

Why Jesus

Dear CG Leaders,

We have refreshed the Connect Resource Pack to make it simpler for you. Based on great feedback from last year's survey, we've reorganized the layout. First, you'll find upcoming events for your connect group's attention, followed by the CG Discussion questions at the beginning of the brief. After the questions, you'll find the Campaign Brief for further study and information. We hope this helps!

Dates: Sunday 30th March to Sunday 20th April 2025.

Announcements:

<p>Foundations</p> <p>2nd April</p>	<p><i>Our online Foundations Course starts on Wednesday 2nd April 2025 at 6.30pm and runs weekly for 5 weeks. Please encourage any new believers in your connect group to attend this significant course to help them establish strong foundations, even if the course runs on your connect group night.</i></p> <p><i>Please stay in touch with them to help them plug into community, gather them to church, answer any questions they may have and then resume attending your cg once the course finishes. (Of course, if your cg meeting doesn't clash with the Foundations course, and the new believer is up for it, they could attend both meetings – Foundations and your Connect Group.)</i></p> <p><i>The Sunday following the last week of the Foundations Course will be a Holy Spirit Baptism Sunday at all Locations.</i></p> <p><i>Here's a link to the website for more information:</i> https://c3syd.church/next-step-foundations/</p>
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<p>Easter Services</p>	<p>Good Friday – 18 April <i>We will gather in our West and North hubs for a special service reflecting on the cross and the sacrifice Jesus made. Enjoy hot cross buns and community time after the service!</i></p> <p>Easter Sunday – 20 April <i>We are celebrating together across all our locations. There will be fun activities and celebrations across all locations. Encourage your connect group to Invite family friends and neighbours for a morning full of joy worship and community</i></p>
<p>Water Baptisms 27th April</p>	<p><i>We're celebrating Water Baptisms on Sunday, 27th April, 2025. If someone in your Connect Group is considering taking this step, encourage them to sign up and be part of it. They can register using the link below or head to the Next Step area on Sundays.</i></p> <p>https://c3syd.ucareapp.com/forms/24/embed</p> <p><i>To find out more about Water Baptism, please click on the link below:</i> https://c3syd.church/nextstep/water-baptism/</p>
<p>SRE Opportunity</p>	<p><i>You or someone in your connect group could be a Scripture Teacher!</i></p> <p><i>Every week 650 students in various schools hear about Jesus in SRE classes (Special Religious Education). This year more parents have chosen for their children to attend SRE! Jacqui Mikac leads the C3 SYD SRE Team and is looking for a few people to assist on Team at Beacon Hill, Cromer, Curl Curl, Dee Why and Narraweena schools. Full training is provided.</i></p> <p><i>If you're interested please complete the Teams Interest Form here https://c3syd.ucareapp.com/forms/65/embed or go to the Next Step lounge on Sunday to ask for assistance.</i></p>

○ **Week 1: Why Jesus – because we need a Saviour**

Connect Questions

30th March 2025

Please choose questions from the below selection that you feel would most benefit your group discussion:

Mark contains stories of three people representative of humanity today – we are bound up in chains of our own desires and ambitions, we trust ourselves and our resources and we are blind. But Father God, loved the world so much that he couldn't leave us as we were -He sent Jesus to save us.

1. *In the book of Mark Jesus encounters humanity that is bound, trusting ourselves and blind.* Share stories of how you have been reminded that we all need a saviour, especially by a problem you couldn't fix or a moment of loss or revelation.
2. Our world is fallen and our humanity is fallen. Talk about why we couldn't get ourselves out of this situation. What are some of the world's suggestions for fixing the world?
3. Sometimes it feels like the "world is out to get us". How does have a saviour change things?
4. Have you ever had a problem you thought you can handle without God? How did that situation work out?
5. How can we regularly remind ourselves not to try and do life without Jesus?
6. *Unfortunately, most people don't know they are blind.* When was the last time you asked the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to things that need to change? He promises that if we ask for wisdom, He will give it to us (James 1:5).
7. What are some of the problems you come across in your circles that remind us how much we all need a saviour? (eg. Aggressive advertising about your appearance or "winning", expectations to have a certain home/car, parents who do it all).
8. Who are the people you are praying for, to realize their blindness? As a group pray for these people and discuss opportunities to be a witness to them.

○ **Week 2: Why Jesus – He is one of Us – the Son of Man**

○ **Week 3: Why Jesus – He knows the Highs and Lows**

Connect Questions

13th April 2025

Please choose questions from the below selection that you feel would most benefit your group discussion:

Palm Sunday and the Last Supper.

Jesus experienced all that we experience as humans – the highs and lows – people adoring Him and shouting His name – people denying they knew Him and betraying Him. God humbled Himself and became a man – and endured it because He knew He was creating a way for us.

1. On His triumphant entrance to Jerusalem, the fact that Jesus received worship showed he was God. As a practicing Jew he knew that to receive worship as a man was blasphemy. Jesus was telling His disciples that He is God and is worthy to be worshipped. The Jewish people had very specific ways of celebrating and worshipping God - what does it look like for us today? (this can be personal or church 'rituals' in general).
2. On this day, Jesus was finally seen by the crowds for who He really is. When did you realize that Jesus was God - tell your story?
3. He is the Saviour who knows what it is to be human. How does it change things in our lives to be seen for all that you are by God and loved enough to die for?
4. Jesus had the Last Supper with His disciples before He died, knowing that they would betray and deny Him later. Have you ever been betrayed or ghosted? How should we react to betrayals, considering how Jesus behaved?
5. Communion is re-enacting this solemn meal, already so significant (the Passover, re-enacting the rescue from Egypt). What does it mean to you?
6. As a connect group, take communion together, (unleavened bread and juice/wine) remembering and thanking Jesus for His work on the Cross – His blood shed for the forgiveness of sin and the salvation of humankind, and what this means to you. (Please see link at end of these questions which directs you to an article on the Passover and Communion).
7. Do we place the same value on our hospitality to non-believers as with other Christians? Why or why not - Jesus is **always** with us?

8. Eating together has always been an important part of our faith and meeting as a connect group. Who would you like to share a meal with your connect group this year? Set yourself the challenge as a group to invite those people and pray about it.

Connect Group Resources:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/passover-remembrance-communion/>

- **Week 4a:** *Why Jesus – He Paid the Price Good Friday- Mark 15 – The Son of Man is crucified*
- **Week 4b:** *Why Jesus – He Defeated Death Easter Sunday – Mark 16 – The Son of Man defeats death*

Key Historical Context, Commentary, or References:

Mark is the shortest gospel we have. It is believed to have been written by John Mark and is the earliest gospel. Matthew and Luke use sections of Mark's gospel in their writing. It is believed that the source of Mark's gospel is the preaching of Peter. It is a gospel of action; it shows Jesus doing kingdom work rather than talking about the Kingdom. It is almost like it rushes through Jesus's life, providing enough of the stories to show he was Messiah. The first 10 chapters are constant action and then when Jesus enters Jerusalem the narrative slows down. The German New Testament scholar Martin Kähler once called the Gospel of Mark "a passion narrative with an extended introduction"

Purpose of this campaign: To inspire resilient faith in Christ by exploring the message of Hebrews, emphasizing a faith that is anchored in God's Word, informed, active, & dependent which leads to an assurance, endurance, and power in every season of life.

Key text/s for this campaign: Hebrews

Week 1: Why Jesus – because we need a Saviour

Date: Sunday 30th March 2025

Key Point of this week (in context of the overarching point): Why Jesus – because we needed a Saviour and the Father loved us too much to leave us where we were – sent his Son John 3:16.

Key Scriptures: John 3:16 and stories from Mark

Historical Context, Commentary + supporting references:

Mark 9:20-28, Mark 10: 17-27, Mark 10:46-20

Supporting points to key Point:

In the book of Mark Jesus encounters humanity that is bound, trusting ourselves and blind:

1. Bound Mark 9:20-28

- The boy was bound by an unclean spirit
- The spirit was trying to destroy him – the demonic realm is out to destroy humanity
- The Father- I believe help me in my unbelief- what a great prayer to pray for all of us
- Jesus takes authority in this moment

2. Trusting Ourselves 10:17-27

- The rich young ruler had the external signs of a God fearer
- However, he could not let go of his riches, the things he and his family had accumulated – he trusted them more than God
- Jesus says it is hard for the rich to enter the kingdom – because it is easy to trust in our resources.

3. Blind Mark 10: 46-52

- The man knew he was blind, and he wanted to see
- Unfortunately, most people don't know they are blind 2 Cor 4:4
- Turning to Jesus in faith brings sight

These three people are representative of humanity today – we are bound up in chains of our own desires and ambitions, we trust ourselves and our resources and we are blind

It has been that way since the Fall of Man

- 1) Humanity is fallen, we suffer the impacts of sin and evil – Rom 5:12
- 2) Our world is fallen – Rom 8:20-23

We need someone to come and fix it. Jesus fixed these conditions for these particular people in the Gospel of Mark, but on the Cross, he fixed it for all people who will believe in him.

But Father God, loved the world so much that he couldn't leave us as we were – John 3:16.

FINAL STATEMENT: Why Jesus – because we needed a Saviour and the Father loved us too much to leave us where we were – sent his Son John 3:16

John 3:16

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Week 2: Why Jesus- He is one of Us (Son of Man)

Date: Sunday 6th April 2025

Key Point of this week: Why Jesus – because there is no-one else like Jesus – the Son of Man and the Son of God, who became one of US who CHOSE to lay down his life.

Key Scripture: Mark 2:1-10

Historical Context, Commentary + supporting references:

From NT IVP – Craig Keener

The text (Mark) especially alludes, however, to Daniel 7:13-14, where “one like a son of man” i.e... like a human being receives the kingdom from God. This Son of Man functions as a representative on behalf of Israel, who in the same context suffers and receives the right to rule the world

Any Bible reader will instinctively recognize that all this takes its place in the larger sweep of Messianic expectation that finds its fulfillment in Jesus the Messiah, the uniquely qualified divine-human king. And in fact Jesus himself confirms this for us, explicitly associating himself with Daniel’s “son of man” ([Matt. 26:63–64](#)). This is in fact his favorite self-designation, recurring some eighty times in the Gospels, and becomes on his lips a Messianic title. Jesus is the Son of God. He is also the Son of Man.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/jesus-christ-son-man/>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/why-is-jesus-called-son-of-man>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6cWEcqxlI>

Supporting points to key point:

Mark 2:1-10 (snippet 8-12):

⁸ 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? ⁹ Which is easier: to say to this paralysed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? ¹⁰ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So, he said to the man, ¹¹ “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” ¹² 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!”

1. *Jesus is fully God and fully Man – every other faith has a leader becoming like God – only Christianity has God coming close and becoming a man (we have talked about this a lot but still worth reminding our congregation and is key to Easter)*
2. *He is not only man – but he is our Great High Priest, so he represents us – Heb 4:14*
3. *Jesus is the Son of Man*
He is one of us – uses this title more often than any other title for himself
Mark 2:10, 2:28, 8:31, 8:38, 9:12, 9:31 etc
When he uses this title- the Jewish audience would have understood that he is referencing the figure in Daniel, a Man who overcame evil.
Jesus deliberately calls himself this so the people who were walking and talking with him, and clearly knew he was human, could understand that he was a human who had a special role.
4. *He is human like us, but he lived a perfect life, overcoming every temptation – Hebrews 4:14-16*
5. *As he lived a perfect life he did not need to die – Rom 6:23*
6. *CHOSE to lay down his perfect life for us, to overcome evil and to pay the price we could not pay. Mark 8:31, 9: 30-32, 10:32-34*

Jesus is the Son of Man

- The Son who became human – to understand and represent us
- Who lived a perfect life and then laid it down
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How extraordinary is Jesus's love for us – that as a man who is one of us- he chose to LAY down his life for us.

FINAL STATEMENT: Why Jesus – because there is no-one else like Jesus – the Son of Man and the Son of God.

Week 3: Why Jesus- He knows the Highs and Lows

Date: Sunday 13th April 2025

Key Point of this: Why Jesus – because he understands the highs and lows of life as a human being.

Key Scriptures: Holy Week – Palm Sunday and the Last Supper – Mark 11:1-11-Mark 14:17-25

Historical Context, Commentary + supporting references:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/passover-remembrance-communion/>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/how-jesus-fulfills-passover/>

Supporting points to key point:

1. High - Palm Sunday – Mark 11:1-11
 - Fulfills prophesy -Zech 9:9
 - Affirms who he is- they knew he was a man he walked among them, but the fact that he received worship showed he was God. As a practicing Jew he knew that to receive worship as a man was blasphemy. He is telling his disciples he is God and this worthy to be worshipped
 - People are receiving their Saviour and King – moment of triumph for Jesus as people see him for who he really is.
2. Low - Last Supper – Low – Mark 14:17-25
 - Eats for a last time before his death with his closest friends, knowing the meal is so significant. They are sharing Passover together, and he will become the ultimate Passover lamb. Communion is the re-working of the Passover Meal into the new Covenant by which we remember his broken body and spilled blood.
 - Knows he will be denied Mark 14:30
 - Knows he will be betrayed Mark 14:18
 - Knows he will die for us Mark 14:24

Jesus experienced all that we experience as humans – the highs and lows – people adoring him and shouting his name – people denying they knew him and betraying him. He is the Saviour who knows what it is to be human.

He humbled himself and became a man – and endured it because he knew he was creating a way for us to be called the Children of God 1John 3:1 and receive the love of the Father.

FINAL STATEMENT: Why Jesus – because he understands the highs and lows of life as a human.

Week 4a: Why Jesus – He Paid the Price (Good Friday)

Date: Friday 18th April 2025

Key Point of this week: Why Jesus – because he was willing to die for us – he loves us SO much he was willing to do this – Rom 5:8, 1 John 1:10. He paid the price we couldn't pay.

Key Scripture: Mark 15

Historical Context, Commentary + supporting references:

Suggestion: Immersion into the story before the theology

Read the 4 Passion Narratives Matthew 26–27, Mark 14–15, Luke 22–23, and John 12–19

Not perfect but moving depiction of the death of the Lion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vbv5wHIKrrw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSGBf-SjT-U>

Supporting points to key point:

1. Events of Good Friday
 - Underwent a mockery of a trial – Mark 15:1-5
 - The same crowd who had worshipped him now rejected him Mark 15:6-14
 - Humiliated by the guards Mark 16: 16-20
 - Crucified Mark 16:21-30 (Please don't focus on "My God My God why have you forsaken me" – it is complex trinitarian theology that is so easy to get wrong – too easy to "break the trinity" in speaking about this- not enough time to unpack it well on Good Friday and there is enough suffering in the story without focusing on it)
 - Died Mark 16:37 -38
 - Was buried Mark 16:42-47
2. Meaning of Good Friday (Recaps the Series)
 - We are bound, blind and relying on ourselves – fallen from the relationship we were designed to have with God
 - We are sinful – and far from God – Rom 3:23
 - There has to be a price paid for our sin- we have a just God, and we all know that wrongdoing needs payment. As humans we have an inbuilt sense of justice, when a criminal gets away with a crime, we know it is not right. Mark 10:35 – the ransom had to be paid to free us from our sin (Note the ransom was not paid to the devil)
 - Jesus who lived a perfect life, took on our sin, and paid the price by dying for us 2 Cor 5:21

As soon as the Fall happened this was in place – he was never going to ask us to pay our debt – the Son was always going to pay the price – Gen 3:15. The whole Godhead suffers in the crucifixion as they are ONE.

God loves us SO much he was willing to do this.

FINAL STATEMENT: Why Jesus – because he was willing to die for us – he loves us SO much he was willing to do this – Rom 5:8, 1 John 1:10.

Week 4b: Why Jesus – He overcome Death

Date: Sunday 20th April 2025

Key Point of this week: Why Jesus – because he overcame death, defeated death and sin, so that we can have an intimate and close relationship with the Father, through the Spirit by the Son.

Key Scriptures: Mark 16:1-13, John 20:11-23

Supporting points to key point:

1. The Events of the Resurrection
 - They found the stone rolled away
 - Angel(s) were present
 - Jesus's body was not there- only the gave clothes
 - Jesus appeared to the women, then the Disciples and taught them for 40 days
 - After 40 days he ascended. Acts 1:6-11
2. Meaning of the Resurrection
 - Jesus fulfilled what he said he would
 - Death could not hold him as he had no sin
 - He defeated death and overcame evil – we live in the now and the not yet- the price has been paid for us to have relationship with the Father – we are now supposed to be bringing justice and mercy to the world which will finally be made right at the second coming of Jesus.
 - The Spirit resurrected his body
 - We can live with the same Spirit on the inside of us.

This is the ultimate union with God to have the Spirit living on the inside of us, because we are made clean by the blood of Jesus. This union brings us into relationship with the Father, not just now but forever – John 3:16

FINAL STATEMENT: Why Jesus – because he overcame death, defeated death and sin, so that we can have an intimate and close relationship with the Father, through the Spirit by the Son.