

It is Finished!

The Cross

John 18:28-19:42; Luke 23:34-35

Character Trait: Thankfulness

(Estimated Lesson Time: 90 minutes)

Objectives:

- Children will recall that the crowd of people wanted Jesus killed.
- Children will describe specific things and people they are thankful for.
- Children will explain specific ways they can show thankfulness for Jesus.

Supplies:

- *It is Finished* loaded onto a tablet or phone in the *Bible App for Kids*
- A ball *(suitable for throwing)*
- Waxed paper *(one small piece for each child)*
- Glue
- Masking tape
- Small pieces of different colored tissue paper *(several for each child)*
- Scissors
- Pens and/or pencils *(optional)*

Welcome Activity:

(5 minutes)

Welcome the children and explain how thankful you are that they have come to learn more about God and His Word, the Bible.

SAY: In today's lesson, we will be talking about thankfulness. To begin, I will toss a ball to one of you. Please catch the ball, share one thing that you are thankful for, and then toss the ball to someone who has not shared yet. *(Continue until each child has had the opportunity to briefly share.)*

Review:

(5 minutes)

Guide the children in a brief review of the previous lesson by asking the following:

- **What did Jesus ask His disciples to do with Him?** *(Pray)*
- **What did the disciples do instead?** *(They fell asleep.)*
- **Jesus knew what God's plan was for Him. What was it?** *(Jesus knew that God's plan was for Him to die.)*
- **Who betrayed Jesus with a kiss?** *(Judas)*
- **How many times did Peter deny Jesus?** *(Three times)*
- **How did Peter react when he realized what he had done?** *(He wept.)*

Today's Bible Story:

(10-15 minutes)

Show *It is Finished* from the *Bible App for Kids* or share the story aloud:

- The religious leaders told the governor, Pilate, that Jesus was dangerous and wanted to be king.
- Pilate asked Jesus, "Is this true?"
- "I am King," Jesus answered, "but not of this world."
- "Jesus is innocent," said Pilate. "There's no reason to kill Him. I will set Him free."
- But the crowd shouted, "Kill Him!"
- So Pilate had his soldiers whip Jesus.
- They forced a thorny crown on His head.
- Then they laid a wooden cross on His back and led Him up a hill.
- There on that hill, the Roman soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross, hands and feet.
- Then they raised it high.
- Jesus hung there between two criminals.
- Around noon, the sky turned dark.
- Jesus' friends wept.
- The religious leaders laughed and said, "You saved other people. Why can't You save Yourself?"
- "Forgive them, Father," said Jesus.
- When the time came for Jesus to die, He closed His eyes and said, "It is finished."
- He had completed what He had come to do because of His great love.
- One of Jesus' followers, a man named Joseph, put Jesus' body in a brand new tomb.
- He rolled a huge stone in front of it.
- A long sad Friday was over.

Discussion:

(15 minutes)

Encourage the children to think more about the story by asking the following:

What did Jesus say when Pilate asked Him if He wanted to be king? *(I am king but not of this world.)*

What did Pilate say about Jesus? *("Jesus is innocent. There's no reason to kill Him.")*

Who wanted Jesus killed? *(The crowd)*

What was Jesus nailed onto? *(A cross)*

What was the last thing Jesus said on the cross? *("It is finished.")*

SAY: In the last lesson, we learned how Jesus showed that He had all of God's power. Jesus could have saved Himself. Jesus did not have to die on the cross. The nails in His hands and feet did not keep Him there. It was His great love for each and every one of us that kept Him there. Jesus willingly died on the cross out of love for all of us.

Even Pilate said: "Jesus is innocent. There's no reason to kill Him." Though Jesus did not deserve it, He died willingly to pay the price for our sins.

God's Bigger Story:

(5 minutes)

SAY: Because we all sin, we all deserve death. Jesus willingly died on a cross as a sacrifice to pay the price we owed for our sins. Jesus lived a perfect life. He never sinned. He did not do anything to deserve death Himself. He died in our place because He loves us so much. Jesus died to fix the sin problem that we could not fix ourselves.

Memory Verse:

(10 minutes)

When Jesus *(touch your middle finger to the other palm, then switch)*
had tasted it *(make sipping sound)*,
he said, "It is finished!" *(hold arms straight out on either side)*
Then he bowed his head *(bow your head)* **and gave up his spirit** *(hands from chest to reaching high)*.

John 19:30 (NLT)

Activity:

(15 minutes)

Line the children up shoulder-to-shoulder along a wall or in a line. Create a finish line no more than ten child-size steps ahead of them. Explain that the children will be told true or false statements about the lesson. Once they hear each statement, the children must hold up one hand if they think it is true and two hands if they think it is false. Those who are correct move one giant step forward. Those who are not correct stay put. The goal is to reach the finish line. The following are some examples of true/false statements to use for the game:

- **Jesus is king but not of this world.** *(True)*
- **Jesus deserved to die.** *(False)*
- **Pilate wanted Jesus killed.** *(False)*
- **Jesus died on a Friday.** *(True)*
- **Jesus carried His own cross up a hill.** *(True)*
- **Jesus' last words on the cross were "Forgive them, Father."** *(False)*
- **Jesus closed His eyes and said, "It is finished" before He died.** *(True)*

Response Activity:

(10 minutes)

Provide each child with a small piece of waxed paper and masking tape. Demonstrate how to place the masking tape on top of the waxed paper to create the outline of a cross. Next, provide the children with glue and several small pieces of different, colored tissue paper. Demonstrate how to carefully glue down the pieces of tissue paper inside the outline of the cross. Complete the activity by having the children cut out their crosses, cutting along the outline of the tape. Encourage the children to hold up their crosses to a light source or a window to see the stained glass effect.

For younger children...
The waxed paper cross can be cut out in advance for younger children.

For older children...
Extend the activity by encouraging older children to write the memory verse on the masking tape along the edge of their cross projects.

SAY: When Jesus died on the cross, He created something beautiful out of what was broken. He made a way for us to be forgiven from our sins and be right with God again.

Your projects look the most beautiful when you hold them up to the light. The same is true for all of us with Jesus. Jesus is our light (John 8:12), and we are designed to need Him, too.

Character Trait: Thankfulness

(10 minutes)

SAY: Thankfulness means to be glad for or about something. It means to be grateful. We can all be thankful for Jesus' great love and willingness to pay the price for our sins.

Encourage the children to think more about thankfulness by asking the following:

- **What are some things or people you are thankful for?** *(Answers will vary.)*
- **Why are you thankful for these things or people?** *(Answers will vary.)*
- **Why should we be thankful for Jesus?** *(Jesus loved us enough to die for us.)*
- **What are some specific ways we can show our thankfulness to others?** *(Answers will vary.)*
- **What are some specific ways we can show our thankfulness for Jesus?** *(We can choose to love, follow, and obey Jesus. We can say thank you to Him through prayer.)*

Connect with Others:

(5 minutes)

SAY: Thankfulness is not just a feeling you have. It is something you can show through your actions, choices, and words. Think about a specific person in your life that you are thankful for. How has this person helped you? How can you show or communicate your thankfulness to them? *(Call on a few volunteers to share their ideas aloud; then provide an opportunity for those who did not share to turn and do so with someone near them. Some examples might include completing a chore or task before being asked at home, making a "Thank You" card to give to someone else, or spending extra time with someone they love and are grateful for.)*

Closing:

(2 minutes)

SAY: Jesus had done nothing wrong, but He willingly died on the cross. He could have saved Himself, but Jesus loved us enough to die in our place. That shows us just how great Jesus' love is!

God is just and fair. He cannot ignore sin. Sin creates a debt that must be paid in order to right the wrong. Our sins create a debt that we could never repay, but thankfully, Jesus paid this debt for us by dying on the cross in our place. Jesus' death on the cross was part of God's plan to fix our sin problem. That is a lot to be thankful for!

Prayer:

(2 minutes)

SAY:

Dear God,
How thankful we are for how much You love us. Thank You for sending Jesus to pay the debt for our sins. Jesus showed us what real love looks like. Help us to put Jesus' words and love into our own thoughts, words, and actions.
Amen.

Notes