

# GROWING IN FAITH



## John 19:28-30

“<sup>28</sup> After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), “I am thirsty.” <sup>29</sup> A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”

For More Information Contact:  
Rev. Josh Attaway,  
Edmond Campus Pastor  
jattaway@stlukesokc.org

## STARTING OUT

Begin with a prayer. You can offer your own prayer or use the one below.

Dear God, we come together acknowledging the grief, loss, and hardships we all face in life. We are grateful to remember that You are the One who chose to suffer and sacrifice for our sake. Remind us that we never have to be alone in our suffering. Lead us into this time and speak to us Your message of hope once more. Amen.

Read the scripture verse for the day – John 19:28-30. Remind everyone that we are reading through the last 12 chapters of John’s Gospel. This lesson covers chapters 18 and 19.

## PLAY THE VIDEO

## GOING DEEPER

Josh mentioned that when the authorities came to arrest Jesus they brought somewhere between 600-700 soldier, police, and Pharisees with them.

Why did they feel the need for such force while arresting Jesus?

What does this tell us about how the political and religious leaders viewed power?

Read John 18:4-6 together. Why did the soldiers fall to the ground? What does this tell us about the power of God?

Jesus was arrested and was likely kept in a dark, cold, and isolated prison cell below the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest.

Share a time when you have experienced one of those “dark pits” of life.

Does knowing that Jesus experienced one of these dark pits bring you hope? Why or why not?

Read John 1:1-5. How have you seen the light shine in the dark moments of your life?

How can we be the light that shines in the darkness for others?

How does standing on this side of Easter allow us to look at the death of Jesus and call it “Good Friday”?

Are there moments in your life that seemed terrible at the time, but you can look back on and see the good that came from it?

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## GOING DEEPER

Josh talked about three classical atonement theories.

*Christus Victor* - Origen (2<sup>nd</sup> century), Augustine (4<sup>th</sup> century), and Luther (16<sup>th</sup> century)

### Main Points:

- Christ defeated sin and death
- Typically contains a story of Jesus tricking the devil

*Penal Substitutionary* - Anselm of Canterbury (1100)

### Main Points:

- Human disobeyed and dishonored God
- There was a debt owed to God in order to bring reconciliation
- Only God was capable of paying this debt
- Only a human could fairly pay the debt

*Moral Influence* - Peter Abelard (1100)

### Main Points:

- Responds to the cruelty of the Penal Substitutionary Theory
- God doesn't demand the blood of the innocent for reconciliation
- The suffering of Christ shows God's love for us and inspires us to be more loving

What are the pros and cons to each of these theories?

Which theory do you find most helpful? Why?

“The worst isn't the last thing about the world. It's the next to the last thing. The last thing is the best. It's the power from on high that comes down into the world, that wells up from the rock-bottom worst of the world like a hidden spring. Can you believe it? The last, best thing is the laughing deep in the hearts of the saints, sometimes our hearts even. Yes. You are terribly loved and forgiven. Yes. You are healed. All is well.” – Frederick Buechner

Remind the group that they may want to read John 20-21 before next week.

## Closing

Take time to lift up joys and concerns in your group before closing in prayer. You can offer your own prayer or use the one below.

Jesus, thank you for the gift of your sacrifice. Thank you for Your great love in our lives. Remind us that we are never alone no matter what we go through in life. Help us to always see Your light in the darkness. Use us to bring your light into the world. Amen.