



4

The Crucifixion

Key Theme

- God's plan of redemption was in place before time.

Key Passages

- Matthew 27:29–35, 27:45–46; John 19:30; Romans 5:6–9

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe what happened at the Cross.
- Explain what was finished on the Cross.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will practice the memory verse by completing the Memory Verse Review Sheet using the puzzle piece clues. If time allows, they will recite the verse to a partner or to the teacher using only the letter clues.



Activity 1: The Crucifixion Class Notes

Students will fill out The Crucifixion Class Notes as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

Jesus was beaten and mocked. A crown of thorns was placed upon His head, and He was told to carry His cross to Golgotha. Nailed to the Cross, Jesus suffered the Father's wrath and paid the penalty for the sin that was laid upon Jesus. Knowing that He had completed the task the Father had sent Him to do, Jesus said, "It is finished," and died.



Activity 2: Truth Be Told Review Game

Students will review the lesson by playing the Truth Be Told Review Game.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- ☐ Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- ☐ Memory Verse Poster
- ☐ Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student



THE CRUCIFIXION CLASS NOTES

- ☐ Print one The Crucifixion Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- ☐ The Crucifixion Class Notes for each student
- ☐ The Crucifixion Answer Key
- ☐ Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- ☐ Study the Prepare to Share section.
- ☐ Go Before the Throne.

- ☐ Student Take Home Sheets



TRUTH BE TOLD REVIEW GAME

- ☐ Assemble the Truth Be Told Game Board found in your curriculum kit.
- ☐ Print the Truth Be Told Game Components from the Resource DVD-ROM. Keep the Truth Be Told Question Answer Key for your use.
- ☐ Cut apart the Truth Be Told Number Cards. These will determine how many spaces to move.
- ☐ OR bring in dice or a game spinner to be used to move teams around the board.
- ☐ Cut apart the Truth Be Told Question Cards.
- ☐ Bring buttons or other small items to use as game pieces for each team and poster putty for adhering game pieces to the game board.

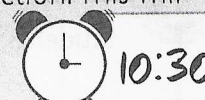
- ☐ Truth Be Told Game Board
- ☐ Truth Be Told Number Cards OR use dice or a game spinner
- ☐ Truth Be Told Question Cards
- ☐ Truth Be Told Question Answer Key
- ☐ Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team
- ☐ Poster putty



Memory Verse

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

The sinless Son of Man had come to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). He would be led like a lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). He would not open His mouth but willingly accept and finish the plan the Father had in place since the beginning of time. After the illegal and unjust arrest and conviction of Jesus, He was sentenced to death—crucifixion on the Cross (John 19:16).

At the time, this was one of the most disgraceful and humiliating forms of death. Pilate had Jesus scourged, and He was mockingly crowned with a painful crown of thorns that was pressed into His head (John 19:1–2). In a very weakened state, He was led out to carry the very cross He would be nailed to and killed upon. He was headed to Golgotha where the crucifixion would occur (John 19:17). Because of His weakened state, the authorities compelled Simon, a Cyrenian, to assist Jesus with the cross (Mark 15:21). Jesus was offered wine with myrrh in order to lessen the pain He was about to endure, but He refused it (Mark 15:23). He was nailed through His hands and His feet to the cross. He was crucified between two criminals (John 19:18). The title Pilate assigned to Him, “King of the Jews,” was placed on the cross (John 19:19). As Jesus hung in agony, soldiers cast lots for His clothes (John 19:23–24), and people shouted insults at Him (Mark 15:29–30). In the midst of all of this, Jesus looked at His mother from the cross, spoke to her, loved her, and left her in the care of His friend and apostle John (John 19:26–27).

After this, knowing that all things were now accomplished, Jesus said, “I thirst!” This was the final Scripture to be fulfilled (John 19:28).

As Jesus suffered, many heard Him cry out to His Father, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mark 15:34). And finally, as He gave up His spirit, Jesus said, “It is finished!” (John 19:30).

Jesus was physically distressed, no doubt. But when He felt that His Father had forsaken Him, this was a distress that went beyond the physical. What did Jesus mean? What was He feeling? It may have been at this point after suffering so immeasurably, knowing that He would soon die, that He also felt the weight and extent of God’s wrath on Him for sins He did not, nor could He ever, commit!

In this act of bearing God’s wrath upon Himself, Jesus finished the work the Father had sent Him to do; the work of redemption was now complete. The punishment for sin had been poured out on the perfect Lamb of God. The debt for sin was paid in full for all who would follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the wonder of the gospel! God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. We are justified by His blood. And because Jesus was willing to take the wrath upon Himself, we shall be saved from the wrath due us for our sin (Romans 5:6–9).

In God’s gracious and merciful plan, He made His only Son, Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us. Jesus took the sin, the wrath, and the punishment. In exchange, believers receive the precious righteousness of God that is the very nature of Jesus Christ and the promise of eternal life with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:21).

As we meditate on the truth of Jesus’s death and what it accomplished for sinners who would one day believe, we can see what led the Apostle Paul to declare in his letter to the Romans,

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

“For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?”
“Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?”

For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen (Romans 11:33–36).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

People sometimes ask who killed Jesus. Who was responsible for His death? Was it the Romans, the Jewish leaders, the Jewish people? The answer is yes . . . and more.

Certainly, the Jewish leaders had a hand in Jesus’s crucifixion. God tells us in His Word that it was the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people who plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him (Matthew 26:3–4). The Jewish leaders demanded that

Jesus be killed rather than the criminal Barabbas (Matthew 27:20). The power and reputation of Jesus threatened these Jewish leaders. They felt compelled to be rid of Him and plotted His death (John 11:47–50, 11:53).

The people of Israel also participated in the death of Jesus as they shouted, “Crucify Him, crucify Him!” during His trial (Luke 23:21).

However, in the end, it was the Romans, under the authority of the governor, Pontius Pilate, who actually authorized the crucifixion. Jesus’s death was physically carried out by Roman soldiers, who erected the cross, drove the nails into His hands and feet, and pierced His side (Matthew 27:27–37).

This corporate responsibility for Jesus’s death is confirmed in Scripture. It was Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel together who cooperated to kill Jesus (Acts 4:27). And this was an unusual conspiracy as these groups were often at odds with one another but united together to murder the Savior. And let us not forget that we, too, caused the Savior’s death. It was our sin for which He died.

But that is not the only answer to the question of who killed Jesus. As we search God’s Word, we will come to understand that, amazingly, the death of Jesus Christ was ordained and accomplished by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God Himself (Acts 2:23, 4:28).

The prophet Isaiah spoke of Christ’s torture and death nearly 700 years before it occurred. And Isaiah wrote that it pleased the Lord to bruise Him and put Him to grief. God’s plan had always been that His Son’s soul would be an offering for sin (Isaiah 53:10).

In what sense did it please the Lord? God the Father was pleased that His eternal plan of salvation was fulfilled (Ephesians 1:4). He was pleased that the death of His Son would bring eternal life to many (Matthew 1:21). He was pleased to demonstrate His love for sinners through such a magnificent sacrifice (Romans 5:8).

Yes, it ultimately was God Himself who determined, before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8), to send His Son to live a perfect life, to die, and to be raised again from the dead so that sinners could be forgiven. In fact, this would be the ONLY possible way sinners could be reconciled to the holy, perfect, righteous God.

And yet, here lies the paradox—the tension between man’s responsibility and God’s sovereignty. For in spite of God’s pre-determination of Christ’s death, each man will be held responsible for the role

he played in completing God’s plan. It was still an act of “lawless hands” as Peter said (Acts 2:23). And Jesus Himself said He must go as had been determined, but woe to the one who betrayed Him (Luke 22:22).

The death of God the Son—Jesus Christ—on the Cross is undoubtedly the most horrific sin ever committed. And yet in it, we see the absolute sovereignty of God. In spite of the evil perpetrated, God’s infinitely good and eternal plan was perfectly fulfilled. The Cross shows us more clearly than anything else that God’s perfect purposes will be accomplished in spite of, and even through, the evil intentions of sinners (Romans 8:28).

We cannot leave the topic of the Crucifixion—and who was responsible for it—without a careful examination of our own hearts. We who have come to faith in Christ are also guilty of His blood, shed on the Cross for us. He died to pay the penalty for our sins (Romans 5:8, 6:23). Therefore, we should live in way that shows gratitude for what Jesus has done. He has redeemed us by His precious blood (1 Peter 1:18–19). He bore our sins in His own body on the tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds we have been healed (1 Peter 2:24–25).

If you belong to Christ, you may rejoice! For this is an amazing plan of God—that through the perfect life and death of Jesus Christ, He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21). Oh, what a Savior we serve! And what hope we have in Him!

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, you have your love upon us! You became sin so that we sinners could escape the wrath of God we deserve. This plan of redemption was in place from before the creation of the world—and you kept your promise. Your perfect plan wove through thousands of years of history until on the Cross, the promised Savior finished the work you sent Him to do. Jesus, you took the wrath of God that I deserve! How can I do anything but humbly worship you in gratitude with my life? Compel my students to see your great love and respond in a similar way. To you be the glory!



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have the students recite the verse together, to each other, or to you.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



The Crucifixion Class Notes

MATERIALS

- ☐ The Crucifixion Class Notes for each student
- ☐ The Crucifixion Class Notes Answer Key
- ☐ Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Do not work ahead. We'll complete them together during class.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we complete the class notes today, we will talk about one of the most important events in the history of the world—Jesus's Crucifixion.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Refer to Lessons 1, 2, and 3 Lesson Theme Posters. Things were suddenly moving along very quickly for Jesus. He knew that soon it would all be over, and His mission would be complete. Jesus had been betrayed by Judas; He had been arrested and accused for crimes He did not commit; and His friend Peter denied knowing Him!

Matthew 27:29–35

The Jews wanted Jesus killed because He said He was God! And they demanded that the Roman government crucify Him! They cried out to Pilate, the governor, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" And Pilate turned Jesus over to be tortured and crucified.

That's where we will pick up this true historical account of Jesus's crucifixion. Turn to Matthew 27:29–35. Let's read those verses. *Choose students to read the verses.*

➤ Use the New Testament History Poster included with your teacher kit as you teach the lesson. Emphasize that Jesus ministered only 3 years, and He lived only about 35 years. Yet His life changed the world forever and brought eternal life to all who believe.

EXAMINE THE WORD

OK. I'm going to ask you some questions about those verses so we can understand them better.

Observe the Text

? What did they place on Jesus's head? *Matthew 27:29. A crown of thorns.*

Jesus had said He was the King of the Jews. So the Roman soldiers made a painful crown of thorns and put a reed or a stick in His hand. They were making fun of Him.

? What did they do after they crowned Him with the thorns? It is at the end of Matthew 27:29. *They bowed before Him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews."*

? They were really making fun of Him! And after they had their fun with Him what did they do? Look in Matthew 27:30. *They spat on Him and took the reed and hit Him on the head.*

The reed was probably a good sized stick. And they took it from Jesus and started to beat Him on the head, while they spat on Him. The Bible says they then led Him away to be crucified. Jesus had already been beaten, then the crown put on His head, and now the heavy cross placed on His back to drag up the hill where He would die!

? He was very weak. And they came across a man named Simon of Cyrene. What did the people make Simon do? Look in Matthew 27:32. *They compelled him to bear Jesus's Cross.*

Jesus had no strength left. He could not carry His cross all the way to the place where He would be crucified. So this man, Simon, was forced to help Him.

? Where were they headed? Where would Jesus be crucified? It is in Matthew 27:33. *Golgotha.*

? What was another name for Golgotha? *Matthew 27:33. Place of a Skull.*

? What happened to Jesus at Golgotha? Look at the beginning of Matthew 27:35. *They crucified Him.*

Jesus was nailed to the Cross and left to die. He wasn't able to speak much from the Cross. But He did say a few things. And I want to look at the very last things Jesus said from the Cross while He was dying.

Turn to Matthew 27:45–46. Follow along as I read those verses. *Read Matthew 27:45–46.*

Matthew 27:45–46

- ? Matthew 27:45 says that from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness. What time do you suppose that was? *Matthew 27:45. Allow discussion.*

In biblical times they counted “daylight” hours to tell time. So, 6:00 a.m. started the day—6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. was the first hour of daylight. That would be the first hour.

Jesus was actually nailed to the Cross about 9:00 a.m. (which would be the third hour). Then at the sixth hour (which would be 12:00 or noon by our time) it began to get very dark. The darkness lasted until the ninth hour, (3:00 p.m. by our time). It must have been very strange and eerie to see that darkness come over the earth in the middle of the day.

- ? At about 3:00 p.m. (the ninth hour) Jesus cried out. What did He say? Look in Matthew 27:46. It is written there in both Aramaic and English. You can read the English part. *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*

He cried out to God. He felt completely alone. He felt like God had deserted and rejected Him when He needed His Father the very most! It must have been a terrible time for Jesus.

- ? And before He died, Jesus said something else. We can find it in John's Gospel. Turn to John 19:30. Let's read it. *Choose a student to read John 19:30.* This was the end of Jesus's human life. What did He say? *It is finished!*

John 19:30

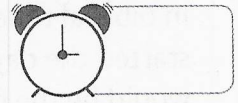
- ? And what did Jesus give up? *He gave up His spirit.*

Discover the Truth

Jesus was dead. He died a horrible death on the Cross. He said for all to hear, “It is finished.” He had lived a life of perfect obedience to His Father. And now that part of His mission was over.

As He died, Jesus felt like God had forsaken Him. He felt completely alone. His pain was terrible, but Jesus was also experiencing God's wrath, His anger, His punishment for sin. The wrath of God—His heavenly Father—was being poured out on Him because of the sins of everyone who would ever believe in Him for eternal life. These were sins that Jesus did not and COULD not commit. Jesus is the only one who ever lived who did NOT deserve God's wrath and punishment. And yet as He hung on the Cross, that is what He had to endure. But He knew that His pain and suffering would offer forgiveness and rest to everyone who would believe in Him.

- ? Let's do a quick review of this amazing day! Will someone read #1 on your class notes? What is the answer there? *Assign a reader. Jesus, Cross. Have students complete #1.*
- ? What was Jesus feeling as He died and bore God's wrath on the Cross? Look at #2. How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. God. Have students complete #2.*
- ? Will someone read #3. How will you complete that? *Assign a reader. Wrath, punishment. Have students complete #3.*
- ? And will someone read #4? What did Jesus say right before He died? *Assign a reader. It is finished. Have Students complete #4.*



READ THE WORD

Wow! What a plan God had. How He loves sinners—that He would send His perfect Son, Jesus, to die so that sinners could be saved for all eternity!

Romans 5:6–9

The Apostle Paul understood Jesus's mission and God's plan. He wrote about it and explained it very well. Turn to Romans 5:6–9. Let's read it.
Romans 5:6–9. Choose students to read.

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Who did Christ die for? It is at the end of Romans 5:6. *Romans 5:6. The ungodly.*
- ? Right. So who are the ungodly? *Allow discussion.*
The ungodly are sinners. We are ALL ungodly sinners. The Bible says that we all deserve God's wrath and punishment because of our sin.
- ? But God had a plan! What did God do for sinners? How did God show His love? Look at Romans 5:8. *Romans 5:8. He showed His love when Jesus died while we were still sinners.*
That's right. God showed us His amazing love by sending Jesus to die for sinners even though He had committed NO sin.
- ? And someone read Romans 5:9 again. *Assign a reader.*
- ? This verse says that sinners who believe in Jesus are saved from something. What is that? What are we saved from? *Romans 5:9. Wrath.*

? Whose wrath are believers saved from? *Romans 5:9. God's Wrath.*

Romans 5:9 tells us that sinners who trust Jesus are justified or made right with God. They are forgiven of their sins. Sinners who repent are saved from God's wrath because Jesus took it on Himself when He died on the Cross.

Discover the Truth

That is why Jesus came to earth. So sinners could be saved from God's wrath! God showed His love in that while we were still sinners, Jesus died. This is amazing! He was perfect. Jesus took all the pain, fury, anger, and rage of God's wrath for everyone who would come to Him in repentance and faith! And He did it before we ever said we were sorry for our sins!

This is the gospel! This is so important to know and understand. Jesus knew that He would have to die on the Cross to finish His work on earth. And that is what He did. But it was not easy. He did it because He loved sinners. And the Bible tells us over and over that we can be saved from the wrath of God we deserve if we are truly sorry for our sins, turn away from them, and turn TO Jesus! Sinners can become children of God if, and only if, we receive Him and believe in His name! He is the ONLY way to eternal life. He is the ONLY one who could take God's wrath upon Himself for the sins of others.

? Let's review quickly from the class notes. Will someone read #5 for us? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Love. Have students complete #5.*

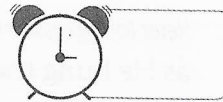
? And on to #6. Will someone read that? *Assign a reader. Sinners. Have students complete #6.*

? Who will read #7? What are sinners saved from? *Assign a reader. Wrath. Have students complete #7.*

? And #8? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Jesus. Have students complete #8.*

? And the last one, #9. Will someone read that? *Assign a reader. Saved, Savior. Have students complete #9.*

I pray that each of you will come to understand God's love in Jesus Christ and turn to Him in repentance and faith.



➤ If time allows, assign students to re-read the points on the class notes as a review and briefly discuss them.



Truth Be Told Review Game

MATERIALS

- ☐ Truth Be Told Game Board
- ☐ Truth Be Told Question Cards
- ☐ Truth Be Told Question Answer Key
- ☐ Truth Be Told Number Cards (or game spinner or dice)
- ☐ Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team
- ☐ Poster putty

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide your class into teams. Teams will take turns drawing a Truth Be Told Question Card. Team members will take turns answering the questions. They will quickly determine an answer and give it. If they are correct, they will draw a Truth Be Told Number Card and move that number of spaces on the game board. As play proceeds, follow the directions on the game board. Alternate between teams as long as time permits.

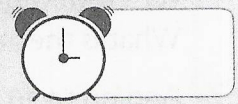
We are going to review now by playing "Truth Be Told." I'll put you into teams. Teams will take turns picking a question card and answering the question. If the

answer is correct, you will draw a number card and move your game piece that many spaces. All directions on the board must be followed. Place used cards underneath the stacks. *Answers to the questions are provided on the Truth Be Told Question Answer Key on the Resource DVD-ROM.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

This game was a fun way to review a very serious lesson. *Congratulate the winning team.*

The Bible tells us how Jesus—in an amazing act of love—suffered and died on the Cross. All of this was God's plan from the beginning. God had promised to send a Savior, so sinful people could be reconciled to the perfect, holy God. And Jesus perfectly fulfilled that plan. He finished His work on earth and made a way for sinners to have eternal life.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Refer to the Lesson 4 Lesson Theme Poster. Jesus suffered and died on the Cross. And as He hung there, the wrath of God was laid on Him. God poured out the punishment for sin on Jesus. Jesus had never sinned. He was perfect. But God's plan was for Him to bear the sins of others and make a way for them to get to heaven. Jesus willingly died and suffered in that horrible way in order to be the perfect sacrifice for all who would believe in Him and receive Him as their Savior.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

When you love Jesus, it makes you ache inside to think about how He died. He suffered so much. He was mocked and humiliated even though He had never done anything wrong.

? Let me ask you a question about the Crucifixion. Who killed Jesus? Are the Roman soldiers and the Roman government responsible? Are the Jewish leaders who had Him arrested and then called for His crucifixion responsible? Who do you think killed Jesus? *Allow discussion.*

All the people I mentioned and more were responsible for killing Jesus. It was an evil act, and all of them—the Jewish leaders, the Roman government and citizens, and the Jewish people—worked together to crucify Jesus.

But remember that from the beginning, this was God's plan. Yes, the Crucifixion was God's plan. Jesus's death and the way He died was planned by God ahead of time. In Genesis 3:15, God first hinted at a Savior who would be bruised, but who would defeat Satan. And God spoke of a Savior through the prophets many times. They gave many prophecies about the way Jesus would die. God knew Jesus must die as the perfect sacrifice for sin.

The Crucifixion of Jesus shows the sovereignty of God. He is in control of all circumstances and events on earth. And in providing salvation for sinners, God worked His righteousness through the evil acts of people and events. As strange as it sounds, the Crucifixion of Jesus was good—good in that it provided a way for sinners to be made righteous through what Jesus did. That's why we call the Friday before Easter—the day on which Jesus was crucified—"Good Friday." Sinners now know the way to heaven. That way is Jesus. He is the only way, the only truth, and the only life that leads to eternal peace, hope, and joy with God forever.

➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise the Father who loved us so much that He sent Jesus to die for our sins.
- Thank Jesus who suffered and died so that we might have life.
- Ask God to help us to truly understand sin and salvation, so we can be saved and tell others about what Jesus did when He died on the Cross.

Notes

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