



Hey everyone!

Welcome back to a new series. Hope you all had a great February, and that you're looking forward to this new month of Crews!

We had an amazing month in February, touching on the topic mental health around the UK and Europe. There were great conversations in Crews and as always we heard amazing praise reports of young people finding freedom from some of the things that were holding them back.

As we come up to the Easter period, as the Young Adults of Hillsong Church, we are of course going to be talking all about Jesus' death and resurrection and what that means for us, in this series called CROSS=LOVE! This will be an amazing series for us, as we get to grips with one of the most fundamental aspects of the Christian message: Jesus' death and resurrection.

Over the next four weeks we'll be talking all about the cross; what the cross represents, why the cross was necessary, what the cross means for us at a personal level and what it means for us as a society. There is a lot to talk through and a lot to apply to our daily lives, so maybe read through the Gospel accounts of Jesus' death and resurrection beforehand so you are well equipped for whatever questions come up.

The cross really is the central point not just of our faith but also of the whole Bible. The whole of the Old Testament points forward to the cross, and the whole of the New Testament points back to it. It is crucial for our faith, salvation and relationship with God, and so we always make sure that we talk about it in Crews when it comes to Easter time.

But even though the cross is so fundamental to who we are and what we believe, there will be many of our young people who aren't familiar with what the cross actually means and represents. So, make sure that over the first couple of weeks you cover the basics of why Jesus needed to die and what the cross represents for us. Then look to apply that to our message of 'positively shaping society', and the change our young people can make.

As we go through these four weeks, encourage your youth that this message of hope and love that the cross brings doesn't need to stay with them, but can be extended to the world around them.

Have a great month and Happy Easter!



WEEK 1 // THE CROSS

INTRO:

The cross is such a powerful depiction of how God extended his love to us. It demonstrates his open arms and empowers us to live the life that he intended us to.

Christ's death was not symbolic of the end, but actually the start of eternal life for all that may believe in Him. Jesus died a sinner's death so that we could not only have life, but life in abundance. He also paved the way for us to be filled with the Holy Spirit and be his hands on feet here on earth.

SCRIPTURE:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. John 3:16-17 ESV

“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter 2:24-25 NIV

MAIN POINT:

God not only chose but planned to redeem a lost world through his son Jesus Christ. Jesus paid the ultimate price of a physical death, that he did not deserve, in exchange for us to have eternal life. This invitation is available to all, irrespective of background, age, gender or status.

We can now walk in freedom knowing we are not bound to sin and that the power of sin has been removed from our lives' because Jesus conquered death on the cross through his resurrection.

QUESTION:

- How does what Jesus did on the cross affect mankind? How does it affect us personally in our daily lives?
- Knowing what we know now how does that shape our perspective and in turn our actions?
- How is it that Jesus dying on the cross enabled him to pay for all of our sins- past present and future?
- Discuss how Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection from the dead are both important and



WEEK 2 // THE COST

INTRO:

Anything that is considered high value is worth paying a high cost for. That's why Jesus laid his life down for the whole world. We also have to accept that there is a cost, to the price we pay to live a life that is sold out for Christ.

An American bible teacher, M.R. DeHaan, once said; "To come to Christ costs you nothing, to follow Christ costs you something, to serve Christ will cost you everything".

SCRIPTURE:

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "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 will find it. Matthew 16:24-25 NIV

While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." Matthew 12:46-50 NLT

MAIN POINT:

In order to live a life sold out to Christ we need to be prepared to lay our lives down, and trust that in doing so God will use us in a way in which glorifies him and his cause.

When we live a life dedicated to Christ it puts God's Kingdom firmly at the centre of our lives. We live according to the will and ways of God.

QUESTION:

- How is it possible to find your life through laying it down?
- How do you live a life that is sold out to Christ?
- What 'sacrifices' do you think you have had to make in order to do this?
- Discuss a time when you have not wanted to live according to God's will but he has changed your heart to bring you in alignment with him.



WEEK 3 // BETRAYAL

INTRO:

Jesus always knew he would walk the earth in order to bring people to revelation of God and into relationship with God. However the culture of the day did not automatically recognise Jesus as the son of God. Whilst multitudes flocked to know him, there were also a number of people who still rejected him.

SCRIPTURE:

“When it was evening, Jesus sat down at the table with the Twelve. While they were eating, he said; ‘I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me’” (Matthew 26:21)

“Jesus said; Father forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34 NLT)

MAIN POINT:

There were numerous times in Jesus’ life where he had to live out the calling God placed on his life- even when rejected, betrayed and crying tears of blood.

Sometimes living out a life that glorifies God and is pleasing to him, does not necessarily mean life will be straightforward or comfortable for us.

QUESTION:

- What does loyalty mean to you and how do you live it out?
- Are there any pressures in your life that test your loyalty to Jesus?
- How do you approach situations where you need to forgive people?
- How does Jesus' conduct during his trial equip and inspire you?



WEEK 4 // RESURRECTION

INTRO:

Without the resurrection of Jesus he would not be alive, and we would have no relationship with him today. Our relationship with Jesus empowers us, gives us direction and a purpose to live for. It is the ultimate key to us being able to live a life fuelled by the Holy Spirit inside each and every one of us.

SCRIPTURE:

The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these." Mark 12:31 NIV

"There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends" John 15:13 NIV

MAIN POINT:

At the time the resurrection of Jesus Christ seemed impossible to believe- even for the disciples and maybe for people today too. That fact it happened means we can all come to the foot of the cross, just as we are, and be fully loved and accepted by God. The power of the resurrection has changed history forever and it's impact is personal, global and eternal.

The resurrection can mean so many things to us all but most importantly it is a victory over death and the cutting off of sin over our lives. Jesus now empowers us as we take comfort in his victory letting us walk in freedom helping us with peace of mind and knowing purpose for our lives as well as giving us a confidence in him to achieve things beyond our own imagination with his strength and might.

QUESTION:

- Talk through a time when you had to sacrifice your own will for the benefit of someone else, and in hindsight you realised it working out to be part of Gods plan for your life?
- Describe to me a time in your life when you felt like you haven't been able to walk in freedom with the understanding of grace and why do you think you have struggled with this?
- Discuss how the Holy Spirit helped resurrect an area of pain/brokenness in your life?
- Who have you been sharing the Easter message with and believing for them to come into relationship with Jesus?

