



**Lesson Title:** The Cross

**Scripture Focus:** Matthew 27:29–31

### The Lesson in Context

Without Jesus Christ we were sentenced to be slaves to sin. The world loves to proclaim that the sinful life is a life of freedom, but alcoholics (being honest) would tell you how hard it is to quit drinking. Ask those addicted to drugs, sexual immorality, cigarettes, or pornography how easy it is to break free. Ask workaholics to cut back from their eighty-hour work weeks. Ask gluttons how easily they can quit excessive eating. It is so hard to stop because revolts are never easy. The ruler always tries to crush the revolt and whip his subjects back into line. It is often less painful to accept the shackles and tread one more time around in a circle pushing the devil's millstone, like Samson—blind, weak, and bound, trapped in the cycle.

But Jesus came to change all that. We who once were servants to sin are now set free. And Jesus didn't just free us, He also adopted us as His sons and daughters. Now we are heirs of that eternal inheritance Jesus' death purchased for us. We are not just set free and turned loose into the world to fend for ourselves. We are adopted as children of the King, brought into His kingdom, and will one day be seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

### Group Discussion

1. Since fear of rejection often holds us back from doing what we know we should do, what can we learn from Jesus' example when He was rejected?
2. Based on Hebrews 12:2, what is the joy that is set before us, and how can we use it to motivate us to self-sacrifice like Jesus did?
3. Share a testimony (yours or someone else's) of God reaching people who were far away from Him.
4. Before coming to God, if you ever tried to break a sinful habit by your own strength, how different was it when you had God's help?
5. Even after Jesus sets us free, why do we sometimes still act like we are enslaved by sin?

### My Prayer for the Upcoming Week

How do you want to be different because of what you have experienced today?

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