

# JESUS + THE CROSS = I'VE GOT YOU COVERED



## THEOLOGICAL QUESTION

Why did Jesus die on the cross?

## BIG IDEA

Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins. There is absolutely nothing we could ever do to save ourselves. His death on the cross covered, or atoned, for our sins, and all people on earth can choose to receive God's forgiveness and eternal life in heaven.

## SCRIPTURE USED

**1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 14:** *I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless.*

**Romans 5:8-10:** *But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son.*

**1 John 2:1-2:** *My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous. He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world.*

**1 Peter 3:18:** *Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit.*

## OPENER

### For the opener you will need:

- Video projection equipment
- *Les Miserables* DVD (either the 2012 musical or the 1998 version)

## EXPLAIN

Today we are going to talk about why Jesus was crucified. There is nothing that comes close in our everyday lives that can adequately illustrate this. But for just a minute, I would like you to think about a time when someone “covered for you.” Maybe there was something you owed or something you were supposed to do, but one way or another you did not live up to your end of the bargain. Maybe you couldn’t, or maybe you just didn’t. Either way, the terms of the agreement were clear, and if the deal had been set in stone you would be facing the consequences with no hope of any mercy. The sad truth is, that is our real relationship with sin. We were born sinners, and we all miss the mark and sin. The Bible says that the consequence of sin is death. But our God, in His unlimited goodness and grace, provided another way.

In just a moment we’re going to watch a movie clip from *Les Miserables*, but first I want to set the scene for any of you who may not be familiar with the story.

Jean Valjean, the main character of the story, was unfairly imprisoned and endured hard labor and abuse for 19 years. That was the price he paid for stealing a little food to feed his starving family. When he is finally released at the beginning of the movie, he finds he really is not free. He is required to carry papers branding him as a social outcast, making it virtually impossible to find work, or even find shelter for “his kind.” The only person willing to show compassion on the former prisoner is the Bishop. Watch what happens when Valjean takes advantage of the Bishop’s hospitality.

Play the clip from *Les Miserables* where Valjean is caught stealing silver and then pardoned by the Bishop (7:20-10:51 in the 2012 musical).

## ASK

- The Bishop extends every courtesy to Valjean: rest, warmth, food, shelter. He treats him as he would a dear friend and calls him “honored guest.” Why is that so significant for Valjean?
- What does it teach us about how we should show and share Jesus with others?
- The Bishop is also “on to” Valjean. He is aware that Valjean has done