

# 10 FINAL GOODBYE

**KEY TEXT:** ACTS 20:18-32

## CENTRAL truth

The apostle Paul gave a tender farewell to the elders in Ephesus. He knew it would likely be the last time he saw them face to face, so he took the opportunity to remind them of his faithful service to the Lord and to encourage them to show that same faithfulness. This week's teaching reminds us that **God uses the church and its leaders to make us more like Jesus.**

## key question

**What prevents us from living with Paul's level of commitment?**

Paul shared why he was willing to obey the Lord, even though his future included suffering: his primary goal wasn't to have a long life but to have a life completely devoted to King Jesus. The thought of willingly following the Lord into discomfort, pain, ridicule, and embarrassment is unnerving for many of us. But following Jesus means unraveling our devotion to the things of this world and treasuring Him above all else, even in the face of discomfort.

## keep in mind

- This week's session includes a **Context note** to address what the role of an elder is. Churches today have a variety of leadership structures that may or may not include the title of "elder," but regardless of what title we use, we can encourage students to be grateful for the leaders whom God has appointed to serve us and demonstrate faithful devotion to Him.
- Paul's emotion comes to the surface as he says goodbye to the elders in Ephesus. Goodbyes are especially challenging when we don't know when we'll see the other person again. Be mindful of students in your group who may have had their own tearful goodbye recently. Be praying for them as you prep for this week's teaching.

## application

**As a group, what are some ways we can encourage and thank our pastors and elders this week?**

## the win

**FOR THE STUDENT:** Students should feel encouraged and empowered to thank the Lord for the church and the leaders who faithfully encourage us.

**FOR THE LEADER:** Remind students that the church is not limited to a building or an event that takes place once or twice a week. The church is the blood-purchased family of God.