



FEBRUARY'S THEME

PERFORM

SCRIPTURE John 19:1-16

BOTTOM LINE No king but Jesus

MEMORY VERSES John 19:17-19



•Tonight we will be in the choir format and we will have communion.

MY GOAL FOR THE NIGHT:



Tonight is the third night of our Captives series. This evening we will hear from a speaker about the reality of sex trafficking. One of the important things that we will hear is that we are not powerless in the fight against this form of modern slavery. There are ways for us, even the youngest among us, to prevent this from happening in the future. In our devotions, we will continue in the story of John. In our reading for tonight, Jesus is handed over to Pilate, judged, and then crucified with the sign "King of the Jews" placed over his head.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Connect

Highs/Lows and Prayer Requests - Share your "highs" and "lows" with the group and then gather prayer requests to distribute to the group for prayer throughout the next week.

Message

(Early Groups you will have to treat this more like a "pre-test" than debrief.)

- What are the steps that you take to ensure that your interactions with others online (including social) media are appropriate and safe? What are some of the risky behaviors that you would tell your peers to avoid?
- What does an appropriate relationship with an adult look like? What are the boundaries (emotional, physical, social) that you would expect to maintain with an adult?
- If you observed a friend who seemed to have an inappropriate relationship with an adult, what would you do? (They will hear about strategies in the large group).
- Does the reality of sex-trafficking seem like a "far-off" problem? Why does it seem that way? Or, why doesn't it? Would you say that there are ways that we indirectly support trafficking? How so?
- What would you say are the reasons that a Christian would be concerned about this issue? What are the reasons that we would not be concerned about this issue?



Devotional: 19:1-19a

Who is in charge? That is one of the fundamental questions in this story. It at least appears in this story that the Roman Emperor, the religious leadership, and the crowd are holding all of the power. They are the ones who make the law, interpret the law, and enforce the law. In this case, the enforcement of the law is death by crucifixion, yet Jesus never really acts as-if these other groups of people truly have any power over him.

He embodies this confidence through his trial, his crucifixion, and his death on a cross. Never once does he acknowledge the power of these groups over him. The only power, he is certain, is the power of God that trumps these groups and even death. The author of John is careful to add the detail about the sign over Jesus' head while he is on the cross. It says, "king of the Jews." It is an ironic sign because Jesus never said he was, the religious leadership falsely accused him of claiming it, but in the it is what his resurrection proves him to be. Take that death!

One of the realities of being alive is that you will be surrounded by people, systems, and situations that claim to have the type of ultimate power over you that Jesus dealt with that day. But, the good news is that the same power that animated Jesus is the same power that resides in you. Therefore, there is no one but God that own you, take away your life, deny your existence, or keep you from being the truest form of yourself that you can be.

- There are a lot of people, places, and systems that try to make us fearful or want us to believe that they are in control of who we are. Maybe there is a bully that wants you to believe the names they call you. Maybe there is a tryout that left you on the "C" team and now you're feeling like a "C" person. Maybe you've received a diagnosis that has made you feel like you are completely out of control. What would it look like if you didn't believe that they had that power over you? What if what you truly are is a child of God? The same God that overcame death?
- We see people who get caught up in believing that they are somehow trapped and inferior. Certainly, that is one of the main traumas inflicted on victims of trafficking. But, it happens in small ways, too. Our friends get caught up in bad relationships where they are made to believe they are less than valuable. We have friends who have family situations that leave them feeling out of control. How would you talk to these friends about the way that these situations don't get to define them? How would you encourage them to look to their worth and meaning in who God says they are?

EXTRAS

Empowered Stories

What You Need: Paper, pens, phone, your memory.

What you Do: Many of us have a story from our own lives or a story that we have seen where someone took the time to speak empowerment into us. For me it was a track coach in ninth grade. Mr. Johnson taught me the way that my work ethic connects to the overall work ethic of the team. I wasn't the fastest on the team, but somehow the way that I worked hard was just as valuable. Has that happened for you? Has someone empowered you in a way that made you do life differently or see things differently? Share that story with your group and then think about a letter or note that you could send to that person thanking them for the way that they spoke into your life.

JUST FOR FUN

NCAA Tournament Brackets

What You Need: Brackets and Pens

What You Do: We will hand out brackets after the tournament for you to score. You'll hand in your high score and we'll compare it with the other groups. The high scoring bracket wins dinner on StuMin.