

11 IT IS FINISHED

KEY TEXT: JOHN 19:17-22,25-30,38-42

CENTRAL truth

On the cross, Jesus suffered under a sign that said, “The King of the Jews.” The phrase may have been used to mock Him, but nothing could undo its truth. What Jesus’s accusers, abusers, and doubters could not see was that though earthly kingdoms are built by leaders who oppress and kill others, Jesus’s kingdom would be built in a different way: by He Himself being oppressed and killed. **Jesus is our King, and He died so that we might live.**

key question

How is “it is finished” good news for someone who worries they have to earn their way to God?

Jesus came to bring salvation to the world, and He did that through His perfect life and His punishing death. When Jesus cried out “It is finished!” on the cross, we can believe Him! We cannot save ourselves; we can only look to Jesus and trust that He is the way.

keep in mind

- A works-based salvation is always a tempting offer—at least, at first. It’s the way we understand the world: we think we have to earn our keep. But Jesus’s work on the cross flips that idea upside down. Help students grasp Jesus’s work in a bigger way and how that impacts how they live. They don’t obey God so that He will forgive—they are forgiven, and in joyful overflow, they get to obey.
- Death, and particularly a death that involves suffering, can be hard to stomach. Try to help students grasp what Jesus endured, but point out that they don’t have to take in this information without hope. We know His death brought life—and we know He came back to life.

application

Why is it better to die for Christ than to live for anyone else? What might that look like in your own life?

the win

FOR THE STUDENT: Students have an opportunity to think about everything Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had to lose, and how they risked it all, anyway. When we know the true King, settling for any less isn’t worth it.

FOR THE LEADER: Help students view Joseph and Nicodemus as real men who were willing to risk everything for their connection to Jesus. Lead students in understanding how the good news of Jesus is better than anything else.