

What I love about Jesus is...

We live in a postmodern world. We do not live in a modern world. Now, before you get too worried about my grasp on reality, I am using these two words—postmodern and modern—in a philosophical way.

A modern world is the product of the Enlightenment—it is a world where human progress is inevitable, where the basis for reality is scientific (everything is verifiable and tangible), and there are absolutes that are accepted everywhere. In this world, the Jude-Christian account of reality remains one of those factors prominently in play in people's lives.

A postmodern world has gone beyond the structure of the modern world. In a postmodern world, all absolute truths are questioned, and the foundation for life is experience.

Christianity is about the absolute truth of God, creation, humanity, sin and Christ. We hold onto the absolute truth of the good news of Jesus Christ. We believe that there is no other hope for humans outside the good news of forgiveness in Christ alone. And we look forward to the day when Jesus will return, the new heavens and earth will be established, and God's people will dwell with him.

The question for us is how to proclaim this good news in this world clearly, when everything about this postmodern world doubts such absolutes. Put bluntly, how can we share Jesus with this world?

I think one key way is to share our experience of how good Jesus is—what we love about him. This shares the truth about Jesus, in a personal way, from our experience. That is the aim of these studies: to equip us to think on how good Jesus is, why we love him, so that we can share him.

Study 1:
What I love about Jesus is... he is God

1. How do people in our world deal with things beyond their comprehension or experience or knowledge?
2. Read John 1:1-18.
3. In verses 1-5, we meet two persons. Who are they?

What is their relationship?

What reality does this reveal about God?

4. In verses 6-9, we meet a third person. Who is he?

What is his role, and why is he important?

5. In verses 10-13, we return to the Word—here described as ‘the true light’. What did he do? (vs.11)

How was he received? (vs.10-11)

What was his ‘job’? (vs.12-13)

6. In verses 14-18, we have the same stuff as verses 10-13 described, but from another angle. What did the Word do? (vs.14)

Why did he do this—what was his ‘job’? (vs.14, 16, 18)

Many in our world understand that there are bigger things than this tangible, concrete existence. In fact, many people will willingly share their experiences of that ‘bigger world’. The difficulty lies in explaining that ‘bigger world’, and where to go for explanation.

7. John makes very clear that Jesus is where we go to understand that ‘bigger world’. What is it about Jesus that means he explains that world?

When you meet Jesus, who do you meet? Why is that so important?

Think about a conversation you might have this week about that ‘bigger world’. How might you speak into that conversation with the statement, ‘What I love about Jesus is... he is God’?

Study 2:
What I love about Jesus is... he is a man.

1. When people talk about Jesus, how do they describe him? Why?
2. Read John 1:1-18.
3. How would you summarise what you learned about Jesus in our study of this passage last week...

We are given hints about Jesus coming into the world—look at verses 9, 10 and 11. But verse 14 puts it most clearly. What do we learn?

Why did this take place? (vs.14, 18)

4. Look at the following verses and write down how this humanity of Jesus is filled out:

Luke 1:31; 2:6-7:

Luke 2:21-22; 2:51-52:

Luke 4:1-2:

Luke 8:22-23:

Luke 19:41-42:

Luke 23:44-46:

John 11:33-35:

Phil.2:5-11:

5. The humanity of Jesus is undeniable, but the purpose of his humanity is important. Look at the following verses and write down both the purpose of Jesus' humanity, and its difference to our's:

Hebrews 4:14-16:

Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-22:

Luke 23:39-43:

Phil.2:5-11:

The humanity of Jesus is undeniable—he is like us in every way. That is so important on three levels: first, he came to reveal in the flesh the significance of God; second, in the flesh, he sympathises with our every weakness; third, as the perfect human, he stood in as a sacrifice for our sins.

6. Why is it so important for people to meet Jesus as a human being?
7. Think about a conversation this week you might have about being a human being... How might you introduce people to Jesus through sharing your love of his humanity with them?

Study 3:
What I love about Jesus is... he is good news.

1. What news so often dominates our world? Why?
2. Read Luke 4:16-21.
3. Where is Jesus and what is he doing?

Scan over the Luke 3 and 4—what has Jesus been doing up until now?

4. When Jesus stands up to ‘read and preach’, where does he read from, and what does he read?

Look up Isaiah 61:1-2.

Who is the ‘me’ in verse 1? (cf. Isaiah 53:1-12; 63:1-6)

What ‘sermon’ does Jesus ‘preach’ based on this passage? (vs.21)

What is the response? (vs.22)

5. Looking at what we have just learned, what is the ‘good news’ that Jesus is saying he is...?

Jesus comes to state publicly what he is bringing—he is bringing restoration (and we saw a hint of what that looked like in John 1:1-18). Put simply, he has come to bring ‘good news’ to a broken world—he will deal with its sin!

6. Why is such a message something our world needs to hear?

Why won't it hear this message?

How can you share this truth we love about Jesus this week?

Study 4:
What I love about Jesus is... he is faithful

1. What do you think people would describe as the key attribute of Jesus?
2. Read Luke 4:1-13.
3. This section is very easy to misunderstand. The crucial piece of information for understanding its place in Luke is contained in the events that immediately precede the baptism—look back at Luke 3:21-22...

What does God reveal at that event?

How does the genealogy back this up?

The temptation of Jesus is about his identity (as ‘Son of God’) and so his faithfulness to his mission. If the devil can trip him up here, then the mission fails; but if God can test him and find him not wanting, then the mission is ‘go’....

4. How does Luke introduce the temptation of Jesus? (vs.1-2)
5. Look at each of the temptations... what lies at the heart of each one, what concept is being tested?
 - (i) vs.3...
 - (ii) vs.6 (cf. Psalm 2)
 - (iii) vs.9...

6. How does Jesus respond each time? And where does he quote from each time? (check your footnotes...)

Each time Jesus responds to the devil, he quotes from Deuteronomy 6-8. Now, we need to follow this closely... Deuteronomy is a collection of three sermons, given by Moses, to God's people before they entered the Promised Land. Their mission, he reminds them (remember Exodus 19:1-8), is to represent God as his special possession, his people. Their lack of faithfulness to their identity meant they failed to do their job. Already, we have seen that Jesus has come to reveal God—he can do this because he is the image of God, his Son. And now, he has shown that he will be faithful to his identity and, so, his mission!

7. Why is it so good that Jesus is faithful?
8. Why is this a key attribute of Jesus that our world needs to hear about this week?

How might you introduce that into a conversation this week?

Study 5:
What I love about Jesus is... he is loving

1. When people say, 'Jesus is love', or 'Jesus is all about love', what do you think they mean?
2. Read John 8:2-12.
3. What is Jesus doing? And what is the interruption? (vs.2-6)

What is the intent of this interruption? (vs.^)

4. How does Jesus respond? (vs.6-7)

What is the result? (vs.8-9)

5. What does Jesus ask the woman? (vs.10)

What is her response? (vs.11)

What is Jesus statement, and command? (vs.11)

6. For a study on Jesus being love, the complete absence of 'love' language in this passage might be a little surprising. However, read the following passages, write down what they say about love (or, in another word, 'mercy'), and see how that explains the love in Jesus' action...

Ephesians 2:1-10:

1 John 4:7-12:

7. Jesus in his love doesn't avoid...

Jesus in his love avoids...

8. How different is this picture of Jesus as loving from that the world holds onto? Why?
9. How might you raise this picture of Jesus as loving this week, with friends/family?

Study 6:
What I love about Jesus is... he is sacrificial

1. If you had to pick the greatest act of Jesus' life, what would it be? Why?
2. Read Mark 10:45.
3. Who is the 'Son of Man'?

What did the Son of Man NOT come to do? And, what did he come to do?

Why?

4. Read the following passages and see how they help you understand this truth:

Leviticus 16:

Isaiah 53:1-12:

Matthew 1:21:

John 1:29:

John 3:16:

Romans 3:21-26:

Romans 5:6-11

2 Cor.5:21:

Phil.2:5-11:

Col.1:15-22:

Heb.10:1-18:

5. Why is Jesus so sacrificial, in the ultimate way?

Why is this such a lovely truth?

6. Think on the week ahead... How does Jesus being sacrificial affect us in our daily living? (cf. Mark 10:35-44)

How might we talk of Jesus being sacrificial this week, to those who don't know him?

Study 7:
What I love about Jesus is... he is alive

1. Asked where/what is Jesus now, how do you think most people you meet in the main street would answer?

2. Read Mark 16:1-8.

3. We have met the ladies in verse 1 in Mark 15:47. What had they seen then? And what had they experienced over the last two and a bit days? (cf. Mark 15)

How was this the fulfilment of Mark 10:45?

4. Where are these ladies heading? Why? What is their expectation?

What do they find? (vs.4-5)

What do they learn? (vs.6-7)

How do they react? (vs.8)

5. How do you explain this event?

Look at the following passages and see how they help explain the resurrection of Jesus:

Isaiah 53:10-12:

Ephesians 1:20-23:

Philippians 2:5-11:

6. If Jesus is alive (and let me reassure you that he is!!), then what relevance does he have now?

How, then, will you share this truth this week?

