

COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS

I. Mark 8:34-38 & Matthew 10:32-33

A. Mark 8:34-38 (ESV) records the words of Jesus, as red as they can get: **34 And calling the crowd to Him with His disciples, He said to them, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. **35** For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. **36** For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? **37** For what can a man give in return for his soul? **38** For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."**

B. Matthew 10:32-33 (ESV) echoes in a similar way: **32 So everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before My Father who is in heaven, **33** but whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny before My Father who is in heaven.**

C. It's probably true in every small town, but if you're a newbie to the community, you sometimes have to be careful what you say about people in public places. Besides the Scriptures having nothing good to say about gossip, you're liable to find yourself talking about someone who's related to the person you're talking about. That can turn out to be very awkward! Honk your horn if you know what I'm saying.

D. Then there's times where someone might say they're proud to know ole so-in-so while someone else will say, ole so-in-so is a buzzard. Another might say, 'Any friend of Billy Wayne Bob is a friend of mine!' Someone else will say, 'Billy Wayne Bob's a complete idiot so you must be too!' But acknowledging Jesus ain't that way!

E. On the night Jesus was betrayed, the disciples all scattered. And as Jesus predicted, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times before the rooster crowed. (And by the way, Jesus knows each of you as well as He knew Peter.) Following His resurrection, Jesus met up with Peter on a Sea of Galilee beach. Three times Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love Me?" Three times Peter answered in the affirmative. The Rock was restored. As for all those disciples that scattered the night of Jesus' arrest, they like Peter, all died as martyrs, except for John. Something happened on the inside of these guys...

F. After Jesus died on the cross, just before the Sabbath was to start, we find the following account in John 19:38-40 (ESV) **38 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away His body. **39** Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. **40** So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. (Joseph and Nicodemus were secret followers of Jesus. But by receiving Jesus' body and preparing it for burial, they showed their true hearts. Their relationship with the Messiah was a secret no more. If Jesus had secret followers back then, I wonder if He has any of those now?)**

G. In our culture, believers are likely to suffer little more than ridicule for their faith in Christ. Skewered, perhaps, on social media. But this is rapidly changing. Persecution's

always just a stone's throw away! In some cultures around the world, if you slapped a "Jesus is Lord" bumper sticker on your car, your family might disown you, your business or livelihood might be destroyed, or worse yet, you could be beaten or killed.

H. As for God's Word, something happens when it's let out of the cage. Isaiah said, God's Word goes forth and doesn't return void. When we read God's Word, it typically requires a response. It was inspired by the Holy Spirit and written to do just that. When the Word goes forth and God puts power on it, it invades our minds and hearts and produces change. It's transformative. Surely you've read a passage at some point and it just came alive. It's like it exploded with life. The Word has an internal effect that produces external results. Conviction of sin occurs, a Holy Spirit prompt to action takes place, or you're inspired to write or compose or create or do something. What might the Lord's Word do for you today?

I. Implicit in our text this morning is a summons, a call to action, an exhortation, and that is: Come out of the shadows and no longer be ashamed to acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord!

J. Last Sunday on Easter, one of our guests wore a suit to Church. Later in the day I happened to run in to him in another setting. He had on a really cool designer style shirt with "Jesus" emblazoned on the front. I said, "Where'd you get that?" He said with a smile, "On the internet!" (Not a thrift store?!) Just to find a shirt like that took some looking. He found it and wore it with joy and conviction as to *Who* his Savior was and how he wanted to honor Him on Resurrection Sunday. He was acknowledging Jesus.

K. A couple weeks ago some of us were eating breakfast together at Denny's. We were being served superbly by two waitresses. Just as they sat down our plates of hot food, Mark asked the two if they minded him saying grace as well as praying for them. They immediately bowed their heads as Mark asked God to bless them. You should have seen their faces. This past Thursday he did it again at Our Lakeside Diner. Those gals were just as surprised and blessed. We were acknowledging Jesus.

L. Jesus shirts are certainly optional but I'm encouraging you to put on Christ, let Him dwell in your heart so deeply that He can't help but manifest in your words and deeds. I'm not telling you to build soapboxes to preach from at the gas station but I am challenging you to come out of the shadows, acknowledge Jesus as Lord, and don't be ashamed to tell others about Him. Many of you know folks whose time may be short due to an illness or ailments of age. You're not going to tell them about Jesus?! Seriously?! Someone you tell will live forever in heaven because you did. This church or some other church will grow as a consequence. God's Kingdom will advance. "It only takes a spark to get a fire going" went the old song. I say, let your sparks fly!

* Close with Prayer...

[Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff](#)

[Mark 8:34-38 \(ESV\)](#)

34 And calling the crowd to Him with His disciples, He said to them, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. **35** For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. **36** For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? **37** For what can a man give in return for his soul? **38** For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Matthew 10:32-33 (ESV)

32 So everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before My Father who is in heaven, **33** but whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny before My Father who is in heaven.

John 19:38-40 (ESV)

38 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away His body. **39** Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. **40** So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

Bonus Rations for Further Nourishment

"Rescuer (Good News)" - Rend Collective

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAg7rn7fH3Q>

Finding People Interesting; Being Real; Caring Enough to Witness to People - John Piper

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eM57eM8tCWU>

We are a Church of Paper Plates - Kevin DeYoung

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTcoF5Vv7og>

Changing Our Names to Herald - Pastor Steve Bush

<http://millersportcc.com/sermons/changing-our-names-to-herald/>

How Can I Serve the Dying? - John Piper

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/how-can-i-serve-the-dying>

Blessing Can Become a Curse - Marshall Segal

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/blessing-can-become-a-curse>

Psalms 9:1 (NLT)

1 I will praise You, LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things You have done.

Psalm 96:2-6 (CEB)

2 Sing to the Lord! Bless his name! Share the news of His saving work every single day!
3 Declare God's glory among the nations; declare His wondrous works among all people **4** because the LORD is great and so worthy of praise. He is awesome beyond all other gods **5** because all the gods of the nations are just idols, but it is the LORD who created heaven! **6** Greatness and grandeur are in front of Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

Isaiah 55:8-11 (NASB)

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. **9** "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. **10** For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it produce and sprout, and providing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; **11** So will My word be which goes out of My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the purpose for which I sent it.

Matthew 27:57-60 (ESV)

57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. **58** He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. **59** And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud **60** and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away.

Mark 15:42-46 (ESV)

42 And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, **43** Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. **44** Pilate was surprised to hear that He should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether He was already dead. **45** And when he learned from the centurion that He was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. **46** And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking Him down, wrapped Him in the linen shroud and laid Him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.

Luke 23:50-54 (ESV)

50 Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, **51** who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. **52** This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. **53** Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid Him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. **54** It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning.

Luke 9:23-26 (ESV)

23 And He said to all, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. **24** For whoever would save his life will lose it, but

whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. **25** For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? **26** For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Luke 12:8-9 (ESV)

8 And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, **9** but the one who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

Mark 16:15-16 (ESV)

15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. **16** Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Matthew 5:11-16 (ESV)

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. **13** You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. **14** You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Romans 1:16 (NKJV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Romans 15:20a (Phillips)

20a My constant ambition has been to preach the Gospel where the name of Christ was previously unknown...

2 Timothy 1:6-8 (NLT)

6 This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. **7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. **8** So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for Him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News.

1 Peter 3:15-16 (NIV)

15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, **16** keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

Quote by Charles Spurgeon

"Every Christian is either a missionary or an impostor."

Quote by Charles Spurgeon

"If sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for."

Quote by Charles Stanley

"God's plan for enlarging His kingdom is so simple - one person telling another about the Savior. Yet we're busy and full of excuses. Just remember, someone's eternal destiny is at stake. The joy you'll have when you meet that person in heaven will far exceed any discomfort you felt in sharing the gospel."

Quote by Warren Wiersbe

"The Christian life is a pilgrimage from earth to heaven, and our task is to take as many as possible with us as we make this journey."

Quote by Mark Dever

"We mustn't be content to just sit around pointing out the errors in others; we actually need to be sharing the gospel and praying for people to be converted."

Quote by Elton Trueblood

"Evangelism is not a professional job for a few trained men, but is instead the unrelenting responsibility of every person who belongs to the company of Jesus."

Quote by Jordan Grooms

"If God calls you to be a missionary, don't stoop to be a king."

Quote by Carl F. H. Henry

"The gospel is only good news if it gets there in time."

Quote by Oswald J. Smith

"We talk of the Second Coming; half the world has never heard of the first."

Original Graffiti Uncovered At The Washington Monument

"Whoever is the human instrument under God in the conversion of one soul, erects a monument to his own memory more lofty and enduring than this." - BFB

Quote by William Booth

"*'Not called!' did you say? 'Not heard the call,'* I think you should say. Put your ear down to the Bible, and hear Him bid you go and pull sinners out of the fire of sin. Put your ear down to the burdened, agonized heart of humanity, and listen to its pitiful wail for help.

Go stand by the gates of hell, and hear the damned entreat you to go to their father's house and bid their brothers and sisters and servants and masters not to come there. Then look Christ in the face — whose mercy you have professed to obey — and tell Him whether you will join heart and soul and body and circumstances in the march to publish His mercy to the world."

These Are Our People

One Sunday evening, William Booth was walking in London with his son, Bramwell, who was then 12 or 13 years old. The father surprised the son by taking him into a saloon! The place was crowded with men and women, many of them bearing on their faces the marks of vice and crime; some were drunk. The fumes of alcohol and tobacco were poisonous. "Willie," Booth said to his son, "These are our people; these are the people I want you to live for and bring to Christ." Years later, Bramwell Booth wrote, "The impression never left me."

- Warren Wiersbe, The Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching & Preachers, p. 185.

Courage During The Boxer Rebellion by John MacArthur

During the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1900), extreme nationalist Chinese fomented a campaign of terror against officials of foreign governments, Christian missionaries, and even Chinese Christians. After they surrounded a certain mission station, they sealed all exits except one. They placed a cross in the dirt in front of the opened gate and told the missionaries and students that anyone who walked out and trampled the cross would be spared. According to reports, the first seven students who departed trampled the cross and were sent on their way. The eighth student, a young girl, approached the cross, knelt down, prayed for strength, carefully walked around the cross, and was immediately shot to death. The remaining 92 students, strengthened by that girl's courageous example, also walked around the cross to their deaths.

Pastor Steve - Sermon Excerpt

"In a manner of speaking God has changed all our names to Herald. The Greek word for Herald is: "Kérux" (Kay'-roox) "*A herald, preacher, or proclaimer.*" We have been called to be Heralds of Good News--declaring first and foremost that God is! And then to subsequently proclaim that God is the Maker and Creator of all things seen and unseen, including us; that He, despite our rebellion against Him, has made a way for us to be reconciled through His Son's death and resurrection; that through the cross, our sin became His and His righteousness became ours; that He not only declares us emancipated and forgiven but has adopted us as His very own children; that we've been chosen to dwell with Him and worship Him forever! Therefore we've become Heralds of this Great News!"

- Pastor Steve Bush, Sermon titled, "*Changing Our Names to Herald*" January 24, 2016.

Hymn Lyrics by William Penn

O Christian! do not falter,
The harvest field is white,
And many souls are sinking

Into eternal night.

Joseph and Nicodemus Bury Jesus

Ligonier Ministries

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/joseph-and-nicodemus-bury-jesus/>

“Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. . . . Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes. . . . So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews” (vv. 38–40). - [John 19:38–42](#)

Our study of John’s gospel resumes today as we pick up our exposition in [John 19:38](#). We are in the middle of considering the most significant events in all of human history—the death and resurrection of Jesus—and our text for this study describes the burial of Jesus.

Once it was clear that Jesus was dead, Joseph of Arimathea approached Pontius Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus so that he could give it a proper burial (v. 38). Ancient Jews had tremendous respect for the human body, so much so that they were sure to bury the bodies of Jews even in cases where they had been convicted of a crime. Normally, in cases of sedition, the Romans left the bodies of crucified criminals on the cross for the vultures to take care of. However, leaving a body hanging on a tree overnight was a violation of the Mosaic law ([Deut. 21:22–23](#)), so the Romans would allow the Jews to follow their traditions and bury even those who had been found guilty of rebellion against Rome. Normally, the Jews would bury criminals in a common grave outside the city gates, but the body of Jesus got a different treatment. Some commentators believe that Pilate’s willingness to give the body to Joseph (and Nicodemus; v. 39) is a further indication that Pilate believed Jesus was innocent, since he allowed Jesus not to be buried with other criminals.

We do not know much about Joseph of Arimathea except that he was a wealthy disciple of Jesus who sat on the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of first-century Judaism ([Matt. 27:57](#); [Mark 15:43](#)). [John 19:38](#) tells us that he was a disciple in secret, and of course we know that Nicodemus’ devotion to Jesus was likely not public knowledge either, since he came to Jesus at night (3:1). We might be tempted to look down on Joseph and Nicodemus for their reticence to identify publicly with Jesus, yet it is worth noting that taking the body of Jesus for burial was a public declaration of their allegiance to our Lord. What is important is that they did not stay in hiding but finally showed their devotion to Christ.

Following the burial practices of the Jews, Joseph and Nicodemus wrapped the body of Jesus in linen strips and spices that would mask the smell of decomposing flesh. Though Jesus had suffered much humiliation, the honor shown in His burial marks the

beginning of a shift to a more exalted state for our Lord. He was laid in a new tomb, a special place reserved in God's providence for Him (19:40–42).

Coram Deo

It is sin to hide our allegiance to Christ ([Matt. 10:32–33](#)), but it is not unforgivable. The key is that we repent of being ashamed or afraid of our identification with Christ and publicly declare that we are His disciples. This is what Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did when they took Jesus' body for burial. If we have been ashamed of Jesus, let us repent today and ask the Lord to give us the courage to be known as disciples of Christ.

Passages for Further Study

Genesis 23

[Isaiah 53:9](#)

[Luke 23:50–56](#)

[1 Corinthians 15:1–11](#)