

taste ²

let's drink

preparation: Buy some bottles of wine, different fruit juices or different and interesting flavoured waters. This is dependant on the group you have, and if any may have issues with alcohol.

action: Sample different sorts of drinks

comment: I hope you enjoyed your drinks this evening. It's amazing to taste different sorts of wine/juice/water with their different flavours and aromas.

We thought last week about Jesus as the Bread of Life. Coming to earth as God/Man, we also thought about how he meets us in the ordinariness of life and can sustain us. What we didn't think about was why he did it in the first place. To explain in just a few short paragraphs the reason he came is very difficult, but here goes.

There is a lot of good in our world, but it doesn't take long to see that there is also a lot of bad. It's pretty broken in many places. The truth is we all have that broken strain within us, its a bit like faulty genes that we activate. This is not the way the world was created to be, we broke it and continue to break it. Not just through the big things like wars and murder, but our own anger, lies, unwillingness to forgive and broken relationships.

Question: If this world is 'broken' do you think it can be fixed?

Christians believe Jesus came to fix it, fix our brokenness. Why? Because it's blocking *our* relationship with him. Cutting ourselves off from the source of all life we are left facing the only alternative – death. But he wants to make us whole, to share in the joy of knowing him, have a purpose and enjoy eternity after we die.

It's no surprise that this is where his life and death enters the story. Jesus lived a life to show us how to live and died to give us the opportunity to live that same life. He took all our wrong and dealt with it in his death and resurrection. He rose again (Christians believe that means he came back from death three days later with a brand new body and as a new and different form of life) to show that there is a new way to be, both in this life and beyond our own lifetimes. It's a lot to take in I know. But it's at the heart of the Christian faith, showing God's unbreakable love for us, through death and resurrection, cross and empty

tomb. It's not about how good we can be at all, but rather, how good God is. Finally, we come to this weeks verse from the Bible:

bible: *'I am the vine; you are the branches.'* John 15.5

There are lots of reasons why Jesus uses this image but for us it has one key connection to make. Christians believe that by putting their trust in Jesus, acknowledging and saying sorry for their wrongdoing and following him means that they are restored in their relationship with him. All things then flow from that. We become part of him, we are in him, like grafted on branches are part of the vine. To put it another way he is not just a bridge that links God and people, but a person through whom they can be united. He is the vine, we are the branches, made possible by all he did for us and his plan is that we are to be fruitful.

personal experience: On how accepting Jesus has made a difference.

reflection: Reflecting on and answering questions

Maybe watch a clip #fallingplates | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGlX11BxF24>

If at the heart of the Christian faith is death and resurrection, what might need to die in us today in order for us to die and rise again and live in a new way? Andrew Murray says "Pride must die in you, or nothing of heaven can live in you." What do we think?

How might it be like, what would it do to us, to be embraced by God the Father and God the Son?

If it all this were true, what difference might it make? What might he have come to do?

- For the world
- For others
- For ourselves

space: Time to feedback and talk

summary statement: We are now over half way through. I hope you are beginning to get a taste for what the Christian faith might be about. Next week we will be asking whether there is life after death, if so what heaven might be like and why heaven is not really the end. Make sure you come hungry because next week we are going to have a meal together.





Jimmy Fallon: Did you Celebrate Easter?

Russell Brand: Actually, yes, because I like things like that, Easter celebrations, time for everyone together, collective consciousness is accrued, and some people don't know, I think Jesus is really brilliant, all those things he done, the miracles, that's kind, that sacrifice of his own life that we might be free from sin, is a really nice thing to do. Also I like that he was very antiestablishment figure, he'd smash stuff up sometimes, there is literally a story about him going in a church and smashing stuff up – yet when I do it ... I would never do that of course. So at Easter my mate asked me what did I did over Easter, I said actually I was really very religious. I was reading the bible watching documentaries about Jesus and learning about him and looking after my godchildren, that's about as spiritual days as you could have, I should think.



"If man had his way, the plan of redemption would be an endless and bloody conflict. In reality, salvation was bought not by Jesus' fist, but by His nail-pierced hands; not by muscle but by love; not by vengeance but by forgiveness; not by force but by sacrifice. Jesus Christ our Lord surrendered in order that He might win; He destroyed His enemies by dying for them and conquered death by allowing death to conquer Him." **A.W. Tozer**

•What might the difference between Faith and Religion? Is there one?

- Jesus is recognised by many as a Good figure, is being good what he wants or is it more than that?
- Christians believe all this is a free gift of love from God that cost Jesus everything our part is to receive it. How might that make you feel?

Want more? Here are some related Bible Verses:

John 3.16-17 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

John 5:24 "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

Romans 6.23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 2.4-6 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.