

8 The Cross

Readings for the Week

Matthew 15-28

Hebrews 4, 8-9

The way God saves his people is foolishness to the world. It is not how Israel had expected or wanted God to come to them. Our King came and saved his people by sacrificing himself for us.

Can you think of any great victories that kings have won for their people?

In Israel's history, what have kings and other leaders been able to achieve and what blessings follow?

As we studied last week, Jesus came to save and be king, but he did so in a way unlike any other. This week we will study the unlikely way he won victory for us.

Galatians 3:13-14

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

How did Christ become a curse for us? Why did he have to do this?

What did Jesus do by redeeming us from the curse?

Do you see the way in which Jesus Christ is continuing a plan that was shown to Abraham all the way back in Genesis?

It seemed impossible to think that God would come to earth in Jesus and take our curse on himself. It looked weak and foolish to believe a powerful God would humble himself so much. Read more about this in 1 Corinthians 1:18-25.

When have you felt foolish in your life? How did you react to feeling that way?

How is the cross “foolish”? How is it, in God’s plan, wise and strong?

Are you willing to appear foolish to speak up about God’s good plans? What might we risk by looking like fools for Christ?

No one likes to be made to feel foolish, but we must be ready for it if we are to speak boldly about Jesus Christ, who was ready to be mocked and more for us. Read Matthew’s account of the crucifixion in Matthew 27:32-54.

How do people treat Jesus at his crucifixion? What did they say about him?

Mockingly they put a sign above Jesus that read ‘King of the Jews’ and they called into question his claim to be the Son of God. How was Jesus—at that moment—truly acting as King and God?

What happens once Jesus dies?

While Jesus looked like an easy target for ridicule as he was dying, his actions were fitting for our God and King. His death on the cross saved his people, defeated death, and as symbolized by the tearing of the curtain in the temple, gave us all access to God. Read more about this curtain and what Christ has done for us in Hebrews 9:1-14.

In what ways is Jesus Christ better than the old system that was in place? How is what Jesus has done similar and how is it different?

How has Jesus’ sacrifice saved us? Having been cleansed, what are we called to do?

