

DMJ 101 – Lesson 1: The Cross: Where the Journey Begins

Small Group Bible Discussion Guide (SALT Method)

Objective: Help participants understand God's plan of salvation and respond personally to Jesus Christ.

Key Verse: John 3:16

S — START (Capture Attention and Set the Tone)

Icebreaker Question

Ask: "If someone offered you a gift worth ₱1 million, completely free, what would you do? Would you accept it immediately? Why or why not?"

Allow several participants to answer.

Illustration: The Gift

Hold up a wrapped gift (or any object).

Say: "A gift only becomes yours when you receive it. No matter how valuable it is, it remains unclaimed until you accept it."

Transition: "Today we'll discover that God offers the greatest gift anyone could ever receive—eternal life."

Read **John 3:16**

Discussion Questions

1. What does this verse tell us about God?
2. What motivated God to send His Son?
3. What gift does God offer to everyone?

Big Idea: Our journey with God begins at the Cross, where His great love provides forgiveness, restores our relationship with Him, and gives us eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

A — ALIGN (Present the Core Biblical Truth)

Truth 1: God's Love Invites Us to Begin the Journey

Read:

- John 3:16
- John 10:10

Discussion Questions:

1. What kind of life does Jesus want us to experience?
2. What does eternal life mean?
3. Why do you think many people still feel empty despite having success or possessions?

God deeply loves us and desires to bring us into a personal and eternal relationship with Him.

Truth 2: Our Sin Separates Us from God

Sin takes us away from God and prevents us from restoring the relationship through our own efforts.

Read:

- Romans 3:23
- Romans 6:23

Discussion Questions:

1. According to these verses, who has sinned?
2. What is the consequence of sin?
3. Why can't good works remove our sin?

Read:

- Ephesians 2:8-9
- James 2:10

Key Principle: No amount of good works can bridge the gap between sinful people and a holy God.

Truth 3: Jesus Opened the Way Through the Cross

Jesus Christ died in our place, paid the penalty for our sins, and became the only way for us to return to God.

Read:

- John 14:6
- Romans 5:8
- 1 Peter 2:24

Discussion Questions:

1. What makes Jesus unique among all religious leaders?
2. What did Jesus accomplish on the cross?
3. Why was His sacrifice necessary?

Truth 4: The Resurrection Assures Us That Jesus Is Alive

Jesus rose from the dead, proving His victory over sin and death and confirming that our hope in Him is true.

Read:

- 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
- Romans 1:3-4

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is the resurrection important?
2. What does it prove about Jesus?
3. How does it strengthen your faith?

Truth 5: Faith Is Our First Step in Following Jesus

Salvation is God's gift. We receive it by turning from sin and personally trusting Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Read:

- Ephesians 2:8-10
- 1 John 5:11-12

Discussion Questions:

1. What is grace?
2. What is faith?
3. How do we receive God's gift of eternal life?

Core Value: Salvation is God's free gift, received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

L — LIVE (Relate the Truth to Everyday Life)

Life Reflection

Ask participants:

1. Have you ever tried to earn God's acceptance by being a good person?
2. What are common ways people try to reach God today?
3. Why do people often find it difficult to accept salvation as a free gift?
4. How does knowing that Jesus already paid for your sins change the way you view yourself?
5. How can this truth help someone struggling with guilt, shame, or fear of death?

Real-Life Scenario

Say: "Imagine owing a debt so large you could never repay it. Then someone pays the entire amount for you. How would you respond?"

Connect: "That is exactly what Jesus did on the cross. He paid the debt of our sin completely."

Personal Reflection

Invite participants to quietly consider:

- Do I believe Jesus is the only way to God?
- Am I relying on Christ alone for salvation?
- Have I personally received His gift of eternal life?

T — TRANSFER (Apply and Share the Lesson)

Personal Application

Ask participants:

1. What is one truth that impacted you today?
2. How can you express your gratitude to Jesus this week?
3. What step do you need to take in your relationship with God?

Faith Response

Read Revelation 3:20.

Discuss: Jesus invites us into a personal relationship with Him. Like any gift, salvation must be received.

Provide an opportunity for participants who desire to place their faith in Christ to pray sincerely.

Growth Challenge

This week:

- ✓ Pray daily and thank God for His gift of salvation.
- ✓ Read one chapter of the Gospel of John each day.
- ✓ Attend a small group or discipleship meeting.
- ✓ Share with one person what you learned about God's gift of eternal life.

Accountability Question

Next meeting ask: "How did you apply this week's lesson, and who did you share it with?"

Wrap-Up Summary

Remember These Five Truths:

1. **God loves you** and wants you to have eternal life.
2. **Sin separates us** from God.
3. **Jesus Christ is the only way** to God.
4. **His resurrection proves** He is the Son of God.
5. **Salvation is received by faith** in Jesus Christ alone.

Memory Verses:

John 3:16 "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."

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."