

23

(4.3 what does this mean for me?)

24

5. Jesus' death

27

(5.1 what?)

27

(5.2 what does this mean?)

29

(5.3 what does this mean for me?)

30

6. Jesus' resurrection

(6.1 what?)

(6.2 what does this mean?)

(6.3 what does this mean for me?)

Bonus Extras

(A. Who do you say Jesus is?)

(A.1 look for yourself)

(A.2 is Jesus a legend?)

(A.3 is Jesus a lunatic?)

(A.4 is Jesus a liar?)

(A.5 is Jesus Lord?)

(B. Did Jesus rise from the dead?)

The **Talking About... Jesus** videos may be used in a number of ways: as a study series for small groups, as a prelude to a sermon or talk in church or to a youth group, in individual one-to-one ministry, or as a course.

The course is divided into five sessions, covering Jesus' incarnation, miracles, teaching, attitudes and death. It is intended to culminate with a church service about the Resurrection (on Easter Sunday if you're running it as a Lent course), using the videos from section 6 of the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD. We hope that the bonus extra videos will be useful to you for outreach events.

For each of the five sessions in the *Walking With Jesus* Leader's Guide there are three videos. Each session is therefore split into three sections, divided by coffee breaks. There is a suggested discussion question and a guided reflection for each session, but we recommend you only do one of these options rather than both, choosing the activity which would be most helpful for your particular group.

We recognise that this course can cater for many different types of group, so if using all three videos will make your session too long, simply choose one or two of the videos that you think will be most helpful, and do the activities associated with those. If you choose not to do Section 1, we recommend that you still use the opening prayer from this session as an introduction, along with the opening introductory activity to set the mood as people arrive.

Suggested session outline (approx. 90 minutes, including a coffee break)

Optional introductory activity	as people arrive prior to scheduled start time
Opening prayer	1 minute

Section 1: what?

Reading	5 minutes
Video	5 minutes
Discussion question or guided reflection	10 minutes
Prayer	1 minute

Section 2: what does this mean?

Reading	5 minutes
Video	5 minutes
Discussion question or guided reflection	10 minutes
Prayer	1 minute

<i>Coffee Break</i>	<i>15 minutes</i>
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Section 3: what does this mean for me?

Reading	5 minutes
Video	5 minutes
Discussion question or guided reflection	10 minutes
Prayer	1 minute
Closing prayer and worship	10 minutes

Session 1: Jesus' Incarnation

This session looks at the significance of Jesus' birth: God choosing to become a human being and live among us. Section 1 explores what was actually happening behind the Nativity story that most people are so familiar with; Section 2 looks at the implications of the fact that God became human; and Section 3 focuses on the response that this historical event demands of those who seek to follow Jesus today.

▶ You will need:

- *Talking About... Jesus videos 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3*
- *The necessary equipment to play the videos*
- *Bibles*
- *Pens*
- *Members' booklets (if you have decided to provide these additional resources for your course participants. Members' booklets can be purchased from www.damaris.org/shop)*
- *Paper (for optional opening activity)*
- *1 large candle, plus enough small candles for each course participant to have one (for Section 1: guided reflection)*
- *A large cross with a sign reading, 'Immanuel: God with us' (for Section 2: guided reflection)*
- *Recent newspapers, scissors, and blu-tack (for Section 2: guided reflection)*
- *A copy of the film Stranger than Fiction (Sony Pictures 2006, certificate 12) (for Section 3: guided reflection)*

▶ Optional opening activity

As the course participants arrive, invite them to discuss what they think Jesus was like. You could give them the option of drawing their impressions of him.

▶ Opening prayer

Father God, thank you for choosing to reveal yourself to us through the person of Jesus. Please show us more of who you are now as we consider the incarnation. Show us your glory, reveal to us our sin, and inspire and strengthen us to live lives that are pleasing to you. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 1: what?

▶ Reading

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only (Son), who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

(John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ") Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but the one and only (Son), who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

(John 1:1-18, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 1.1 (*Jesus' Incarnation: what?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ Discussion question

What ideas about Jesus are expressed in this passage and in the video? What do you understand by the concept of Jesus being 'the Word' and 'the light'? What is the significance of that for your own daily life and experience?

▶ Guided reflection

Light a large candle at the front. Ask the group to reflect for a moment on what it means to say that Jesus is the Light. Then give each group member a small unlit candle. Ask them to think of someone they know who is currently living in darkness, not knowing the God who came to our world bringing life and light. When they have someone in mind, invite them to come forward and light their candles, committing to pray that their person would come to know the Light of the World.

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you for sending Jesus to bring us light and life. Thank you that through him we can become your children. Please fill us with the desire to know you more and more each day. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Section 2: what does it mean?**

▶ **Reading**

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers and sisters in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

(Hebrews 2:14-18, TNIV)

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▶ **Video**

Show video 1.2 (*Jesus' Incarnation: what does it mean?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ **Discussion question**

Why did God choose to come to Earth in human form? How might things be different if he had decided not to – both globally and for you personally?

▶ **Guided reflection**

Place a large cross at the front and attach a sign which reads, *'Immanuel: God with us'*. Give out recent newspapers, scissors and blu-tack to the course participants. Ask them to find stories of suffering and stick them to the cross, reflecting on the amazing truth that Jesus, the *'man of sorrows'*, understands all our suffering.

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you that because you lived among us as a human we can know what you are really like. Thank you for entering into our world and suffering with us. May our increased understanding of you, and the knowledge that you have shared our pain, give us confidence to approach your throne of grace with all of our needs. Help us to grow in our understanding of who you are, and to worship you with renewed devotion. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 3: what does it mean for me?

▶ Reading

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

In your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a human being, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

(Philippians 2:1-13, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 1.3 (*Jesus' Incarnation: what does it mean for me?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ Discussion question

How can we live every moment of our lives following in Jesus' footsteps? What does it mean to sleep for God? To eat for God? To watch TV for God? To travel to work for God? Is there any part of our lives that cannot be done for God's glory? Which parts of your life do you find hardest to let God have?

▶ Guided reflection

Show a clip from the film *Stranger Than Fiction* (Sony Pictures, certificate 12). The clip shows a day in the life of a man obsessed by numbers. Invite the group to reflect on what a day in their lives might look like if they had Jesus in mind in everything they did.

Start: 0.00.40 (in chapter 1 of the DVD)

End: 0.03.23

Duration of clip: 2 minutes and 43 seconds.

The clip starts, right after the opening film company credits, with a starry sky. It ends with the narrator (Emma Thompson) saying, '*On the nightstand beside him*'.

If you can't show the DVD clip, you could talk through a typical day and invite group members to reflect on how they might live each moment for God.

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you for Jesus. We want to spend every moment of our lives following in his footsteps and living for you. Please make us aware of your presence in all that we do and help us to put you first in everything. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Closing prayer and worship**

Spend some time worshipping God through songs, or praying in groups. Focus your prayers on praising God for sending his Son into our world, and recommitting to follow Jesus each day.

Session 2: Jesus' Miracles

This session looks at some of the miracles which Jesus performed, and what they show us about his character and mission. Section 1 explores some of the different kinds of miracles recorded, and what they tell us about Jesus; Section 2 looks at Jesus' purposes in performing miracles; and Section 3 focuses on the place of miracles in our lives and ministry today.

▶ You will need:

- *Talking About... Jesus videos 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3*
- *The necessary equipment to play the videos*
- *Bibles*
- *Pens*
- *Members' booklets (if you have decided to provide these additional resources for your course participants. Members' booklets can be purchased from www.damaris.org/shop)*
- *Paper (for optional opening activity)*
- *Some quiet worship music (for Section 1: guided reflection)*
- *The necessary equipment to play the worship music (for Section 1: guided reflection)*

▶ Optional opening activity

As the course participants arrive, invite them to discuss what super-power they would most like to have. You could give them the option of drawing their own super-hero creation.

▶ Opening prayer

Father God, thank you that by looking at Jesus we can understand more of your character and purposes. As we look at the miracles Jesus performed, please reveal to us more of your glory and power. Send your Holy Spirit to be at work among us now, speaking into our hearts to change us and empower us to live lives that make a difference for you. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 1: what?

▶ Reading

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

(Mark 2:1-12, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 2.1 (*Jesus' Miracles: what?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ Discussion question

What do the miracles Jesus performed tell us about who he was? What difference do Jesus' miracles make to our understanding of what God is like?

▶ Guided reflection

Often when God does a miracle in the Bible, people respond by praising him. Read Exodus 15:1-18 or 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Play some quiet worship music and write your own prayers of thanksgiving to our miraculous God.

▶ Prayer

Father God, thank you for the many ways in which we have seen your power at work in the world and in our lives. Above all, thank you for the miracle you performed in our hearts when you forgave our sin, rescued us from death, and gave us new life through Jesus. May we never grow tired of praising you for the amazing work you have done and are doing in us. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 2: what does it mean?

▶ Reading

When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and

had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

"You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"

But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?"

Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe."

He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

(Mark 5:21-43, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 2.2 (*Jesus' Miracles: what does it mean?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ Discussion question

How do Jesus' miracles affect the way we relate to him today? What do they tell us about his character and his purposes?

▶ Guided reflection

Read the account of Jesus calming the storm in Mark 4:35-41. Invite the group to reflect quietly on their answer to the disciples' question.

What does this miracle tell us about who Jesus is?

What kind of storms do we face in our lives?

Do we ever feel like Jesus is asleep?

What difference does it make to us that even the wind and waves obey Jesus?

How should we respond to this man?

▶ Prayer

Father God, thank you for demonstrating your amazing power by changing our hearts and bringing us into a relationship with you. Please give us a greater understanding of your love for us, and let that love shine through in our words and actions each day. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 3: what does it mean for me?

▶ Reading

Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near.

When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

Philip answered him, "It would take almost a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

So they asked him, "What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

"Sir," they said, "always give us this bread."

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All whom the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

At this the Jews there began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven'?"

"Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered. "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from him comes to me. No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which people may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever."

(John 6:1-15; 22-58, TNIV)

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▶ **Video**

Show video 2.3 (*Jesus' Miracles: what does it mean for me?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ **Discussion question**

How can we make sure that our actions point towards Jesus and his message?

▶ **Guided reflection**

Read through the following suggestions for reflection, giving the group time to respond to God.

How do you feel about miracles? What situations or areas of your life could use a miracle at the moment? What is the greatest miracle you could imagine? Spend a moment thanking God for the difference his power has made in your life, and asking him to be at work today.

Do you try to do everything in your own strength, not trusting God's power to be at work in your situation? Or do you look for big miracles and wonderful signs rather than focusing on the good news of Jesus and the change he can effect in people's lives? How easily do you find yourself focusing on appearances of Christian ministries (including your own) rather than the substance of what God may be doing in a quieter, less obvious way? Spend a moment saying sorry to God for any wrong attitudes you may have identified during this session.

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you that you are all-powerful. Nothing is impossible for you. Thank you that you alone have the power to save people from their sins. We are sorry for the times when we have been more interested in spectacular signs than communicating the message of your grace, and we are sorry for the times when we have not believed that you can change things. Please help us to proclaim your gospel plainly and fearlessly, trusting in your power to change hearts and restore relationships with you. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Closing prayer and worship**

Spend some time worshipping God through songs, or praying in groups. Focus your prayers on praising God for his power at work in our world, and asking him to intervene in specific situations that you know of.

Session 3: Jesus' Teaching

This session looks at some of the things that Jesus taught to his followers about God and about how they ought to live. Section 1 explores the main thrust of Jesus' teachings and their relevance today; Section 2 looks at the practical implications of the command to love our neighbours as ourselves; and Section 3 focuses on the specifics of how we live out Jesus' commands in every aspect of our lives each day.

▶ You will need:

- *Talking About... Jesus videos 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3*
- *The necessary equipment to play the videos*
- *Bibles*
- *Pens*
- *Members' booklets (if you have decided to provide these additional resources for your course participants. Members' booklets can be purchased from www.damaris.org/shop)*
- *Paper (for Section 1: guided reflection; and Section 2: guided reflection)*
- *A range of popular magazines (for Section 1: guided reflection)*
- *Recent newspapers (for Section 3: guided reflection)*

▶ Optional opening activity

As the course participants arrive, invite them to share with each other what they recollect of their most memorable teacher from school. What made them so memorable and have they had any lasting impact?

▶ Opening prayer

Father God, thank you for sending Jesus to teach us how we ought to live, and model that lifestyle in his own perfect life and death. As we study his teaching, please help us to understand more of your great plans for us, show us where we need to make changes to our lives, and by your grace enable us to apply your truths to our lives in fresh and exciting ways. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 1: what?

▶ Reading

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with

all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

(Mark 12:28-34, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 3.1 (*Jesus’ Teaching: what?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ Discussion question

In your opinion, what was the most important message of Jesus’ teaching?

▶ Guided reflection

Get some magazines and browse through them. Try to write a list of the top ten rules for a successful and happy life based on what you find there. Now read through Matthew 5:1-12 and reflect on the radically different priorities and lifestyle that those verses encourage us to aspire to.

▶ Prayer

Father God, we are sorry for the times when we have not loved you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. We are sorry for the times when we have failed to love others as much as we love ourselves. Please renew our hearts and minds, changing our priorities so that you are the centre of our lives. We don’t want to live for ourselves any more; we want to live wholly for you. Please give us the will and strength to do that day by day. In Jesus’ name, amen.

▶ Section 2: what does it mean?

▶ Reading

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

He answered, “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

(Luke 10:25-37, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 3.2 (*Jesus' Teaching: what does it mean?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus DVD*.



▶ Discussion question

How do we practically apply the golden rule to 'love your neighbour as yourself' day by day in every area of our lives?

▶ Guided reflection

In the DVD it was mentioned that our daily choices should be a 'response that comes from a heart of love', so it is important that we spend time reminding ourselves of how great God is, and cultivating our love for him.

With this in mind, give your group members some time to think of ten reasons for why they love God. (It may be helpful to give out pens and paper for this activity, as it may be difficult to remember and reflect on ten things without writing them down. You could also suggest that participants might like to draw pictures to symbolise their reasons if they would find this more helpful than writing.)

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you so much for who you are. Thank you that you are gracious, compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love and faithfulness. Thank you for the perfect love that you have shown for each one of us. Please fill our hearts with so much love for you that it overflows into our words and actions each day. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Section 3: what does it mean for me?**

▶ **Reading**

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

(Matthew 5:38-48, TNIV)

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▶ **Video**

Show video 3.3 (*Jesus' Teaching: what does it mean for me?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ **Discussion question**

How might the golden rule apply practically in the job you do? Are there situations or relationships in your life where you struggle to put yourself in someone else's place? Discuss specific areas where you feel that you need to start applying the golden rule in your lives. Come up with some action points about practical changes you intend to make.

▶ **Guided reflection**

Margaret Killingray asks how we can show God's love to six billion people. Read through the following questions to help the group reflect on this tricky issue.

How can we show God's love to the lonely old lady who lives down the street?

How can we show God's love to that annoying colleague at work?

How can we show God's love to that gang of youths who make us feel uncomfortable as we walk past?

How can we show God's love to the government of our country?

How can we show God's love to the the high flyers of the financial world?

How can we show God's love to prisoners with nothing to live for?

How can we show God's love to those bereaved by violent conflicts?

How can we show God's love to those with not enough to eat?

How can we show God's love to those with life-threatening diseases?

How can we show God's love to the celebrities we read about in magazines?

How can we show God's love to six billion people all over the world?

Give out some newspapers and allow time for the group to pray about some of the people and situations they find there.

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you that your way is not about following a set of rules, but that it ultimately all comes down to love. Thank you for showing us what real love looks like. Please be at work in us in sharing your amazing love with the rest of the world. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Closing prayer and worship**

Spend some time worshipping God through songs, or praying in groups. Focus your prayers on praising God for his transformational teaching made available to us in his word, and asking him to help us put it into practice, actively showing his love to the world.

Session 4: Jesus' Attitudes

This session looks at how Jesus interacted with the people that he met, and what this shows us about his character and priorities. Section 1 explores Jesus' attitudes to those on the margins of society. Section 2 looks at how Jesus deals with sin, and the implications of this for those who meet him as sinners. Section 3 focuses on how the church can reflect Jesus' attitudes in the way that it behaves towards outsiders.

▶ You will need:

- *Talking About... Jesus videos 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3*
- *The necessary equipment to play the videos*
- *Bibles*
- *Pens*
- *Members' booklets (if you have decided to provide these additional resources for your course participants. Members' booklets can be purchased from www.damaris.org/shop)*
- *Paper (for optional opening activity)*
- *An unsavoury guest (for optional opening activity)*

▶ Optional opening activity

As the course participants arrive, invite them to discuss which of Jesus' followers is their personal favourite, and why. Alternatively, the participants could draw their own impressions of what some of Jesus' followers might have looked like.

Alternatively, invite a guest who will be unfamiliar to most participants. Ask your guest to come dressed scruffily and smelling of alcohol. They should hang around at the back of the room muttering. After a while, introduce your friend and explain that he doesn't normally dress or act this way! Ask participants to discuss how they reacted to the stranger.

▶ Opening prayer

Father God, thank you for loving the world so much that you sent your Son Jesus to us. Please help us to understand more of your love now. Show us what is important to you and, by your Spirit, make the same things important to us. As we study Jesus' attitudes to those he met, please develop in us the mind of Christ, that we might be able to reveal Jesus to the people we meet. In Jesus' name, amen.

Section 1: what?

Reading

Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John—although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

Now he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

"I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

"Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one

asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now those who reap draw their wages, even now they harvest the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers.

42 They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

(John 4:1-42, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 4.1 (*Jesus' Attitudes: what?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ Discussion question

What strikes you about the way Jesus behaves towards those on the margins of society? Try to come up with a list of principles which seem to govern his attitudes and actions. How can we put the same principles into practice in our lives?

▶ Guided reflection

Think about how your church might treat a woman similar to the Samaritan Jesus met at the well.

The woman has had to come to the well on her own in the heat of the day. Why might people be treated as outcasts in your community (or feel that they are treated as such)?

Jesus approaches the woman by asking her for a drink. Are we willing to approach people whose company might damage our reputation? How do we initiate conversations? Do we see outsiders as having something to offer us?

Jesus offers the woman living water so that she will never be thirsty again. What do you think people in your community are thirsting for? How can we help them to see that faith in Jesus can meet those needs?

Jesus challenges the woman about her lifestyle? How can we challenge people about their sin without making them feel condemned?

When the woman asks Jesus questions, he takes time to engage with the issues she raises. Do we listen to the genuine questions people have and try to help them find answers?

Jesus explains to the woman how she can worship God and uses her as one of his first evangelists. How do we ensure that outsiders are enabled to worship God? How do we equip and empower them to use their gifts in his service?

▶ Prayer

Father God, thank you for reaching out to us when we were far away from you, lost in our shame and sin. Thank you for choosing to use us to advance your kingdom. Please help us to follow you in reaching out to the outcasts who have been marginalized by society and to those who long for the life you offer but do not know where to find it. Help us to see people through your eyes and show them your love. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 2: what does it mean?

▶ Reading

At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

"No one, sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

(John 8:2-11, TNIV)

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▶ **Video**

Show video 4.2 (*Jesus' Attitudes: what does it mean?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus DVD*.



▶ **Discussion question**

What can we learn about Jesus from the story of the woman caught in adultery? What can we learn about ourselves? What are the practical implications of your answers for your worship, your lifestyle, and the way you relate to others?

▶ **Guided reflection**

In the DVD, Philip Yancey suggests that grace is a free gift, but we must open our hands to accept it.

Read Ephesians 1:3–14 slowly. Invite the group to open their hands as you do so, as a symbol of receiving the amazing free gifts of grace that God offers us.

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, we can't thank you enough for the gift of grace that you offer us without charge. Help us to grasp just how amazing that gift is. Help us to be overwhelmed by the scale of your goodness to us each day, as we discover more of your grace. And, Father, help us to show more grace in the way that we deal with those we meet. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Section 3: what does it mean for me?**

▶ **Reading**

My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. Suppose someone comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor person in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the one wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the one who is poor, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if people claim to have faith but have no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

(James 2:1-18, NLT)

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▶ Video

Show video 4.3 (*Jesus' Attitudes: what does it mean for me?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ Discussion questions

Does your church show favouritism towards certain people? Do you ever respond differently to people because of your prejudices towards their social standing, intellect, or activities? How should the church respond to different types of people? Is there ever a valid basis for treating different people in different ways?

Who are the outcasts in our community? Think of some practical ways in which you can follow Jesus' example in identifying with our suffering and needy world.

▶ Guided reflection

Read the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in this paraphrase from *The Message*. Give your group members time to reflect on the story and their response to it.

When he finally arrives, blazing in beauty and all his angels with him, the Son of Man will take his place on his glorious throne. Then all the nations will be arranged before him and he will sort the people out, much as a shepherd sorts out sheep and goats, putting sheep to his right and goats to his left.

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what's coming to you in this kingdom. It's been ready for you since the world's foundation. And here's why:

I was hungry and you fed me,

I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,

*I was homeless and you gave me a room,
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,
I was sick and you stopped to visit,
I was in prison and you came to me.'*

Then those 'sheep' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?' Then the King will say, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.'

Then he will turn to the 'goats,' the ones on his left, and say, 'Get out, worthless goats! You're good for nothing but the fires of hell. And why? Because—

*I was hungry and you gave me no meal,
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,
I was homeless and you gave me no bed,
I was shivering and you gave me no clothes,
Sick and in prison, and you never visited.'*

Then those 'goats' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or homeless or shivering or sick or in prison and didn't help?'

He will answer them, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you failed to do one of these things to someone who was being overlooked or ignored, that was me—you failed to do it to me.'

Then those 'goats' will be herded to their eternal doom, but the 'sheep' to their eternal reward.

(Matthew 25:31-46, The Message)

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▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you that you showed your love for us by joining us in our suffering. Please help us to follow Jesus' example by identifying with our suffering and needy world. Father, we ask that you would be with those known to us who are especially in need of your care at this time. We pray too for those situations in our world where many are suffering because of war, poverty, natural disasters, or disease. Please show your power in transforming those situations and comforting those affected by them. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Closing prayer and worship**

Spend some time worshipping God through songs, or praying in groups. Focus your prayers on praising God for the amazing love he showed us through the life and death of Jesus, and asking him to change our hearts to reflect his attitudes and priorities in the way we relate to others.

Session 5: Jesus' Death

This session looks at the climax of Jesus' ministry: his death on the cross. Section 1 explores why it was necessary for Jesus to die; Section 2 looks at the difference that Jesus' death around two thousand years ago makes in our lives today; and Section 3 focuses on what Jesus' willingness to take up his cross means for those of us who seek to follow in his footsteps.

▶ You will need:

- *Talking About... Jesus videos 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3*
- *The necessary equipment to play the videos*
- *Bibles*
- *Pens*
- *Members' booklets (if you have decided to provide these additional resources for your course participants. Members' booklets can be purchased from www.damaris.org/shop)*
- *Paper (for optional opening activity and for Section 2: guided reflection)*
- *Bread, wine, and anything else necessary for sharing the Lord's Supper (for Section 1: guided reflection)*
- *The necessary equipment to burn or otherwise completely destroy paper (for Section 2: guided reflection)*

▶ Optional opening activity

As the course participants arrive, invite them to share a particular defining moment in their lives that changed things forever. You could give them the option of drawing a timeline for their life, marking on the defining moments.

▶ Opening prayer

Father God, thank you that you love us so much that you allowed your own Son to die in our place. As we look more closely at the death of Jesus, please help us to be struck anew with the wonder and glory of this most amazing moment in history, as if we were hearing about it for the very first time. Reveal to us new depths of your love, give us a greater understanding of our relationship with you, and fill our hearts with the love, hope and freedom that Jesus has won for us. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 1: what?

▶ Reading

As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the

country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then

" 'they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!"

and to the hills, "Cover us!" "

For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One."

The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself."

There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

(Luke 23:26-46, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 5.1 (Jesus' Death: what?) from the Talking About... Jesus DVD.



▶ Discussion question

To what extent did Jesus' death 'change the face of the universe'? Think of some specific things that are different because of Jesus' death. What has changed for you? What has changed for everybody?

▶ Guided reflection

Celebrate the Lord's Supper together by sharing bread and wine and reflecting on Jesus' death. If you require an ordained minister to do this and are unable to arrange for one to attend, you could read Mark 14:12-26 instead, perhaps singing a hymn together at the end.

▶ Prayer

Father God, we're sorry that we haven't loved you with our whole heart, and we're sorry for the times when we've rejected you as Lord of our lives. Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to rescue us from our sin and its consequences by dying for us. Please help us to put you first in our lives. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ Section 2: what does it mean?

▶ Reading

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 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. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

(Ephesians 2:1-10, TNIV)

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▶ Video

Show video 5.2 (*Jesus' Death: what does it mean?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ Discussion questions

How would you answer the question: 'Why did Jesus have to die?'

Where do people in our society look to find freedom? What kind of freedom is offered through the cross?

▶ **Guided reflection**

Ask your group members to write a sin they struggle with on a piece of paper. Take all the pieces of paper (without reading them!) and burn them. Point out to the group that Jesus has already paid the price for these sins, and that he wants to set us free from our burden of guilt. Invite one or two members of the group to express their thanks to God for what he has done.

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to die for us. Thank you for the new life you offer us and that you have set us free from the power of sin and death. Please help us to live lives that reflect the joy of our salvation, and point others towards the freedom they can enjoy through Jesus' death. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Section 3: what does it mean for me?**

▶ **Reading**

He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for you to gain the whole world, yet forfeit your soul? Or what can you give in exchange for your soul? If any of you are ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of you when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

(Mark 8:31-38, TNIV)

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▶ **Video**

Show video 5.3 (*Jesus' Death: what does it mean for me?*) from the *Talking About... Jesus* DVD.



▶ **Discussion question**

How can we practically deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus day by day? What will that cost us, and how willing are we to accept that cost?

▶ **Guided reflection**

Read 1 John 4:7–12 slowly. Pause between each sentence to allow time for personal reflection.

▶ **Prayer**

Father God, thank you for all that we've learned as we've studied the life and death of your Son, Jesus. Thank you for your amazing grace to us. As we go home, please give us the power to understand the full extent of your love. Please enable us to experience the love of Christ. Then, made complete with the fullness of life and power that comes from you, to let your love flow out from us to everyone we meet. In Jesus' name, amen.

▶ **Closing prayer and worship**

Spend some time worshipping God through songs, or praying in groups. Focus your prayers on praising God for the way he demonstrated his love to us through the death of his Son, and asking him to let the knowledge of this love and sacrifice make a daily difference to the way we live our lives.