

THE CROSS

Reframing Crucifixion as Victory

AN INTERACTIVE PERSONAL STUDY WORKBOOK

COLOSSIANS 2 | PSALM 22 | PSALM 31 | MARK 15 | PSALM 116

CHRIST CONQUERS THROUGH SELF-GIVING LOVE.
SIN, DEATH, AND THE POWERS ARE DEFEATED.

THE RESURRECTION REVEALS THE VICTORY.

THE CRUCIBLE'S FIRE

BIBLICALLY FAITHFUL RESOURCES FOR LIFE IN THE KINGDOM



BEGIN HERE

Your Week 32 Field Guide

Use this workbook after reading each Week 32 devotional. Keep your Bible open, move slowly through the assigned passage, and plan about 25-35 minutes per day.

This is a guided personal study companion. It does not rebuild the devotionals; it helps you work more deeply with the same source material.

CENTRAL TRUTH

The cross is Christ's victory through self-giving love, where sin, death, and the powers are decisively defeated.

How to Use This Workbook

1 Read

Begin with the assigned passage in your Bible. Keep the text open while you work.

2 Work the Text

Observe before applying. Let Scripture and the devotional focus set the boundaries.

3 Respond

Name one faithful practice and entrust your response to the Lord in prayer.

PASTORAL SAFETY NOTE

Some exercises address grief, shame, fear, conflict, or unsafe situations. You may respond privately or skip a question. When danger, abuse, or serious distress is involved, seek appropriate help from a trusted and qualified person.

The Five-Day Journey

01	Unexpected Victory	Colossians 2	Christ disarms the powers.
02	The Praise of Lament	Psalm 22	Lament does not cancel God's kingship.
03	Into Your Hands	Psalm 31	Trust entrusts what cannot be controlled.
04	The King Who Remained	Mark 15	Jesus reveals strength through faithful obedience.
05	The Worship of Rescued	Psalm 116	Rescue produces grateful worship.

THE WEEK IN CONTEXT

What Does Victory Look Like?

The cross appeared to be defeat. Jesus was condemned, mocked, exposed, and killed while the powers of the world seemed to have the final word. Yet Scripture presents the cross as Christ's decisive victory. At the cross, Jesus conquers not by domination but through sacrificial obedience to the Father. Sin is forgiven, accusation is canceled, hostile powers are disarmed, and God's rescue is revealed in the very place that looked like shame.

This week moves from hidden victory to honest lament, surrendered trust, faithful allegiance, and grateful worship. The resurrection will reveal the victory more fully, but this week asks us to stay at the cross long enough to see what God has done there.

The Cross Reframes Victory

The World Often Calls This Victory	The Cross Reveals
overpowering an enemy preserving status forcing others to submit escaping suffering proving personal strength	faithful obedience to the Father After the week overview, add your own phrases: 1. 2. 3.

Opening Question

Before this week, how would you have described victory?

WEEKLY PRACTICE

At the end of eachday, write one sentence of trust and one sentence of allegiance. Keep both close to the cross.

DAY 1 | THE STORY

Unexpected Victory

PRIMARY READING
Colossians 2

KEY VERSE (CSB)

"He disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly; he triumphed over them in him." (Colossians 2:15)

Place in This Week's Story

Colossians 2 teaches us to see the cross differently than the world saw it. From the outside, crucifixion looked like shame, weakness, and the victory of hostile power. But Paul says that God made His people alive with Christ, forgave our trespasses, and canceled the record of debt that stood against us. That record was nailed to the cross. At the same place where accusation seemed to speak loudly, Christ disarmed the rulers and authorities and exposed their defeat. The cross is not victory through domination. It is victory through the self-giving obedience of Jesus, who rescues His people and breaks the authority of accusation.

Read and Observe

Mark or underline phrases in the passage connected to these observations.

[] What does Colossians 2 say humanity could not do for itself?

[] What does God do through Christ?

[] What is canceled, removed, or nailed to the cross?

[] What happens to the rulers and authorities?

[] How does the passage describe the believer's relationship to Christ?

Notes from my observation:

INTERPRETIVE GUARDRAIL

The cross does not merely inspire courage. In Christ, God actually forgives, cancels accusation, and defeats hostile powers.

INTERPRET AND RESPOND

Appearance and Reality

Read each statement. Draw a line, match numbers, or discuss how Colossians 2 changes what the cross appeared to show.

What the Cross Appeared to Show	What Colossians Says Happened
1. Rome was in control. 2. Jesus had been publicly shamed. 3. Violence had won. 4. Death had the final word. 5. The powers could accuse without challenge.	A. The record of debt was canceled. B. Sinners were made alive with Christ. C. Rulers and authorities were disarmed. D. The powers were publicly exposed. E. Christ triumphed through the cross.

Private Response

You are not required to share this response with the group.

What accusation, shame, or fear speaks as though it has greater authority than the cross?

Faith Statement

Because I belong to Christ, the accusation does not have the final word because...

Finish This Sentence

Because Jesus triumphed at the cross, I no longer have to live under _____.

Prayer / Response

Father, anchor my confidence in what Christ has done at the cross. Teach me to live under His victory rather than accusation, fear, or shame.

DAY 2 | THE WORLDVIEW

The Praise of Lament

PRIMARY READING
Psalm 22

KEY VERSE (CSB)
"For kingship belongs to the Lord; he rules the nations." (Psalm 22:28)

Place in This Week's Story

Psalm 22 gives words for anguish without surrendering faith. The psalm names abandonment, mockery, weakness, and urgent need with striking honesty. Jesus takes these words on His lips from the cross, showing that biblical lament is not unbelief or failure. The psalm does not rush past suffering, but it also does not let suffering become the only reality. It remembers God's faithfulness, cries for help, and moves toward praise. By the end, the nations are in view, and the Lord's kingship is announced. Lament and hope are held together because suffering does not derail God's covenant purposes.

Read and Observe

Mark or underline phrases in the passage connected to these observations.

☐ Locate words or phrases of anguish.	☐ Mark examples of mockery or opposition.
☐ Find places where past faithfulness is remembered.	☐ Underline cries for help.
☐ Circle language of praise and worldwide hope.	

Notes from my observation:

INTERPRETIVE GUARDRAIL

Lament does not need to sound emotionally resolved before it can be faithful.

INTERPRET AND RESPOND

Trace the Movement of the Psalm

Place selected verses or summarized phrases from Psalm 22 into the stage where they best fit. The goal is to see that lament and faith are not opposites.

Stage	Verses or Summarized Phrases from Psalm 22
1. Lament	
2. Remembrance	
3. Petition	
4. Praise	
5. The Nations Turn to the Lord	

Reflection Scale

When God feels quiet or hidden, which response is most natural for you? Mark more than one if needed.

☐ withdrawing ☐ pretending everything is fine ☐ demanding an explanation	☐ praying honestly ☐ remembering God's character ☐ asking others to pray with me
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Guided Lament

God, what hurts right now is...	
What I do not understand is...	
What I remember about Your faithfulness is...	
Even here, I ask You to...	
I will hold onto the truth that...	

Your final line does not have to sound emotionally resolved.

Finish this sentence: When God feels hidden, I will remember that _____.

DAY 3 | THE HEART

Into Your Hands

PRIMARY READING
Psalm 31

KEY VERSE (CSB)
"But I trust in you, Lord; I say, 'You are my God.'" (Psalm 31:14)

Place in This Week's Story

Psalm 31 speaks from the middle of distress. David names grief, slander, fear, danger, and the loss of control, yet he entrusts himself to the Lord. Jesus also uses the language of this psalm at the cross, showing perfect trust without pretending that suffering is not real. Biblical trust is not denial, passivity, or silence in the face of harm. It may include crying out for rescue, telling the truth, seeking counsel, asking for protection, and pursuing justice. Trust refuses the false promises of control, retaliation, and despair. It places what cannot be controlled into God's hands while taking faithful action.

Read and Observe

Mark or underline phrases in the passage connected to these observations.

☐ Mark what David fears or suffers.	☐ Identify what David asks God to do.
☐ Underline what David says about God's character.	☐ Find statements of trust.
☐ Note references to refuge, rock, fortress, or protection.	

Notes from my observation:

INTERPRETIVE GUARDRAIL

Trusting God does not require denying danger or refusing appropriate help.

INTERPRET AND RESPOND

Four Responses to Threat

Sort the statements into the response they most clearly represent: control, retaliation, despair, or trust. Biblical trust may include appropriate boundaries, intervention, and seeking help.

Statement Bank	Sort Into
I must control every outcome. They need to suffer as much as I have. Nothing matters, so there is no point trying. I can seek protection while entrusting the outcome to God.	Control: Retaliation: Despair: Trust:
I will replay every accusation until I can answer it perfectly. I can tell the truth without seeking revenge. Asking for help means I have failed. God's care may include wise counsel and practical protection.	Control: Retaliation: Despair: Trust:

Personal Discernment Map

What I Cannot Control	
What Faithful Action I Can Take	
What I Must Entrust to God	

PASTORAL SAFETY NOTE

Trusting God does not require you to remain in an unsafe situation or keep abuse secret. Seek appropriate help from a trusted leader, counselor, protective authority, or emergency service when necessary.

Finish This Sentence

Into God's hands, I need to entrust _____.

DAY 4 | THE WAY

The King Who Remained

PRIMARY READING Mark 15

KEYVERSE (CSB)

"When the centurion, who was standing opposite him, saw the way he breathed his last, he said, 'Truly this man was the Son of God!'" (Mark 15:39)

Place in This Week's Story

Mark 15 presents Jesus as King in a way the world does not expect. He is mocked with royal language, challenged to save Himself, and surrounded by people who think power must prove itself by escape or domination. Jesus remains faithful. He does not accept the world's definition of kingship. His strength is seen in truth, holiness, courage, love, and obedient surrender to the Father. Even the centurion's words become an unexpected recognition of who stands before him. The crucified King exposes false power and calls His people to allegiance, not to passivity, but to faithful witness under pressure.

Read and Observe

Mark or underline phrases in the passage connected to these observations.

[] Identify titles or symbols of kingship used mockingly.

[] Mark demands that Jesus save Himself.

[] Notice how Jesus responds.

[] Write the centurion's observation.

[] What does this scene reveal about Jesus' identity?

Notes from my observation:

INTERPRETIVE GUARDRAIL

Do not confuse Christlike strength with passivity. Faithful allegiance can include truth, boundaries, protection of the vulnerable, and resistance to evil.

INTERPRET AND RESPOND

Worldly Power or Kingdom Strength?

For each scenario, name the instinct of worldly power, then write what faithful allegiance to Jesus could look like. Do not make the faithful response passive, weak, or dishonest.

Scenario	The Instinct of Worldly Power	The Way of Faithful Allegiance to Jesus
Someone misrepresents you publicly.		
A friend refuses to admit wrongdoing.		
You have authority over someone who has failed.		
A conflict threatens your reputation.		
You can win an argument by humiliating the other person.		

Strength Inventory

Which expression of Christlike strength do you most need in your present situation?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ truthful speech without cruelty
☐ courage without domination
☐ service without applause
☐ love without manipulation | ☐ holiness under pressure
☐ resistance to evil without retaliation
☐ trust when self-preservation feels urgent |
|--|---|

What is one concrete action that would express this kind of strength?

Finish This Sentence

Following the crucified King means I will _____.

DAY 5 | WORSHIP AND RESPONSE

The Worship of the Rescued

PRIMARY READING Psalm 116

KEY VERSE (CSB)

"How can I repay the Lord for all the good he has done for me? I will take the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord." (Psalm 116:12-13)

Place in This Week's Story

Psalm 116 teaches worship as the response of someone who has been rescued. The psalmist remembers distress, helplessness, and the Lord's mercy. Gratitude is not an attempt to repay grace or prove worthiness. The cup of salvation is received, and the name of the Lord is called upon. Because rescue has been received, worship becomes visible in choices, commitments, relationships, resources, and service. Thanksgiving does not erase the memory of suffering, but it refuses to let suffering rule the story. The rescued life becomes a surrendered life of grateful worship before the Lord.

Read and Observe

Mark or underline phrases in the passage connected to these observations.

☐ Mark the psalmist's distress.	☐ List what the Lord did.
☐ Notice why the psalmist loves the Lord.	☐ Identify public responses of worship.
☐ Underline expressions of gratitude and commitment.	

Notes from my observation:

INTERPRETIVE GUARDRAIL

Gratitude is a response to grace, not a payment for grace.

INTERPRET AND RESPOND

From Rescue to Response

Use short phrases. The goal is not to repay grace, but to name how received mercy forms worship.

What God Has Done	
What I Have Received	
What Gratitude Changes	
Who May Be Served	
How Worship Becomes Visible	

Gratitude-to-Action Planner

Write one realistic expression of gratitude in each category. Then circle one action to practice during the coming week.

Words	
Time	
Relationships	
Resources or Influence	

Closing Prayer Builder

Use any of these starters as you pray: Father, thank You for... I receive Your grace rather than trying to... Let my worship become visible through... Place my life at Your disposal by... Teach me to remember...

Prayer:

Finish this sentence: Today I call on the Lord with gratitude for _____.

WEEK 32 REVIEW

What Kind of Victory Is the Cross?

Before you close the week, review the path you have walked. Keep your answers brief enough to remember and concrete enough to practice.

Five-Day Review

Daily Movement	Connect It to the Biblical Passage
Day 1: Christ disarms the powers.	
Day 2: Lament does not cancel God's kingship.	
Day 3: Trust entrusts what cannot be controlled.	
Day 4: Jesus reveals strength through faithful obedience.	
Day 5: Rescue produces grateful worship.	

Final Synthesis Questions

How has your definition of victory changed this week?	
What does the cross reveal about the character of Jesus?	
Which false form of strength most often tempts you?	
What does faithful trust look like without denying danger or injustice?	
How can gratitude for Christ's rescue become visible in your life?	

CLOSING RESPONSE

Trust, Allegiance, and Gratitude

Cross-Shaped Allegiance Statement

Because Jesus conquered through sacrificial obedience, I will no longer define strength as _____. By His grace, I will pursue _____.

My Prayer of Trust, Allegiance, and Gratitude

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, crucified King and victorious Savior, teach me to see the cross as Your decisive victory. Free me from accusation, form honest lament in me, teach me to entrust what I cannot control, and make my rescued life a visible offering of grateful worship.

SCRIPTURE ATTRIBUTION

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