

# 12 THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

KEY TEXT: MARK 15:24-39

## CENTRAL truth

**Jesus's death on the cross paid for our sin, once and for all.** To those who didn't understand God's plan, it looked like a miserable defeat, but it was actually the greatest victory ever won. Through Jesus, God was glorified, and now we have access to Him.

## key question

**Why is it important for us to understand that Jesus was in control of His own death?**

If Jesus wasn't in control of His own death, then He was a victim—too weak to rescue Himself, much less rescue anyone else. If Jesus wasn't in control of His own death, then His death was a testament to the cruelty of humankind, not God's love. If Jesus wasn't in control of His own death, we can't trust Him to do any of the other things He promised. But, fortunately, Jesus **was** in control of His own death. He did rescue us. He did show us God's love. We can trust Him to come through on every promise.

## keep in mind

- Students might wonder how a loving God could turn His back on His Son. Explain that to obey God, Jesus had to take on the sin of the whole world, and God can't be around sin. Remind students that when it was over, God raised Jesus from the dead and glorified Him in heaven forever. God didn't stop loving Jesus. He just couldn't interact with Him for a short while.
- Crucifixion is violent, and some of your students might be more sensitive to descriptions of violence than others. Explain what crucifixion is, but watch them for signs of discomfort. Don't gloss over the crucifixion, but also spend your time focusing on the many prophecies that were fulfilled through Jesus's death, how people responded to it, and what it accomplished.

## application

**How can we let our gratitude for what Jesus did on the cross affect our actions and prayers this week?**

## the win

**FOR THE STUDENT:** Jesus's death wasn't quick and easy. It was long, painful, embarrassing, and gruesome. However, His love for God was strong enough to keep Him on the cross. Make sure students understand that God the Father is just as much a hero as Jesus. The fact that He deserves to be obeyed made their salvation possible.

**FOR THE LEADER:** Encourage students to accept the forgiveness God made possible through Jesus by putting their faith in Him for salvation. Encourage them to watch for God's activity in the world so they don't miss it like the onlookers at the cross did.