

#20 JOHN C 19, cont.

VIII 19:28-30, the death of Jesus. The final words, the sour wine, death.

IX v31,32. The urgency for burial caused steps to be taken to accelerate the dying process, the pierced side. These details are necessary to refute later Gnostic concept that since Jesus was a God he was immortal and could not actually die; therefore, he had to appear dead but was only in a coma.

X 38-42. Two brave men risked public disgrace and loss of position by determining to do the right thing for the body of Jesus. Recall that Nicodemus visited Jesus one night and tried to understand his message. He also demanded fairness in the Sanhedrin, 7:40-52, for which he was mocked and scorned. Joseph of Arimathea was also a Jewish leader. a member of the Sanhedrin and a secret disciple.

Some commentators, writing in the safety of a comfortable office with the security of a tenured faculty position, have been critical of Joseph and Nicodemus for being secret followers. I think we should respect them for their courage, decisiveness and generosity.

XI Discuss: Why has the cross become the universal symbol of Christianity? It is the symbol of a tortuous, humiliating execution. The usual mode of execution in Judaism was stoning; for Rome it was beheading. If this were Jesus' fate, what would be our symbol?

XII Next time: John C 20, Willhauck C 13. "I have seen the LORD."  
We will do a short play that we used in 1990.