



Week Ten: John 19:31-42

Death That Brings Life

Study Guide for the week of
November 14, 2021

Read John 19:31-42. Some questions to answer and discuss:

1. What is one fact about you that most of your friends don't know?
2. What was fulfilled by the circumstances of Jesus' death? ([19:36-37](#))
3. Why did Joseph go to see Pilate? ([19:38](#))
4. Why was Joseph a secret disciple? ([19:38](#))
5. What was significant about Nicodemus, the person who went with Joseph to take away Jesus' body? ([19:39](#))
6. What is significant about Jesus' death on the cross?
7. How can you thank Jesus today for His sacrifice on the cross?
8. When and why have you been a secret disciple of Jesus?
9. When have you taken a stand that you were previously afraid to take?
10. To whom do you want to reveal openly that you are a disciple of Jesus?

Life Application Bible Notes

[19:31](#) It was against God's law to leave the body of a dead person exposed overnight ([Deuteronomy 21:23](#)), and it was also against the law to work after sundown on Friday, when the Sabbath began. This is why the religious leaders urgently wanted to get Jesus' body off the cross and buried by sundown.

[19:31-35](#) These Romans were experienced soldiers. They knew from many previous crucifixions whether a man was dead or alive. There was no question that Jesus was dead when they checked him, so they decided not to break his legs as they had done to the other victims. Piercing his side and seeing the sudden flow of blood and water (indicating that the sac surrounding the heart and the heart itself had been pierced) was further proof of his death. Some people say Jesus didn't really die, that he only passed out—and that's how he came back to life. But we have the witness of an impartial party, the Roman soldiers, that Jesus died on the cross (see [Mark 15:44, 45](#)).

[19:32](#) The Roman soldiers would break victims' legs to hasten the death process. When a person hung on a cross, death came by suffocation, but the victim could push against the cross with his legs to hold up his body and keep breathing. With broken legs, he would suffocate almost immediately.

[19:34, 35](#) The graphic details of Jesus' death are especially important in John's record because he was an eyewitness.

[19:36, 37](#) Jesus died as the lambs for the Passover meal were being slain. Not a bone was to be broken in these sacrificial lambs ([Exodus 12:46](#); [Numbers 9:12](#)). Jesus, the Lamb of God, was the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world ([1 Corinthians 5:7](#)).

[19:38, 39](#) Four people were changed in the process of Jesus' death. The criminal, dying on the cross beside Jesus, asked Jesus to include him in his Kingdom ([Luke 23:39-43](#)). The Roman officer proclaimed that Jesus was surely the Son of God ([Mark 15:39](#)). Joseph and Nicodemus, members of the Jewish high council and secret followers of Jesus ([7:50-52](#)), came out of hiding. These men were changed more by Jesus' death than by his life. They realized who Jesus was, and that realization brought out their belief, proclamation, and action. When confronted with Jesus and his death, we should be changed—to believe, proclaim, and act.

[19:38-42](#) Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were secret followers of Jesus. They were afraid to make this allegiance known because of their positions in the Jewish community. Joseph was a leader and honored member of the Jewish high council. Nicodemus, also a member of the high council, had come to Jesus by night ([3:1](#)) and later tried to defend him before the other religious leaders ([7:50-52](#)). Yet they risked their reputations to provide for Jesus' burial. Are you a secret believer? Do you hide your faith from your friends and fellow workers? This is an appropriate time to step out of hiding and let others know whom you follow.

[19:42](#) As they buried Jesus, Nicodemus and Joseph had to hurry to avoid working on the Sabbath, which began Friday evening at sundown. This tomb was probably a cave carved out of the stone hillside. It was large enough for a person to walk into, so Joseph and Nicodemus carried Jesus' body into it. A large stone was rolled in front of the entrance.

Gospel of John Study Guide questions and notes are from