

Sunday 21 March 2021

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Reflection

A grain of wheat has little value until it springs out of its grave into new life. A grain of wheat's real potential does not occur until it dies. Jesus used the natural principle of a seed to illustrate the spiritual truth that there can be no fruitful life without death, no resurrection power without surrender. In and of itself the seed is weak and useless but when it is planted and "dies" it fulfils its purpose.

Of course this principle that death is essential for further fuller life applied to Jesus Himself. It speaks of his own death. Jesus died on behalf of others that they might be the fruit of His death. The simple truth is, if He does not die we cannot live! His death is what produces the fruit of life!

He was on His way to the cross to die, be buried, and be resurrected to new life, and if He did this there would be a great harvest of souls. His death would produce new life, spiritual life, eternal life for many. Jesus is saying, "Trust Me. You watch. You wait. You'll see that out of death will come life." Jesus says our lives will not be spiritually productive, if we do not die to self. But if we die to self and plant our life in Christ, it will grow and multiply and produce a great spiritual harvest.

Had Jesus not been willing to go to the cross we could never have been saved. If we are not willing to die to self and live to God, others will not be saved. The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

So Jesus tells us our very usefulness - our fruitfulness for God - is tied to our willingness to surrender our lives to Him. We must die to our life on the earth so that we might walk in new life, in spiritual life, with Him. We too need to live each day by this law of the cross.

Reading: John 12:23-32

Jesus answered them, "The hour has now come for the Son of Man to receive great glory. I am telling you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains. Those who love their own life will lose it; those who hate their own life in this world will keep it for life eternal.

Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. And my Father will honour anyone who serves me.

Now is the time for this world to be judged; now the ruler of this world will be overthrown.

When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to me."

Sunday 21 March 2021 (continued)

I love the **hymn:**

*You're the Author of creation,
You're the Lord, the great "I am";
And your cry of love rings out
Across the lands.*

*Yet you left the gaze of angels,
Came to seek and save the lost,
And exchanged the joy of heaven
For the anguish of a cross.
With a prayer you fed the hungry,
With a word you stilled the sea;
Yet how silently you suffered
That the guilty may go free.*

*With a shout you rose victorious,
Wresting victory from the grave,
And ascended into heaven
Leading captives in your wake.
Now you stand before the Father
Interceding for your own.
From each tribe and tongue and nation
You are leading sinners home.*

Prayer

Lord Jesus,

you taught your disciples that 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;

In this time of Lent, when we prepare our hearts to remember your death and resurrection,

grant us the strength and wisdom to serve and follow you, this day and always. Amen

Blessing

May Christ our crucified Saviour draw you to himself, so that you may find in him the assurance of sins forgiven and the gift of eternal life;

Go in peace, pressing on towards the heavenly goal.

And may God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit go with you and remain with you always. Amen