**1. Motivate**

When have you been frustrated by your inability to fix something?

* get the chainsaw/lawnmower/string trimmer running
* house foundation settling, causes cracks
* radio won’t pick up favorite station
* Wi-Fi doesn’t reach the whole house
* one of the kids cannot understand how to do well in a school class
* neighbor is uncooperative
* water keeps coming in the garage at the smallest rain
* Internet/cable service keeps going out
* dripping faucet or slow drain
* one of my credit cards is now and then rejected for no reason
* we are hounded by bill collectors for someone with the same name as us
* internet, cable service keeps going out

A video introduction is available. View at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_grdt782t> If you have no Wi-Fi where you teach, best to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/se54bmff>

**2. Transition**

Some things we just cannot fix on our own.

* A broken relationship with God is certainly one of those things.
* Forgiveness is possible only because Jesus died for our sins.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 God’s Control of Events

Listen for Pilate’s claim.

John 19:8-11 (NIV) When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, 9 and he went back inside the palace. "Where do you come from?" he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. 10 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

What do you think Pilate was afraid of?

* in his mind, afraid Jesus *might* indeed be God become man
* afraid of political trouble with the Jews
* afraid of ending up out of favor with Caesar
* really didn’t want to condemn an innocent man
* his wife had had a bad dream about all this

Why would Pilate want to question Jesus again?

* curious
* maybe he wanted to see if there was something he had missed
* still didn’t have a clear picture of who Jesus really was

Even though Pilate’s assessment of his own authority was true, how was his thinking flawed, especially in that moment?

* he had political or judicial power to free or condemn Jesus
* ultimately God was in control, not Pilate
* he was actually a “bit player” in a much bigger event than he realized

What lessons might Jesus have been teaching in His response to Pilate recorded in verse 11?

* God is in control
* this was God’s plan, history pivoted on this whole sequence of events
* similarly, we must realize that throughout all of history, God is still in control
* we make free will choices and react to events, but God is accomplishing His purposes no matter what

How does God’s authority differ from the authority exercised by institutions in your life?

* as individuals we have a free will to make choices
* the institutions in our lives (local, state, federal government, businesses, etc.) are run by humans who make choices based on profit and loss or by politics
* their power and authority are granted by Sovereign God
* whatever these people or institutions do, God will still accomplish His purposes

How does it make you feel to know the events around the passion of Jesus were part of God’s plan?

* in awe of God’s power and authority
* grateful that we can have sins forgiven because of what God accomplished in these events
* encouraged to trust in God’s direction in our lives – on a personal level and on a worldwide level

3.2 Jesus Suffered in Our Place

Listen for how Pilate is manipulated.

John 19:14-18 (NIV) It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. "Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. 15 But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. 16 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. 17 Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). 18 Here they crucified him, and with him two others--one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

Pilate wanted to preserve his authority. What position or possession might you be tempted to preserve at the expense of doing the right thing?

* new car, new boat, new pickup truck
* getting a substantial raise
* house in the right neighborhood
* promotion at work
* impress the right person with whom you wish a relationship
* voted into an important government office

Pilate acted under political pressure. When and why might we allow the pressures of the moment to compromise our beliefs or standards?

* told by a boss to take action that you know is illegal or immoral
* peer pressure from friends or family
* faced by an opportunity of great financial gain
* see a possibility to gain power and/or authority

The religious leaders rejected Jesus as King of their lives. Who or what are the "kings" that people worship today?

* material things
* popularity
* relationships
* substance abuse – from hard drugs, to alcohol, to chocolate
* riotous living – party hearty, sex, binge drinking
* climbing the social ladder
* entertainment

What emotions do you experience when you think about Jesus’ crucifixion?

* outrage that an innocent and righteous man … God Himself … was executed
* cannot imagine not only the physical pain, but the spiritual suffering to have all the sins of all mankind for all time be heaped upon Jesus
* grateful for the forgiveness He has provided

When have you been overwhelmed by the sacrifice Jesus made for you?

* when I fail Him repeatedly
* when I experience a difficult situation and remember Jesus suffered far more
* reminded of all of this during a Lord’s Super (communion)
* beyond my understanding how God is at work in all of this and how it all fits together in God’s plan to culminate history
* I don’t deserve His forgiveness

3.3 Jesus Died for Our Salvation

Listen for Jesus final words.

John 19:28-30 (NIV) Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." 29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. 30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

What was the first saying from the cross John recorded and what was its significance?

* “I am thirsty”
* showed his humanity
* yes, He was/is God, but he had the same human physical and emotional needs as each of us
* He was suffering

Why did Jesus receive something to drink at this point when He had refused earlier?

* earlier it was alcoholic and intended to deaden the pain
* He realized He could not avoid any of the punishment He must take
* here he was basically dehydrated and was reacting to that
* seems like a totally physical response to His condition

What did Jesus mean when He said, "It is finished"? What is its significance, even to us?

* He realized this was the final moment of physical death
* physically His vital signs were about to cease
* spiritually He was about to be separated from God the Father – this was the death He took for us
* He received the condemnation of separation from God the Father that we deserved
* this is the punishment He took for us

What do you find hopeful about Jesus’ declaration, “It is finished”?

* I don’t have to be separated from God
* Jesus took that punishment
* I can have an ongoing personal relationship with the Very God of the Universe … even though I don’t deserve it

Why is the crucifixion of Jesus an essential element of the gospel?

* He took our punishment
* He made it possible for us to be forgiven
* God’s righteousness/justice is satisfied
* the sin of all mankind was, indeed, punished
* God’s holiness requires punishment of sin … that happened … He took it upon Himself in the person of Jesus

How would you describe the importance of the cross to someone who needed to hear it?

* we are all sinners – we don’t even live up to what our own consciences consider right living
* sin had to be punished
* otherwise, we would be sentenced to death … spiritual death … eternal separation from a loving God
* Jesus took our place … dying for us on the cross

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Give thanks.

* Reflect on the salvation we have in Jesus
* Thanking Him for forgiving your sins.

Offer forgiveness.

* Since you have been forgiven by the blood of Christ, identify someone in your life who has wronged you.
* Reach out to them with a word of forgiveness.

Share the message.

* The forgiveness and salvation Jesus provided through His death is available to all.
* Share this truth with a friend who does not know Jesus.

Cryptogram Puzzle

This message rolled up in a soda bottle came over the wall of the embassy in Rwangua Fagium. All our decoders are off getting their Covid vaccine shots. We need you to decode it using what is left of the decryption key above. When you finish it, forward to your head deacon immediately. For decoding assistance and further Family Activities go to <https://tinyurl.com/se54bmff>

