

# "It Is Finished"

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Following are some personal observations on John 19:23–52: What a mystery to men that God could see hundreds of years down the stream of time and know what men were going to do to His Son, even in such details as the disposal of His robe! Jesus' concern for His mother (Joseph must have been dead) is especially tender and touching, considering His present agony.

The end has now arrived; a final request for drink (another prophetic reference) and Jesus could no longer hold the brittle thread of life together. "It is finished," has been variously interpreted:

1. Initially, it may refer to the purpose of the crucifixion from the Jews' perspective, namely, Jesus' death. This had been a long-standing aim and now it was accomplished.
2. It may refer to the purpose of Jesus' life – to die sacrificially and vicariously for sinful mankind.
3. It may refer to the Law of Moses. All of the types and shadows, prophecies and promises are focused on the cross and the blessings that flow from it. (cf. Mat. 5:17).
4. It may refer to God's precreation plan to redeem man, meticulously worked out through the patriarchs and the prophets, finding fruition in the cross.
5. It is possible, I suppose, that the Lord could have included all of these ideas in His statement.

Now we see the Jews in a spiritual paradox. They had no qualms about crying for innocent blood, but they dare not think of violating a technicality concerning the Sabbath. John makes it clear that this is not hearsay, but he was there and saw these things himself.

Joseph (the Arimethean) and Nicodemus were men who lived in a powder keg. The Sanhedrin, of which they were members, had been preoccupied with the destruction of Jesus for many months. Yet, these men believed in Him to some degree, enough that John calls Joseph a disciple and enough to cause Nicodemus to ascribe Jesus' origin to God. These men were walking an increasingly dangerous tightrope and perhaps risked their careers, if not their lives, in preparing the Lord's body for burial. Many have been quick to condemn them for "secret discipleship," but even so, it appears that they did better than Peter, who had long been a disciple openly, but who, in time of greatest need, deserted and denied his Lord.

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