

The Human Moment
Wayne Waibel – 03/17/2024

It must have been very confusing for the disciples of Jesus to hear Him speak so candidly of His impending death. They had witnessed many astounding feats of wonder. His manner of speaking compelled thousands to join the movement, calmed the raging seas, and opened the way to salvation through the redemption of creation.

He was at the height of His popularity. All were touched by His mere presence. With the inbreaking of the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us – the age of already and not yet had begun.

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As Jesus turned to Philip and Andrew to respond to their message from the visiting Greeks, the not yet of His salvific trajectory turned to the already. The hour had come. Now His message was being received by the Gentiles as well as the Jews. The mission and the ministry had arrived.

In a moment of complete humanness – His soul was troubled, and He wondered if He should ask to be spared. In that human moment, He resolved that it was entirely for this moment that He had come, and asked not to be saved, but that His Father’s name would be glorified.

And God’s answer - though intended for those around Jesus – would be interpreted as either thunder or angelic banter. Having ears, they could not hear. The Father is bearing witness to the Son, and all they hear is thunder.

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We do that – engage in selective hearing. And we miss so much because of it. The kinds of things we pay attention to can be alarming. I mean no disrespect to the legion of fans out there, but “Keeping Up with the Kardashians” comes to mind.

Missing the point is kind of our thing as flawed humans. Fortunately, we are the children of a God who despite our inability to hold up our end of a covenant, bestows upon us a new covenant that He has put in our minds and written on our hearts.

We have been imprinted, if you will, with the love of God. And having the love of God written on our hearts is the essence of freedom. A freedom that acknowledges humanity simply does not have the capacity to heal itself. I'm sure this comes as a shock to no one.

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Jesus and the Father were always one. Because God in Christ endured sufferings, the way to eternal salvation has been opened to us. He is our God, and we are His people. Both Jew and Greek – male and female – master and servant. We all have the law written on our hearts.

Jesus was very specific, "For this hour I have come." His entire purpose was to bring all people to Him, that where He is, we may be also. Every last one of us. No exceptions.

It's difficult to wrap our head around sometimes because it seems counter-intuitive, but death must precede life. We see it in nature with the death of a simple seed becoming a wealth of life sustaining grain. We hear it in the proclamation of our Father who says, "For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

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Tuesday is the first day of Spring. Today is the last Sunday of Lent. In two weeks, we will celebrate Easter. Despite the tribulations of this past year, and the multitude of societal challenges we have endured, and continue to suffer through – there is cause to rejoice.

In His darkest hour, Jesus was still able to confess a fundamental message of hope. And it is that hope that allows us to believe the future into being. The foundation of our faith resides in the law that has been written on our hearts.

The not yet of this chapter in human history is slowly turning toward the already. As we engage as a people, we will reaffirm long held affections. But we will also encounter new and deeper understandings. We will live into the glory of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Our coming days will lengthen, and the sun will gain strength. As we lose the icy bonds of winter, let us reflect on the holiness of the season. The annual rebirth of the soil – the awakening of new life – the sounds and smells of familiar wonders.

These are times of great anticipation on the heels of our collective joy in living a life of servitude. Modeling the example set by our Lord and Savior who saw His hour and embraced it – that we, too - might have our human moment, and join Him in life everlasting. Amen.