

A series on the cross

Paul said, “I decided to forget everything except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” For four weeks, that’s what we’re going to do. Because of what Jesus has done, the Cross has become the prism through which we see God, ourselves, and everyone else. The Cross is the hinge point of history. The Cross is the divine counter-narrative to the typical script life hands us. The Cross is the greatest offense to a world of people who don’t think they need to be saved, and also the greatest offering of God’s love for that same world. The Cross is the great equalizer among all humankind. The Cross is the triumph of God. The Cross is the decisive victory in the war against sin and death. We are saved and shaped by the Cross.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Read 1 Corinthians 1:18 through 2:5. Divide up the reading between the group so everyone is involved. What are some things that immediately resonate with you from this passage?

2 1 Corinthians 1:18 claims that the “message of the cross” is the power of God. What is the message of the cross? How would you share this message with someone who didn’t know much about Jesus?

3 The cross is God’s worst offense. In the Roman empire, there was no one more disturbing and stigmatized than victims of crucifixion. And God wanted his gospel to culminate with our Savior on a cross. No one would have made up this story on their own. Why is it important to understand the offense of the cross? What does this tell us about the work of missionaries like Paul?

4 Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-29. The Corinthian church faced a common temptation: repackage your old life with a twist of Christianity. How does the cross overturn this strategy? What should the heart posture be of a church lifting up the cross? Follow up: When have you been tempted or guilty of “repackaging your old life with a twist of Christianity”?

5 Read 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 (in a few different translations). **The cross is our best and only hope.** How does the cross silence our boasting? How does the cross increase our faith? And what does it mean for Jesus to have become our wisdom? Follow up: Share the story of when you first learned about the message of the cross being your best and only hope (how has it both saved and shaped you?).

6 What one thing stood out to you the most from this message? How can you apply what you learned this week?

