

## REMOVE THE STONE

Matthew 27:57-60 gives an account of what took place after Jesus died on the cross:

As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary was sitting there opposite the tomb. (NIV)

Jesus' burial and resurrection was also described in the John 19:38-42:

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes and about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of wrapped it, with spices, in strips of linen, this was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. (NIV)

Who is placing a stone in front of you?

Now, this Joseph was a secret follower of Jesus. He was afraid to make his allegiance known because of his position in the Jewish community. Joseph was a leader and an honored member of the Jewish council. He was more concerned about his position in society and not his heavenly position. If you are a Christian in hiding, you are blocking someone from coming to God. Our job is to let the light of Christ shine so much that others see Him in us and want Him too, thus making it easy for them to accept Him as Lord and Savior. This Joseph, when Jesus had died, found the courage to come out of hiding and put His body to rest in a tomb and rolled a stone in front of it.

Stones were meant to be moved. There is no stone too big or too strong that God cannot remove. Matthew 28:2 tell us, "Behold, there was a great earthquake for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled the stone from the door and sat upon it." (KJV) Let the Lord in, He will assign ministering angels to remove the stones that are blocking you from your purpose-driven life. Ask Him to cause a spiritual earthquake to happen in your life. There's much work to be done, we have to know how to fight.

The devil's job is to roll a stone in your way so that you do not fulfill your purpose in Christ. There will be people who are assigned to put stones in your way. These are the people who have given up on you. The ones who have told you that you'll never

make it, and any other negative words spoken to discourage you. Do not give up on yourself. God has called you for a specific purpose.

Don't you know that God has plan for your life? Seek God, and find out what His will is for your life. Once you do, be assured that it will flow peaceably.

Avoid being the stone or stumbling block in someone else's life. You may be and not even aware of it. Always speak positive words into the lives of others; seek to build others up, not tear them down.

Let's follow the pattern that Christ has established.