

Parents Guide: Session Four. The Message of Christianity

The purpose of this module is to explain the essential message of Christianity. It's worth taking a little time yourself to ponder the truths that this module contains because they have profound and very real implications for us. The module follows a structure which reveals the essential Christian truth.

1. We were created in love and for love, by God who is love. Created for divine friendship and given that friendship freely by God. God has always intended for us to live with him and for him, forever. In this is
2. The first human beings were made in harmony and unity. They were at peace with each other and at peace with God. To be friends with God is to possess **Sanctifying Grace**. Grace is the life of God within our souls, rather like blood in a Body. Without Sanctifying Grace we cannot be in friendship with God. Our first parents had the gift of Sanctifying Grace. We can see this by the harmony which existed both between them and God and between each other.
3. The fall changed all this. The disobedience of Adam and Eve meant the loss of **Sanctifying Grace** - friendship with God, and, indeed friendship with each other. You will see how after the Fall, Adam and Eve first hide from God and then blame each other for the disaster. We can see here the disintegration of relationships, a disintegration which is the consequence of all sin. You might reflect in your own life on how your actions or actions of others against you have wounded you or others. Sin always damages our relationship with God, with others, and even with ourselves.
4. **Jesus Christ is God's great rescue plan for us.** After the fall God the Father, but sent God the Son, Jesus Christ, to become truly human. Jesus Christ is absolutely unique. He is fully God, equal to God the Father and fully Human. As human as you and me, yet he is without sin. He is not pretending to be either human or divine, but he is truly both divine and human. You can talk about the ways in which we see his divine power - he can heal the sick, raise the dead, rebuke the evil one, miraculously feed the crowds. But we can also see his humanity. He is really born and died, he cries, eats, sleeps, and laughs. He lives a truly human life.
5. In Jesus Christ we see the extent of God's personal love for us. Coming after us, and seeking us out, Jesus offered himself on the cross for us, not to appease an angry God, but to offer himself in our place in an exchange of unfathomable love. Jesus makes up for our sins in a way we simply could never have done.
6. Jesus is fully human, and yet because he is without sin, he lived the perfect life. Something we cannot do. Because he is God in Human flesh, all that he does has infinite value. His love cannot be outdone and is greater than the whole power of death and hell, sin and suffering. So in offering himself to God the Father for us, he has cancelled out and undone the generations of sin and death that have so marred our human history. What we lacked in love, he has made up, indeed he has far exceeded all we could offer. This is the depth of divine love.

Our Call Today

We need to buy into following Jesus and commit to following him. Jesus invites us to follow him by joining us to himself and to each other by the gift of Baptism. In Baptism we are **given Sanctifying Grace again** and made, should we desire, friends with God forever. We journey together with and to Jesus, in the Church. To be in the Church is to be unite with Jesus and others and to share in the mission of Jesus to the world. To ask to be confirmed is to accept our place in the Church and to commit to following Jesus for the rest of our lives. The session begins to treat how we can follow Jesus more faithfully and you might like to reflect yourself, in your family and with your children, how your relationship with Jesus is going. The purpose of this is not to bring down condemnation on yourself but to help you begin to speak in prayer with Jesus and to hear his great love for you again. Recommit to following him today.

In short the message of Christianity is simple and bold and amazing.

Jesus Christ, God himself, has come to save us and invite us to follow him.

Follow through the material with your child and help him or her to work through the fairly straightforward comprehension questions. The second video (slide 5) gives an in-depth description of the crucifixion.

YOU MAY WISH TO LOOK AT IT YOURSELF, BEFORE WATCHING WITH YOUR CHILD