The background is a close-up of a wood grain, showing various shades of brown, tan, and orange. A large, black, semi-transparent watermark with the letter 'S' is oriented diagonally across the center of the page.

THE MAN  
WHO DIED  
ON  
Easter

 **access**  
downloadable curriculum  
ISBN: 9780892653775





# THE MAN WHO DIED ON EASTER

## INTRODUCTION

We all know the name of this man—Jesus. As Christians, we know Jesus is the only way to salvation. As Christians, we know He was much more than a mere man; He was God. We know He came to earth to live, die, resurrect, and return to heaven for us. However, how much do we really understand the person of Jesus? If we take a closer look at His character, a finer look at the meaning behind Him, we will gain a truer understanding of who He really was. We will come to see more fully another facet of the beautiful mystery of God's plan. In the coming study, we will look at four titles of Jesus: Prophet, Priest, King, and Savior. These aspects will reveal the revelation, reconciliation, rulership, and reality of Christ.

Many of your students may be veteran Christians, but some may be relatively new to the Christian faith. Some may not be Christian at all. Be sensitive to those students who need basic explanations. This may even require outside-of-class private discussions. Do not finish this study without the entire group being able to see the mystery of Christ. Be sure they come to have an intimate relationship with Him. By recognizing Jesus' full person, we are recognizing God.

## SESSION 1: THE PROPHET OF EASTER: REVELATION

Group members will come to see Jesus was God and prophet. They will see how this aspect suggests revelation. They will then look at the revelatory aspects of His person and ministry.

## SESSION 2: THE PRIEST OF EASTER: RECONCILIATION

Group members will come to see Jesus was God and priest. He came to earth to reconcile us to God. He came to be an intermediary between the Father and us. As a priest, He provided atonement for us.

## SESSION 3: THE KING OF EASTER: REIGN

Group members will see Jesus as God and king. He came to reign. He rose from the dead to claim His place at the right hand of the Father. Now He rules forever.

## SESSION 4: THE SAVIOR OF EASTER: THE REALITY

Group members will see the reality of Jesus. They will see He is the one and only way to salvation. They will see how Jesus' truth sets us free. Prophet, priest, and king all culminated in Jesus to create the savior of Easter.

# Session One

## THE PROPHET OF EASTER: REVELATION

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Handouts
- Bibles
- Pens, regular and colored pencils, and markers
- Horoscope section of the newspaper (if should choose Connect Option 1)

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

Group members will come to see Jesus was God and prophet. They will see how this aspect suggests revelation. They will then look at the revelatory aspects of His person and ministry.

### CONNECT

**Option 1:** Bring to class the cut-out horoscope sections of the newspaper. Read a few of the most positive horoscopes. Say something like, *I do not read the daily horoscopes, because I think we should look to the Bible for answers, but these fortunes sound pretty nice, don't they?* Fortune tellers will always try to tell you what you want to hear whether it is true or not. True prophets of God, on the other hand, only said what God told them to whether people liked it or not. Jesus was like this. He was a prophet who spoke the truth, whether it was liked or not. We can know He was a prophet who said what God wanted because He was God.

**Option 2:** Ask the following discussion questions:


- *What comes to mind when I mention a prophet?*
- *What do you think qualifies a person to be a prophet?*
- *What do you think qualifies Jesus as the ultimate prophet?*
- *Do you think the gift of prophecy still exists? Why or why not?*
- *What do prophets do?*

Say something like the following: *It is putting it lightly to say Jesus was a complex character. He was and is multifaceted and plays many roles in the Godhead. His salvational work is the work of prophet, priest, king, and savior—all at the same time. In this first session, we will look at the first of these. We will look at Jesus as prophet. We will look at His work of revelation.*

### CONSIDER

Prophets are all about revelation. Sometimes they reveal the future. Sometimes they reveal a truth. Whatever prophets of God reveal they always reveal one thing—exactly what God wants. Jesus came from God to reveal what God wanted Him to. Jesus was the ultimate prophet foretold of old (Acts 3:21-23). In the Old Testament, God spoke to us through human prophets; in the New Testament, He spoke to us through His own Son Jesus

Jesus both suggested He was a prophet (Luke 4:24) and denied being a prophet (John 1:21). Look at the context. When the people asked Jesus if He was the prophet, they were talking about a prophet foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15. Jesus was the ultimate prophet, but He was not just a prophet. Certainly not a prophet like they had ever seen before.



Jesus is called the Christ. Christ was not His last name. Christ is a designation. It means, “anointed.” Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed for their roles. Jesus was all three. He was the “anointed one.”

(Hebrews 1:1-2). Jesus revealed the greatest truths from God (John 1:15-18). He revealed three important types of things, and these culminated in His work of salvation on the cross.

### He Came to Reveal God

Read Matthew 22:34-38. Ask the following questions:

- *Why do think the religious leaders wanted to tear down someone who worked for God?*
- *Why do you think they thought their question would trap Jesus?*
- *How do you think Jesus was able to come up with such a good answer so quickly?*

God does not suggest we love Him. He does not merely like it—He commands it! Love, infinite love, is why He sent His own Son to die for us that first Easter. God is always right. He is right to demand love from us. He deserves our love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).

Read Matthew 6:5-13. Ask:

- *What does this passage have to do with our divine relationship?*
- *What are some important instructions Jesus gives here about how to talk to God?*
- *What strikes you as the most interesting thing about the example prayer?*

Read John 10:22-37. Ask:

- *What had Jesus revealed to make the Jews so angry?*
- *Why did this make them angry?*
- *What do you think Jesus meant in His reply?*

### He Came to Reveal Our Standing

The prophets in the Old Testament did more than foretell the future. They revealed what God did not like. They revealed when the people were in bad standing with God. Jesus came to do that. He came to show every person on earth stands as a sinner before God and is in need of redemption.

Read the following Scripture passages. Summarize what Jesus said that indicates He knew we needed help and divine advice. Also ask: *Why does His statement make Him sound like a prophet?*

- Matthew 4:17
- Matthew 10:27-28
- Mark 6:4
- Mark 13:5-37
- Luke 4:16-21
- Luke 21:8-9





- John 4:21-24
- John 5:24-30

Every writer of the New Testament took his cue from Jesus. All of them knew the human race is in bad standing before God and is in need of Divine assistance. Here are some basic invaluable Scripture passages:

Read Romans 3:21-23 and ask:

- *What do you think it means when it talks about God's righteousness apart from the law?*
- *How does this righteousness affect us?*
- *What does this passage mean for those who believe salvation has to be earned with good works?*

Read Romans 6:20-22. Ask:

- *What does spiritual slavery have to do with all of this?*
- *What value does slavery to sin produce?*
- *What does slavery to sin do to a person?*
- *What does slavery to God produce?*

Jesus could reveal the answers. Three people who were previously non-followers of Jesus and were involved in the Easter story seemed to recognize this to varying degrees:

- 1. There was Pontius Pilate.** The judge at Jesus' trial is known as the one who authorized His crucifixion. Did he trust in Jesus at all? His question about truth may have been provoked more by political stress. However, Pilate seems to have understood that there was something very special about Jesus. He only reluctantly condemned Jesus to death after pressure from the mob.
- 2. There was the thief who was crucified with Jesus.** Luke 23:39-42 offers a short but important exchange. Two thieves have been crucified along Jesus. One blasphemed and mocked Jesus. The other defended Jesus and scolded the other thief. The repentant thief then asked Jesus to remember Him in paradise. He realized the crucified Jesus was the only one who could help him.
- 3. There was the centurion.** When Jesus died the world was literally thrown into chaos. The sky darkened, the earth shook, and the heavy veil in the temple was torn in two. Amidst such a cataclysm of events surrounding Jesus' death, it's no wonder the Roman centurion decided Jesus must have been the Son of God (Mark 15:39).

### **He Came to Reveal How to Be Saved from Eternal Death**

Ask the following questions:

- *How do you think you would have responded to Jesus?*



- *If He were walking on the earth today, how do you think modern society would respond to Him?*
- *How would you describe Jesus' message? Was it one of despair or hope?*
- *What are some ways other religions have said people can find salvation?*
- *Do you know you are saved?*

Split the class into several groups. Assign each group a passage to read and discuss. If you would rather, you may pick a few volunteers to read aloud the following passages:

- Matthew 1:20-21; 9:10-13
- John 1:6-13
- Romans 5:8-9
- 1 Corinthians 1:18
- Ephesians 2:5-9
- 2 Timothy 1:8-10
- Hebrews 1:8b-9

Use the handout "Verse Analysis" to have the groups discuss the following questions about their scripture passage:

- What does this say about humanity's situation?
- Does it give any hope?
- What specifics of the solution does it give?
- Summarize the message of the passage.
- What does it mean to be saved by Jesus?
- How is being born of God different than being born of a human?

Jesus did many great things during His ministry. He healed the sick. He taught us how to live. He showed us how to love one another. This was all just a setup for His ultimate purpose: Paving a way for us to be saved from eternal punishment. Just as He promised—He rose again, ascended to heaven, and now sits at the right hand of the Father. He reigns today, continually interceding on behalf of those who choose His salvation.

Men did not crucify Jesus against His will. Neither did He just decide one day this is what He would do. The way for God to come down in human form to save all humanity was paved throughout the Old Testament. In addition, Jesus repeatedly said we needed to be saved and He was going to save us. He said this over and over again.

Read John 3:16-21 and ask:

- *What was God's solution to our predicament?*
- *What is the end result of those who turn down His solution?*
- *What is the motivation of those who turn down the solution?*
- *What does it mean to live in the light?*

Distribute the handout, "What Does it Mean to Be a Prophet?" Pass out pens or pencils. It asks group members to look up and summarize these passages that talk about the office of the prophet. If you desire, you may split the group into teams. Allow a few moments. Afterwards, allow volunteers or teams to share their work.

Jesus was not just a prophet. He was our intimate, personal God. Be sure to let the group know a person can have a personal relationship with Him. He greatly desires and expects this of His servants. He loves and is constantly thinking about the whole world. At the same time He is honed onto every detail about each one of us.

Sad to say, but some Christians actually do not know a lot about the basic details of evangelism. Be aware there may be Christians in your study group like this. Spend time in discussion and prayer regarding our duty to share our faith.

Have two volunteers read Mark 14:58 and John 2:18-19. Jesus was God. He was a prophet of His own works. Ask: *What was Jesus trying to say? Was He saying He would destroy and rebuild a building?*

Read John 2:20-21. Say: *Jesus had been talking about His own body. He prophesied His own crucifixion and resurrection. These were not the only instances where He did so.*

Ask:

- *Do you think Jesus' closest followers and friends knew as well? Why or why not?*
- *How do we know the full truth of Jesus?*
- *In what ways are we just as ignorant as the disciples?*

## COMMIT

Say: *The work of the prophet is about revelation. Jesus revealed everything we needed to know while here on earth. By the time He ascended into heaven, His followers knew everything Jesus wanted them to know. They certainly did not always act like it. While Jesus was alive, the disciples often behaved immaturely. It was only after He left, however, that His work of revelation sunk in through the help of the Holy Spirit. His work of revelation suggests how we are supposed to adopt such a prophetic work.*

### 1. We Must Point the Way to God

Ask:

- *Christians today understand more about Jesus' work than the disciples did before the death and resurrection. Why do you think this is?*
- *There are many people today just as ignorant of Jesus as sinners were then? How might we help them understand?*
- *Why is it so hard being a prophet for God?*

### 2. We Must Point Out That Only God Can Save Us

Say: *Look at the prophets of the Old Testament. So many times it looks like the only thing they did was foretell gloom and doom for the future. Yes, they certainly did that. However, it needed to be said. It was what God wanted them to say. This is what Jesus did. He was a prophet of God for all humanity for all time. Yes, He talked about the gloom and doom aplenty. He indicated God as the One all have sinned against. He indicated the eternal doom all mankind is facing.*

Ask:

- *What are some practical ways you can imitate this aspect of Jesus?*
- *What would you say if someone told you he or she didn't really know anything about being saved?*
- *How can you help fellow Christians face a world so ignorant of such matters?*

### 3. We Must Explain the Point That Salvation Came Through His Son

Read John 14:6 and ask:





- *Jesus said He is “the way, the truth, and the Life.” Why is the word “the” so important in this statement?*
- *Why do you think there is only one way?*
- *How is this important in witnessing?*

Many people, even in Christian circles, will tell you there are many or at least several ways to God. Jesus revealed very, very clearly that He is the one and only way. Ask group members to skim through the gospels to see if they can spot any other statements Jesus made to this effect. Depending on the publisher, in most Bibles Jesus' words are in red.

SAMPLE



## VERSE ANALYSIS

Read your assigned verse, and then answers these questions:

- What does this say about humanity's situation?
- Does it give any hope?
- What specifics of the solution does it give?
- Summarize the message of the passage.
- What does it mean to be saved by Jesus?
- How is being born of God different than being born of a human?

SAMPLE

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A PROPHET?

Look up the following passages to find out further specifics about being a prophet. Give a brief description beside the verse.

Numbers 12:6

Deuteronomy 18:21-22

2 Chronicles 29:25

2 Chronicles 32:20

2 Chronicles 36:12

Amos 2:11

Amos 7:14-15

Based on what you have learned about prophecy in these verses and this lesson, what in the world does prophecy have to do with the Easter story?

SAMPLE