

It Is Finished

JOHN 19:16-30 (BSB) · TEACHER GUIDE · DIGDEEPER.AI

THE BIG IDEA · SAY IT AT LEAST FIVE TIMES

The crucified King finished his work; nothing is left undone.

Open with it, bring it back after every section, close with it. By the end they should be able to finish the sentence for you.

- Before this passage (day 25): John 18:28-40, What Is Truth. Its big idea: Jesus, the true King, asks whether your answer about him is your own.
- After this passage (day 27): John 20:1-18, The Empty Tomb. Its big idea: Whom are you seeking? The risen Jesus comes and calls you by name.

Open

Recall last time (John 18:28-40): Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" Then he let the crowd choose Barabbas. Today Pilate hands Jesus over. Ask: "Think of a job you left half-done. What does 'unfinished' feel like?" Let a few answer. Read John 19:30: "When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished.'" Big idea: The crucified King finished his work; nothing is left undone. Ask one person what stuck from last time.

Run Sheet

1. The King Under the Sign (John 19:16-22, about 12 min)

The one thing: The charge nailed over Jesus is really his title: he dies as King.

Ask: Pilate meant the sign as a joke or a jab. What does it say that turned out to be true?

2. At the Foot of the Cross (John 19:23-27, about 12 min)

The one thing: Nothing here is random. Scripture is being fulfilled, and Jesus is still caring for his people.

Ask: Jesus is in agony, yet he looks at his mother and makes sure she has a home. What does that show you about him?

3. It Is Finished (John 19:28-30, about 12 min)

The one thing: Jesus dies knowing his work is complete, and he gives up his life rather than having it taken.

Ask: Jesus says "It is finished," not "I am finished." What is the difference?

Close (never cut it)

Read verse 30 slowly once more and give it a few seconds of quiet. Say plainly: the King on that cross finished what he came to do, and nothing is left for us to add. Let them lean on that; no homework, no checklist.

PROTECT THE ENDING

If section three starts late, drop section two's optional points and the Psalm links so verse 30 and the quiet close still get full time.

KIDS SIDE ANSWERS

Story order: 3, 5, 4, 2, 1 (top to bottom) · Feelings: Jesus' mother sad, The chief priests worried, The soldiers happy, Mary Magdalene sad · Code: IT IS FINISHED

Act it out: Give each child a paper 'bill.' Walk around and stamp each one PAID IN FULL while everyone says together, "It is finished!"

1. The King Under the Sign

JOHN 19:16-22 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 1 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Jesus carries his own cross to Golgotha.
- Pilate's sign names him King in three languages.
- Pilate refuses to change it.

Carrying His own CROSS, He went out to The Place of the Skull.

Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have WRITTEN."

Discuss: Pilate meant the sign as a joke or a jab. What does it say that turned out to be true?

The charge nailed over Jesus is really his title: he dies as King.

MUST COVER

- v.19-20: Rome posted the crime over the condemned. Here the 'crime' is being King, and three languages meant every passerby could read it.
- v.21-22: The priests want 'He said' added. Pilate won't budge, so the plain claim stands.

IF THERE'S TIME

- Crucifixion was for slaves and rebels. It was public by design, near a busy road, meant to shame.
- Hebrew (God's people), Latin (Rome's power), Greek (the wider world): everyone was addressed.

Illustration idea: A price tag stuck on the wrong item. The clerk meant it as a mistake, but it tells you the real worth.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: He really is the King of the Jews.
- Listen for: Everyone, in every language, was meant to see it.

If it drifts: If talk turns to Pilate's motives or Roman politics, point back to the sign's words in v.19. What does it actually say?

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

Pilate wrote more than he knew. The one on that cross is the King, and he came to finish something.

Short on time? Drop the three-languages detail. Keep the sign and 'What I have written.'

Bridge → Beneath the sign, soldiers gamble and a few people stand watching.

2. At the Foot of the Cross

JOHN 19:23-27 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 2 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Soldiers split his clothes and gamble for the tunic.
- Even this fulfills Scripture (Psalm 22:18).
- Dying, Jesus provides a home for his mother.

The tunic was SEAMLESS, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

Then He said to the disciple, "Here is your MOTHER."

Discuss: Jesus is in agony, yet he looks at his mother and makes sure she has a home. What does that show you about him?

Nothing here is random. Scripture is being fulfilled, and Jesus is still caring for his people.

MUST COVER

- v.23-24: The soldiers only want the loot. John says it fulfills Psalm 22:18, a song of David about a sufferer whose clothes are divided.
- v.25-27: A few women stood near. Jesus sees them and gives his mother into the loved disciple's care 'from that hour.'

IF THERE'S TIME

- Psalm 22 is a song of suffering written about a thousand years earlier. Read v.18 aloud beside John 19:24.
- Name the women in v.25. They could not stop it, but they stayed.

Illustration idea: A parent in a hospital bed who still asks the family, "Has anyone fed the dog?" Love keeps caring when it hurts.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: He cares about people even while suffering.
- Listen for: He isn't a victim; he's still in charge.

If it drifts: If it becomes a debate about who the loved disciple was, say John leaves him unnamed. Return to what Jesus says in v.26-27.

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

Even the gambling was in the script, and even from the cross he cared for his own. The King is finishing his work.

Short on time? Skip the Psalm 22 reading. Keep Jesus' words to his mother.

Bridge → Then John tells us everything is nearly done.

3. It Is Finished

JOHN 19:28-30 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 3 OF 3

THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Jesus knows everything is accomplished.
- "I am thirsty" fulfills Scripture.
- "It is finished": a work completed, not a life defeated.

Knowing that everything had now been ACCOMPLISHED, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

He said, "It is FINISHED." And bowing His head, He yielded up His spirit.

Discuss: Jesus says "It is finished," not "I am finished." What is the difference?

Jesus dies knowing his work is complete, and he gives up his life rather than having it taken.

MUST COVER

- v.28-29: He speaks 'knowing' all was accomplished. The hyssop echoes Passover, when hyssop brushed lamb's blood on Israel's doorposts (Exodus 12:22).
- v.30: In John's Greek it's one word, tetelestai: a task done, a debt settled. He bows his head and 'yielded up' his spirit.

IF THERE'S TIME

- 'I am thirsty' likely points to Psalm 69:21, where a sufferer is given sour wine.
- Jesus prayed the night before, 'I have accomplished the work' (John 17:4). Here he says it's done.

Illustration idea: A bill marked PAID IN FULL. You don't keep making payments on it.

RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: He wasn't defeated; he completed something.
- Listen for: The work is done, so we don't add to it.

If it drifts: If people start listing what they must now do for God, go back to v.30. He said the work is finished. Let them sit with that first.

TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

Not almost done. Not done if you help. Finished. The crucified King left nothing undone.

Short on time? Drop the Psalm 69 and John 17 links. Keep hyssop only if time allows; keep v.30 fully.

Bridge → Let the class rest here in the close.

With One Friend, Over Coffee

ABOUT 30 MINUTES · FOR A FRIEND WHO IS CURIOUS, OR NOT SURE

1. Read it together. Read John 19:16-30 aloud, slowly. It takes about three minutes. Ask what stood out or bothered them.
2. Look at the sign. Pilate posts 'King of the Jews' in three languages and won't change it. Ask: why would John make such a point of this?
3. Face the objection. Admit it: this looks like a failed king. Point out that John shows Jesus in control. He cares for his mother, knows all is accomplished, and gives up his spirit.
4. Hear the last word. 'It is finished' is one Greek word for a finished task or settled debt. He says 'it,' not 'I.' Ask what they think 'it' was.
5. Leave the question. The sign asks every reader who this man is. Leave it with them honestly: defeated man, or King who finished his work? Let them think.

QUESTIONS YOU MAY HEAR

"Isn't 'It is finished' just his followers spinning a defeat?"

Fair question. John wrote after the fact, but he describes a man making choices to the end, not just a victim. And John's story doesn't stop here; the next chapter is the tomb.

"Why did he have to die at all?"

John links it to Passover, when a lamb died so a household was spared. Jesus is shown as that Lamb, finishing what the old sacrifices pointed to.

"Couldn't the 'fulfilled Scripture' parts be made up to fit?"

Some people think so. But the soldiers dividing clothes was ordinary custom, and Pilate's sign was public. John points to things many witnesses could see.

"If it's finished, what's left for me to do?"

The passage doesn't give you a task. It shows you a finished work. The first thing is simply to see who he is.

Evergreen Principles

Four standards every week. The rest rotate: each lesson brings the few that fit its passage best.

EVERY LESSON

1. Pray before you prepare

Teaching the Bible is spiritual work first (John 15:5).

If you're new: Pray for your class by name during the week.

If you've taught for years: Pray for the one person you find hardest to reach.

2. Study the text first

Understand the passage yourself before any help.

If you're new: Read it in two translations; write your own questions first.

If you've taught for years: Don't lean on old notes. What did you miss last time?

3. Teach one big idea

People remember one sentence, not four points.

If you're new: Write it in 12 words or fewer before anything else.

If you've taught for years: Test every story against it. If it doesn't serve it, cut it.

4. Point to Christ

All of Scripture points to him (Luke 24:27).

If you're new: Ask: what does this show about Jesus?

If you've taught for years: Show grace as the reason for obedience, not just the rule.

FOR THIS LESSON

1. Let the passage land the way it lands

This passage shows a finished work and offers rest, not a to-do list.

If you're new: End on verse 30 and quiet. Resist adding an application step.

If you've taught for years: Notice when you reach for a challenge out of habit, and let 'finished' stand alone.

2. Plan for the skeptic and the grieving

Some will see a failed king; some have stood by a dying loved one.

If you're new: Keep the coffee objection ready, and note the women who 'stood' in v.25.

If you've taught for years: Invite the skeptic's question aloud and treat it as the text's own tension.

3. Let silence do its work

Death and 'It is finished' deserve a pause, not quick talk.

If you're new: After reading v.30, count ten seconds before speaking.

If you've taught for years: Build a longer silence into the close and trust it without filling it.

BEFORE CLASS

- ☐ Read the passage three times
- ☐ Big idea in one sentence
- ☐ Opening and close chosen
- ☐ Know what you'll cut
- ☐ Handouts, pens, extra Bibles
- ☐ Prayed for the class by name

Openings, Closings & Hard Moments

Pick one opening and one close; rotate so class doesn't get predictable.

OPENINGS

- ask a real-life question: What's something you finished that felt good to call done?

- use an object: Hold up a receipt stamped PAID. Ask what it means that you don't owe anything.
- start in the text: Read Pilate's sign aloud: 'JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.' Ask: was it true?

CLOSINGS

- allow quiet reflection: Read v.30, then one minute of silence with the words 'It is finished' on screen.
- call back to the opening: Return to the PAID receipt: the King didn't leave a balance.
- restate the big idea: The crucified King finished his work. Nothing is left undone. Rest there.

WHEN CLASS GETS HARD

• Someone who recently watched a loved one die is undone by the women standing at the cross (v.25).: Slow down. Name that they stayed when they couldn't fix it, and that Jesus saw them. Don't hurry past it; offer to talk after.

- Someone says, "I can't believe it's finished for me; I've messed up too much.": Go back to v.30: he said 'it,' not 'you,' is finished. Don't argue; just point to the words and let them stand.
- Silence after a question: Wait. Then rephrase simpler, or ask them to talk to a neighbor first.
- One person dominates: "Thanks. Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet." Talk privately if it continues.
- A question you can't answer: Say so, write it down, bring an answer next week.
- A tangent takes over: "Great question. Let's catch it after class so we can finish the passage."

READ THIS WEEK

- Psalm 22
- Isaiah 53
- John 17:1-5

Free at digdeeper.ai/devotionals/john/19-16-30/lesson

It Is Finished

JOHN 19:16-30 (BSB) · WHO DO YOU SAY I AM? · DIGDEEPER.AI

Key verse: "When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished." And bowing His head, He yielded up His spirit." John 19:30

THE BIG IDEA

The crucified King finished his work; nothing is left undone.

1. THE KING UNDER THE SIGN · JOHN 19:16-22

- Jesus carries his own cross to Golgotha.
- Pilate's sign names him King in three languages.
- Pilate refuses to change it.

Carrying His own _____, He went out to The Place of the Skull.

Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have _____."

Discuss: Pilate meant the sign as a joke or a jab. What does it say that turned out to be true?

2. AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS · JOHN 19:23-27

- Soldiers split his clothes and gamble for the tunic.
- Even this fulfills Scripture (Psalm 22:18).
- Dying, Jesus provides a home for his mother.

The tunic was _____, woven in one piece from top to bottom.

Then He said to the disciple, "Here is your _____."

Discuss: Jesus is in agony, yet he looks at his mother and makes sure she has a home. What does that show you about him?

3. IT IS FINISHED · JOHN 19:28-30

- Jesus knows everything is accomplished.
- "I am thirsty" fulfills Scripture.
- "It is finished": a work completed, not a life defeated.

Knowing that everything had now been _____, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."

He said, "It is _____." And bowing His head, He yielded up His spirit.

Discuss: Jesus says "It is finished," not "I am finished." What is the difference?

Read this week: Psalm 22 · Isaiah 53 · John 17:1-5

For Kids: It Is Finished

JOHN 19:16-30 · NAME: _____

Big idea: Jesus finished the job he came to do.

1. PUT THE STORY IN ORDER! NUMBER THE BOXES.

- ☐ Soldiers gamble for Jesus' coat.
- ☐ Jesus says, "It is finished."
- ☐ Jesus gives his mom a new son.
- ☐ Pilate puts a sign above Jesus.
- ☐ Jesus carries his cross to Golgotha.

2. HOW DID THEY FEEL? CIRCLE ONE.

Jesus' mother: happy · sad · worried

The chief priests: happy · sad · worried

The soldiers: happy · sad · worried

Mary Magdalene: happy · sad · worried

3. WORD SEARCH

C U B R K I N G K
R H C T U N I C S
O U U C R K N D O
S R M O T H E R L
S H U R V S K D D
D N R G C F V V I
K P P I L A T E E
H H Y S S O P G R
F I N I S H E D S

CROSS · KING · PILATE · TUNIC · SOLDIERS · MOTHER · HYSSOP · FINISHED

4. SECRET CODE

1=D 2=E 3=F 4=H 5=I 6=N 7=S 8=T

5 8 5 7 3 5 6 5 7 4 2 1

5. DRAW IT!

Draw the sign above the cross that says JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

6. MEMORY VERSE

"When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, It is finished." John 19:30 Say it to a grown-up: ☐ ☐ ☐

Jesus finished his work, so I don't have to _____. _____