

## Worksheet #20: John 19:1–42

**Summary:** Chapter 19 resumes the story of Jesus' trial from Pilate's failed attempt to convince the Jews to release Jesus in place of Barabbas (18:39–40). Trapped between unwavering Jewish demands for crucifixion on the one hand and his own increasingly troublesome fears on the other, Pilate repeatedly fails to convince the Jews that Jesus is not guilty of any crime (19:4, 6). Ultimately, the Jewish appeal to imperial authority ("we have no king but Caesar") causes Pilate to acquiesce (19:15–16).

John's crucifixion account omits many details found in the Synoptics. Rather than focusing on the chain of events and physical agony, John emphasizes the symbolic significance of Christ's accomplished death. In 19:17–18, he mentions that Jesus carried his own cross and was hung between two thieves. He then turns to the placard identifying "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," an ironic theological comment in Pilate's own hand (19:19–22). Next, he tells how the soldiers fulfilled Scripture by gambling over Jesus' clothing (19:23–24). In a rare autobiographical reference (absent from the Synoptics), John tells how Jesus committed Mary to the care of "the disciple whom He loved" (19:25–27). This is significant because it reveals John as an eyewitness of the Crucifixion. After this detail, John briefly records Jesus' last statements on the cross, emphasizing Jesus' intentional fulfillment of Scripture and voluntary completion of His mission on the cross (19:28–30).

In his account of Jesus' burial (19:31–42), John provides several other details absent from the Synoptic accounts. For instance, the entire paragraph regarding the breaking of the thieves' legs appears only here (19:31–37). Joseph of Arimathea appears in all four gospels, yet only John names Nicodemus as present at the burial (19:39).

### Abbreviated Outline<sup>1</sup> (current passage in bold):

- I. INTRODUCTION: THE WORD MADE FLESH (1:1–18)
- II. THE BOOK OF SIGNS: THE SIGNS OF THE MESSIAH (1:19–12:50)
- III. THE BOOK OF EXALTATION: PREPARING THE NEW MESSIANIC COMMUNITY AND THE PASSION OF JESUS (13–20)
  - A. *The Cleansing and Instruction of the New Covenant Community, including Jesus' Final Prayer* (13–17)
  - B. *The Passion Narrative* (18–19)
    - 1. The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus (18:1–11)
    - 2. Jesus Questioned by the High Priest and Denied by Peter (18:12–27)
    - 3. **Jesus Before Pilate (18:28–19:16a)**
    - 4. **Jesus' Crucifixion and Burial (19:16b–42)**
  - C. *Jesus' Resurrection and Appearances, Commissioning of Disciples* (20:1–29)
    - 1. The Empty Tomb (20:1–10)
    - 2. Jesus' Encounter with Mary Magdalene (20:11–18)
    - 3. Jesus' First Appearance, to His Disciples (20:19–23)
    - 4. Jesus' Second Appearance, to Thomas (20:24–29)
  - D. *Concluding Purpose Statement* (20:30–31)
- IV. EPILOGUE: THE COMPLEMENTARY ROLES OF PETER AND THE BELOVED DISCIPLE (21)

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Andreas Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, The Cross, and The Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville, Tenn: B & H Academic, 2009), 307–308.

**Interpretation:** *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. In what way is there deep irony in the three statements made by Romans about Jesus in John 19:3, 5, and 14?  
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2. Why would Pilate bring Jesus before the crowd in 19:4? What would be his purpose in visibly presenting Jesus to the people?  
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3. What does Jesus' statement in 19:11 suggest regarding divine sovereignty? What about human responsibility?  
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4. Notice the references to the fulfillment of Scripture in 19:24 (*cf.* Psa. 22:18), 19:28 (*cf.* Psa. 69:21), and 19:36–37 (*cf.* Zech. 12:10). What does the correspondence of these events to Scripture tell us about the crucifixion?  
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5. What does it mean for “all things” to be “now accomplished” (19:28) and “finished” (19:30) at the Cross?  
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6. Notice that even in death Jesus is active: “bowing His head, he gave up His spirit” (19:30). How should we react to Christ's active obedience in death?  
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7. Consider the risks involved for Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (*cf.* ch. 3; 7:50–51) in participating in Christ's burial. How does their public identification contrast with the behavior of the other disciples?  
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**Application:** *Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.*

8. What does this passage tell us about Jesus? How does it help us to understand “his place in the sweep of redemptive history”?<sup>2</sup>  
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9. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?  
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10. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?  
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<sup>2</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 102.