

# TALK THREE

CROSS:  
WHY DID  
JESUS DIE?

3

# key

## PERSONAL STORY

Any heading highlighted in yellow is a personal story that Ben and Jason share in the Alpha Youth Film Series. These may be replaced with a live speaker's personal story or the speaker may tell the story about Ben and Jason in the same way Ben and Jason share stories about others.

## STORY

Any section heading highlighted in blue is a story that Ben and Jason share in the Alpha Youth film Series. These may be replaced with a live speaker's own story they've heard that illustrates the same point.

## QUOTES

Any section heading highlighted in pink are quotes that are key to the talk in order to emphasize a point and to enable guests to engage and relate the material.

## BIBLE TEACHING

Any section heading highlighted in green is meant to identify key bible passages for the talk that you may or may not wish to display visually on screens for your guests. Bolded text in these sections are passages that may be put on the screen as a visual aid.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Any section heading highlighted in red is meant to identify a place where an illustration can be used. An example illustration used in the Alpha Youth Film Series is there as an example but speakers are free to use their own illustrations if they wish.

## VIDEO ELEMENTS

Any section heading highlighted in orange meant to function as a cue to play the specified Video Element or Street Talk Element provided as an additional resource to make the live talk more engaging. This is an optional part of the talks but are highly recommended to be used by speakers.

# key

## OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS

**Red type** identifies a part of the key teaching text that could be removed or altered for contextualisation.

***Italicized type*** is a specific instruction we're giving to speaker's on how to use the provided script.

Text left untouched is the standard key message content of the Alpha talk. Speakers should leave this portion of the talk untouched.

# TALK SUMMARY

The main problem for human beings is sin.

Sin has polluted humans and separated us from a relationship with God.

Jesus' death on the cross is God's solution for sin.

The cross has the power to save us and put us back into a relationship with God.

**[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS ALL VIDEOS FOR THIS WEEK'S TALK](#)**

# TALK THREE: CROSS: WHY DID JESUS DIE?

## VIDEO ELEMENT 1

*Play Video Element 1 as a "Video Opener" marking the start of Talk 3. This should be played before the speaker comes on stage.*

## WELCOME + OPENING REMARKS

*Speaker begins Talk 3 with welcome and opening remarks. Speakers should do this in a way that is natural and relatable to their local context.*

**Example:** Hey everyone! Welcome to (insert youth ministry name here)! My name is (insert speaker name here) and our team is so glad you've joined us for another week of Alpha.

Here's a sneak peak of what you can expect. Tonight we're going to continue our Alpha Series by exploring the question, "Why did Jesus die?" As we get started, we're gonna check out this video and take some time to chat with each other.

## PLAY STREET TALK 1 AND/OR COUCH CONVO 3A

**Question:** What's the best (or worst) thing you've ever made?

## INTRODUCTION:

Typically, people who are famous are remembered for the great things they did during their life, but Jesus seems to be equally remembered for his death.

But have you ever wondered why Jesus' death on a cross matter to us today?

Paul wrote in the New Testament that Jesus "loved me and gave himself for me". Jesus died because he loves you.

That's the reason for the cross. It's God's amazing love for you and for me.

# WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?

Jesus died for us. What does that mean? Why did he have to die? What was the problem? Let's check out this next video to get a jumpstart on these questions...

*Speaker cues Video Element 2*

## PLAY VIDEO ELEMENT 2

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE BUT INFECTED BY SIN

## INTRODUCING THE PROBLEM OF SIN

The Bible uses a specific word to describe this part of humanity: sin.

Now, I know the word sin isn't necessarily one that people love. It can often be misunderstood.

I've heard it used to describe really good foods like chocolate or cake.

*(Insert own example of the ways people might misunderstand sin).*

But sin in the Bible isn't described in a positive way. It's used to describe the bad stuff in our life.

We're not talking about accidental mistakes, like eating too much chocolate or something like that.

We're talking about our natural inclination towards selfishness, to act in a way that goes against what's best for the relationships that we care about and even our own wellbeing.

## BIBLE: ROMANS 3:23

EVERYONE HAS SINNED

*Begins on the following page.*

Paul wrote, "**All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**" (Romans 3:23, NIV)

That means that sin isn't just an issue for a few people. It's something inside each one of us.

I know I've done stuff in my life that I deeply regret. I've hurt people, even people I love.

*Speakers should consider adding in some examples of how they struggled with sin from their personal story.*

I think that if we were all honest, we've all done stuff that's wrong. We've sinned.

And none of us wants to be called a sinner, and if you're like me you might think, "Okay, I'm not perfect. I know I get stuff wrong but, compared to some people I'm not that bad."

But the problem with that type of comparing is that it's not how Christianity teaches about sin.

God doesn't share our rating system. He doesn't compare us to one another to see if we're sinners or not.

Compared to God's standard for goodness, we're nowhere close. We're all sinners. We're all in the same position. We're people in need of forgiveness.

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN: POLLUTION, POWER, PENALTY, AND PARTITION

So if we're all sinners, why does it matter? If we're all in the same situation, what's the problem? The problem is, there are consequences for our sin. What are the consequences of sin?

Well, the **first** consequence is **pollution**. Just as the pollution in our environment is a problem, Jesus actually said it's possible to pollute your life. Now, sin pollutes our hearts. It poisons our relationship with one another, and it poisons our relationship with God.

**Second**, sin is **powerful**. It has an addictive quality to it. It can destroy our lives. Jesus said, "Everyone who sins is a slave to sin." So, for example, if you were to take heroin for a sustained period, you'll become addicted. But it's not just hard drugs. It's also possible to be addicted to things like envy, greed, and even arrogance.

**Sin has a penalty.** There's something in all of us that cries out for justice when we've heard about the terrible things that are done to people.

# THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN CONT.

Things like robbery, violence, slavery, abuse. We want the people who do these things to be caught and punished, because we believe there should be a penalty for those things, but it's not just other people's sins that deserve to be punished. It's actually ours as well.

And lastly, the worst part of sin is the impact it can have on a relationship with God. **Sin creates a partition.** It creates a gap between us and God.

That's an issue, because we were created for relationships with people and with God. But sin fractures that relationship.

Maybe you've experienced how a lie can wreck a friendship or even how cheating can break apart a family. In a similar way, sin actually builds up a wall between us and God that you and I can't tear down by ourselves.

**Romans 6:23** describes penalty of sin as death. When we are disconnected from God, our ultimate source of life, that's spiritual death.

But what do you think about this idea of sin? We want to give you the chance to talk about it with the people around you. So let's check out our next question prompt and then take some time to discuss the question together.

*Speaker cues Street Talk 2*

## PLAY STREET TALK 2 AND/OR COUCH CONVO 3B

**Question:** How do you see sin in the world around you?

# JESUS DEATH = GOD'S SOLUTION FOR SIN

The cross shows us that God loves this world, that he loves you, and it shows us that he's done something about the problem of sin.

He didn't ignore the problem or say, "You know what? It's not that bad. Don't worry about it."

No. God came to Earth in the person of his Son, Jesus, to deal with it personally. Jesus' death on the cross is God's solution to the problem of sin.

One of Jesus' closest friends, called Peter, put it like this. He said, **"He himself," talking about Jesus, "bore our sins in his body. By his wounds you have been healed." 1 Peter 2:24 (NIV)**

In other words, because Jesus was wounded, we can be healed. He took the consequences of our sin on himself.

It's been described as the self-substitution of God. God substituted himself for you. Jesus died in your place.

## STORY

### MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE IN AUSCHWITZ

*Speaker may consider using another story as long as it provides an equally powerful example of someone sacrificing their life for another person.*

On the 31 July 1941, sirens rang out from cell block 14 in Auschwitz concentration camp, because a prisoner had escaped. As punishment, the prison guards selected 10 random men to die in a starvation bunker. The ninth man selected was a man called Francis Gajowniczek, and when he was chosen he cried out, "My wife! My children! I'll never see them again."

At that moment, another man stepped forward and offered to die in his place, and to everyone's amazement his offer was accepted. That man was a Catholic priest named Maximilian Kolbe. He was taken with the other nine to the starvation bunker. 15 days later they were still alive, so on that day August 14, 1941, they were killed by lethal injection.

41 years later on the 10 October 1982, the death of Maximilian Kolbe was put in it's proper perspective. In St Peter's Square, Rome, in front of a crowd of 150,000 people, Pope John Paul II described Maximilian Kolbe's death in these terms. He said, "It was a victory like that won by our Lord, Jesus Christ."

# ILLUSTRATION

## THE GREAT EXCHANGE (HAND AND BIBLE)

*Speaker shares an illustration that demonstrates the way Jesus took our sin from us.*

### EXAMPLE FROM FILM SERIES

Being executed on a cross was the height of pain, yet the New Testament doesn't focus on the physical suffering of Jesus too much, but instead it focuses on his spiritual suffering as he carried the weight of our sin.

I've seen it explained like this: Let this hand (left hand holding book in it, palm facing up) represent you and me, your life and my life, and let this book represent the things that we do wrong. The sin that causes a barrier between us and God.

Now let this hand (right hand not holding anything, palm facing up) represent Jesus. Jesus didn't do anything wrong. He lived a sinless life, so there's no barrier between him and his heavenly Father.

There's a verse in the Old Testament that prophesied the death of Jesus, and it says, **"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way"**. And then it says, **"the Lord has laid on him,"** (left hand places book onto the right hand while reading the last line) on Jesus, **"the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)**

On the cross, Jesus was carrying your sin and my sin. Do you see where that leaves us? Free to have a relationship with God (the right hand that was holding the book should now be empty, signifying how Jesus took our sin onto himself on the cross).

# ILLUSTRATION

## THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION IS LIKE A DIAMOND

The results of the cross are amazing. The cross and resurrection are really like one event. It's like a beautiful diamond that has many different facets.

When a diamond hits the light a certain way, you see it one way, and when it hits the light another way you see another part of its beauty. When we think of all that Jesus has done on the cross, it reveals so much.

**First**, it reveals how much God loves you and how precious you are to him. You never have to feel insignificant or worthless, because the cross reminds us just how valuable we are to God.

# ILLUSTRATION CONT.

**The cross speaks to suffering, too.** It shows us that God isn't far away sitting on a cloud somewhere and watching all the suffering down here. No. Through Jesus he came into our world to suffer for us. And now he suffers alongside us.

**The cross also tells us that the powers of evil have been defeated.** And the resurrection tells us that the story ultimately ends well.

Because of the cross, the penalty of sin has been paid. Our guilt has been removed. The debt that we owed was paid for us.

This next video gives one of the best illustrations that will help you understand this even more.

*Speaker cues Video Element 3.*

## PLAY VIDEO ELEMENT 3

JUDGE PAYS FOR HIS FRIEND'S DEBT

## TRANSITION: JESUS PAID OUR DEBT

What Jesus has done for us is even more amazing than what the judge did for his friend.

The debt was way bigger; it was our debt of sin. And the love that he demonstrated was far greater, because it cost him his life.

And the result, even better. It's total forgiveness made available to you and to me.

So let's talk about it and process together.

*Speaker cues Street Talk 3*

## PLAY VIDEO STREET TALK 3 AND/OR COUCH CONVO 3C

**Question:** What does forgiveness mean to you?

# THE POWER OF THE CROSS

*Speaker should share an example from their own story, exploring how the power of the cross helped them find forgiveness and freedom from sin in their lives.*

The reality of the cross has the power to change us. It helps us leave behind bad habits and experience new freedom in our lives. Before I was a Christian, I used to have so many negative thoughts about myself that would run through my mind. As a result, I felt insecure. I pushed people away, and ultimately I was unhappy.

When I began a relationship with Jesus, so many of those thoughts, they disappeared. The power they had in my life was broken. And in a similar way, when my friend Chris encountered Jesus, his addiction to drugs was instantly broken. He was set free.

Here's the thing. It's not always like this. Change is a journey. It's longterm. Some things might change overnight, but a lot of the change we're talking about happens over time.

Jesus said, **"If the Son sets you free you will be free" John 8:36 (NIV)**. That means that we can experience freedom from the grip of sin and see transformation in our lives.

The power of sin has been broken, and the pollution of sin has been cleansed. John writes that **"the blood of Jesus... cleanses us from all sin" 1 John 1:7 (NIV)**

When I realised that I had been forgiven by God, it helped me to forgive others too. All of us have been hurt at some point in our lives, and that hurt stays with us, often leaving us bitter or even angry, but when we experience God's forgiveness it makes it possible for us to let go of that anger and bitterness and to forgive others.

## BIBLE: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:19

### THE CROSS = GOD'S RECONCILIATION WITH THE WORLD

In 2 Corinthians it says, **"God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself." (2 Corinthians 5:19 (NLT))**.

The cross wasn't God punishing an innocent third party. God himself came to die for you and for me. Ultimately, because of the cross we have been reconciled to God. The partition of sin has been removed.

This next video gives another great illustration that will help you see what we're talking about more clearly.

*Speaker cues Video Element 4.*

# PLAY VIDEO ELEMENT 4

## MODERN DAY PRODIGAL SON

### CLOSING REMARKS

Do you want to know the best part of the story we just watched? This story is for you!

No matter what you've done, when you come home, when you come to God, he runs to you and he embraces you.

God loves you. Jesus died for you. And through the cross, we're invited to have a relationship with God.

When I understood all of this, when I experienced this, it totally transformed my life. And it can totally transform yours, too.

### CONCLUSION

*Speaker closes the session with a brief prayer over their group.*

*Speaker plugs next week's topic "How can I have faith?"*