

March 17, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Lent

John 12:20-33

I have often been amazed at how death gives life context and perspective. When death happens around you, one starts to think about life and the things that are truly important. In short, death gives life meaning. If we lived forever in this world life would become meaningless. Like a football game with to time limit. This morning's gospel is about dying to tis world.

In the Gospel this morning Passover is a week away and Lazarus has been raised from the dead by Jesus. Even Passover cannot hold a candle to Jesus and His actions. He has just brought His friend from death to life with only a heavenly glance and the strength of His voice.

The Pharisee's realize that they have big troubles. They and the rest of the religious establishment are powerless against this Galilean preacher who claims to have come from the Father in Heaven.

There are Greek Jews in Jerusalem for Passover who want to meet Jesus. They approach Phillip with the hope that he can make that happen. Jesus's reputation has reached that far north. Seeing is believing in the Gospel and in the Jewish world of that day. We just have to recall Thomas and his situation after the resurrection. So when the Greeks ask to see Jesus chances are they are expressing a desire to believe in Him. Jesus has been telling people to "come and see" since the start of His ministry. When the disciples asked where He was staying His response was the first "come and see". However, it is no longer enough to "come and see". Jesus is now inviting us to come and be with Him.

So that where I am there will my servants be. Jesus is with the Father and he is present and dwells amongst us. Jesus is leading His followers

to eternal life as He approaches His death on the cross. Soon He will be lifted up on the cross where he will lay down His life for us. Just as a grain of wheat falls to the earth in order to fulfill its true purpose, Jesus is lifted up from the earth to fulfill His. Now lifted up refers to Jesus's resurrection. His resurrection will draw many people to Him. It will be at the cross that we will see His glory. For those who follow Jesus, life and death matters greatly.

There is a reason Jesus brings us to this time in His ministry. Jesus is trying to prepare His disciples for what is coming. He promises that "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all peoples to Myself." At this point in Jesus's ministry, this is a large come and see statement. Somethings very big and earth shattering is going to take place in the very short future. His death and resurrection will change history forever and many countless lives to come. His movement will take on a truly global aspect. Where the Gospel will be preached in the four corners of the known world. This is going to be very big so come and

see. That is an interesting invitation that still resonates to this very day. We relive these events every Holy Week and Easter. We are still coming out to see and believe. These events still touch us and form a large part of our faith. They are the bedrock of what we believe as Christians. That Christ died on Good Friday was buried and rose from the dead on the following Sunday morning. So this Holy Week I invite you all to come out and see!

Have a great week, Pastor D