



SERIES: John Believe
SPEAKER: DAN COKE
Saturday, May 13, 2023
Scripture: John 19:38–42 (ESV)
TITLE: The Night Comes

John 19:38-42

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. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

There is such a thing as the benefit of hindsight. Meaning, the ability to know what to do because of previous experience and possibly failure. Sometimes, as we hear someone explain the lessons they learned in hindsight, we can be tempted to respond with pride. As in, “I can’t believe you that you thought that would work. I mean, it’s obvious that’s a dumb thing to do.”

We tend to do the same thing when we look back on the weaknesses and failures of Bible characters. We look at Joseph and think, “I wouldn’t have been afraid.” Or we look at Nicodemus and think, “I would’ve been more bold than him.” The problem is that we don’t understand our own pride and we quickly forget how tormenting fear can be. Unfortunately for us, the night has come and will come again until Jesus returns.

What do I mean by night? Night is the time in person’s life when it’s hard to believe that God is with you. Night is that time when everything around you is going wrong and it only looks like it’s going to get worse. Nights are those circumstances that rise like a never-ending flood that keeps crashing down upon you. And when that happens, fear or anger or both is what you’re left to contend with.

These men, like the disciples, believed that Jesus was sent from God. How could God allow one of His own to suffer and die in this way? And, if God did spare Him, surely he won’t spare me. Night has come.

But notice something. While we tend to look down on these men for a lack of courage, we make ourselves blind to the way in which we battle in the cover of night. Joseph was moved to bury Jesus and Nicodemus helped. These men fulfilled the will of God in doing so. But there’s still another lesson to be gained. In all likelihood, God moved these men to act even in their

experience of night, by helping them to remember what Jesus did and said. They remembered Jesus during their night experience and this led them to walk in the will of God.

When night comes for you, will you turn to substances to escape the pain? Will you dig a metaphorical hole in the ground and throw yourself a pity-party? Or, will you fight to remember Jesus, what He did for you and what He said? I hope it's the latter, because the Son of God is the Light for the whole world. Amen.