

20Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." 22Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

27"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. 28Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." 29The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." 30Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. 31Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. 32And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." 33He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. 34The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" 35Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. 36While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light." After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them.

*If anyone serves me, he must follow me, and where I am there shall my servant be also; if any one serves me, the Father will honor him.*

Where is Jesus? Is he in a manger in Bethlehem, or cradled in Mary's arms? Is he hanging on the cross, forever suspended there between heaven and earth? Is he walking out of a tomb on a bright Easter morning, bringing joy to those who love him? Is he off in heaven, taking it easy after a hard life on earth? Where is he, right now?

We have come here this morning believing that he will be here, where two or three are gathered, for he promised to be in our midst. We have come here this morning expecting to encounter him in this book we call the Bible, especially in the word of God which is preached, and in the bread and wine, his body and blood. Some of you have come here excited to witness him entering into Evan James, through water and the word in baptism. Right now in all these ways, Jesus Christ is here. And we his servants gather here in obedience to his word, *Where I am there shall my servant be also.*

But if I were going to look for him this afternoon, I would not look here. I would look where people are lonely, where people are afraid, where people are poor. I would look for Jesus in the bars where people seek to flee from problems. I would look for Jesus in a nursing

home, spending time with one of those people who never have a visitor. I would look for Jesus on street corners where drugs are bought and sold - and at the bowling alley, and stores and factories. I would look for Jesus out on the street among the homeless and in the school, with the children who have a hard time keeping up.

*“Where I am, there shall my servant be also,”* Jesus said.

Once, for us all Jesus was a grain of wheat that fell to the earth and died so that he might bear much fruit. You are the fruit of Jesus dying and rising. You who believe in Jesus Christ, who follow him, who serve him, you are what has made his sacrifice worthwhile. Jesus did not die in vain, because you have believed in him. Today he calls us, his servants to follow, to give our lives in every place where he is.

*Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in his world will keep it for eternal life.*

All of this is about our sacrificing for those in need, our losing our lives in service, letting go. It costs a great deal to be available to someone in need. To be where Jesus is, may mean the loss of your time, as you sit with one who is grieving, or work to find a home for the homeless.

To be where Jesus is may mean giving up control over your calendar and your day as a neighbor's emergency interferes with your family's plans.

To be where Jesus is may mean sacrificial giving; for the needs of the poor will not be determined by what we can easily budget.

Jesus does not need people to climb up on crosses, but he needs followers who will give their lives and lose their lives as they are where he is.

Jesus said, *“Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I when I am lifted up will draw all people to myself.”*

Jesus was talking about his dying on the cross, and of his being raised by God. But Jesus dying and being raised was not simply a deed long ago, over and done with but Jesus dying continues in your sacrificing for others. In Colossians Paul writes: “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's affliction for the sake of his body, that is the church.”

*Now is the judgement of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.*

You, the fruit of Jesus death are caught up in casting out the evil one. When you are where Christ is, serving those in need, then Satan's hold is broken, and Christ is able to draw another person to himself.

Where is Jesus? Most of all he is in you, still losing his life, dying, in your sacrifices , a grain of wheat that falls to the earth, and bears much fruit.

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