

# centerpiece

## The Cross: The Way to Friendship with God

Romans 5:10

We were enemies of God.

Sin: standing against God.

Our life was in danger.

Jesus made us friends with God.

Salvation: God standing for us.

Friends of God...

Inherit new enemies.

Pray for our enemies.

Become unexpected friends with enemies.

Tell others how they can become God's friends.

**Getting Started:** What is your favorite sports team, or who is your favorite athlete? When they are competing, how do you respond to their opponent (scream, boo, belittle, disparage, run-down, etc.)? Why is it so easy to make enemies?

**Digging In:** Read Jn 12:4-6; Mt 26:14-16. How was Judas an enemy of Jesus? Read Mark 15:15; Mt 27:24-26. How was Pilate an enemy of Jesus? Read Mt 26:57-68; 27:18, 20; Jn 2:12-18; **11:47-48**. How were the Pharisees enemies of Jesus? How were Judas, Pilate, and the Pharisees acting as if they were God? What do these scriptures say (Rm 6:23) about the fate of the enemies of God? Describe how difficult it is to reconcile bitter enemies. How does this give you a greater appreciation for our reconciliation with God (Rm 5:10; 2Cor 5:18-19, 21; Eph 2:3,12; Col 1:20-22)? What do these verses (Jn 15:18-19; Mt 5:43-45; Eph 2:11-22; 2Cor 5:18-19) say about the friends of God?

**Living It Out:** Before understanding the message of the cross, did you see yourself as an enemy of God? Why or why not? Briefly tell about the time you moved from being an enemy of God to a friend of God. In what ways do you attempt to "substitute yourself for God"? In what way has your friendship with God been revealed lately: a) I inherited a new enemy, b) I prayed for an enemy, c) I became an unexpected friend to an enemy, d) I explained to someone how to become a friend of God? Which one of those do you desire, as a friend of God, to see more of in your life?