

**Men's Sunday Night Live**  
**Lesson 20 – John 19:1-42**  
**Finding Identity and Purpose**  
**“Even the Death of the Cross”**

Pilate perhaps thought that scourging Jesus (which was illegal) would move the hearts of the Jews and that they would want to see Him released. But their hearts were hard, and they were determined to destroy Him. Pilate wrongly permitted the soldiers to ridicule Jesus, presenting Him with a mock crown, robe, and scepter. The Jews accused Jesus of breaking their law because He claimed to be God. Yet in His messages and miracles, Jesus had proved Himself to be God. But the hard-hearted sinners refused to consider the evidence; they were bent on destroying Him.

Why did Jesus not answer Pilate's question in vs. 9? For one thing, Pilate had not obeyed the truth he had already received; and God does not reveal more truth until we obey what He has already given. “*We have no king but Caesar!*” was their cry.

John records three of Jesus' seven statements from the cross. He is careful to note the fulfillment of Scripture in 1. The gambling for the seamless robe, 2. The giving of the vinegar, and 3. The piercing of His side without breaking any bones. Every detail about the crucifixion was carefully worked out by the hand of God. “*I thirst*” spoke both of physical and spiritual agony, for Jesus suffered the penalty for our sins. He thirsted that we might never thirst. “*It is finished!*” “*tetelestai*” is one word in the Greek text.

God had prepared Nicodemus and Joseph, two members of the Sanhedrin, to bury the body of Jesus. Otherwise, His body probably would have been thrown on the garbage heap outside Jerusalem. Isaiah 53:9 promised that His grave would be with the rich. We must not criticize Joseph for being a “hidden disciple,” for we can see how God used him and Nicodemus to accomplish His purposes. Had their faith been known openly, they would have been prevented by the council from caring for the body of Jesus. When Joseph and Nicodemus touched the dead body of Jesus, they defiled themselves for the Passover. But they did not care, for they had come to trust in the Lamb of God Himself. The Lamb of God had given His life for the sins of the world. His work on earth was finished, and He rested on the Sabbath.



6. In Luke 23:34 Jesus said, “*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.*” Who was He asking the Father to forgive?

7. What does the phrase “*It is finished!*” mean?

8. What does it mean to you that Jesus “*Gave up His Spirit*” (See 19:30)

9. What else happened at the time of Jesus’ death to show that it was not a normal death? What does verse 34 prove?

10. What were Joseph and Nicodemus risking by asking for Jesus’ body and burying it?

11. Take some time to meditate on Jesus’ death. What strikes you as important? How has His death affected your life?

## **Seeing Behind Power**

Pilate assumed that he had more power than Jesus because he had authority to condemn Him to death. But Jesus knew that all power ultimately comes from God, even the power of the state. Indeed, one of the reasons Jesus could submit to the injustices of His trial was that He was submitting to the will of God. Pilate and those under him were merely exercising limited authority. Meanwhile, God's purposes were being fulfilled.

What type of power do you have? In your work, at home, in your community. Do you recognize that your authority ultimately comes from God, and that you are ultimately accountable to Him for the use of that power?