

A Sermon by the Reverend Elizabeth Bonforte Gardner
Tuesday in Holy Week (C)
Tuesday, April 16th, 2019

Isaiah 49:1-7 | Psalm 71:1-14
1 Corinthians 1:18-31 | John 12:20-36

In our gospel lesson tonight we hear of some Greeks coming to Philip.

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

What an evangelism opportunity!

People actually come asking, none of that messy going out to people where they are with the Good News!

They just come!

Philip, along with Andrew, goes to Jesus to tell him about this great chance to impress.

Jesus starts off in a promising way: “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”

Excellent!

We’ve been waiting for this moment!

You can almost picture the disciples turning to the group and whispering,

“Just watch this... you will be amazed!”

But Jesus starts telling a parable.

That’s not good.

Most of the time the disciples had no idea what Jesus was saying when he spoke in parables.

Worse yet, this one is about death: “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.”

Uh oh.

Once again, you can almost picture the scene.

Philip and Andrew looking back and forth at one another mouthing, “What do we do now?”

How many times have we asked that question of ourselves?

Or of God?

“What do we do now?”

When we lose our job.

When we lose our parent.

When we lose our way.

What do we do now?

I imagine it was what Adam and Eve said when they were thrown out of the Garden.

I imagine it was what Moses said when he came back and found a golden calf.

I imagine it was what Mary said after the angel visited her.

I imagine it was what Joseph said after the angel visited him.

What do we do now?

Pastor Rick Warren of Saddleback Church fame, who wrote A Purpose Driven Life, once said this about loss – we can't go around it; we can't go over it; all we can do is go through it.

The glorification of Christ came on the cross.

Not escaping from it.

Not avoiding it.

Not outwitting or faking it.

Hold tight to this week.

Hold onto the knowledge Jesus's glorification came when he was a victim of torture and injustice.

Sometimes in our rush to Easter we miss this truth.

But don't miss it.

Because Jesus says this is our path too.

With just the grace of God, the wisdom of God, and the strength of God.

We too find our resurrection.

Our glorification.

Our Easter.

We, like those men before us, get to see Jesus