

## "Secret" Christians

### Scripture Reading — John 12:42-43; 19:38-40

*They would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved human praise more than praise from God.*

—John 12:42-43 —

Two prominent leaders, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, paired up to bury Jesus. These two men had been secret Christians, afraid at first to openly confess Jesus because they would have been excommunicated from the synagogue, the Jewish worshiping community.

But Jesus' death brought a crisis of commitment. Would Joseph and Nicodemus continue to side with family, friends, nation, culture, and place of worship, or would they identify with Jesus?

Nicodemus had come to Jesus at night to ask him some questions (John 3). And in a council discussion he had tried to stand up for Jesus but was quickly shouted down (John 7:50-52). After Jesus' death, though, he came forward to help prepare Jesus' body, and Joseph provided the burial place (Matthew 27:59-60).

In our day a new wave of tolerance is winning college campuses and social network discussions. Public pressure is rising not just to respect someone else's views but to say they are also true. Our culture wants us to say there are many ways to God, and that what is true for me is not necessarily true for you. Yet Christians believe that Jesus is God and is the only way to eternal life (John 14:6).

Are you willing to speak up for Jesus? What stance do you have to take in order to side with him?

### Prayer

*Lord, we confess that we like to be comfortable in our culture. Empower us to stand up for you, whatever the cost. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#), [Witness](#)

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