

PARTICIPANTS GUIDE



THE CROSS

**THE CRUX OF
CHRISTIANITY**



THE CROSS

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The cross of Christ stands at the crux of history and the centre of Christianity. In this series, we'll reflect on the wonder of what Jesus has done through his death on the cross—why the cross matters, what it reveals about God, and how it reshapes every part of our lives.

SERMONS

WHY DOES THE CROSS MATTER SO MUCH?

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

WHAT HAS THE CROSS ACHIEVED FOR US?

Romans 3:21-25

WHAT DOES THE CROSS REVEAL ABOUT GOD?

Romans 3:25-26

HOW SHOULD THE CROSS SHAPE US?

Philippians 2:1-11

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO THE CROSS?

Romans 12:1-2

JOIN A LIFE GROUP

At Oasis, we believe that following Jesus was never meant to be done alone. God has designed us to grow best in community—walking with others, sharing life together, and encouraging one another in faith. One of the key ways we do this as a church is through Life Groups.

Life Groups are small gatherings of people who meet regularly in homes or at church. They're a space where you can slow down in the busyness of life and truly connect—with God, with His Word, and with each other. In these groups, people read the Bible together, pray for one another, share meals, laugh, serve, and build genuine friendships. Over time, Life Groups become like extended family—people who walk with you through the joys and challenges of life.

Whether you've been part of Oasis for years or you're just beginning to make it your home, joining a Life Group is one of the best next steps you can take. In a big church family, Life Groups make sure no one slips through the cracks. They are places where you can belong, be known, and be encouraged to keep growing as a disciple of Jesus.

We'd love for everyone at Oasis to be part of a Life Group. If you're not yet connected, why not make this the year you step in? There's a group waiting to welcome you.

To find out more or to register your interest, simply scan the QR code below and we'll help you find the right group for you.

Let's walk together as we follow Christ.

WANT TO JOIN A LIFE GROUP?

email: office@oasischurch.com.au



Or scan the
QR Code

BIBLE READING PLAN

WEEK 1

WHY DOES THE CROSS MATTER SO MUCH?

KEY TEXT:

1 Corinthians 15:1–8

DAY 1: *1 Corinthians 15:1–11*

DAY 2: *Isaiah 53*

DAY 3: *Mark 15:16–39*

DAY 4: *John 19:16–30*

DAY 5: *Galatians 6:14*

DAY 6: *Colossians 2:13–15*

DAY 7: *Reflect & pray*
– What does the cross mean for me?

WEEK 2

WHAT HAS THE CROSS ACHIEVED FOR US?

KEY TEXT:

Romans 3:21–24a

DAY 1: *Romans 3:21–26*

DAY 2: *Romans 5:6–11*

DAY 3: *Ephesians 1:3–10*

DAY 4: *Colossians 1:19–22*

DAY 5: *Hebrews 9:11–15*

DAY 6: *1 Peter 2:24*

DAY 7: *Reflect & pray*
– What has Jesus accomplished for me?

WEEK 3

WHAT DOES THE CROSS REVEAL ABOUT GOD?

KEY TEXT:

Romans 3:24b–26

DAY 1: *Romans 3:23–26*

DAY 2: *Exodus 34:5–7*

DAY 3: *Psalm 85:8–13*

DAY 4: *John 3:16–21*

DAY 5: *1 John 4:7–10*

DAY 6: *Romans 5:8*

DAY 7: *Reflect & pray* –
What is God like?

WEEK 4

HOW SHOULD THE CROSS SHAPE US?

KEY TEXT:

Philippians 2:1–11

DAY 1: *Philippians 2:1–11*

DAY 2: *Mark 8:34–38*

DAY 3: *Galatians 2:20*

DAY 4: *Ephesians 4:1–5*

DAY 5: *Colossians 3:1–17*

DAY 6: *1 Peter 2:21–25*

DAY 7: *Reflect & pray*
– How is my life being shaped by the cross?

WEEK 5

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO THE CROSS?

KEY TEXT:

Romans 12:1–2

DAY 1: *Romans 12:1–2*

DAY 2: *Romans 6:1–14*

DAY 3: *Luke 9:23–26*

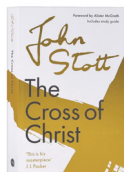
DAY 4: *Hebrews 12:1–3*

DAY 5: *2 Cor 5:14–21*

DAY 6: *Psalm 116*

DAY 7: *Reflect & pray* –
What is my response?

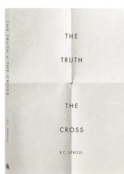
FURTHER RESOURCES



THE CROSS OF CHRIST

by John Stott

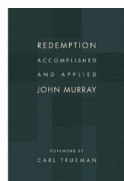
A comprehensive, modern classic detailing the centrality of the cross.



THE TRUTH OF THE CROSS

by R.C. Sproul

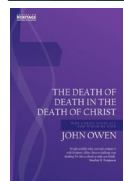
A short, powerful overview of the atonement.



REDEMPTION ACCOMPLISHED AND APPLIED

by John Murray

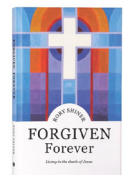
A detailed look at the meaning of the atonement.



THE DEATH OF DEATH IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST

by John Owen

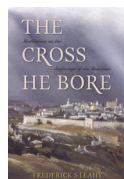
A classic, deep dive into the purpose of the cross.



FORGIVEN FOREVER

by Rory Shiner

A powerful exploration of how the cross shapes our lives.



THE CROSS HE BORE

by Frederick Leach

A meditative, devotional book focused on the suffering of Christ.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is not meant to replace the Sunday sermon but is designed to help you apply the Biblical teaching given on a Sunday in your Life Groups. We don't want our Life Groups to feel like another 'mini-sermon', but rather to be places where we learn to obey what God says in Christian community. You can find our latest sermons here <https://oasischurch.com.au/audio/>

CHURCH SERVICES

Keep this guide with your Bible and bring it with you to church.

There is space for you to take down notes during the sermon as well.

LIFE GROUP

Use this guide during life Group each week. There are Life Group questions for each sermon in the series, and space to write down prayer points that come from the discussion that week or prayer requests from the members of your group.

PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

Although this guide is primarily designed for Life Groups, it can also be used in personal devotions. After you have heard the sermon preached on the Sunday, go through this guide and use it to apply what you have learnt. It may be more natural to go through these questions with your family. There are also leader's guides available that give additional information to aid leaders in arriving at Biblical answers. Leaders use these to help them lead the group but you may find one beneficial in your personal devotions. If you would like a copy of a leader's guide please contact our team (lifegroups@oasischurch.com.au).

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION

Your group needs to be a safe place for all people to share and to enter the discussion. This means, all members of the group need to follow a few guidelines:

WE LEAD WITH GRACE

We respond to one another in light of what Christ has done for us, understanding that we are all in need of His grace, compassion, and mercy.

WE TREAT EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT

We can wrestle with ideas and disagree with one another without judgement, personal attack, or dismissal. We don't laugh at others when they've shared and no putdowns of any kind. These are the actions that make others withdraw and feel uneasy about sharing.

WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER, NOT 'FIX' ONE ANOTHER

Jesus does the 'fixing'. Give encouragement, speak truth, and point to Jesus. Don't try to solve or fix each other.

WE COMMIT TO CONFIDENTIALITY

What is said in the group should stay in the group unless permission is given to share it elsewhere. This is not to create a dysfunctional group that keeps unhealthy secrets. Instead, it is to create a culture of safety where everyone feels safe to share thoughts and feelings and knows that others will not find out.

WE DO NOT CROSSTALK

Crosstalk is a conversation during discussion time that leaves others out and can be hurtful. Each person should be free to express his or her feelings without interruptions.

Your group needs to agree with one another that you are committed to providing a safe place to be encouraged and challenged by the word of God and to let Him do a healing, sanctifying work in your lives.

If you have any concerns, you should speak to your group leader or get in contact with our team (lifegroups@oasischurch.com.au).



WHY DOES THE CROSS MATTER SO MUCH?

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8

CONTEXT

In this part of Paul's letter to the church in Corinth, he is writing to encourage them to stand firm, and to remind them of the foundations on which they stand, namely the death and resurrection of Christ. He reminds them that without these foundations, their faith is in vain and their hope is futile.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 28 horizontal dashed lines.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal dashed lines for tracing and writing practice.



WHY DOES THE CROSS MATTER SO MUCH?

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to remind us of the foundation of our faith, namely the death and resurrection of Christ. This study should help us to remember that no matter where we are at in our faith journey, we can always be reminded of the good news of the gospel.

SHARE TOGETHER

Check in with each other. Discuss some or all of the following questions:

- What has God been teaching you lately?
- How has God been stretching you?
- Where have you seen God working in your life?

PRAY TOGETHER

Before you begin your discussion, spend time in prayer together. While catching up you may have identified some prayer points you should include. Be sure to pray that God makes you more like Jesus through this discussion.

PURSUE GOD

- 1 If you could have one thing recorded to be passed down through history, what would you say?
- 2 What would make you prioritise saying what you said over something else?

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8

- 3 What does Paul think is the most important thing to pass on? Why?

- 4 Why do you think that Paul would need to remind the Corinthian church of what they believe?
- 5 Can you think of reasons why Christians today might need to be reminded of what they believe?
- 6 What does Paul mean by the phrase "believe in vain"?
- 7 Why does Paul repeat the phrase "according to the Scriptures"?
- 8 Why do you think Paul includes both the cross and resurrection?
- 9 What is the significance of pointing out all the people to whom Jesus appeared?

LIVE IT OUT

- 10 Paul sees the spread of the gospel as of first importance. Is this reality reflected in your life? What can you change in your life to make it so?

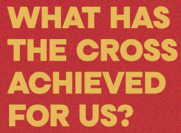
Father God,

Thank you for the example and faith of Paul. Please help us to never grow tired of the core gospel message, and to see it as of first importance in our lives.

Thank you for the testimony of Your Word, the Bible. Please build up and strengthen our faith, and help us to ask questions that help deepen our understanding and love for You, and for the gift of Your grace.

Help us to change our thoughts, words and actions to increasingly reflect the reality of the life-giving hope we have in Jesus.

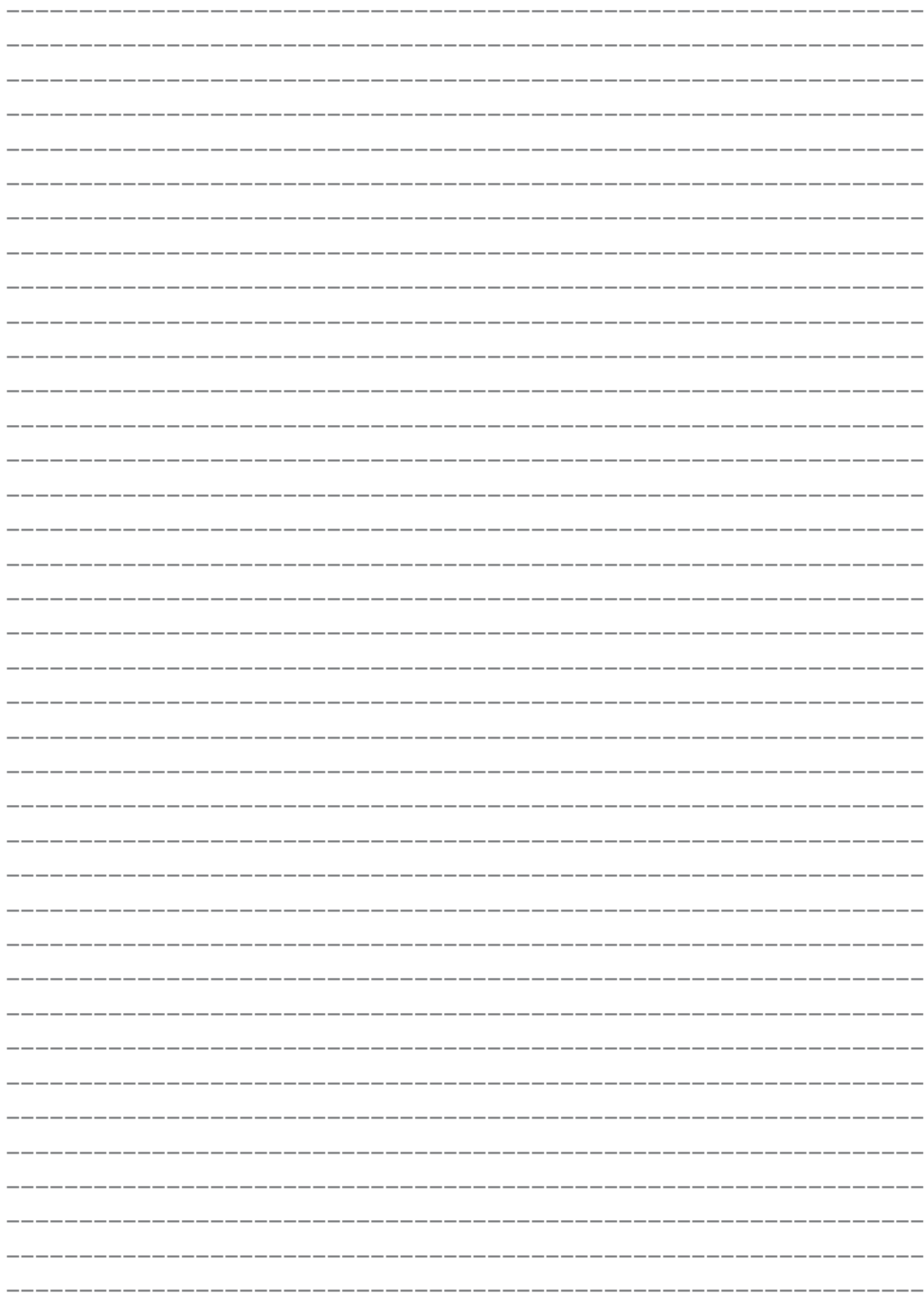
**In the Name of Your Son Jesus we pray,
Amen.**



CONTEXT

In his letter to the Roman church, Paul writes to a church that he has not yet visited personally, though he wishes to, and he writes to encourage them, and to provide a clear outline of Christian faith. In the lead up to this passage, he reminds them of God's justice and judgement, and His faithfulness to His people.

[illegible]





WHAT HAS THE CROSS ACHIEVED FOR US?

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to remind us of our state outside of Christ, that no matter who we are and where we come from, we are sinners in need of saving, and to remind us of the sweetness of the gospel message that Christ's blood was shed for our salvation.

SHARE TOGETHER

Check in with each other. Discuss some or all of the following questions:

- What has God been teaching you lately?
- How has God been stretching you?
- Where have you seen God working in your life?

PRAY TOGETHER

Before you begin your discussion, spend time in prayer together. While catching up you may have identified some prayer points you should include. Be sure to pray that God makes you more like Jesus through this discussion.

PURSUE GOD

READ ROMANS 3:21-25

- 1 The great Reformer Martin Luther described this passage as the "central place of the Epistle (the letter of Romans), and of the whole Bible" and a "gate to heaven". Why might he describe it in this way? How is it a "gate to heaven"?
- 2 What does Paul mean by God's righteousness being revealed 'apart from the Law' (v.21)?
- 3 What is 'the Law and the Prophets' (v.21)? What makes this reference significant?

- 4 What do the Law and Prophets testify to (v.21)? Why does Paul point this out?
- 5 Who is worthy of the glory of God (v.23)? Why is that so?
- 6 What does it mean that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile (v.22b)? Why might Paul feel the need to address this?
- 7 Who receives the righteousness of God? What makes them eligible for this? (v.22a)
- 8 What is the redemption that comes through Christ (v.24)?

LIVE IT OUT

- 9 We often hear of people thinking that they are generally good people and they'll probably go to heaven. Perhaps you know of a family member or friend who thinks this. How could you use this passage to help that person understand the gospel?
- 10 Sometimes we might find ourselves downplaying God's judgement or overlooking the grace that God has given us. What are some ways we could remind ourselves and each other about the weight of judgement and the wonder of grace?
- 11 How does knowing these two realities affect the way we live and act in our lives? What are some things, big or small, in your life that can change to reflect your beliefs? If you are comfortable, share with the group so that you can encourage one another in your walk of faith.

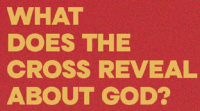
Just and Gracious God,

We know that we are sinners who await judgement and damnation. Help us to begin to grasp the weight of our sinfulness and the reality of standing before You on the Day of Judgement.

We also know that in the shedding of Christ's blood at the cross, our debt is paid for all who believe. What awesome grace it is that Your Son took our place, and bore our punishment. Help us to begin to grasp the immensity of this good news and what it means for us.

May we marvel at Your work and increase our dependence on You day by day.

**In the name of Your Son Jesus we pray,
Amen.**



CONTEXT

In this part of his letter to the church in Rome, Paul continues to remind them of God's judgement and grace, and of God's justice. We saw last week that there is none that are righteous and that everyone has fallen short of God's glory, and that God has given His Son as an atoning sacrifice.

This image shows a full page of handwriting practice paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal dashed lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is white, and the lines are light gray or blue. There is no text or other markings on the page.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 sets of three horizontal dashed lines.



WHAT DOES THE CROSS REVEAL ABOUT GOD?

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to reflect on the just character of God. While we might be familiar with the terms of judgement and grace, they are just concepts without a sense of God's justice. This study will help us wrestle with how God can both be just and forgive sin.

SHARE TOGETHER

Check in with each other. Discuss some or all of the following questions:

- What has God been teaching you lately?
- How has God been stretching you?
- Where have you seen God working in your life?

PRAY TOGETHER

Before you begin your discussion, spend time in prayer together. While catching up you may have identified some prayer points you should include. Be sure to pray that God makes you more like Jesus through this discussion.

PURSUE GOD

READ ROMANS 3:25-26

- 1 What does 'atonement' mean? Can you think of any modern examples?
- 2 Why is this significant in the death and resurrection of Christ?
- 3 What does this say about God's character?

READ LEVITICUS 16:15-16

- 4 What significance does the phrase "through the shedding of his blood" (Romans 3:25) carry in light of this passage from Leviticus?
- 5 In the passage from Leviticus, the sacrifice atoned for the sin of Israel. How is this different to the passage from Romans?
- 6 How does understanding this link deepen our appreciation for God's plan for our salvation?
- 7 How do we receive the benefits of Christ's atoning sacrifice (v.25)?
- 8 How does the cross ensure that God is both "just and the one who justifies" (v.26)?
- 9 For what purpose did God bring about Christ's death on the cross?

LIVE IT OUT

- 10 People have accused God of letting evil go unpunished. How does Romans 3:25–26 help us answer this question?
- 11 Similarly, people have also accused God of being too harsh in judgement. How does Romans 3:25–26 help us answer this question?
- 12 In light of this passage, how might you describe God's character to a non-believer?

Sovereign God,

What wondrous news is this, that You have made a way for us to be made right with You. Even in our sinfulness and rebellion against You, You have not forsaken us but instead sent Your Son to be sin in our place.

Help us to marvel at Your justice, mercy and faithfulness. They never conflict, yet they are accomplished to their fullest extent. Thank you for all that You have done.

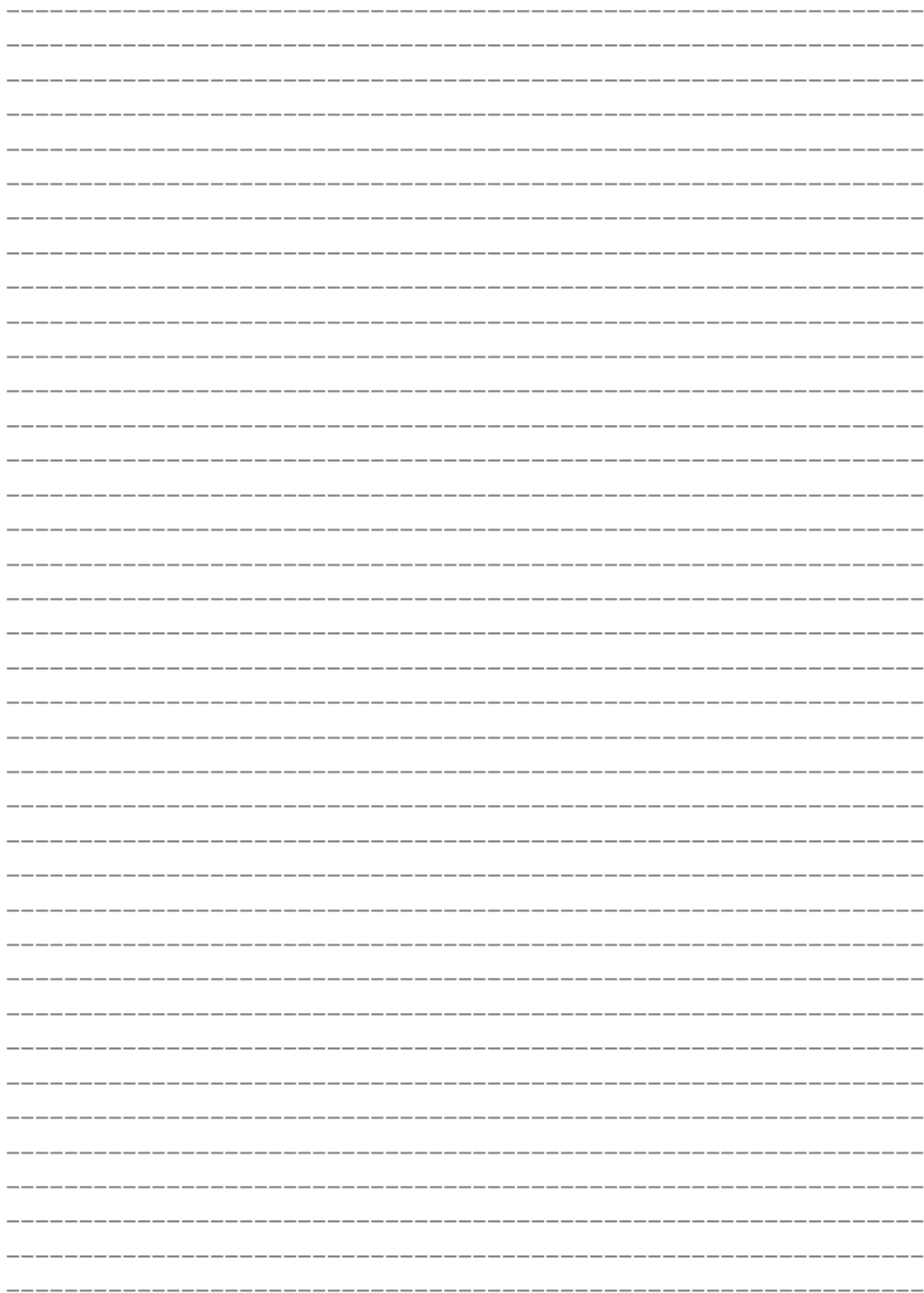
**In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.**



CONTEXT

In this part of his letter to the Philippians, Paul calls believers to let the cross shape their lives. Writing from prison to a divided church, he urges Christlike humility, selflessness, and unity. Jesus' self-emptying, obedient death, and exaltation show that true greatness comes through sacrificial love and servant-hearted obedience.

This image shows a full page of handwriting practice paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal dashed lines spaced evenly down the page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is white, and there are no margins or additional markings.





HOW SHOULD THE CROSS SHAPE US?

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is to help us consider the lengths Jesus went to be obedient to the will of the Father and how we are called to do likewise. This study should make us pause and consider how our lives might better reflect a life of taking up our cross and following Jesus.

SHARE TOGETHER

Check in with each other. Discuss some or all of the following questions:

- What has God been teaching you lately?
- How has God been stretching you?
- Where have you seen God working in your life?

PRAY TOGETHER

Before you begin your discussion, spend time in prayer together. While catching up you may have identified some prayer points you should include. Be sure to pray that God makes you more like Jesus through this discussion.

PURSUE GOD

READ PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4

- 1** What does Paul say about how believers should treat one another in verses 1-4? What differences are there between this and how the world teaches us to treat one another?
- 2** What might 'selfish ambition' and 'vain conceit' (v.3) look like within a Christian community?
- 3** What might it practically mean to "value others above yourselves" (v.3)?

READ PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

- 4 What does it mean that Jesus "made himself nothing" (v.7)? What does it not mean?
- 5 How does Jesus' obedience "to death – even death on a cross" shape our understanding of humility (v.8)?
- 6 Why do you think Paul moves from Christ's humiliation to his exaltation?
- 7 What does it mean that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord" (v.10)?

LIVE IT OUT

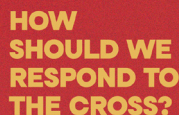
- 8 Where might "selfish ambition" or "vain conceit" subtly appear in our Life Group or in our church? What are some ways we might overcome it?
- 9 What would change if you were to truly adopt "the same mindset as Christ Jesus" this week?
- 10 How should confessing that Jesus is Lord shape your ambitions, decisions, and relationships?

Almighty and loving Father,

We know that even as Christians, we are far from perfect. We often look out for ourselves and our own interests above serving the needs of Your people.

Help us to marvel at the humility of Christ, that He stepped down from heaven and took on the likeness of the man He created, and that He became obedient to death, even death on a cross! Make us more like Him day by day. Help us to exalt Him and declare that He is Lord of all, to Your glory.

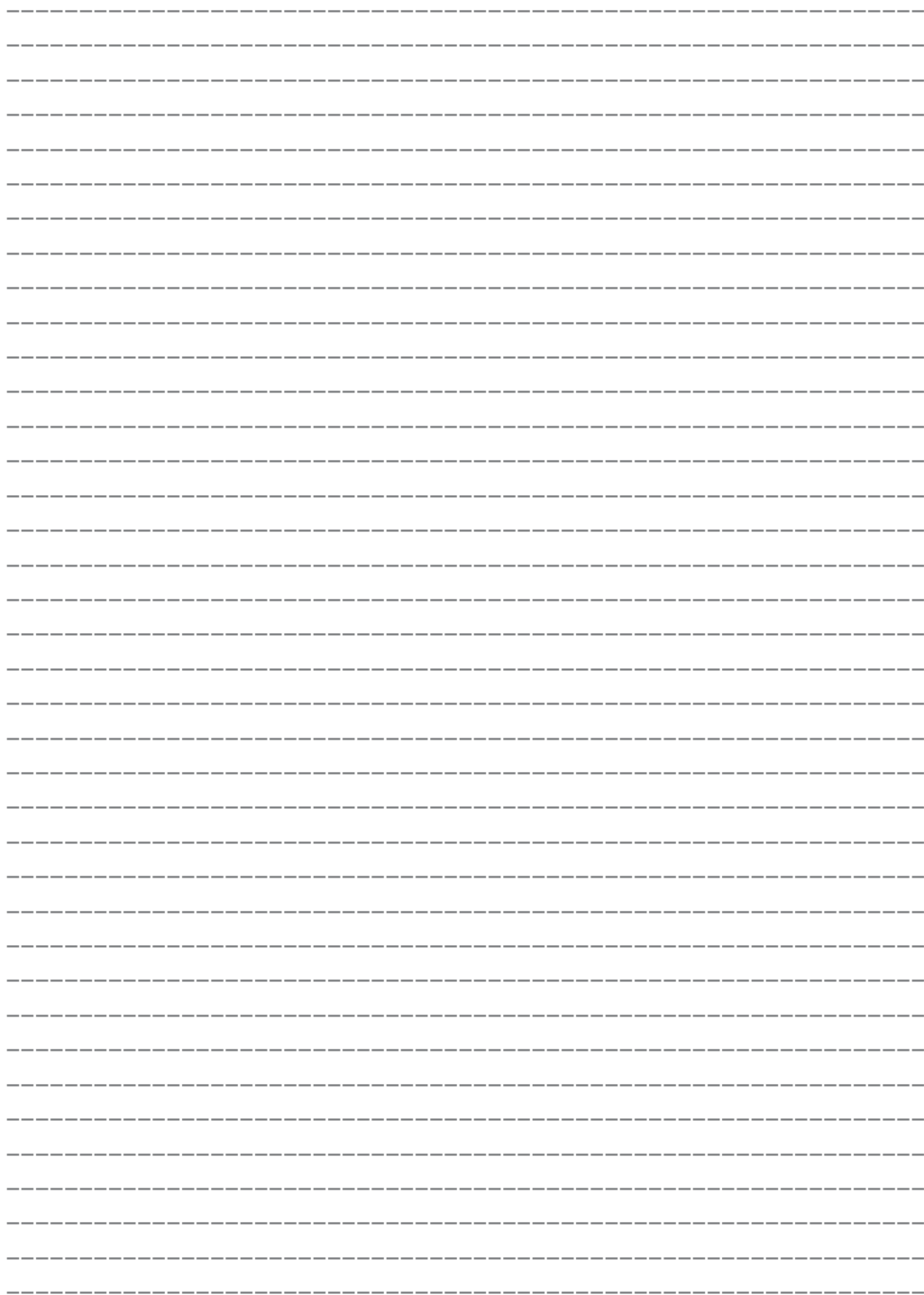
**In the precious name of Jesus we pray,
Amen.**



ROMANS 12:1-2

In his letter to the church in Rome, the Apostle Paul turns from explaining God's mercy through Jesus (chapters 1-11) to how believers should live. In Romans 12:1-2, he urges Christians to sacrificially offer their whole lives to God, being transformed by having their minds renewed by God rather than being conformed to the world, that they may know God's good, pleasing, and perfect will.

[illegible]





HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO THE CROSS?

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to help us consider how God's mercy in the gospel should lead us to offer our whole lives to him. The questions should, hopefully, lead to discussion on how to practically resist conforming to the world and how to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

SHARE TOGETHER

Check in with each other. Discuss some or all of the following questions:

- What has God been teaching you lately?
- How has God been stretching you?
- Where have you seen God working in your life?

PRAY TOGETHER

Before you begin your discussion, spend time in prayer together. While catching up you may have identified some prayer points you should include. Be sure to pray that God makes you more like Jesus through this discussion.

PURSUE GOD

READ ROMANS 12:1-2

- 1** What do you think Paul means when he writes, "in view of God's mercy" (v.1)?
- 2** How should this motivate us to "offer our bodies as a living sacrifice" (v.1)?
- 3** What might Paul mean when he says that our lives should be a "living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God" (v.1)?

- 4 Why do you think this is our "true and proper worship" (v.1)? What connection does he make between worship and everyday life?
- 5 What does it mean/look like to "not conform to the pattern of this world" (v.2)?
- 6 According to verse 2, transformation in a Christian's life takes place through the renewing of one's mind. What might this look like?
- 7 What does Paul say results from having a renewed mind (v.2b)? What do you think this means?
- 8 How does offering our lives to God relate to being transformed?

LIVE IT OUT

- 9 In what areas of life do you think Christians are most tempted to "conform to the pattern of this world"? Does this ring true for your life?
- 10 What is one practical way you can seek "the renewing of your mind" as a follower of Jesus this week?
- 11 What might it look like for you to personally offer your life as a "living sacrifice" to God this week?

Holy and Ever-present Father,

We confess that we often lead lives that don't reflect the reality of our new life found in the death and resurrection of Your Son. As we read and hear Your Word, convict us, encourage us, and change us. Help us to give all that we are and have to You to glorify You, that more people might find life in Jesus. Thank you for Your Word - help renew us that we might know and follow Your will. To You be all glory, honour, and praise, both now and forever.

**In the name of Your Son Jesus we pray,
Amen.**

