

Sermon Series: “Dying and Living in Jesus” – Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN 3/22/09

Title: “Dying to self and coming to life in Jesus”

Text: Galatians 2:20

Intro.: *Illus.: Missing on purpose*

Theme: When the shadow of the cross falls across my life it brings a light into my existence that allows me to die to self and to begin really living.

Where life begins . . . I have been crucified with Christ.” Galatians 2:19

- The paradox of the Christian faith in Jesus
 1. Die to live, follow to be lead, become slaves to become free
 - a. The culture around you won’t support this, will ridicule this — so don’t expect and look for its support
 2. But it is not something that we choose and do; it is a passive thing that we participate in and God is the actor
 - a. *Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. John 1:12-13*
- In the waters of baptism
 1. Taken back to the cross and Christ’s gift to motivate my life for him
 - a. *Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Romans 6:3-4*
 2. Rising to daily die to self and selfishness and carnal living (*life I now live in the flesh*)
 - a. More than just the physical body—also includes the emotions and the spiritual battle we face from inside
 - b. *It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God’s law with all my heart. But there is another law at work within me that is at war with my mind. This law wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin? Romans 7:21-24*
 - c. But that is where we receive the Holy Spirit’s power in the waters of our baptism to conquer and overcome
 - d. *However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Romans 8:9-11*

What it means . . . I live, but it is no longer as I Galatians 2:20a

- Crossing your “I’s – for the rest of your live
 1. What gets in the way is our fear of self-preservation – selfishness
 - a. **Illus.: Giving up our blue marble**
 - b. This is not a legalistic obedience to earn something but a relational submission to the One who already gave it
 - c. *We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5*
 2. Get an attitude – Jesus’ attitude
 - a. *Although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Philippians 2:6-8*
 - b. As Jesus, our Savior and Friend, unselfishly gave of himself; now he gives us His attitude (*Have this attitude which was also in Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:5*)
 - c. ***He became what we are that he might make us what he is. Saint Athanasius***
- So moved by the gift that our gift in return is ourselves
 1. What would it look like in each of our lives if our next day and next day and each day was dedicated to Jesus?
 - a. Think of the fervor with which we attach ourselves to celebrities and wear their numbers, buy their stuff, etc.
 - b. **Illus.: Part of the Gift**
 2. During these next few weeks before Good Friday and Easter, falling in love with Jesus all over again
 - a. *And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. vs.20*

Missing on purpose—true self-denial

When Johnnell Franklin's mother lost her battle with cancer on February 7, 2009, no one was surprised to hear that Franklin, a senior forward for the Milwaukee Madison High School basketball team (Milwaukee, Wisconsin), was not going to play in his team's game that day against DeKalb High School (DeKalb, Illinois). But then he showed up. Midway through the second quarter, Franklin walked into the gym, ready to play. The only problem was that his name hadn't been entered into the scorebook. That meant that if Franklin took the floor, his team would be assessed a technical—two free throws for the DeKalb team. Aaron Womack Jr., coach of Milwaukee Madison, and Dave Rohlman, coach of DeKalb, both met with the game's referee, begging the referee to make an exception to the rules. Though the referee was sympathetic to the situation, he stressed that the rules had to be followed, regardless of the extenuating circumstances. That's when something truly special happened. When the referee would not budge, DeKalb's Darius McNeal volunteered to shoot the two free throws. When he turned to make his way to the line, Coach Rohlman called out, "You realize you're going to miss, right?" McNeal nodded. McNeal went to the line, the referee handed him the basketball, and he set his feet to take the shot. But instead of a perfectly executed free throw, McNeal shot the ball just two feet in front of him, and the ball slowly bounced out of bounds. The referee picked the ball up, handed it back to McNeal, and McNeal did the same thing for the second shot. The crowd responded with a standing ovation. Later, in an interview with the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, McNeal said, "I did it for the guy who lost his mom. It was the right thing to do." Moved by the gesture of the DeKalb team, Coach Womack wrote a letter to the *DeKalb Daily Chronicle*, saying, "You should all feel immense pride for the remarkable job that the coaching staff is doing in not only coaching these young men, but teaching them how to be leaders." He added—tongue in cheek—"I'd like to recognize Darius who stepped up to miss the shot on purpose. . . . I hope Coach Rohlman doesn't make him run [laps]." source: **ESPN.com news services, "Team's gesture supports grieving opponent," www.espn.com (2-17-09)**

Giving up our blue marble

There was a young boy who loved to play marbles. He regularly walked through his neighborhood with a pocketful of his best marbles, hoping to find opponents to play against. One marble in particular, his special blue marble, had won him many matches. During one walk he encountered a young girl who was eating a bag of chocolate candy. Though the boy's first love was marbles, he had a weakness for chocolates. As he stood there interacting with the young girl, his salivary glands and the rumbling in his stomach became uncontrollable, and he thought to himself, I have got to get my hands on those chocolates. Concocting a plan, he asked the girl, "How about I give you all these marbles for those chocolates?" She replied, "Sounds fair to me." He put his hand in his pocket, searching for the distinguishing cracks on the surface of the blue marble. Once he identified the blue marble with his finger tip, he carefully pushed it to the bottom of his pocket and pulled out all the other marbles. As he handed the marbles to the girl in exchange for the chocolate, the boy thought his plan was a success and turned to walk away. As he began to eat the candy, he suddenly turned to the girl and asked, "Hey, did you give me *all* the chocolates?" Our fallen nature persuades us to posture ourselves in the same deceptive and defiant attitude as the boy in this story. We want everything the kingdom of God has to offer. We want to have a secure sense of God's presence, we want all our prayers to be answered, we want to "feel close" to Jesus, we want to flourish in the riches of God's glory—we want it all. But we are unwilling to give up everything for it. Many times there is a "blue marble" in our lives that we seem unwilling to offer to the control of Christ. Until we can fully subjugate ourselves to God's will, our participation in God's kingdom will be limited. **Christopher L. Heuertz, *Simple Spirituality* (IVP, 2008), pp. 116-117; Samuel T. Kamaleson, "Mangoes and Marbles," *Decision* magazine (January 1978)**

Part of the gift

A missionary, raised on the Pacific coast, sent to interior Africa, who missed the ocean, and one of the villagers traveled 170 miles round trip to bring sea shells to the missionary. "Here is the gift from the ocean." Long walk is part of the gift!"

Galatians 2:19-20

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. [NASB]