

BOLD BELIEVERS

John 12:42-43

Introduction: We hear of Christians being persecuted in other countries. Some have to hide where and when they meet for worship, some have to be very secretive about being a Christian. That takes boldness. It makes one wonder that if there were danger in being a Christian in our own country, just how many would still retain their openness in being a Christian? Makes one wonder if some of us would have been very strong followers of Jesus back when things first got started.

I. MANY BELIEVED IN JESUS BUT REFUSED TO CONFESS HIM OPENLY

1. Many who heard and had met Jesus knew He was right.
 - They were not prepared or willing to take the risk of going public with their acceptance of Jesus.
 - If they did, it would be the end of their position, their income, perhaps even their lives.
 - At the moment, it was just too high a price to pay.
 - They simply were not big enough to stand up in public for Jesus.
2. Some who believed in Jesus were just too afraid to say so publicly.
 - They were afraid of being put out of their synagogue (worship place).
 - They were afraid of possible disgrace and personal, property damage.
 - They afraid of being labeled a fanatic.
3. Others preferred the praise of others to the approval/praise of God.
 - Being approved of others seemed more valuable at the moment.
 - It was better to be accepted by fellow man at that time.
 - They didn't want to "make waves."
4. They preferred the rewards of the moment to the rewards of eternity.
 - They loved man's acceptance more than God's.
 - They feared being rejected by others more than God's rejection.

II. ARE YOU A BELIEVER IN JESUS LIKE THEY WERE?

1. Like them, you know Jesus is right.
 - You can see the perils of unbelief.
 - You see the need of Jesus being first in your life.
 - You also lack courage to turn your knowledge of Jesus into your salvation.
 - You lack courage to let Jesus be the Lord of your life.
 - The price is just too high for now.
2. You are also afraid, like some of them.
 - You are afraid of what some one might say.
 - You are afraid of what you think you might have to give up.
 - You are afraid of allowing Jesus to be first in your life.
 - You are afraid of "letting go."

3. Like so many of those in Jesus' days, you prefer your own plans to God's.
 - You want to do things your way.
 - You want to go when you want to.
 - You want to go where you want to.
 - You want the approval of your family and friends rather than God's.
 - You want the friendship and consent of those around you more than that of God.
4. Again, like those in Jesus' days, you prefer this moment's pleasures and rewards more than those of eternity with God.
 - You love self and the world more than God.
 - You fear the displeasure of others more than that of God.
5. You refuse to confess Jesus Christ as your Savior.
6. You refuse to openly live for Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION:

1. How easy it is to look back at those who turned their backs on Jesus for their various reasons and shame them, but nothing has really changed.
2. Jesus is the same. The results of following Him in belief are the same.
3. Excuses for not being bold in one's belief of Jesus are the same.
4. God is the same. Jesus is the same. People are the same.
5. So, which one are you. A bold believer, a secret believer, a want-to be believer?