

## Secret Disciples?

John 19:38-42 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. 39 And there came also **Nicodemus**, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an **hundred pound weight**. 40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. 42 There **laid they** Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation *day*; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

### 1. What is the picture of a secret disciple

- a. Nicodemus 39 And there came also **Nicodemus**, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*.
  - i. He came by night John 3:1-2 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2

The same **came to Jesus by night**, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

ii. Afraid but wanting to say something [7:50-52](#)

**Nicodemus** saith unto them, (he that **came to Jesus by night**, being one of them,) [51](#) **Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?** [52](#) They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

1. He was a religious man of much prestige and position in society
2. He is known as the one that came by night
3. When he is questioned he backs down
4. He is at least sympathizing with God's people if not a believer

iii. He arrives for the funeral of Christ [19:39](#) **And there came also **Nicodemus**, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*.** [40](#) Then took they the

body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

iv. Could this open stand for the body of Christ be an open confession in the daylight after starting cowardly at night?

b. Joseph of Arimathaea

i. He is a disciple of Jesus but secretly for fear of the Jews

**38** 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.

ii. He is a rich man of high position **Matthew 27:57**

iii. He was a well known man on the Jewish council

**Mark 15:43**

iv. He was a good, just man **Luke 23:50** *And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a **good man, and a just:** 51* (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.** 52* This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

- v. Joseph had a tomb prepared very close to the place of execution
  - 1. It was new and had never been used
  - 2. Did Joseph prepare this tomb just for Jesus
- c. There are secret disciples today
  - i. Mr. fearful witness
  - ii. Mrs. I don't want anyone to think that I am a fanatic
  - iii. Mr. Chameleon
  - iv. Mr. I can't live the Christian life
  - v. Mr I can talk about anything but Jesus and church
  - vi. Mr I don't want to offend anyone with my personal beliefs

## 2. Why would anyone be a secret disciple?

- a. Because we are afraid of people [12:42](#) Nevertheless among the chief rulers also **many believed on him;** but because of the Pharisees they **did not confess him,** lest they should be put out of the synagogue: [43](#) For they **loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.**
- b. Because we love our position that we have

- c. Because we love how popular we are
- d. Because we love our prosperity
- e. Because we do not want anyone to make fun of us

3. Consider the misery of being a secret disciple

- a. They lost 3 years of fellowship with Jesus
- b. They lost 3 years of His preaching and teaching
- c. They lost their joy and intimate close relationship with Jesus
- d. They lose the fellowship with other Christians. The ember that is separated from the fire will soon go out!
- e. Christians need other Christians
- f. By now they feel like second class citizens
- g. Being a secret disciple makes you feel guilty
- h. Can you be a secret disciple for real?

i. **Luke 9:23** And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

ii. **Luke 14:27** And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

iii. **Romans 10:9-10** That if thou **shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,** and shalt believe in thine

heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and **with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

iv. Matthew 10:32-33 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

- i. No one knows for sure if you are really born again, saved
  - i. Joseph nor Nicodemus are mentioned again
  - ii. I want to think that they were saved but neither the Bible or history talk more about them
  - iii. You would think that being that close to Jesus, doing so much would have gotten them at least another mention
  - iv. Were they saved? Who knows for sure! I hope so. I want to think so but I can't be for sure
  - v. Are you in the same condition? Making excuses for your lack of faithfulness, your lack of boldness, your weak nearly non existent testimony!

#### 4. The cure for the secret disciple

- a. The cross make the coward feel courage
- b. The cross wakes up the love you feel
- c. The cross demands your full surrender
- d. His sacrifice demands the sacrifice of His servants
- e. His death makes them realize they have been wasting their lives
- f. Realize how foolish it sounds for you to say that those in church are hypocrites and a sorry bunch of people.**
  - i. How proud are you?
  - ii. What group do you find superior to Christians, unbelievers, the world
  - iii. It was that world that crucified Jesus so why do you think they will treat you any better

5. What is the opposite of a secret disciple

- a. Ask God for boldness in prayer [Acts 4:29-31](#) **And now, Lord, behold their threatenings:** and grant unto thy servants, that **with all boldness they may speak thy word,** [30](#) By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy

child Jesus. **31** And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all **filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.** **4:13** Now when they saw the **boldness** of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that **they had been with Jesus.**

- b. Stand up to your fear and defeat it
- c. Realize that fear is the weapon of Satan
- d. Clearly and boldly declare that you are a Christian
- e. Live in such a way that it is obvious that you are a believer
- f. Pray without shame and embarrassment
- g. Witness
- h. Stand for what is right and do not move