

The Hour Has Come

5th Week of Lent – Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51; Hebrews 5: 7-9 - John 12: 20-33

The readings for this week all seem to converge on the prediction of Jesus that, **“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”** The prophet Jeremiah proclaims that, **“The days are coming says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.”** St Paul affirms that Jesus **“became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.”** So what does this have to do with my life? My faith?

If we are to be a disciple of Christ, our life and our faith must reflect the self-sacrificial quality that is Jesus. But then, what does this entail? Jesus makes this pretty simple. **“Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.”**

It appears that our lives cannot be about our own gain. Our lives must be focused outward to all people. We cannot live for our own personal desires or wants. Instead, we must be willing to suffer and to die away from our own selfish tendencies so that our lives reflect the glory that is God, fully realized in Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection.

I find that this is much easier to think about than to do. I want to be the best Christian I can be, but I find that I can also spend incredible amounts of time focused on myself, my wants, my needs and my desires. So Lent is the perfect time for each of us to reset the barometer. We can start again to live the life that Jesus calls us to this day. **“Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.”**

Jesus is not asking us to hate the created world and the many blessings we have been given. Rather, Jesus is asking us to put it all in perspective. We must take the good and the bad that comes our way. We, as baptized Christians, are called to follow Jesus as his servant, and to do the will of God in good times and in bad.

It is only in Jesus’ crucifixion that the full glory of God will prevail. God’s new covenant, predicted by Jeremiah, will be realized through the forgiveness Jesus shows as he is lifted up on the cross. In understanding that **“the hour has come”** we would be wise, in these last days of Lent, to sing the psalm for this week, **“Create a clean heart in me, O God.”**

Happy Lent!

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