

Lent 5B (March 21, 2021) John 12, 20 – 33  
Jane Kilpatrick

Let us pray: Dear Lord, may this message being shared be the message needing to be heard, O Lord my strength and my redeemer. Amen.

When Philip and Andrew told Jesus that there were some Greeks wanting to see him, Jesus knew what this meant, but what he said began with metaphors more understandable to those of us with the advantage of hindsight than to those who were standing right next to him.

What did grains of wheat “bearing much fruit,” have to do with life, death, and eternal life? How many of them knew what Jesus meant by eternal life?

Still standing near him, what must it have been like to hear Jesus, the one who had turned water into wine, walked on and calmed stormy seas, who had healed lepers, restored sight to the blind, and, who just brought his friend, Lazarus, back from the dead - Yes, that Jesus said,

“Now my soul is troubled? And what should I say – Father, save me from this hour?”

How long was it before Jesus answered his own question saying, “No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.”?

Far be it for me to say but, like Jesus, my soul, too, has been troubled. In fact, my soul is frequently troubled and, I have said, “God, save me from this...”

I have held onto a piece of grain and plead my case to God with the many excuses I have for not wanting to acknowledge or trust the reason God gave me that piece of grain. That piece of grain I have been blessed with and entrusted with by God was not intended just for me to just hold onto.

We each have our excuses for clutching those grains so tightly that they will never bear the much-needed fruit God intends for them to produce. Every grain entrusted to us and the resources provided for its nourishment are for the benefit of all God’s children.

Do we feel and respect the privilege and humility of being given this opportunity and responsibility? Why are we so often tightly clutching our God-given grain? What is getting in our way of letting it go? Anxiety. Distrust. Control. Skepticism. Selfishness. Controversy. Fear. Just can’t let go.

What if Jesus had held on to his God-given piece of grain.

What if Jesus had just said, “No.”

“No. I just can’t.”

“No.... I just can’t let go of that grain to become the bread of life.”

“No.... I just can’t let go of that grain so the children of God may have eternal life.”

“No. I just can’t.”

No.

What does it feel like knowing Jesus didn’t just say, “No.”

How different our world is because Jesus accepted the reason his hour had come and answered, “Father, glorify your name.”

We will never be that piece of grain God entrusted to Jesus who became The Bread of Life for all God’s children. But we can improve the life of all God’s children by utilize our God-given grain of... Skills and talents. Creativity and time. Determination and knowledge. Ability and vision. Conviction and resources. Compassion, trust, and love.

When our hour comes may we release the grip on our grain and glorify God with the fruit it will bear. Amen.