

**Lenten Series 2006: Baptized into His Death—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—4/5/06**

**Title: Baptized into the Family**

**Text: John 19: 38-42 & Colossians 2: 12-15**

**Intro:** *Ills.: picture of an empty casket — how does dying make you feel*

**Theme:** Having participated in Jesus' death and resurrection in our baptism, death and its sting can no longer touch us, freeing us to live out the new life of Jesus with confidence and boldness.

***What risks come with your association with Jesus?***

- Under the world's disapproval and threat, we can risk much from a temporal point of view
  - A. Joseph and Nicodemus risked expulsion from the Sanhedrin and possibly death by their hands
    - 1. Joseph in courageous fear and Nicodemus, earlier night-visitor of Jesus sneaked into Pilate's chambers to ask
  - B. In a culture of religious intolerance and immorally accepted practices, believers can stand out like a sore thumb
    - 1. **Ills.: The Risk of Faith**
    - 2. If Jesus is in you and you in him, it will be hard to hide him—but do you want to?
- Finding reality in resurrection power in which you participate that trumps any force/authority arrayed against you
  - A. If you live in the "*power of God*" (Col 2: 12) in your baptism, your deaths are followed by *resurrections* like Jesus'
    - 1. What can be done to you that God can't undue—so why fear
    - 2. **Ills.: Desmond Tutu does not fear death**
  - B. Learning to let go of what does not last for the eternal within your through baptism which does (*You have been buried with him in baptism and raised with Him. ..You were dead in your sins...but God made you alive with Christ. vs. 13*)

***Through Jesus' death from what risks have you been freed?***

- Freed from your sins and its shame which could take you down
  - A. Because your sin, any sin, the payment/wages/penalty is death
    - 1. "*The wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ.*" Rom. 6: 23
  - B. Living shameless lives we can stop backing into the future and live with joy
    - 1. The two disciples had somehow discovered that in the events of Good Friday the courageous faith to do what needed to be done
    - 2. You and I can live with the courage that we won't be found out and even if accusation comes, payment is made
      - a. In your baptism original depravity and sins of your whole life "*nailed to the cross*" vs. 14
      - b. **Ills.: Foreclosure notice of shame taken down**
      - c. Paul says that the "*written document was cancelled, with its regulations, that was against us and stood opposed to us*" vs. 14
- Freed from fear what the sinful world can do to us because of association with Jesus
  - A. Your life is hidden with Christ in God so that you can live without fear of powers and authorities in Jesus' victory(15)
    - 1. Joseph and Nicodemus finding that their new life in Jesus was untouchable were ready for lasting witnesses
      - a. Joseph gave his unused tomb, not reusable in Jewish culture
      - b. Nicodemus gave a king's ransom of myrrh/aloes (75lbs.)—hard to hide
    - 2. Through your baptism association and power in Jesus enabled and resourced to give whatever it takes
      - a. *For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Col 3: 3-4*
      - b. **Ills.: Scalia on living fearlessly**
  - B. Like Joseph and Nicodemus we may experience a impending resurrection which we cannot even anticipate
    - 1. **Ills.: Taking the Word to others**

### **Desmond Tutu does not fear death**

Under scrutiny by his apartheid government's Eloff Commission, South African bishop and Nobel Prize winner Desmond Tutu declared: There is nothing the government can do to me that will stop me from being involved in what I believe God wants me to do. I do not do it because I like doing it. I do it because I am under what I believe to be the influence of God's hand. I cannot help it. When I see injustice, I cannot keep quiet, for, as Jeremiah says, when I try to keep quiet, God's Word burns like a fire in my breast. But what is it that they can ultimately do? The most awful thing that they can do is to kill me, and death is not the worst thing that could happen to a Christian. **Richard H. Schmidt, Glorious Companions: Five Centuries of Anglican Spirituality (William B. Eerdmans, 2002), p. 328**

### **Scalia on living fearlessly**

Speaking to the Knights of Columbus Council in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia said: "God assumed from the beginning that the wise of the world would view Christians as fools and he has not been disappointed. If I have brought any message today, it is this: Have the courage to have your wisdom regarded as stupidity. Be fools for Christ. And have the courage to suffer the contempt of the sophisticated world." **Penny Brown Roberts, "Scalia: Faithful Live for Christ," theadvocate.com; submitted by David Slagle, Atlanta, Georgia**

### **The Risk of Faith**

In a recent article on the suffering church, FaithWorks listed the degrees of persecution one could face for practice of religious faith: 1. Disapproval 2. Ridicule 3. Pressure to conform 4. Loss of educational opportunities 5. Economic sanctions 6. Shunning 7. Alienation from community 8. Loss of employment 9. Loss of property 10. Physical abuse 11. Mob violence 12. Harassment by ... **Andrew Black and Craig Bird, "The Risk of Faith," FaithWorks (July/August 1999), pp.17-20; source: Robert Garret, Southwestern B**

### **Taking the Word to Others**

In the 1930s in Stavropol, Russia, Stalin ordered that all Bibles be confiscated and Christian believers be sent to prison camps. Ironically, most of the Bibles were not destroyed, yet many Christians died as "enemies of the state." With the recent dissolution of the U.S.S.R., a CoMission team arrived in Stavropol in 1994 for ministry. Their request to have Bibles shipped to Moscow was being held up. But someone told them about a warehouse outside of town where confiscated Bibles were still stored. Remarkably, the team was granted permission to distribute them. Hiring several local Russian workers, they began to load their trucks. One young man, a hostile agnostic, came only for the day's wages. But not long after they had started, he disappeared. He was found in the corner of the warehouse, weeping, a Bible in his hands. Intending to steal it for himself, he had picked his own grandmother's off the shelf! Her signature was on the front page. Today, that young Russian is in the process of being transformed by the very Bible that his grandmother was persecuted for, but still held dear. **Ken Taylor, Christian Reader, Vol. 33, no. 5**

### **John 19:38-42**

<sup>38</sup>Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. <sup>39</sup>He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. <sup>40</sup>Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. <sup>41</sup>At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup>Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

### **Colossians 2: 12-15**

<sup>12</sup>You have been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup>When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, <sup>14</sup>having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.