



You will need...

- PPT

The talk falls into 4 sections- an introductory section which could be done very near the start of the service to introduce the theme of the service.

Then 3 teaching sections, two of them have a short reading before each one.

The third teaching section has the conclusion directly following it.

The story

Part 1: That's not fair!

PPT → That's not fair!

When was the last time you heard that?

When was the last time you said that?

Was it at bedtime? Does someone in your class go to bed later than you?

Was it when your parents said "no"? Were you certain that you were right?

Was it over an ipad or watching the TV? Did you think you had been promised longer?

I think it's something every single one of us thinks most weeks. We make sure we get what is fair. So we can really spot it when it's unfair!

This afternoon, we're going to walk through the Good Friday story, as it really happened. And as we do, we will all find ourselves wanting to shout, "That's not fair". It's terrible. It shouldn't have happened. It's unfair.

But perhaps, by the end, by the time we leave this afternoon, instead of saying, "That's not fair", I think we'll say, "That's amazing!"

But first, we need to understand how we got to this point. When Jesus travelled around, there were always crowds cheering, enjoying and asking for more of him. But these crowds made the religious leaders jealous. The religious leaders wanted the crowds for themselves. They wanted the cheering. **PPT (arrest)**

So one evening, they arrested Jesus and took him away. His friends left him. **PPT (on trial)** The Religious Leaders shouted at him and the soldiers punched him. It was when he said that he was



the Son of God that they decided they had heard enough. They took him to Pilate who was the Roman governor, the man in charge of the whole country. He had the power to have criminals punished, even put to death.

Let's find out what Pilate did next. This is Jesus' trial:

Part 2: Jesus had done nothing to deserve death

PPT (Jesus had done nothing to deserve death)

Pilate was the boss of the whole country. The top man. What he said- happened. You know how a trial works: you try to find out if the person before you is guilty and should be punished, or is innocent and should be let go. ***PPT (Luke 23:22)*** Three times Pilate said that Jesus had done nothing wrong and should be let go.

PPT (crowd) Pilate decided that Jesus was innocent and this other man Barabbas was guilty. Three times Pilate says.. Jesus Christ has done nothing deserving punishment, so he should be let go.

But three times the crowd shouted, and called for Jesus to be punished and Barabbas was to be let go.

That's not fair! Barabbas had killed people. Barabbas was horrible, awful and guilty. Everyone knew that. But the Religious leaders, the chief priests and the crowd shouted for Barabbas to be let go and Jesus to be crucified.

PPT ²² A third time Pilate said to them, "Why? What wrong has he done? I can find no reason to kill him. So I will have him punished and set him free."

What wrong has he done? What wrong had Jesus done? You must know what the Bible says to answer this question: ***NOT ONE THING. EVER!*** Jesus had never done one single thing wrong. He had lived completely for God all of his life. He had loved everyone he had met perfectly. Even the people who hated him, he had never hit them, he had never said anything unkind to them, he had never even thought an unkind thing. Jesus didn't deserve *any* punishment for anything. He was perfect.

Pilate didn't understand all that about Jesus, but Pilate did understand that Jesus had done nothing wrong that deserved *death*. Decision made! Pilate will let him go. ... But that's not what happened.

We read... ²³ But they continued to shout. They demanded that Jesus be killed on the cross. Their yelling became so loud that ²⁴ Pilate decided to give them what they wanted."



Pilate gave in. He had Jesus punished when he *knew* that Jesus had done nothing wrong.

PPT That's not fair.

So what does Jesus say? Did you hear what Jesus said? Did he complain? Did he fight? Did he shout to the crowd? Did he try to explain to Pilate? Did you hear what Jesus said?

(Pause then say quietly): NOTHING. Not a thing. In all of this, while all this was happening, Jesus didn't say one word.

(SHOUT): "Jesus say something! Tell them. Tell them you've done nothing wrong. Fix it. Make it fair!"

(Silence. Pause): He said nothing

PPT *(Isaiah)*

750 years before this day, there was a prophet called Isaiah. God gave Isaiah messages for God's people. Isaiah wrote the messages down. Messages that were true, promises that would one day happen; to encourage them that God was still with them.

God promised his people that one day he would send a servant to rescue them. Here is one thing God told Isaiah to write down about that servant:

PPT *(Isaiah 53: 7)*

"He was beaten down and punished.

But he didn't say a word.

He was like a lamb being led to be killed.

He was quiet, as a sheep is quiet while its wool is being cut.

He never opened his mouth."

I know who that sounds like. *He was beaten down and punished. He didn't say a word. He was quiet. He never opened his mouth.*

It's happening. This is it. 750 years of waiting and the Promise is coming true. God's promised servant who would come to rescue is here!

→ Reading Luke 23: 32-38. The crucifixion

Part 3: Jesus did not save himself, because he was saving others.

PPT *Jesus did not save himself, because he was saving others.*

PPT *(Crucified)*

Jesus was crucified with two criminals. As this was happening, Jesus spoke for the first time. "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing."



They didn't know what they were doing, did they? The religious leaders made fun of him.

PPT

They said, "If he is God's Chosen One, the Christ, then let him save himself. He saved other people, didn't he?"

If he is this Servant we've been promised... If he really is this rescuer... If he really is the great hero we've been waiting for then he'll save himself. Won't he? No.

Jesus was God's chosen one, he was the Christ. He came to save others. He was the Promised rescuing servant Isaiah had written about.

Jesus did not save himself, because he was saving others.

Let me show you what I mean:

(Get a table on stage put an egg in an eggcup on the table.) I want you to imagine this egg is one of us *(draw face on egg)*

(Put a double ended egg cup or another object and another egg, to represent Jesus.) I want you to imagine this egg is Jesus *(draw face and crown on egg)*

Finally, this cricket ball is God's anger at the way we treat Him and other people. *(Get a long drainpipe, go up a ladder and drop the cricket ball down the pipe.)*

(You can start by having just one egg to demonstrate what happens. Then do it with the explanation as per above. Make sure you practice this before you do it in front of the congregation!)

Did you see the way Jesus got smashed by God's anger while we walked away safe? That is exactly (or almost exactly!) what Jesus was doing by dying on the cross.

Jesus *could* have saved himself. Of course he could. He could have flown away. He could have clicked his fingers and just jumped down from the cross. He could have sent a ball of fire out of the sky and blown up everyone else there.

He didn't. He chose to stay on the cross to save others. He was getting what we deserved. He was there in our place.

PPT (Isaiah)

Do you remember Isaiah? Remember how he said Jesus was like a sheep that went silently, just the verse before that one, Isaiah explains that actually we're like sheep too.

PPT (Colin Buchanan Isaiah 53:6)

We all like sheep have gone astray

Baa baa doo baa baa

Each of us has turned to his own way

Baa baa doo baa baa

But the Lord has laid on Him



The iniquity of us all - sing!
Baa baa doo baa baa
Isaiah 53:6 - uh!

(If you don't sing this song at Children's Church you can use the ICB version:

"We all have wandered away like sheep.
Each of us has gone his own way.
But the Lord has put on him the punishment
for all the evil we have done.")

We're like sheep who have gone astray, that means gone our own way. But the Lord has laid on Jesus our iniquity, or wrong things, so that he could take our place.

→ Reading Luke 23: 44-47. The death

Part 4 Jesus' death means that we can be with God

PPT Jesus' death means that we can be with God

These last few verses pack in the action. Everything is happening at once.

PPT (Luke 23:44)

Did you catch it? *Read it.*

PPT (darkness)

First, darkness fell. In the middle of the day. In a hot country. For three hours.

That's impossible, but it happened. It's as if God just switched out the lights.

In the Bible, darkness, when there should be sunshine, is a sign that God is angry, angry in the right way with people who are doing the wrong thing.

We've already seen, that's exactly what is happening. God turned out the light to show that his anger for our wrong things, was falling onto Jesus. Once and for all. It really wouldn't be fair to punish the same wrong things twice, would it? So if all our wrong things we've ever done, and will ever do can be forgiven, then we can be with God. Jesus death means we can be with God.

PPT (curtain)

Then comes the curtain tearing. This is strange. Soft furnishings getting ripped up?

Let me explain:



Luke 23:45 says that at the exact moment that Jesus died, the temple curtain tore from top to bottom. That curtain was hung between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The Most Holy Place was where the Ark of the Covenant-or mercy- seat was. (*Place a seat/throne on the stage*). God wanted a “seat” to be put there, to show that it was like his throne room. Although God is everywhere, he wanted his people to know that in a special way, he was sat on his throne in the middle of his Capital city.

(*Hold a curtain up in front of the throne, so we can't see the throne anymore*) The curtain was placed there to stop anyone coming in. It was a reminder that God and us are different. He is perfect and Holy. We are sinful. We could not stand in his throne room and live. Only one person, once a year, could go into there, and that was after days of washing, praying and preparing; and only then God would withhold his punishment.

The curtain reminded everyone of the problem of sin.

So when it tore, from top to bottom it was as if God himself was ripping it. (*Tear the curtain from top to bottom- needs a tear cut before to start the rip.*) God was saying, “My son has wiped away your sin, you can now be holy, you can now come into my throne room and live with me”. The cross makes it possible for us to be in God's family.

We can all see what Jesus' death did for us. His death means we can be with God. The way is open. Our sin, our wrong things are gone. Nothing is stopping us.

So it is sort of true “That is unfair”. Jesus had done nothing to deserve death. We had. He was getting what we deserved.

PPT (Centurion)

Because even the Roman army officer who was there that day, who had seen so many people die, said “I know this was a good man!”

He wasn't amazed by how unfair it was. He was amazed by Jesus. We should be amazed by Jesus!

Jesus did not save himself, because he was saving others. He was saving me. He was saving you. If we've understood this story, we wouldn't say, “That's so unfair”. We'll stand in awe of Jesus, we'll want to thank him, for what he did, in silence, for us. We'll want to give him our wrong things, so that we can be forgiven, because **Jesus' death means that we can be with God!** Be amazed. Thank him. Trust him.

PPT (THAT'S NOT FAIR)

We don't need to fight for what we deserve.

We don't need to make sure that we've got the same.

Because Jesus chose not to get what he deserved for us.

He did that to give us everything we could ever need.

It is unfair.



If we're trusting Jesus death, we're in God's family. Forever. Safe forever. Loved forever. We have nothing to complain about ever.