

It's easy to stand in the crowd,
but it takes courage to stand alone.”
– *Mahatma Gandhi*

I still believe that standing up for the truth of God is the greatest thing in the world.
This is the end of life.

The end of life is not to be happy.
The end of life is not to achieve pleasure and avoid pain.

The end of life is to do the will of God, come what may.
Martin Luther King, Jr.



Opening Prayer



Dear Lord,

How hard it is to stand up for you when our chair is so comfortable. How hard it is to speak up when others may find fault.

How hard it is to live out our faith when it's so much easier to sit quietly in our chair.

Give us the courage to stand up. *Amen.*











Nicodemus?





John 3: 1-9

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus *late at night* and said:



Nicodemus

Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.

Jesus

Very truly, I tell you, unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus

How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into your mother's womb and be born?



Jesus

You're not listening. Let me say it again. No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. Unless a person submits to a baptism into a new life, it is not possible to enter God's kingdom....Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.'

Nicodemus

How can these things be?

Jesus

Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?... For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.



**Change my heart, O God,
Make it ever true;
Change my heart, O God,
May I be like You.**



**You are the Potter,
I am the clay;
Mold me and make me,
This is what I pray.**

Responsive Reading Psalm 27

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

**The LORD is the strength of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?**

Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.

**One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I
seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life.**





Teach me your way, LORD; lead me in a straight path.

**Wait for the LORD: be of good courage,
and he shall strengthen your heart:
wait, I say, on the LORD.**

John 7: 46-52

The Pharisees asked the temple guards, *“Why didn’t you bring Jesus with you?”*

“No one ever spoke the way this man does,” the guards replied.

“You mean he has deceived you also?” the Pharisees retorted.

“You don’t see any of the rulers or the Pharisees believing in him, do you? No! It’s only this crowd, that knows nothing of the law, that is taken in by him.”



Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, “*Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he has been doing?*”

They replied, “*Are you from Galilee, too? Examine the evidence, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee.*”

John 19: 38-42

Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one, because he feared the Jewish leaders. Joseph asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away.

Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus at night, came now in broad daylight. He brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. He and Joseph took Jesus' body and wrapped it with the spices in strips of linen, according to Jewish burial customs.



I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold
I'd rather be His than have riches untold
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand.

Than to be a king of the best domain
Or be held in sin's dreads way
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today.



I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause
I'd rather have Jesus than world wide things
I'd rather be true to His holy name.

Than to be a king of the best domain
Or be held in sin's dreads way
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today



He's fairer than lilies of rarest bloom
He's sweeter than honey from out of the comb
He's all that my hungering spirit needs
I'd rather have Jesus and let Him lead.

Than to be a king of the best domain
Or be held in sin's dreads way
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today

Community Prayer

Dear Lord,

We sometimes try to avoid difficult situations that we are put in because of our faith in you. You want us to put everything we are and have in your hands, for your use.

Lord, give us the strength to stand up when you call.

Amen