

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.

Wheat. Life.

As long as there is wheat to grind, there will be bread to eat.

The family will stay alive another year as long as there is wheat to grind.

How great an act of faith to set aside wheat, life for another week or month or season, to set it aside to be planted in the ground to produce the wheat for another year.

Planting. The farmer takes what is life-giving already and gives it up. He buries it in the ground never to be taken back. He hopes that the rains will fall, and no hail or storm or insects will destroy the crop. He hopes that a whole year of life will come from what he buried in the earth.

What a deep act of faith it is to bury life giving grain in hope of a harvest.

He was the one who could heal the sick, and give the blind sight, even raise the dead. Life flourishes wherever Jesus is. His followers certainly witnessed that. And the word got around.

Some Greeks heard, came to Philip and said, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” When Jesus heard their request, this was his response: “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very 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.”

Jesus was the wheat that would be buried. Jesus life would be given up, trusting that from this grain of wheat God would give a great harvest.

But his trusting was not without conflict within.

“Now my soul is troubled,” Jesus said.

If the farmer must have faith to plant the seed, how much more the faith required when you yourself are the seed. Jesus would no longer be alive, just a cold, dead body, waiting for God.

“Now is my soul 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. Father, glorify your name.”

Some Greeks wanted to see Jesus. Jesus died so that they would see him. Not as you and I see each other, a face, eyes, nose ears. They could have seen Jesus in that way right then, right there. But Jesus wanted them to see him, to know him in a different way altogether.

Not a face, not an appearance but the glory of God Jesus wanted to see. God's glory in giving his only Son for their life, Jesus own spirit in them, this is what it is to see him: Jesus' own spirit in 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.” You are the fruit for which Jesus died.

And you are also a single grain of wheat sowed just like Jesus.

“Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me the Father will honor.”

To see Jesus is to know that your life is not for you. Your life is to be buried in service, buried in love, lost to you and given to your neighbor. Just as Jesus life was lost to him, and given to you.

For as you are a grain of wheat, dying in service, you bear much fruit. And God is glorified. As he was glorified in Jesus, God is glorified in you.

You are the fruit of Jesus' dying. God plants you that there might be more fruit still.

“Whoever serves me must follow me,” says Jesus, “and where I am, there will my servant be also.”

May God grant it this day and for all eternity that we may be where Jesus is. Amen.