

**INTRO**

- What's an example of a way your family line or parents decisions affected you for better or worse?

**READ**

As we continue in our Cruciform series, we reflect on the cross and the victory it brings.

- Read 1 Cor 15:3-4 and Romans 5:12-21

**REFLECT & RESPOND**

These verses are meaty and we won't do them justice, but the overall point is to see how the death of Christ makes most sense when we understand the overall story the bible is telling.

**“In accordance with the Scriptures”**

In other words, we should understand the death of Jesus in the context of the biblical story. We often sum up the Bible as telling a story in 4 parts: *Creation—Fall—Redemption—Restoration*. For many of us, we understand the cross in the *Fall—Redemption* context (Jesus dying for our sins). But what about the *Creation—Restoration* context?

In Romans 5, Paul explains the *Creation—Restoration* story another way by locating us in 1 of 2 families: Adam or Christ—each representing humanity, but very differently.

Sin means *missing the mark*, not just of God's moral standards, which is what we typically think when we think of sin. Sin is also missing the mark of what it means to be genuinely human through the failure to worship God and bear his image into the world. When Adam & Eve abdicated this calling to “reign in life,” the Powers of Sin & Satan stepped in and “Death reigned,” as Paul describes it.

*Qu: do you think of sin as primarily missing the mark of God's moral stds, or what it means to be truly human? Why?*

We need more than just forgiveness. We are in need of atonement *for* sin and deliverance *from* the Powers of Sin, Death & Satan.

This is how the early Christians came to understand the cross, and see it as the ultimate victory of God over the powers of Sin, Death & Satan. No wonder they preached, boasted and gloried in Christ crucified!

The death & resurrection of Christ declares a fresh start: a new creation & new humanity patterned after him, not Adam.

*For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. — 1 Cor 15:22*

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. — 2 Cor 5:17*

*Qu: in light of this, what comes to mind when you hear Paul's phrase “reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ”?*

As Paul says, we are restored to “reign in life” once again in and through Christ by being fully forgiven of our sin (past, present, future), delivered increasingly from the power of sin as we choose to live for God's glory and purposes, and one day await the full removal of the presence of sin in the New Heaven & New Earth.

*Qu: how can you apply the accomplishment of the cross to your own life? Do you need forgiveness and freedom from sin? Move into a time of prayer.*

**RESPOND & PRAY**

- Pray for a rest in the finished work of Christ and a courage to confront areas of sin in our lives.
- Pray for a fresh and true view of our calling as a human being in God's image.
- Pray for one another to practice a life of up-in-out in the week ahead.