

# 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** As we conclude this series on the Cross, what has been most meaningful to you? What has been most challenging or thought provoking?

**2 Read Colossians 1:19-22 and Romans 5:1-11. The cross is how God restores relationship with humanity.** The need for peace assumes the presence of conflict - and both these passages refer to sinful humans as God's enemies (*for another example, see Philippians 3:18-19*). In what ways has sin broken our relationship with God? Why is a restored relationship to God so important?

**3** In the above passages, who is being reconciled to whom? Is God changing His mind about humanity? And how does God's wrath play into this? (*Leader tip: remember to emphasize God's wrath not as an emotion but as His divine action in setting right what is wrong*) No doubt, these can be troubling questions. Share with each other ways you would answer them for someone new to faith.

**4 Read Ephesians 2:11-22.** In Jesus, God didn't just restore relationship with his people - he wanted to show them a new way to be human (see also Galatians 3:28 and Colossians 3:11). **The cross is how God creates a new humanity.** What would it mean for Christians to live with the communal peace Jesus won for us? What hostility with others do you personally need to see as something Jesus “put to death”?

**5 Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.** If this is new life is really for all, then everyone needs to know about it. That's why **the cross creates a mission of reconciliation**. Who has been a model of reconciliation to you? What are some specific ways you can own the ministry and message of reconciliation?

**6** You're encouraged to finish by reading **1 Corinthians 11:23-26** and taking communion together.