

Fifth Sunday of Lent - (3/17/24 SJ, SM)

John 12:20-33- "Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. (21) They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." (22) Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. (23) Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. (24) I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. (25) The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. (26) Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me. (27) "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. (28) Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." (29) The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. (30) Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. (31) Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. (32) But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (33) He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die."

In the name of Christ our Savior, DFR:

It's time - the mother of the bride enters the room and tells her daughter on her wedding day. *It's time* - pilots waiting on the runway to make an attack run get a message from the control tower, telling them, *It's time to take off*. People are huddled around the bedside of a loved one when a member of the surgical team comes into the room and announces to them, *It's time*. A guard comes into a cell on death row and utters those dreaded words, *It's time*.

So often we talk about it being "the time:" time for our annual physical; time for a tire rotation or a tune-up; time for our flu shots; time for supper; time for spring cleaning; time for school; time for church to start.

Jesus today meets with his disciples and he tells them those often dreaded words, *It's time*. But time for what? Let's gather around Jesus and his disciples today as Jesus explains how:

It's Time!

1. Time for the Son to be glorified
2. Time for the Father to be glorified
3. Time for us to follow

1. For the Son to be glorified

A group of Greek converts to Judaism had come to Jerusalem, and they wanted to know more about Jesus. Perhaps because they were converts, and perhaps because of the way they had been treated before, they thought Jesus might be hesitant to meet with them. So they went to the disciple with the Greek name – the Apostle Philip, and they told him: **"Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus."**

Philip didn't go to Jesus immediately. Instead he went and discussed it with his Brother, Andrew, and the two of them went together and told Jesus about the Greeks.

Jesus' answer was: **The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.** When Jesus tells us that the time is here, he doesn't mean it's supper time or that it's bed time for the children. It's time for him to be glorified. It's time for him to do the very task that he came into this world to accomplish.

It was time for Jesus to die. It was time for him to allow Judas to betray him, for the soldiers to mock him, for a servant of the high priest to slap him. It was time to allow himself to be dressed up in a purple robe, a crown of thorns and beaten with a scepter-rod.

But Jesus was willing to undergo that not because he was a masochist who would enjoy the pain, but because he knew what it would accomplish. Don't you find it comforting that it isn't someone dragging Jesus to his death for our sins? This is the condemned man being told by the guard or the executioner, *It's time*. No, this is the condemned telling us that he knows the time has come and he wants to go.

That Jesus knew what was going to happen he clearly shows when he says: **But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.** Jesus' death was not a surprise nor a shock. He knew exactly what was going to happen.

Jesus also knew why it was going to happen: **now the prince of this world will be driven out.** Only he could defeat the devil. Only he could free us from Satan's power over us by saving us and redeeming us.

As Jesus said later: **Now is the time. Let's not sit around, let's not wait**, he was saying.. **The salvation of the world needs to be accomplished. My blood needs to wash away the sins of the world. Let's go. The time is here.** The time is now for Jesus to be glorified and honored as he gives his life for the lives of the world.

2. For the Father to be glorified

But it was time for something else as well. It was time for Jesus to ensure that not only Jesus was glorified but that Jesus by his actions brought glory to God the Father.

First we notice that Jesus *wanted* the Father's name to be glorified, as he makes it clear by his prayer, **Father, glorify your name!"**

Jesus' sacrifice on the cross would not just be bring praise and honor to his name; they would also bring praise and honor to the one who had willed it and planned it from eternity. It was our Heavenly Father who sent his one and only Son into the world. It was our Father who loved us and sent Jesus to save us.

Imagine the surprise of those nearby when God the Father answers Jesus' prayer, **"I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."** Our Father approved of what Jesus was doing. Rather than saying, *Don't go. Don't be arrested. Don't allow yourself to be so maltreated and abused.* The Father to says, **It's time.** Time for you to do what I sent to do. Time for you to finish your earthly ministry, and allow Thomas to betray you, the Sanhedrin to convict you, the soldiers of Pilate to mock you, the Jews to murder you. It's time for you to bring me praise and honor by completing your mission – giving up your life for the world.

3. Time for us to follow

Jesus found the time to die for us. The Father found the time to carry out his plan of salvation. Now it is time for us to follow him. **The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.**

Jesus warns us that to follow him means losing our lives. He doesn't mean dying in a physical sense, but losing our selfishness and our attachment to this world. To follow Jesus means no longer living for ourselves, but instead living for the Savior who made the time in his heavenly schedule to come to earth, made the time to suffer, bleed and die for us.

Have we lose our lives for Jesus? Have we stopped living for worldly things? Maybe we think we have, but have we really? Jesus once point out to a rich man his attachment to worldly things by asking him to give away all that he owned. How ready are we to get rid of our worldly possessions if God should ask it of us? If our income was sharply slashed, how willingly would we be to cut back significantly on our lifestyle choices? Do we few cable TV, computers and cell phones as a right or privilege? Would we say, **Thank you God for the time that you gave them to me** or would we complain that we no longer had them?

We too are to bring praise and honor to Jesus. But our words and actions don't always do that. Don't you think that sometimes Jesus must be embarrassed by us? Like Simon Peter our intentions sometimes are good, but our words and actions don't always match our intentions.

Losing our lives means giving our lives totally and completely to Jesus and to God. Yet are we sometimes reluctant to help out at church? Are we secretly glad when our time is up and we don't have to serve any longer? Do we find ourselves ever checking our watches or thinking, *Gee, I wish church would get over soon!* Shouldn't our attitudes really be that we wish we could spend all day every day in God's house and listening to his Word, offering him our prayers and giving him our worship and adoration?

Jesus teaches us that when we do follow him, we gain eternal life. But it isn't our actions that save us, it is the faith and love that we have for our Savior that saves us. We love him because we know that he made the time for us. He made the time to rescue us when we were lost. Jesus didn't put off serving us, but he knew that *now is the time.* And we also know that right now, not tomorrow, not next week, but now is the time for us to follow Jesus and to live for Jesus. *Now is the time!* Amen.