

John 19:17-30

“Jesus: The Great Finisher”

Scripture: John 19:17-30

Memory Verse: John 19:30b “*He (Jesus) said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*”

Lesson Focus: We will walk through the crucifixion account in the text and then unpack exactly what transpired when Jesus uttered His final victory cry. Our goal in this lesson is that the kids will better understand exactly what Jesus finished and accomplished on the cross and therefore respond with a much greater and deeper trust in Him!

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Jesus Crucified, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring It Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for ALL GRADES: Cootie Catcher

Starter Activity: Things That We Never Finish

First have some discussion with the kids to get them thinking about what it means to finish something. Ask them for some common things that people finish. Some ideas below. To make the discussion more fun share some personal stories of things that you finish and how finishing them made you feel.

- 1) Races
- 2) Books
- 3) Movies

Q: How do you usually feel when you finish some of these things? Pretty good, especially if it was something that you had to work hard at.

Then ask the kids to think of things that they often start, but then don’t finish. Also ask them why they don’t finish these things. Some ideas:

- 1) Supper (because we are picky about food) *
- 2) Chores (because we don’t like doing them)
- 3) Puzzles (too hard, or gets too boring) *
- 4) The milk jug (something wrong with the last sip?) *

We typically don’t finish these things because we don’t really want to do them in the first place or we get distracted by something else. *

In our Bible study today we are going to look at the greatest finish ever! We will see how Jesus finished what He started and how hard it was for Him. Yet it’s what He came to do!

Bible Study:

John 19:17: This sets the stage for the crucifixion, but first do a quick review of what has happened to get to this point:

Jesus has been whipped, beaten, and mocked. He has a crown of thorns on His head ridiculing His claim to be King. (**John 19:1-3**)

Pontius Pilate had the power to stand up for truth and release Jesus, an innocent man, but instead he went with the crowd which was shouting “Crucify Him!” (**John 19:6**)

Boy and girls, this scene is HORRIBLE! Jesus Christ, after being beaten and ridiculed, with the little strength He had left was now carrying His own cross to where they would crucify Him!

John 19:18: We know from Matthew and Luke that these two others were criminals who were actually guilty of a crime.

Q: But was Jesus actually guilty of anything?

A: No! Jesus was innocent and yet here He was sentenced to the cruelest and most shameful of all punishments: crucifixion! *

Q: If Jesus was innocent and yet powerful enough to work miracles, why did He let this happen? Why didn't He just flex His superhero muscles and come down from the cross? (let the kids chew on this a little bit)

A: Because this is what He came to do! As hard as it was, this was His mission!

Read Matthew 26:38-39, which is Jesus' prayer in the garden the day before. Jesus knew how hard this was going to be. He cries out to God the Father something like, “Papa, if there is any other way for people to be rescued from their sin and punishment, please show me!” But yet He knows there is no other way and quickly adds, “Not my will, but Yours be done!”

It was even prophesied (**Isaiah 53:12**) that God's promised Savior would die among other common criminals!

John 19:19-22: King Jesus is now dying on the cross, the nails in His hands and feet.

This was all done very publicly. It was very busy right now with the Passover feast going on and many people would walk by and observe this and talk about it. It would be like today if someone took a quick video and put it up on Instagram for everyone to see! *

How humiliating! But WHY? Because God the Father wanted the whole world to know that His Son had finished the work He came to do!

John 19:23-24: More fulfilled prophecy! (**Read Psalm 22:16-18**)

What is amazing about this is that this Psalm was written hundreds of years before crucifixion even existed! Yet here we have a very detailed prophecy of what was going to happen to God's promised Savior and it is now being fulfilled!

John 19:25-27: Jesus is experiencing tremendous agony and suffering on the cross, and yet even now He is not thinking about Himself, but others!

Q: When you are in pain, who are you thinking about? Yourself! *

What a hero Jesus is! Jesus is suffering more pain than you and I can ever imagine and instead of thinking of Himself and crying to His mommy, He is thinking about who is going to take care of His mommy!

Notice also that it is mostly women (not men) that have the courage to stand with Jesus here. The disciple whom Jesus loved is John, the author of this book. All of the other disciples had fled like cowards. Women here show great courage in being with Jesus when it was very unpopular to do so! *

John 19:28-29: More fulfilled prophecy! Jesus was "accomplishing" what was predicted in the pages of Scripture hundreds of years before!

Q: What does it mean to accomplish something?

A: It means to complete or succeed.

John 19:30: Jesus utters His final cry, "It is finished," knowing that He had ACCOMPLISHED all He came to do. And then He dies! *

What did Jesus accomplish and finish? Our rescue from sin and from hell! "It is finished" was a victory cry of Jesus for He had won the salvation of His people. How?

Teachers: Consider using these illustrations geared toward each age group to help the kids understand exactly what Jesus ACCOMPLISHED and FINISHED on the cross.

1st-2nd grade: We will provide you with some labels or stickers that you are going to write or draw on.

- 1) Ask the kids to think of some basic sins or bad things that you all have done and then write or draw them on the stickers. Then put those stickers on yourself (or consider having the kids put them on themselves) to illustrate that we all have done bad things. Point out that this is a problem we all have and that because God is holy, He must and will punish all sin!
- 2) Using the whiteboard title it "Jesus" and have the kids list some of the good things that Jesus did during His life (i.e. help others, serve people, heal people, etc.). Write or draw each of these on stickers also and then put them on the "Jesus board". **Emphasize that Jesus lived a perfect life and point out that living this perfect life is one of the things that He ACCOMPLISHED and FINISHED!**

- 3) Now explain that when Jesus died on the cross, the most amazing and outrageous trade took place:
 - a. First, Jesus took our sins upon Himself and paid for them all! (Put our “sin stickers” now on the Jesus board). When He died on the cross, He took OUR sin and guilt! He took OUR shame! Remember, He did not have any Himself! This is WHY our sins are forgiven, because Jesus paid for them! This is WHY Jesus had to die and WHY He is the ONLY WAY!
 - b. Second, Jesus gives His perfect righteousness to us! (Take Jesus’s “righteous stickers” off of His board and put them on individual kids or yourself). His perfect life of righteousness becomes OUR righteousness!

3rd-5th grade: We will provide you with “report card” materials that you will pull out as described below. See the samples on the last pages of the lesson.

- 1) The first envelope labeled “Me” contains “our” report card. Pull out the blank one first and explain that instead of schoolwork, we earn grades for living the way God wants: obeying your parents, telling the truth, putting yourself last, etc. Ask the kids what grades they think they should get for each “subject”. Some may think Bs or Cs thinking they are OK, but that they can do better.
- 2) Then explain that God actually gives us all the same grades and pull out the actual report card which will have “Fs” for each one! Let that sink in and explain God is holy and righteous and anything short of perfection earns an F! Ask the kids what would happen if they brought a report card like this home: **Punishment!!**
- 3) Now shift the focus to Jesus. First, point out that when Jesus died on the cross, He took the punishment that WE DESERVE for our Fs upon Himself! That was one of the things He ACCOMPLISHED! It’s like He erases our Fs. Refer back to the blank report card. But is this all He does? If He earns us only a blank report card, we are still burdened to try and earn those As. Toss that blank one away! *
- 4) The other thing Jesus ACCOMPLISHED/FINISHED was living a perfect life. To illustrate this, now show the second envelope which contains Jesus’s report card. Pull it out and show the A+ in every subject. But then to illustrate what actually happened on the cross, put Jesus’s report card into the envelope marked “Me” and put your Fs report card into Jesus’s envelope! Let that sink in and ask the kids how they would feel going home with straight A+ report card! That’s what it will be like when we stand before God by faith in Jesus after we die. Jesus gives us His perfect report card and He takes our awful one Himself!

Key Point: This is what happens to us only when we are joined to Jesus Christ BY FAITH. Not everyone gets the Jesus stickers (1st-2nd) or A+ report card (3rd-5th). But only those who RESPOND to what Jesus did by trusting in Him and believing in Him. *

Read Ephesians 2:8-9. God’s grace comes only thru Jesus’s death. This is God’s gift that we must receive! We can’t boast about our A+ report card or Jesus stickers, because we did not earn them. Jesus did! He ACCOMPLISHED and FINISHED this work!

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, know what it is that He FINISHED for you! *
If you are not sure, come and receive God’s grace right now!

Bring It Home

(Devotional for the Family)

Lesson Theme: “Jesus: The Great Finisher”

Scripture: John 19:17-30

Memory Verse: John 19:30b “*He (Jesus) said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*”

Teachers/Parents: First share with each other some things that you have “finished” that you are proud of. Second, have some discussion about some things that you start, but often do not finish and why you don’t finish them. Finally, consider what it is that Jesus finished when He died on the cross and discuss what that means to you.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read **John 19:18**. We learn more about these two others in Luke’s gospel. Read **Luke 23:39-43**. What stands out to you in this passage?
- 2) Read **John 19:24**. Several times in this section of Scripture OT prophecies are being fulfilled. Read **Psalms 22:1-18** and listen carefully to how much this reads like what happened to Jesus leading up to His death. This was written hundreds of years before Jesus came. Why is this important?
- 3) Read **John 19:30**. The sentence “It is finished” is the translation of a single Greek word, *tetelestai*. In Jesus’s day, this word was written on business documents and receipts to denote that something had been “paid in full”. With this in mind, what do you think Jesus meant when He uttered “*tetelestai*” before finally dying?
- 4) In class we used report cards to explain the amazing trade that happened at the cross. Our “spiritual” report card before God (i.e. our grades for telling the truth, serving others, etc.) has all “Fs”. Perfection is what the holy God of the Bible requires (**James 2:10**). What should we expect to happen after bringing home a report card of all Fs? Bad news! But see Question 5!
- 5) One of the things that Jesus finished or accomplished on the cross was living a perfect life. By His life He earned the one and only perfect spiritual report card of straight A+s. But when Jesus died on the cross, not only did He take our “Fs” upon Himself (and paid for them), but He then gives us the straight A+s that He earned. Read **2 Corinthians 5:21**. How does this trade with Jesus make you feel?
- 6) Read **Ephesians 2:8-9**. This trade is God’s gift, God’s grace! What is our part in all of this according to v. 8?

Subject

Grade

Sharing

F

Obeying Parents

F

Telling the Truth

F

Speaking Kind Words

F

Letting Others Go First

F

Loving Your Enemies

F

Subject

Grade

Sharing

A+

Obeying Parents

A+

Telling the Truth

A+

Speaking Kind Words

A+

Letting Others Go First

A+

Loving Your Enemies

A+

Subject

Grade

Sharing

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