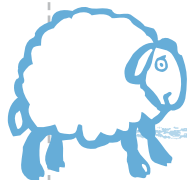




Lesson Ten

Joseph of Arimathea Acts Boldly



Nourishing Your Heart

Scripture

Matthew 27:57–28:10

Bible Truth

By faith, Joseph of Arimathea became bold in service when he buried the body of Jesus in the tomb; on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead.

Lesson Aim

To trust Jesus for the courage to become bold workers for him, and to thank him that he is our living Savior.

Memory Verse

REVIEW:

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.
TITUS 3:4–5a

Who was Joseph of Arimathea? Each Gospel account contributes to the picture of this servant of God. Matthew reports that he was rich. In Mark, we read that he was a respected member of the Sanhedrin. Luke describes him as a good and righteous man. And John tells us that he was a secret disciple of Jesus.

As a member of the council that opposed Jesus, it would have been difficult for Joseph to openly support Jesus, so Joseph did not speak out regarding his faith. Luke's Gospel, however, tells us that Joseph had no part in the vote to put Jesus to death. You might think, then, that the crucifixion would cause a man like Joseph to withdraw even more, but in his case, the death of Jesus motivated him to go *boldly* to Pilate and ask for the body of his Lord (Mark 15:43).

Why did this secret disciple come forward with such boldness? His heart was focused on the coming kingdom of God, and he did not lose hope even as he faced the reality of the death of Jesus. In faith, he stepped forward and committed himself to loving and faithful service. No longer could he be silent—it was time to speak and act.

Once Pilate gave Joseph permission, Joseph took the body of Jesus from the cross and placed it in his own tomb. It was not uncommon for rich people back then to have tombs built during their lifetimes, and Jesus would be the first to occupy Joseph's tomb. He rolled a great stone in front of the entrance to prevent the possibility of someone rifling through the tomb.

But neither the tomb nor the stone could hold the Lord Jesus. On the first day of the week—that glorious resurrection morning—Jesus rose from the dead, conquering sin and death forever. Those who are children of God share in the triumph of our Lord: We know that by his sacrifice on the cross he has paid the price for our sin and, because he lives, we shall live also.

As we—like Joseph and the women at the tomb—wait for his final appearing, we must focus on the wonder and the reality of the resurrection. Pray that you and your children will be able to keep your gaze fixed on the living, victorious Savior. Then, by his power, you will be able to serve him boldly and faithfully.

Because Jesus lives,
we shall live also.