

John 20:1-18

We have all experienced this in some way. It's unavoidable, It is painful, It produces great sorrow and yet, as Christ Followers, there is a thread of hope we cling to that weaves its way through the difficult path of the mourning process.

This presents a tension to be held; grief and hope, sorrow and celebration.

There is also a process of life and death we experience in our spiritual life: While death in our physical life seems to be in seasons, death in our spiritual life is faced daily.

It is no mistake that Jesus chooses to use this metaphor of death and life to describe our salvation and sanctification process. When we became a Christ follower, we stepped into a constant cycle of life and death.

“When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die” - **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

THE CALL TO CHRIST:

Luke 9:23 – Deny yourself, pick up your cross daily.

Gal. 2:20 – We are crucified with Christ.

Rom. 6:6 – Our old self was crucified with Him, so our body ruled by sin might be done away with.

Col. 3:3 – For you died, and now your life is hidden with Christ.

Col. 3:5 – So put to death the sinful earthly things lurking within you.

In order to gain the life God has called you to, you will have to let go of aspects of your life that you have built, that you love, that you desire, that you live for and cling to. While that feels like loss, you will gain a life greater than you could ever hope or imagine.

It may be a life the world would never desire, but it will bring a reward this world could never produce.

This is where we find Mary. **John 20:1-18**

V.17 Don't cling to me.

This was not easy. Imagine how Mary felt:

Everything she loved and cherished (Identity, Security, Life as she knew it) now was wrapped up in the Jesus she knew, of course she would want to cling to it.

You can't hold onto the old and fully experience the new

Unless she embraces the death of what she knew, she could not experience the life she was being given. She had to let go. This is the discipleship process.

This is what Jesus was teaching in John 12:23-25

23 Jesus replied, “Now the time has come for the Son of Man[!] to enter into his glory. 24 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. 25 Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity.

Catholic Tradition: Paschal Mystery of Christ

Paschal – Derived from Hebrew word PE-SACH (Passover)

Mystery - this does not mean something unknown. Instead, it refers to a transcendent reality whose infinite depth can never be fully exhausted by human reason.

This is the Easter story:

- 1) Good Friday – loss of life
- 2) Easter Sunday – resurrection
- 3) The great 40 Days – A time of adjustment to not mourning the old
- 4) Ascension – Letting Go
- 5) Pentecost – New Spirit

Terminal death – End of life on this earth.

Paschal death - ongoing process as we live our faith out here on earth. It is the ending of one kind of life that opens the person undergoing it to receive a deeper and richer form of life

Let's be honest:

Staying and clinging seems better than going and dying.

We miss out on the freedom Christ promises, because we cling to bondage we are familiar with.

Freedom takes work!

“Everything worthwhile is uphill” - **John Maxwell**

You are not working for salvation, you are working within the process of salvation.

Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning. Earning is an attitude, effort is an action.

- **Dallas Willard**

DON'T MISS THIS: The Garden

At the most pivotal point in history, a cosmic reset, we find ourselves back in a garden where God is revealing new life once again.

God is in the business of transforming tombs of darkness and death into gardens of resurrected life

He meets us at the tomb, He Calls us by name.

He helps us turn from the death that consumes us.

He sends us off into this new life that He has given.

When Jesus calls you to come and die, it is always to a deeper, richer, greater depth of relationship with Him. It is an Invitation to new life, understanding, victory, perspective, purpose, relationship.