



# Standing alone for Jesus

In John 15:18-19 Jesus said: *If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you...because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.* Followers of Jesus Christ will not have it easy, but Jesus encourages us to stay faithful to Him, despite opposition. By doing that, we may find that we stand alone. You might come under pressure to lower your standards or your commitment. Remember that we are to be separate from sin, but not ignore sinners. (John 17:15-19).

## Hindrances to standing alone

**Fear.** Fear of what others think, fear of being different, fear of losing friends or of being laughed at.

Hebrews 13:6: *So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"*

Pray - Lord Jesus, help me not to fear what people think, but to honour You in everything.

**Friends.** To have the right friends, we must be willing to have enemies. Jesus made friends with those who accepted Him and His message.

Pray - Father, please give me friends who really love and honour You, yet help me to be a friend to those who do not yet know You.

**Desire to be like those in the world.** In Psalm 73 David envied the success of the godless, until he realised their destiny was disaster; and that he had God and needed nothing else. Sometimes it may seem that you lose because you have chosen to do what is right; but you haven't lost. Luke 6:22: *Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake.*

Pray - Lord, remind me that I always win by choosing what is right and that which honours You.

## How to stand alone

**Stand firm.** Don't apologise for what you know to be the truth and a life which pleases God. Do not be arrogant though, because we are commanded to walk in humility and meekness. Let your spiritual life be natural and your natural life be spiritual.

Pray - Lord Jesus, help me to walk with great humility and gentleness amongst all people without compromising my faith in You.

**Promote Jesus by letting your friends know that you are not your own boss - Jesus is your Lord.**

Remember, those who reject you are rejecting Jesus. Read the story of Matthew 6:17-49 again.

Pray - Lord Jesus, You are my Friend and all that I need. Help me always remember that and not to reject people, even though they may reject me.

**Do what is right and make the right choices even in difficult circumstances.** What can you do in these situations? You could ask yourself these questions when you end up in situations where you feel uncertain: Does it bring glory to God? (1 Corinthians 10:31). Can I thank God for this activity and will Jesus be with me in it? Will it cause another Christian to sin? (1 Corinthians 8:9-13). If you are not sure, don't do it. (Romans

14:22-23). Ask the Holy Spirit for His help and guidance, and then rely on it!  
Pray - Lord Jesus, help me to be a true testimony of who You are every day of my life.

## **I have decided to follow Jesus**

*I have decided to follow Jesus;  
I have decided to follow Jesus;  
I have decided to follow Jesus;  
No turning back, no turning back.*

*Though I may wonder, I still will follow;  
Though I may wonder, I still will follow;  
Though I may wonder, I still will follow;  
No turning back, no turning back.*

*The world behind me, the cross before me;  
The world behind me, the cross before me;  
The world behind me, the cross before me;  
No turning back, no turning back.*

*Though none go with me, still I will follow;  
Though none go with me, still I will follow;  
Though none go with me, still I will follow;  
No turning back, no turning back.*

*Will you decide now to follow Jesus?  
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?  
Will you decide now to follow Jesus;  
No turning back, no turning back.*

## **Origin of the hymn**

"*I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*" is a Christian hymn that originated in Assam, India. It was written by Simon Marak, from Jorhat, Assam. However, according to Dr P. Job, the lyrics are based on the last words of Nokseng, a Garo man, a tribe from Meghalaya, who was in Assam. He along with his family decided to follow Jesus Christ in the middle of the 19th century, through the efforts of an American Baptist missionary.

Called to renounce his faith by the village chief, the convert declared, "I have decided to follow Jesus." His two children were killed and in response to threats to his wife, he continued, "Though no one join me, still I will follow." His wife was killed. He was executed while singing, "The world behind me, the cross before me." This display of faith is reported to have led to the conversion of the chief and others in the village. This fierce opposition is possible, as various tribes in that area were formerly renowned for head-hunting.

The formation of these words into a hymn is attributed to the Indian missionary Sadhu Sundar Singh. The melody is also Indian and entitled "Assam" after the region where the text originated. (*Source: Wikipedia*)