

Fearful Followers

Scripture Reading — John 19:38-42

Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders.

—John 19:38 —

Joseph and Nicodemus made quite a pair: Joseph was a member of the temple leadership, but was afraid to reveal his trust in Jesus. Nicodemus, fearful of fellow Pharisees, had visited Jesus secretly to ask questions. But together they risked being found out by asking for Jesus' crucified body.

Fearing for their lives, Jesus' other disciples had scurried off. What a gloomy Sabbath the next day must have been for them! It had all happened so fast, and now their leader, whom they'd thought would deliver them, was dead.

Joseph and Nicodemus acted quickly to honor Jesus' dead body "in accordance with Jewish burial customs." Using a large quantity of aloes and myrrh, they wrapped the body properly and placed it in Joseph's unused tomb. Their burial ministry showed devoted commitment.

We're not told how these two men later served Jesus. But we can be glad they graciously did what they could, even though they'd previously been afraid to reveal their loyalty to him.

It's important for us to learn that we don't need to be afraid to let others see our love for Jesus. In fact, we're called to do so. The apostle John wrote, years later, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear" (1 John 4:18). Do you know that perfect love?

Prayer

Father God, as we wait today to celebrate Christ's resur-rection, empower us to be bold in our witness. May we not be afraid to speak out for you. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Life of Jesus](#), [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#), [Love](#), [The Cross](#)

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