

# Mark 15:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

## Analysis

**Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor**—Joseph came from Arimathea, likely Ramathaim-zophim northwest of Jerusalem. Honourable means prominent, respected, of high social standing. Counsellor identifies him as a Sanhedrin member, part of the 71-member ruling council. Luke 23:50-51 clarifies he was a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their decision and action—he dissented from the council's condemnation of Jesus. **Which also waited for the kingdom of God**—Joseph was a pious Jew anticipating Messiah's coming. His messianic hope led him to recognize Jesus's identity, making him a secret disciple (John 19:38). **Went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus**—The Greek verb means to dare, take a risk. Joseph's action was bold because publicly identifying with Jesus risked reputation, position, and potentially life.

## Historical Context

Sanhedrin members wielding religious and political authority typically avoided association with executed criminals. Joseph's request was shockingly countercultural—a respected leader publicly honoring one condemned as a blasphemer and insurrectionist. This could have cost him his council position and social standing. Pilate's agreement suggests respect for Joseph's status or desire to avoid Jewish unrest during Passover. That Jesus was buried in a rich man's tomb fulfilled Isaiah 53:9: And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man

in his death. Joseph's unused tomb meant Jesus's burial place was known, verifiable, and unquestionably empty three days later.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. What does Joseph's transformation from secret to public discipleship teach about how crisis can clarify priorities and embolden faith?
2. How does a respected religious leader honoring Jesus's body when apostles fled challenge assumptions about whose faith is strongest?
3. Where might you be a secret disciple for fear of consequences, and what would bold identification with Christ cost?

## Interlinear Text

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ῆλθεν Ἰωσὴφ ὁ ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας εὐσχήμων βουλευτής  
came Joseph of Arimathaea an honourable counsellor  
G2064 G2501 G3588 G575 G707 G2158 G1010

ὅς καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν προσδεχόμενος τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ  
which also for waited the kingdom G3588 G3588  
G3739 G2532 G846 G2258 G4327 G932

θεοῦ τολμήσας εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς Πιλᾶτον καὶ ἤτήσατο τὸ  
of God boldly and went in unto Pilate also craved G3588  
G2316 G5111 G1525 G4314 G4091 G2532 G154

σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ  
the body of Jesus  
G4983 G3588 G2424

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 2:38** (Parallel theme): And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

**Luke 2:25** (Parallel theme): And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

**Luke 23:51** (Kingdom): (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

**Matthew 27:57** (References Jesus): When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

**John 19:38** (References Jesus): And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

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