

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

DONE, WEEK 1: PROPITIATION

Tips: Keep this conversation flowing and tight. Maximize participation. Be sensitive to any not-yet-Christians.

Optional opening question

- When Christians look at the cross, they assign a particular meaning to it, a meaning very different to what non-Christian people in our city have. What are some meanings or associations commonly assigned by non-Christian people?

Making sense of religion vs Christ

- Read and discuss the following paragraph: 'Religion says 'do'. In order to get salvation, we must earn it through good deeds and religious observance. It is depicted by a ladder. Christ said 'done'. Salvation is earned not by us, but by Christ. We receive it undeserved. It is depicted by a cross. The God of the Bible is not to be met on top of a ladder, but at the foot of a cross.'

Making sense of propitiation

- The doctrine of propitiation simply means, '*On the cross, Christ absorbed the wrath of God on our behalf.*'
- **Read Romans 1:18-32.** This long section describes what causes God's anger. Is there anything in particular you see in the people you live or work with? And in your own life?
- **Read Romans 3:25 and 1 John 4:10.** The phrase translated 'atoning sacrifice' can also be translated 'propitiation', which means a sacrifice that absorbs God's anger.
- **Read Mark 15:33-37.** What does the darkened sky, and the drinking of the sponge represent? And why did Jesus say, 'Why have you forsaken me?'
- **Read John 3:36 and Hebrews 2:3.** What insights do these verses add to the subject of propitiation?

Life-changing conversation

- What effect does the doctrine of propitiation have on you?
- What does the cross mean for you right now?

Prayer

- Respond in prayer to the insights gleaned in this conversation? Also ask God for deeper insight yet. (And be sure to come to this Sunday, and Good Friday (services 8h30 and 10h30) and Easter Sunday (services as usual.)