

SEEING JESUS IN JOHN

WEEK FORTY-THREE: JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

READING

16 Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus away. 17 Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, Golgotha). 18 There they nailed him to the cross. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them. 19 And Pilate posted a sign on the cross that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." 20 The place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, so that many people could read it. 21 Then the leading priests objected and said to Pilate, "Change it from 'The King of the Jews' to 'He said, I am King of the Jews.'" 22 Pilate replied, "No, what I have written, I have written." 23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. 24 So they said, "Rather than tearing it apart, let's throw dice for it." This fulfilled the Scripture that says, "They divided my garments among themselves and threw dice for my clothing." So that is what they did. 25 Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." 27 And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on this disciple took her into his home. John 19:16-27 (NLT)

TEACHING

In less than 24 hours, Jesus has been betrayed by one of his friends, arrested, unjustly tried by the Jewish and Roman leaders, denied by another one of his friends, whipped and beaten by soldiers, and found guilty of a crime he did not commit. Now Jesus is sentenced to be executed on a cross. (*Parents, you can explain crucifixion as appropriate for the age of your child*). There are four wonderful things we learn about Jesus in the midst of great sadness.

- 1) Jesus died *with* sinners, *for* sinners, and *as* a sinner.** Jesus was crucified between two life-long criminals. They deserved to die, Jesus did not. This reminds us that we deserved the punishment of God for our rebellion and sin, but Jesus took our place.
- 2) Jesus throne was a cross.** Most of Jesus' followers expected him to enter Jerusalem, lead a political uprising, and sit on a throne as the King of the Jews. But Jesus didn't come to be lifted up on a throne; he came to be lifted up on a cross. And even as he died the word "The King of the Jews" hung over his head.
- 3) Jesus' death fulfilled many Old Testament prophecies.** When the soldiers cast lots (a gambling game) for his robe it fulfilled a 600-year old prophecy (Psalm 22).
- 4) Jesus loved his mom.** Even as he was laying down his life for the entire world, Jesus made sure his mom would be taken care of. Jesus loves each of us individually.

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RESPONSE

OPENING QUESTION(S):

- What makes you sad?

TODDLERS/PRE-K:

- In this story, who was crucified between two criminals?
- Did Jesus deserve to die? Why or why not?

CHILDREN:

- Did Jesus deserve to die? Why or why not?
- What was written on the sign above Jesus' head?
- How did Jesus show his love for his mom?

TEENAGERS:

- What does it mean that Jesus died "with sinners, for sinners, and as a sinner?"
- How was Jesus' "throne" different than what most people expected?
- What does that teach us about the kingdom of God?

ADULTS:

- How has the cross of Jesus changed your life? How is it changing your life?
- How can you care for individuals in your life even in the midst of personal pain?

PRAYER

God, thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross for the sins of the world. Thank you that in dying, Jesus defeated Satan, sin, hell and the grave. Jesus, thank you for taking my place on the cross and suffering the punishment that I deserved. Help me to always be grateful for the cross and to live my life in the light of who you are and what you've done. Thank you for being a humble king who laid down his life for his people. Help me to lay down my life for others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

NEXT LEVEL (ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL TEACHING)

Compare some of the following verses to see OT prophecies fulfilled in the death of Jesus.

Isaiah 53:3 and John 1:10-11

Psalm 41:9 and Mark 14:10

Zechariah 11:12 and Matthew 26:14-16

Isaiah 53:7 and Mark 15:5

Psalm 22:15 and Matthew 27:48

Psalm 22:17-18 and John 19:23