

I am He ... You are Right

Read John 18:1-8 and Luke 22:70 – 23:1.

Have you done or said anything recently that took a lot of courage? Do you know anyone who has? Is there something you should like to do or ought to do that you haven't had the courage to face? Take a few minutes and discuss this in your group.

Jesus is an unsurpassed example of the supreme measure of courage. He knew what He faced when He said, *I am He* (John 18:5b), to the group of men who had come to capture Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. He knew what humiliation and mockery would follow.

Jesus also knew what the result would be when He answered Pilate's question, *Are you the king of the Jews?* (John 18:33b). His reply would certainly result in extreme physical as well as emotional pain and ultimately death. Yet, He persevered. He was firm and steady.

When we have a choice to make between truth and falsehood, the way of a committed Christian versus the way of the world, or of witnessing to our faith or keeping comfortably silent, what will our choice be? Challenges to today's Christian may run the spectrum of minimal effect to major consequences, but they are nothing compared to the challenge of courage that Jesus faced. He stood and answered boldly and unwaveringly. When events in our lives call the unspoken or unspoken question of whether or not we are committed to Christ, let our words and actions make the courageous statement, "I am".

For all that Jesus courageously suffered on our behalf, overwhelming thankfulness must be our response. Our gratitude can take the form of loving, willing service. We can go beyond that service which is comfortable or convenient. We can extend our time, talents, and treasures to the point of sacrifice.

Our gratitude can also take the form of words. We use words to speak, write, or sing His praises for His great love for us. Words can accompany a loving touch of comfort. Words empowered by the Holy Spirit can be effective witnesses in spreading the Gospel.

Sing: *Christ the Life of All the Living* (LSB #140; LW #94, verses 1, 6, 7)

Prayer: Lord, we thank You for Your courage, Your perseverance, and Your unsurpassed love. We ask for power to live, love, and serve with courage and vitality, so that our lives may be a true representative of Your love. Amen.