

Gracious Father, you have promised to be with us even to the end of the age. Help us we pray to see you present with us, not just in the good times, but in the times when we feel abandoned and alone, for your promise is for all time and in all seasons of our lives. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

In this lesson, we'll look at Luther's Theology of the Cross – God present with us even in the worst of times.

Part 1 Theology of the Cross - Watch First Video Segment Before Answering Part 1

1. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

- a. In verse 1 what does the scripture writer say about the times and seasons of our lives?

- b. If verse 1 is true, then where does God dwell in all the times and seasons of our lives?

- c. Why do you think the scripture writer takes great pains, then, to name each of the seasons of our lives both using good times and bad times? What is the scripture writer trying to emphasize about God?

2. Read Luke 1:46-55

- a. In Mary's Magnificat prayer/song, who are the ones who blessed by the coming of the Jesus Child into the world?

- b. In Mary's Magnificat prayer/song, who are the ones who don't fare as well from the coming of the Jesus Child into the world?

3. Read Matthew 5:1-11

- a. In Matthew's Beatitudes, upon whom does God seem to bestow his blessings?

- b. Why do you think over and over again in scripture that sinners/tax collectors, those who mourn and are meek, those who are sick and poor, etc. are the ones that Jesus spends the most time with?

Part 2 Hiddenness of Christ - Watch Second Video Segment Before Answering Part 2

4. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

- a. In verse 18, what does Paul say about the message of the cross?

- b. What does Paul mean by writing that?

- c. in Verses 25-31, what does it mean that God's foolishness wiser than human wisdom?

5. Read Mark 15:33-39

- a. After Jesus died, what did the Roman Centurian declare?

- b. What do you think he saw (specifically) that made this Roman Centurian, who was involved in beating and crucifying Jesus make that declaration?

Part 3 What Does This Have to Do With My Life?

6. Read John 13:1-20, 34-35

- a. Jesus washes the disciples' feet. Using your learning in this lesson, how does this story demonstrate the Theology of the Cross and the Hiddenness of Christ?

7. Along with the Theology of the Cross and the Hiddenness of Christ, there is also a concept called the Hiddenness of the Church. Much like the Hiddenness of Christ, there is something about our behavior that "hides" or "obscures" the blessedness, the holiness, the majesty of God in our everyday life as Christian believers.

- a. What action does Jesus call his disciples to that "hides" the Church?

- b. Can you share a time when you have "washed the feet" of someone in need? How do you think that action gives God glory? And in what way does it also demonstrate the Hiddenness of the Church and the Hiddenness of Christ?