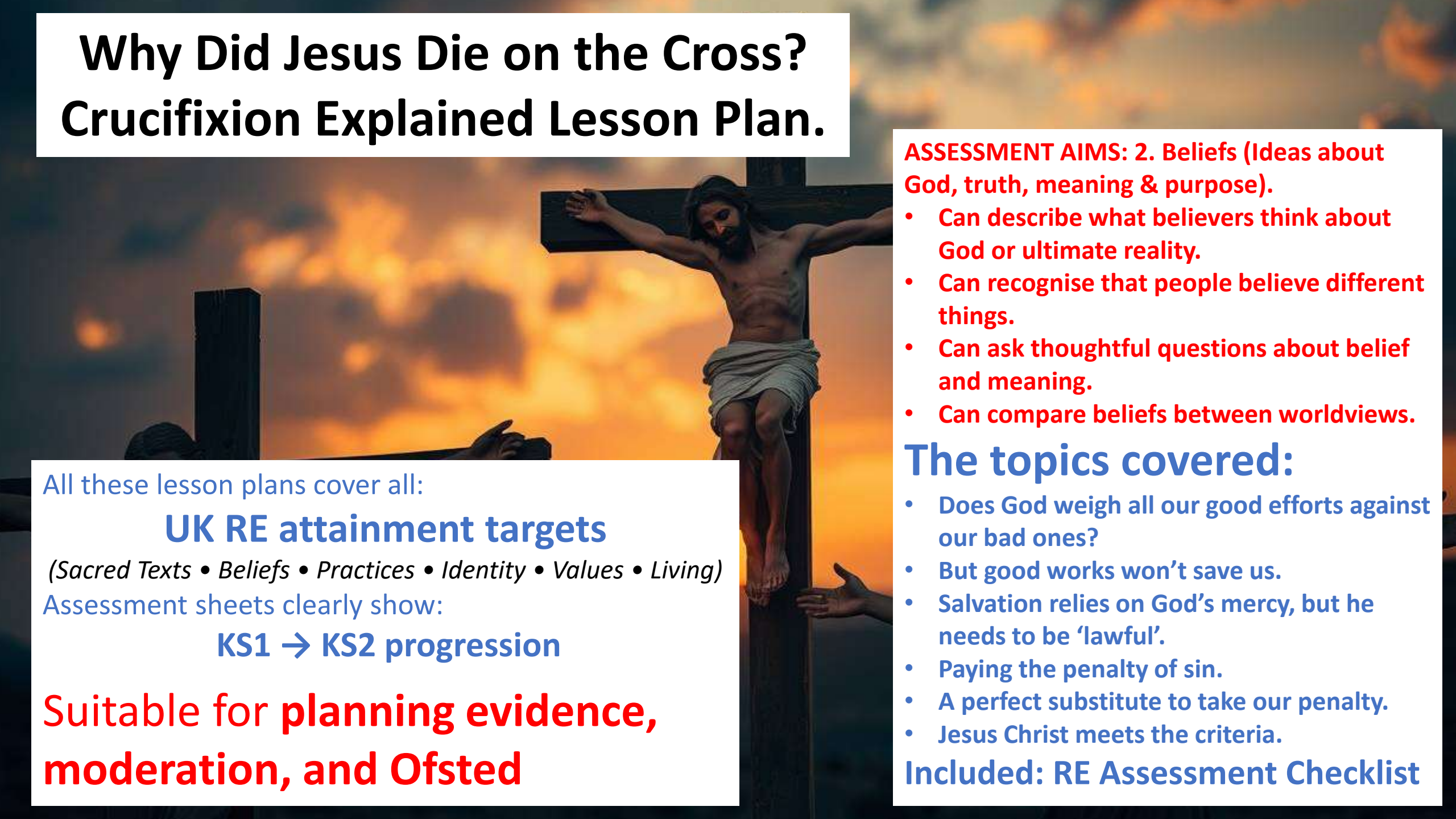
Why Did Jesus Die on the Cross? Crucifixion Explained Lesson Plan.



All these lesson plans cover all:

UK RE attainment targets

(Sacred Texts • Beliefs • Practices • Identity • Values • Living)

Assessment sheets clearly show:

KS1 → KS2 progression

Suitable for **planning evidence, moderation, and Ofsted**

ASSESSMENT AIMS: 2. Beliefs (Ideas about God, truth, meaning & purpose).

- **Can describe what believers think about God or ultimate reality.**
- **Can recognise that people believe different things.**
- **Can ask thoughtful questions about belief and meaning.**
- **Can compare beliefs between worldviews.**

The topics covered:

- **Does God weigh all our good efforts against our bad ones?**
- **But good works won't save us.**
- **Salvation relies on God's mercy, but he needs to be 'lawful'.**
- **Paying the penalty of sin.**
- **A perfect substitute to take our penalty.**
- **Jesus Christ meets the criteria.**

Included: RE Assessment Checklist

Teacher's overview of this ready-to-use lesson plan:

Here is the overview to satisfy the National Curriculum, combining multiple agreed syllabi:

- What difference does the resurrection make to Christians?
- What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people? (Salvation)
- How do the lives, teachings and examples of the key religious figures influence individuals and faith communities today?
- Are these figures good role models for us today? Why?

These are the specific questions covered and are in the Assessment at the end of the lesson plan:

Q. According to the Bible, good works won't save us, so what will?

Q. Would it be right for God to keep changing the rules? What would happen if He did?

Q. Can a judge declare someone guilty but then let them off? What would be wrong with that?

Q. In the drama sketch, what did the 'unnamed person' do?

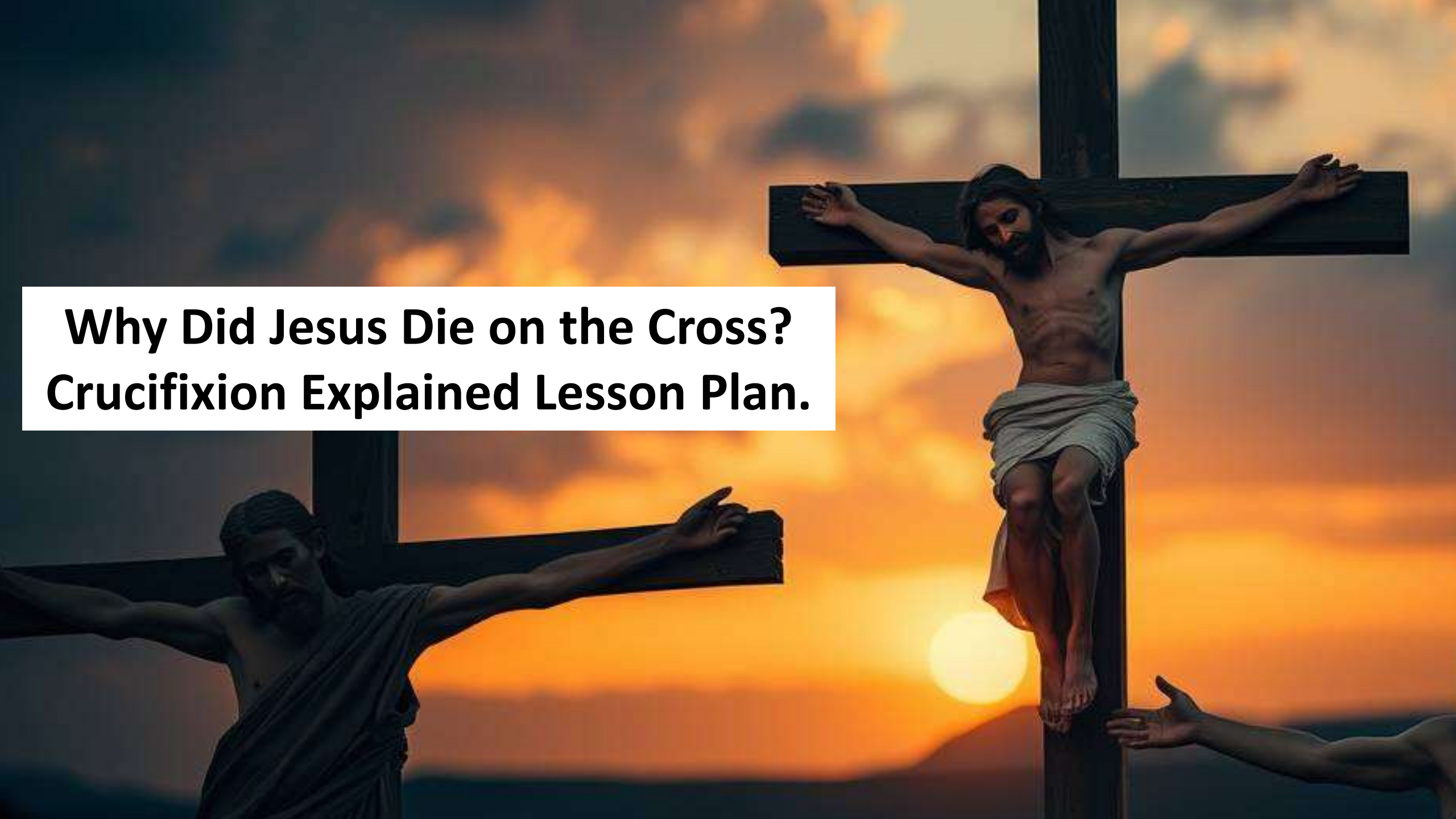
Q. Will sacrificing an animal pay for our guilt? If not, why?

Q. Why do Christians believe that Jesus took the punishment that we deserved to have?

Q. What influence does Jesus' life have on people today?

Resources required:

- To perform the Courtroom sketch, these characters need to be found:
  A Judge, the guilty person, a policeman, a narrator and an unnamed person.



Why Did Jesus Die on the Cross? Crucifixion Explained Lesson Plan.

Many people have the opinion that God puts all our bad actions, wrong thoughts, and all of the good things we failed to do into one side of a pair of balance scales.

Then they think he puts all our good works on the other side.

If one weighs more than the other, then that is how they think God judges people.

Q. Is that what you think, or have you got a different view?

[i]

But that is totally wrong according to the Bible:

“Yet we know that a person is made right with God by faith in Jesus Christ, not by obeying the law.”
Galatians 2:16 New Living Translation

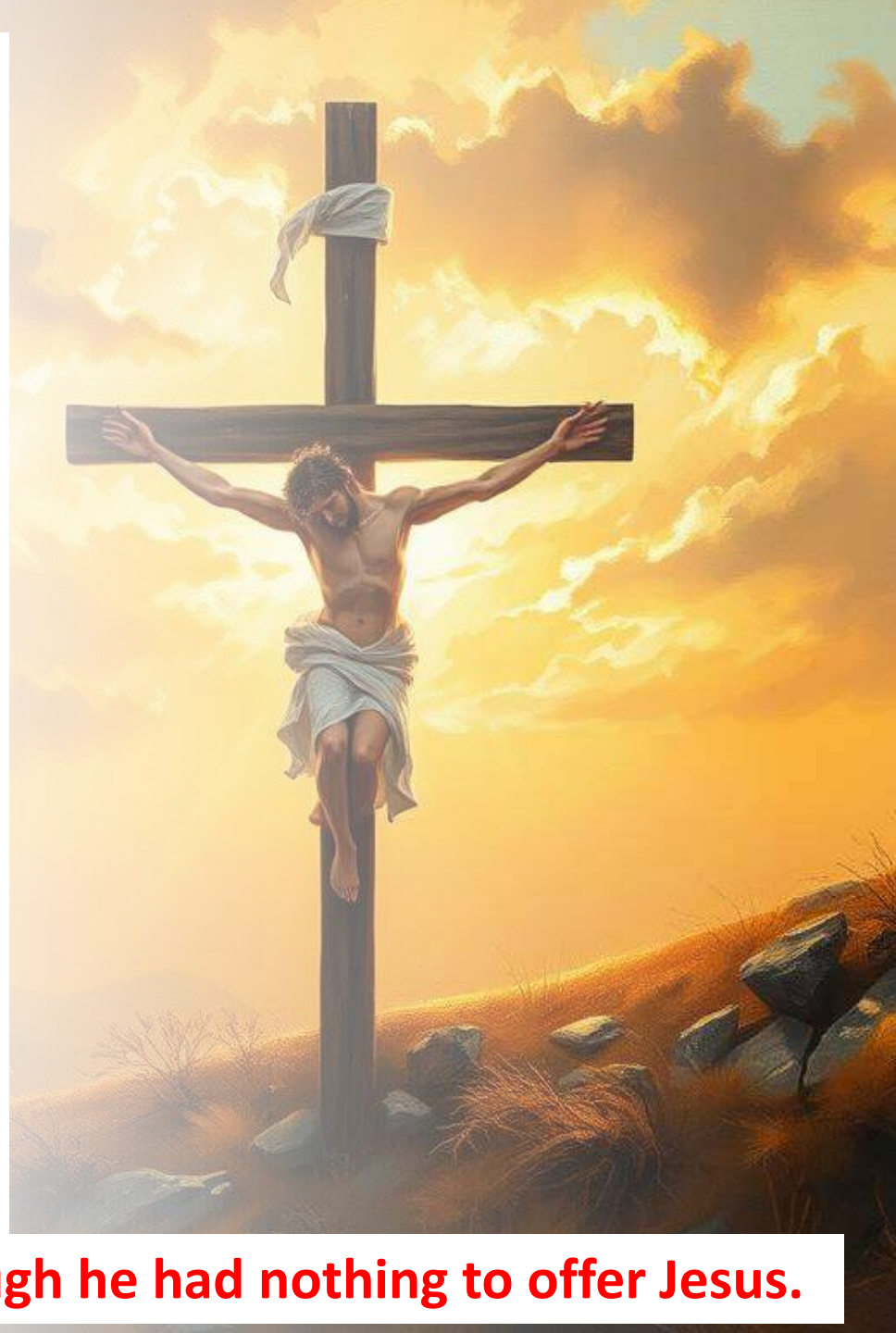
And another Bible verse says:
“Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.” Ephesians 2:9 New Living Translation

Q. So if good works won’t save us, what will?

Answer: The Bible verse said: "by faith in Jesus Christ"

One thief on the cross next to Jesus hurled insults at him, saying: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" (Luke 23:41-43 NIV)

But the other criminal next to Jesus saw something godly and special in Jesus, believing that he was the king of a kingdom, and so he rebuked him:
"Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."
Then he turned to Jesus and said:
"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."
Jesus answered him:
"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."



Q. Does this surprise you? Jesus accepted him even though he had nothing to offer Jesus.

Christians believe that being saved and getting to heaven (which is known as salvation) relies totally on God's love and mercy.

That does not mean we can selfishly live our own lives and push God aside, and then when we die, God will forgive us.

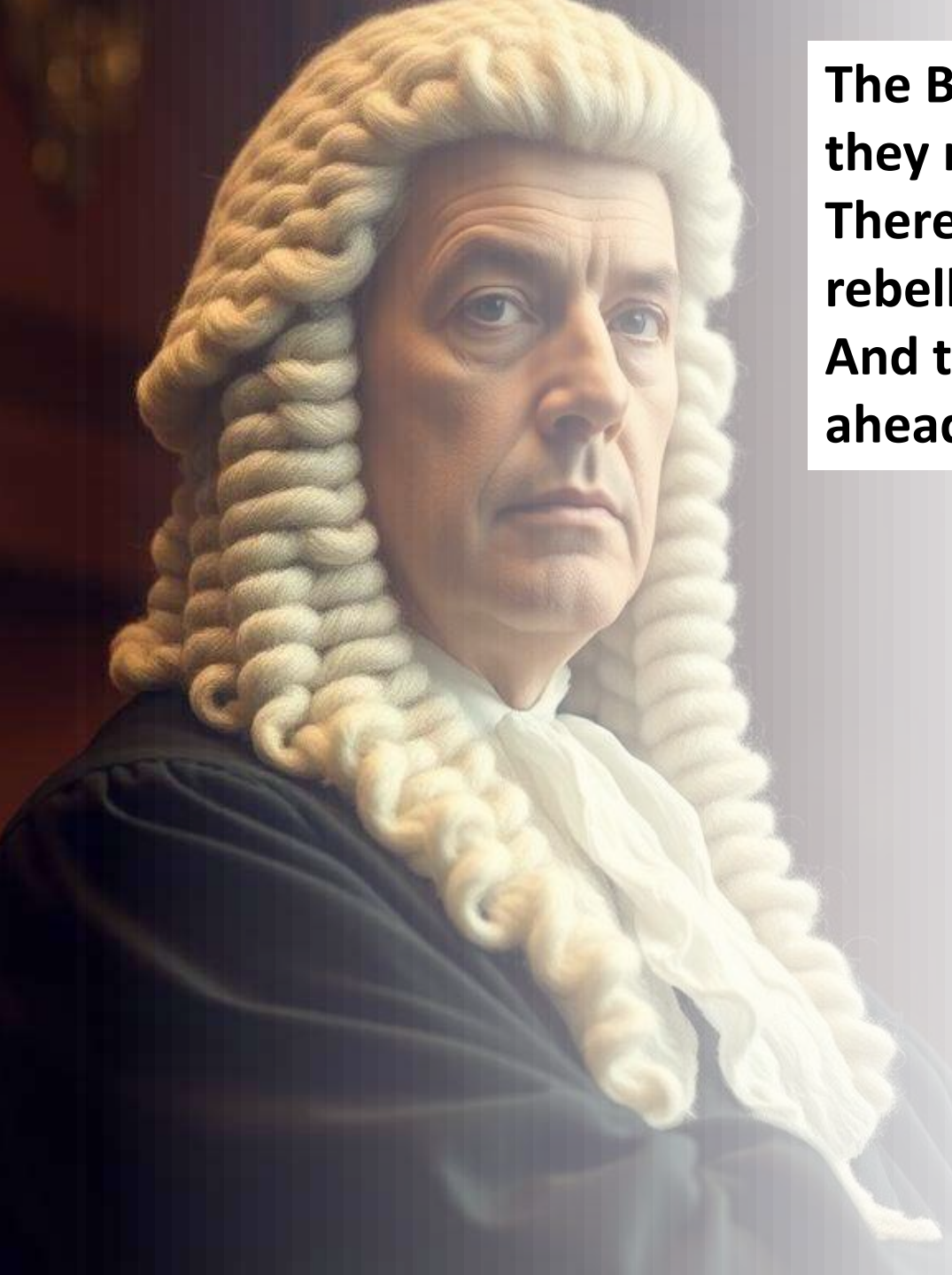
That would not be 'lawful'.

Imagine a football referee changing the rules and making up new rules as the game was played.

Q. What would happen?

It would end in chaos.
The football match would be lawless.
It just wouldn't be right.

Q. Would it be right for God to keep changing the rules? What would happen?



The Bible tells us that everyone does wrong, they sin, and they rebel against God.
Therefore, everyone needs to pay the penalty for this rebellion and pride, and all the wrong things that are done.
And there is no way of stopping the penalty from going ahead.

Q. Can anyone say that they have never done anything wrong, including bad thoughts?

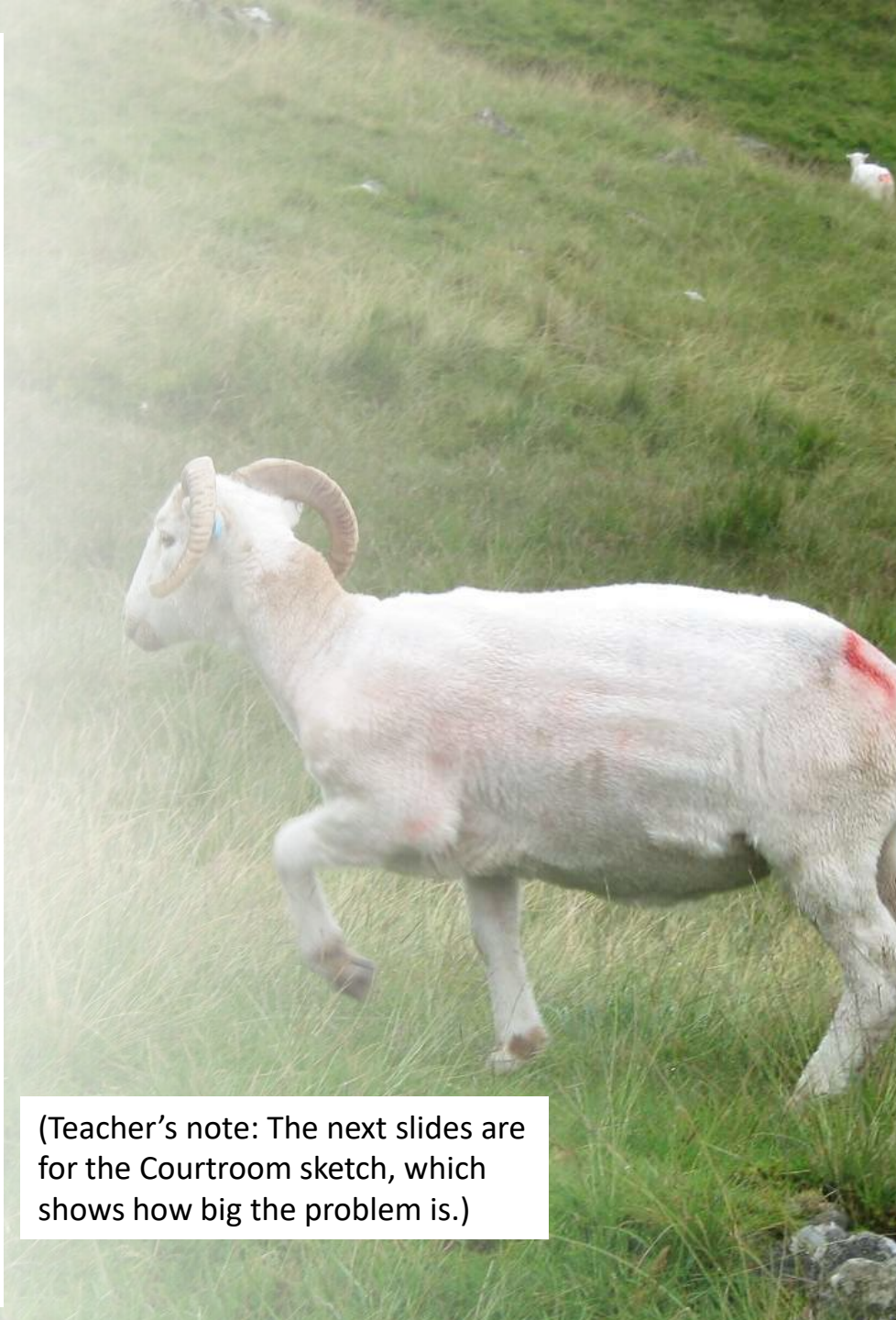
Imagine a Judge announcing the verdict of ‘guilty’ to someone, and then saying, “Don’t worry about it, perhaps the sentence won’t happen after all!”

Q. Can a judge declare someone guilty but then let them off? Would that be ‘lawful’?

Answer: That would not be lawful.
The Law has to do what is right, and justice has to be carried out.
In the Old Testament, the Jews killed a lamb to illustrate that all these wrong things do have a consequence.
When bad things are done, or good things are not done, the law demands that a penalty must be paid.

In football, if an attacking player is brought down by a defending player in the penalty area, then a penalty has to be taken.
In other words, the penalty for the 'bad' tackle is likely to be a goal given away.

But the penalty for rebellion and pride, etc, is a lot worse than giving a goal away.
The killing of a lamb couldn't take away the penalty; it was only a symbolic act.



(Teacher's note: The next slides are for the Courtroom sketch, which shows how big the problem is.)

[JUDGE SEATED, THE GUILTY PERSON STANDING]

Judge: You have been found guilty on all accounts. The Law can show no mercy to you, even though you are in very poor health. Therefore, your sentence is for you to be locked behind bars for the rest of your life.

Guilty person: [START TO SOB] That's terrible, I'll never be able to feel the waves of the sea washing over my feet, never run through the open fields…

Judge: [INTERRUPTS] You have only got yourself to blame. But the Law does allow for you to redeem yourself from prison.

Guilty person: Redeem myself? What does that mean?

Judge: It means that you can pay money instead of serving the prison sentence.

Guilty person: [LOOKS HOPEFUL]

Judge: The cost to redeem yourself is 100 billion pounds. I know the guilty one hasn't got such money, so take him away!

Guilty person: 100 billion pounds! I haven't even got one thousand pounds! No one has got that much!

Judge: That's not my problem! Take the guilty one away!

[THE POLICE TAKE HIM AWAY]

Narrator: The Law and justice have been satisfied. The guilty person is paying the penalty for his wrongdoing. [PAUSE. RUB CHIN THOUGHTFULLY] But what if… Let's rewind the sketch:

[JUDGE SEATED, THE GUILTY PERSON STANDING]

Judge: You have been found guilty on all accounts. The Law can show no mercy to you, even though you are in very poor health. Therefore, your sentence is for you to be locked behind bars for the rest of your life.

Guilty person: [START TO SOB] That's terrible.

Unnamed person: [ENTER COURT AND STAND BETWEEN THE GUILTY ONE AND JUDGE] Now stop right there!

Guilty person: [SURPRISED]

Unnamed person: I will personally pay that money to redeem him, and then he can come and work for me. [TURN TO GUILTY ONE] If that is Okay with you!

Guilty person: [RELIEVED AND HAPPY] Of course, that is okay with me! I just can't believe that anybody would want to pay for me to be redeemed from prison!

Judge: [STERNLY] Never mind all this! You are wasting my time. Unless, of course, you have actually got the 100 billion pounds, which I presume you haven't!

Unnamed person: Of course I have got the money. Here, have this guaranteed bank transfer for 100 billion pounds.

Judge: [EMBARRASSED] Oh! Then I had better declare the new verdict. [CLEAR THROAT] I declare that this person is now free to leave the court, and to go and work for this chap here. This court session has now ended!

Q. What just happened in the sketch?

Answer: This sketch illustrates that the guilty person cannot pay the penalty.
It required someone very special to come in and pay the penalty.

But God, as the Judge of the whole world, cannot be paid with money.
No amount of money will redeem a guilty person.

So, if money won't do, nor will sacrificing an animal, what will?

The only way was for someone to take their place, but they would need to be perfect.

That person must not have had evil thoughts or have done bad things, and they have put others first constantly in their life.

Q. Who could possibly take their place?

Answer: A perfect substitute needed to take the blame and punishment, and the Bible tells us that someone is Jesus Christ.

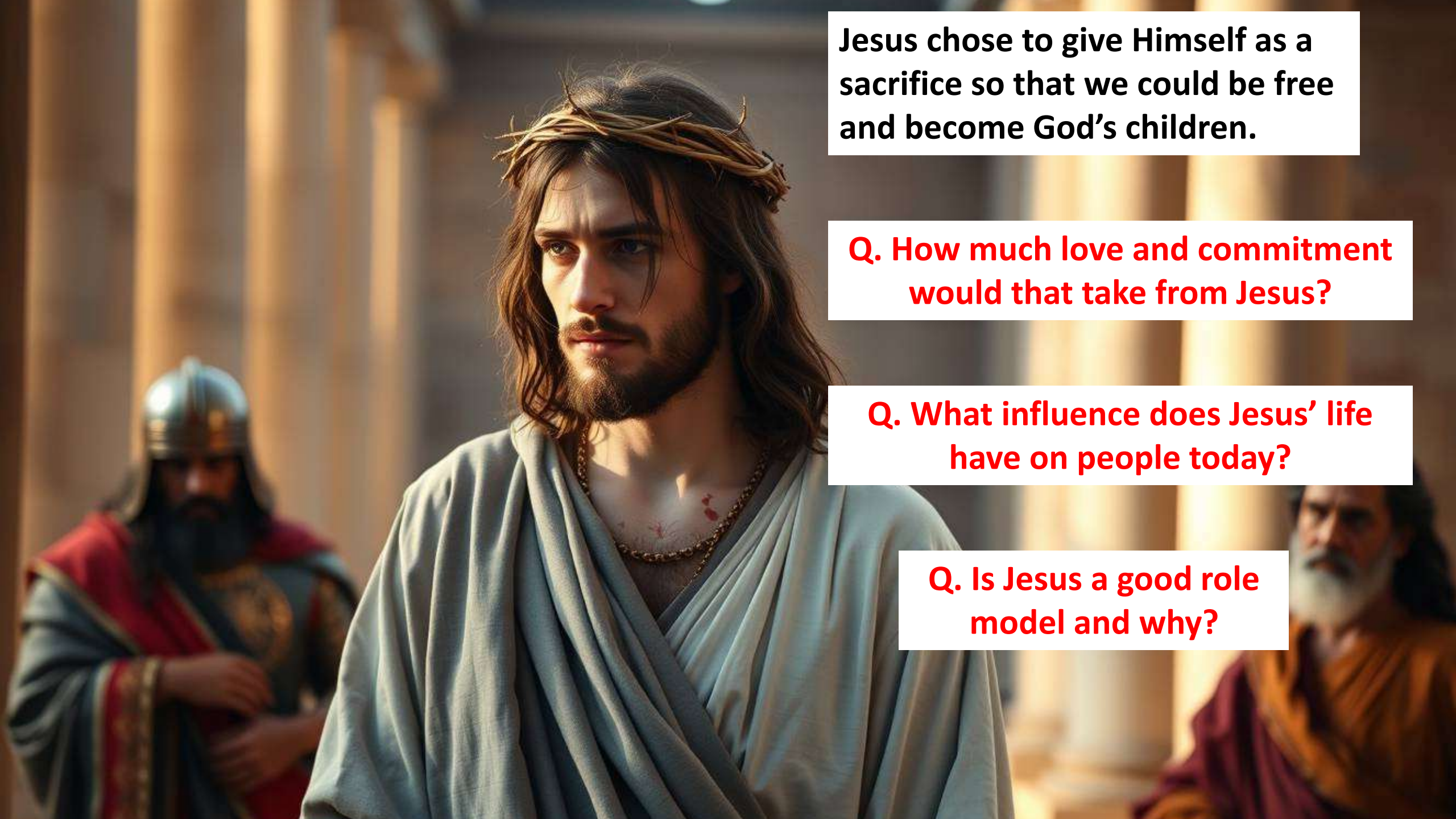
He is our perfect substitute, and he took on the penalty.

Christians believe that because the penalty for sin is spiritual death (James 1:15), **Jesus Christ died on a Roman cross to pay the penalty for that sin, for everyone who trusts in him:**

"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."

(John 3:16 NIV)

Q. Can you see that for this to work, the substitute needed to be absolutely perfect?



Jesus chose to give Himself as a sacrifice so that we could be free and become God's children.

Q. How much love and commitment would that take from Jesus?

Q. What influence does Jesus' life have on people today?

Q. Is Jesus a good role model and why?

Name:

Date:

Specific assessment for this lesson:

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A printable Religious Education Assessment Checklist KS1 and KS2 is downloadable at: https://notmanywise.uk/assessment-sheet

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https://notmanywise.uk

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