

# DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY SESSION 3: THE CROSS

## MEETING TIME

Please use these pages for notes and to record your thoughts

## FOLLOW-UP HOMEWORK

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S ASSIGNMENT

## LESSON

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DID JESUS' DEATH ACCOMPLISH?

THE CROSS – JESUS WENT WILLINGLY

*John 10:17-18 (NIV)*

*The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”*

---

## THE CROSS – PENALTY PAID

*Romans 3:22-26*

*This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.*

---

## THE CROSS - REDEMPTION

*1 Peter 1:18-19 (NIV)*

*For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

---

## THE CROSS – RESTORING HOLINESS

*John 1:29*

*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”*

*1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.*

---

## THE CROSS – RECONCILIATION

*Colossians 1:21-22*

*Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—*

---

## CROSS - VICTORY

*Colossians 2:13-15*

*When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

---

## CROSS – OUR EXAMPLE

*Matthew 16:24*

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."*

*Ephesians 5:1-2*

*Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

## THE CROSS

- Jesus took the punishment that we deserved: The Law Court
- Jesus redeemed us and paid the ransom to free us from sin: The Market Place
- Jesus, the lamb of God, cleanses us from sin: The Temple
- Jesus' death reconciled us to God: The Home
- Jesus gained victory over evil: The Battlefield
- Jesus showed us the way to live a life of sacrificial love: The Example of our Rabbi

## IMPORTANT QUESTION: HOW DO WE EXPERIENCE THESE IN OUR LIFE?

*John 3:16 (NIV)*

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

## IN-CLASS EXPERIENCE

You will be given about 5 minutes to read this sheet and fill in the answers. When you have completed the sheet you are invited to sign it indicating that from now on you will attempt to live your life believing that Christ's work on the cross applies to you

# IF I BELIEVED

IF I BELIEVED THAT CHRIST'S DEATH ON THE CROSS ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISHED THE THINGS WE LEARNED TONIGHT, HOW WOULD I (MY LIFE, MY FAITH) BE DIFFERENT?

JESUS TOOK THE PUNISHMENT THAT I DESERVED

---

JESUS REDEEMED ME AND PAID THE RANSOM TO FREE ME FROM SIN

---

JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD, CLEANSSES ME FROM SIN

---

JESUS' DEATH RECONCILED ME TO GOD

---

JESUS GAINED VICTORY OVER EVIL IN MY LIFE

---

JESUS SHOWED ME THE WAY TO LIVE A LIFE OF SACRIFICIAL LOVE

---

**Because of Christ's death on the cross and God's love for me, I determine to trust God for my salvation and live my life believing and having faith that Christ's death accomplished these things.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

REFORMED *PERSPECTIVE*

## HOMEWORK

## HOMEWORK SESSION 3: THE CROSS

## FIND A DEPICTION OF THE CROSS

The homework for this week is to find a piece of art that depicts the cross and the events immediately preceding it. It can be a painting, a poem, or even artistic prose (not a commentary). Find one that captures an aspect of the cross that is especially meaningful to you. Bring that artwork next week—or a picture of it—and share it with us.

## CONTINUE TO READ AND STUDY SCRIPTURE

As a reminder, here was the assignment from the first week. We will continue with this study practice throughout the 40 day experience.

- Choose a book of the Bible that you would like to study and that you would enjoy continuing after the 40 day experience
- Study that book at least 15 minutes every day:
- Start with the first logical unit (certainly less than a chapter—maybe only a few verses)
- Fill out a Bible Study sheet completely for that unit before moving on to the next. You may stay several days on that one unit. It's not how much you read, but how much what you read becomes a part of you.

Move to the next logical unit and repeat

## CONNECT WITH ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER

- Pray for your accountability partner this week
- Contact you accountability partner about half way through the week
- Ask how their daily Bible reading is going and share your experience with it
- Share prayer requests
- Encourage one another

# DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY SESSION 3: THE CROSS

## OVERVIEW

This week's meeting will examine the meaning of the cross—or rather meanings, since we will see that there are a number of images used to explain the meaning of the cross. After examining six of the images that are used in the Bible the participants will be given an opportunity to examine their own life in light of what Christ accomplished, and asked to make a conscious decision to put their faith and trust in Christ and his work on the cross

## PREPARING FOR THIS WEEK'S SESSION

It will be important to pray for the participants—this could be a very meaningful time for some. It could be a time when they decide to trust God and to begin living their lives in light of Christ's finished work on the cross. So, pray for the participants.

Also, become familiar with the six images yourself. Read the scriptures and think about how these truths have affected you. It might be helpful, too if you could find an image of the crucifixion or a poem about it that is especially meaningful to you. It will help in explaining the homework.

Contact the participants to encourage them to persevere

## SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR THE MEETING

- Name Tags
- Participant Guides
- Bible Study sheets (several will be included in the Participant Guides, but you will need extras for those who will need more than 4 for the coming week.
- Signup Sheets (to pass around in case not all slots are filled, and to remind those who have signed up of their assignment for next week.)

## MEETING TIME

### 7:00 PM (5 MINUTES) WELCOME AND GATHERING

- Name Tags
- Focus Activity
- Prayer

---

**FOCUS ACTIVITY**

**Welcome to day 14 of our 40 day experience. You have had two weeks now of daily Bible Study, connecting with your accountability partners, and doing a couple of assignments. We are going to pray to start our meeting tonight, and here is what we will do. First, we will have a few minutes of silence. I'd like you to look back over the last 14 days and think of some things that you could thank God for—they may be intimately related to the 40 day experience, or they may be some things totally unrelated. Then, I will start a short prayer, and when there is a space, I would like you to offer your thanks for how God has been at work in your life. It should be just one short sentence: God, thank you for . . . . We will do it popcorn style: no order, just whenever there is a space, you can offer your thanks. Questions?**

**Let's pray.**

---

**PRAYER**

Give the participants a minute or two to think of the things they want to thank God for. Then begin a prayer, offer your own short word of thanks, and then remain silent to let others offer theirs. Don't worry if the silence feels uncomfortable. That unease will help motivate the participants to say their sentence of praise. Give plenty of time for people to offer their thanks and then close.

---

**7:05 PM (10 MINUTES) FOLLOW-UP HOMEWORK**

- Review Assignment
- Discussion Questions

---

**REVIEW LAST WEEK'S ASSIGNMENT**

**Last week I asked you to carve out a three-hour block of time to rest; to take a Sabbath.**

---

**QUESTION FOR FOLLOW-UP**

**How was that? Can someone share their experience?** Let people share. In the process try to draw out (or simply ask) some of the following

- How did it feel not having an agenda for the time?
- Did you feel guilty not doing anything "constructive"
- How did it feel spending that much time alone? (You might explain that this exercise was designed to give participants a taste of another spiritual discipline: solitude. Rest doesn't have to happen alone, and in fact often the Sabbaths were designed to be a time of community celebration. However, we do know that Jesus often went to a deserted place to be alone with God.)
- How did you feel as you looked forward to this time of rest? Excitement? Dread? Annoyance?
- Does anyone plan on making an intentional time of rest and Sabbath a part of your routine?
- What did you learn from this exercise?

## 7:15 PM (30 MINUTES) LESSON

**Tonight we are going to look at the work that Jesus accomplished on the cross. We have a lot to cover. So we will need to keep the discussion moving and not get bogged down. Our goal is to see the different images that the Bible uses for what Christ accomplished on the cross. First, though, I would like to assign the scriptures for tonight.** Go through the process of assigning each of the scriptures that will be talked about. Ask people to either look them up in their own Bible or to read them from the sheet. By assigning all the scriptures at one time it will save time as you go through. Make a note to yourself beside each scripture of who volunteered to read it. You will only have three to four minutes to cover each item.

### INTRODUCTION: WHAT DID JESUS' DEATH ACCOMPLISH?

There are Six Images that the Bible uses. They are from:

- The Law Court
- The Market Place
- The Temple
- The Home
- The Battlefield
- The Rabbi and his Disciples

These are not the only ones!

### THE CROSS – JESUS WENT WILLINGLY

**Before we go on to examine what Christ's death accomplished, we need to realize that Jesus was not some cosmic victim. He was a full participant.**

*John 10:17-18 (NIV)*

*The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."*

Jesus knew what lay ahead in Jerusalem. He laid his life down willingly

**Does it make a difference that Jesus was a willing participant?**

### THE CROSS – PENALTY PAID

Image is the court of Law

*Romans 3:22-26*

*This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.*

Penalty for sin (breaking God's law) is paid

This is the image we hear most often

“Penal substitutionary death of Christ”

**Knowing that Christ has paid the penalty for your sin, how does that affect you?**

the other images are just as important

---

## THE CROSS - REDEMPTION

Image is the Market Place and Finances

It is kind of like making the final payment on something in Lay away, and can contain the idea of Collateral for a loan

*1 Peter 1:18-19 (NIV)*

*For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

Could also translate “Ransom”

We are freed from the power of Sin—the empty way of life—Jesus paid our ransom.

**Knowing that Christ paid the ransom that freed you from your former way of life—you are no longer bound by it—how does that make you feel?**

---

## THE CROSS – RESTORING HOLINESS

Image from the Temple

*John 1:29*

*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"*

*1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.*

In the temple an offering was made to take away the stain of sin—to make the person making the offering clean again. The Pollution of Sin is removed.

**How does that make you feel—knowing that the stain, the pollution, from your sins has been removed?**

---

## THE CROSS - RECONCILIATION

Image is from the Home and Family

It has to do with Repairing a relationship

*Colossians 1:21-22*

*Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—*

Separation caused by Sin is Destroyed

**In another place Paul emphasizes that since we have been reconciled with God, we ought to be reconciled with one another also.** (Ephesians 2:11-22) **How might you live your life differently, knowing that you have a restored relationship with God, and should have restored relationships with those around you?**

---

## CROSS - VICTORY

Image is Battle

*Colossians 2:13-15*

*When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

Christ entered the territory of death

He did this willingly and through his obedience triumphed over the ungodly forces.

**How does knowing that Christ has already triumphed over the forces of evil change things for you?**

---

## CROSS – OUR EXAMPLE

Image of disciple and Rabbi

*Matthew 16:24*

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."*

*Ephesians 5:1-2*

*Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

**When you first became a Christian, did you know that it would mean denying yourself and sacrificially giving yourself to others?**

---

## THE CROSS

- Jesus took the punishment that we deserved: The Law Court
- Jesus redeemed us and paid the ransom to free us from sin: The Market Place
- Jesus, the lamb of God, cleanses us from sin: The Temple
- Jesus' death reconciled us to God: The Home
- Jesus gained victory over evil: The Battlefield
- Jesus showed us the way to live a life of sacrificial love: The Example of our Rabbi

---

## IMPORTANT QUESTION: HOW DO WE EXPERIENCE THESE IN OUR LIFE?

**There are lots of places we could look for this, but one well known verse gives us a clue.**

*John 3:16 (NIV)*

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

**What does it mean to believe?** Allow people to give their answers, then lead into the illustration below.

---

## ILLUSTRATION: BRIDGE OVER TROUT STREAM

Use an illustration that fits you, but here is the outline I use

- I come upon a bridge over a trout stream
- I don't know how well it is built—test it out
- Eventually, I become familiar with the bridge and walk out onto it completely trusting that it will hold my weight.
- This is faith/belief: trusting God and Christ in the same way: trusting that what the Bible says has been accomplished for you, is really true.

#### 7:45 PM (5 MINUTES) IN-CLASS EXPERIENCE

Use the sheet in the participants section, *If I Believed*. Explain that you will give the participants about 5 minutes to read this sheet and fill in the answers for themselves. When they have completed the sheet they are invited to sign it indicating that from now on they will attempt to live their life believing that Christ's work on the cross applies to them.

#### 7:50 PM (10 MINUTES) REFORMED *PERSPECTIVE*

Turn the time over to the volunteer who has prepared this section

#### 8:00 PM (5 MINUTES) ASSIGN HOMEWORK

- Find a depiction of the cross
- Bring it to share next week
- Continue to read and study Scripture
- Connect with accountability partner

---

### HOMEWORK SESSION 3: THE CROSS

#### FIND A DEPICTION OF THE CROSS

---

**The homework for this week is to find a piece of art that depicts the cross and the events immediately preceding it. It can be a painting, a poem, or even artistic prose (not a commentary). Find one that captures an aspect of the cross that is especially meaningful to you. Bring that artwork next week—or a picture of it—and share it with us.**

#### CONTINUE TO READ AND STUDY SCRIPTURE

---

As a reminder, here was the assignment from the first week. We will continue with this study practice throughout the 40 day experience.

- Choose a book of the Bible that you would like to study and that you would enjoy continuing after the 40 day experience
- Study that book at least 15 minutes every day:
- Start with the first logical unit (certainly less than a chapter—maybe only a few verses)

- Fill out a Bible Study sheet completely for that unit before moving on to the next. You may stay several days on that one unit. It's not how much you read, but how much what you read becomes a part of you.

Move to the next logical unit and repeat

#### CONNECT WITH ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER

---

- Pray for your accountability partner this week
- Contact you accountability partner about half way through the week
- Ask how their daily Bible reading is going and share your experience with it
- Share prayer requests
- Encourage one another

#### 8:05 PM (10 MINUTES) ADMINISTRATION

Remind those who have signed up of their assignments for next week. Give the location and have the host give simple directions.

Make any adjustments needed in the accountability partners that may occur if someone new has come or someone has dropped out of the experience.

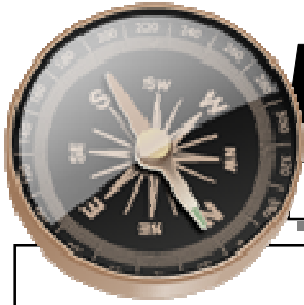
#### 8:15 PM (10 MINUTES) BREAK/REFRESHMENTS

**LEADERSHIP TIME**

SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR LEADERSHIP TIME

8:25 PM (35 MINUTES) MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM TIME

9:00 PM (2 HOURS) CLOSE



# Awesome Bible Study

**Scripture Passage:**

**CAST** *List the characters. Are they speaking parts or extras? Do they just watch or participate in the action?*

**Hint:** Imagine yourself directing this in a movie. What are the facial expressions of the actors? What would the actors look like? Who would you choose to play the main character? How many extras would you have to hire?

**SETTING** *Where does the action take place? What specific clues are you given about the setting?*

**Hint:** If you are the director where would you find a suitable location for the scene? What would it look like?

**TIME** *What time of day is it? What day of the week? Time of the year? Period in history?*

**ACTION** *Summarize what happens in the passage.*

**Hint:** Use short sentences. Summarize. Try to just get the main idea and movement of the passage.

**STRUCTURE** *Is there anything about the way the passage is laid out, or the story is told that is unusual or gives us clues to its meaning? What is the literary context?*

**Hint:** Look at the summary that you just wrote. Is there any pattern in the subjects or words used? Is there a theme or thought that runs through the whole passage? Is there something that all the characters know about but is not stated?

**OTHER OBSERVATIONS** *What other things do you notice?*

**QUESTIONS** *What questions does the passage raise in your mind? Can you find out the answer to any of them? Are there questions about history or culture that if they were answered, you might be able to understand the passage better?*

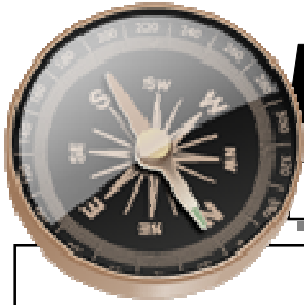
**Hint:** Now is the time to look in Bible dictionaries, atlases, commentaries, etc.

**KERNEL STATEMENT** *In one or two sentences write down the main message that the passage is meant to communicate.*

**Hint:** Try to write this from the perspective of the one writing the passage.

**APPLICATION** *How can I apply this to my own life today?*

**Hint:** Possibly write it in prayer form asking God to make this true in your life.



# Awesome Bible Study

**Scripture Passage:**

**CAST** *List the characters. Are they speaking parts or extras? Do they just watch or participate in the action?*

**Hint:** Imagine yourself directing this in a movie. What are the facial expressions of the actors? What would the actors look like? Who would you choose to play the main character? How many extras would you have to hire?

**SETTING** *Where does the action take place? What specific clues are you given about the setting?*

**Hint:** If you are the director where would you find a suitable location for the scene? What would it look like?

**TIME** *What time of day is it? What day of the week? Time of the year? Period in history?*

**ACTION** *Summarize what happens in the passage.*

**Hint:** Use short sentences. Summarize. Try to just get the main idea and movement of the passage.

**STRUCTURE** *Is there anything about the way the passage is laid out, or the story is told that is unusual or gives us clues to its meaning? What is the literary context?*

**Hint:** Look at the summary that you just wrote. Is there any pattern in the subjects or words used? Is there a theme or thought that runs through the whole passage? Is there something that all the characters know about but is not stated?

**OTHER OBSERVATIONS** *What other things do you notice?*

**QUESTIONS** *What questions does the passage raise in your mind? Can you find out the answer to any of them? Are there questions about history or culture that if they were answered, you might be able to understand the passage better?*

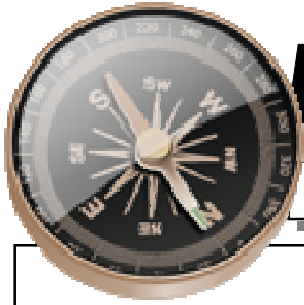
**Hint:** Now is the time to look in Bible dictionaries, atlases, commentaries, etc.

**KERNEL STATEMENT** *In one or two sentences write down the main message that the passage is meant to communicate.*

**Hint:** Try to write this from the perspective of the one writing the passage.

**APPLICATION** *How can I apply this to my own life today?*

**Hint:** Possibly write it in prayer form asking God to make this true in your life.



# Awesome Bible Study

**Scripture Passage:**

**CAST** *List the characters. Are they speaking parts or extras? Do they just watch or participate in the action?*

**Hint:** Imagine yourself directing this in a movie. What are the facial expressions of the actors? What would the actors look like? Who would you choose to play the main character? How many extras would you have to hire?

**SETTING** *Where does the action take place? What specific clues are you given about the setting?*

**Hint:** If you are the director where would you find a suitable location for the scene? What would it look like?

**TIME** *What time of day is it? What day of the week? Time of the year? Period in history?*

**ACTION** *Summarize what happens in the passage.*

**Hint:** Use short sentences. Summarize. Try to just get the main idea and movement of the passage.

**STRUCTURE** *Is there anything about the way the passage is laid out, or the story is told that is unusual or gives us clues to its meaning? What is the literary context?*

**Hint:** Look at the summary that you just wrote. Is there any pattern in the subjects or words used? Is there a theme or thought that runs through the whole passage? Is there something that all the characters know about but is not stated?

**OTHER OBSERVATIONS** *What other things do you notice?*

**QUESTIONS** *What questions does the passage raise in your mind? Can you find out the answer to any of them? Are there questions about history or culture that if they were answered, you might be able to understand the passage better?*

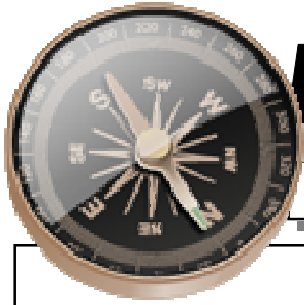
**Hint:** Now is the time to look in Bible dictionaries, atlases, commentaries, etc.

**KERNEL STATEMENT** *In one or two sentences write down the main message that the passage is meant to communicate.*

**Hint:** Try to write this from the perspective of the one writing the passage.

**APPLICATION** *How can I apply this to my own life today?*

**Hint:** Possibly write it in prayer form asking God to make this true in your life.



# Awesome Bible Study

**Scripture Passage:**

**CAST** *List the characters. Are they speaking parts or extras? Do they just watch or participate in the action?*

**Hint:** Imagine yourself directing this in a movie. What are the facial expressions of the actors? What would the actors look like? Who would you choose to play the main character? How many extras would you have to hire?

**SETTING** *Where does the action take place? What specific clues are you given about the setting?*

**Hint:** If you are the director where would you find a suitable location for the scene? What would it look like?

**TIME** *What time of day is it? What day of the week? Time of the year? Period in history?*

**ACTION** *Summarize what happens in the passage.*

**Hint:** Use short sentences. Summarize. Try to just get the main idea and movement of the passage.

**STRUCTURE** *Is there anything about the way the passage is laid out, or the story is told that is unusual or gives us clues to its meaning? What is the literary context?*

**Hint:** Look at the summary that you just wrote. Is there any pattern in the subjects or words used? Is there a theme or thought that runs through the whole passage? Is there something that all the characters know about but is not stated?

**OTHER OBSERVATIONS** *What other things do you notice?*

**QUESTIONS** *What questions does the passage raise in your mind? Can you find out the answer to any of them? Are there questions about history or culture that if they were answered, you might be able to understand the passage better?*

**Hint:** Now is the time to look in Bible dictionaries, atlases, commentaries, etc.

**KERNEL STATEMENT** *In one or two sentences write down the main message that the passage is meant to communicate.*

**Hint:** Try to write this from the perspective of the one writing the passage.

**APPLICATION** *How can I apply this to my own life today?*

**Hint:** Possibly write it in prayer form asking God to make this true in your life.