

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster  
Sunday, March 26th, 2023, Lent V  
Ezekiel 37:1-14 Psalm 130 Romans 8:6-11 John 11:1-45

Again, a long gospel. Two phrases that come to mind from the passage in the gospel today are unbind him and let him go. And Lazarus come out. We hear in the Psalm today; out of the depths I cry to you I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, my soul waits more than watchmen in the morning.

Do we come out or do we wait? Out of the depths. It has been said people feel that they are so bad God cannot forgive or redeem them. If we look at it in a linear fashion with bad at one end and good at the other. It does not matter how bad we are on the one end, God's goodness and love is so much further to the side of good than anything we can do on the bad side. If it's folded in the middle, which line overtakes the other?

And by depths it is not only our actions but our feelings perhaps of despair and depression. This may say something about mental illness, perhaps depression and being alone with our dark imagination.

We tend to think and imagine there is clear demarcations between sick and well. That may not be true. In reality, we are all fighting something which can make us sick at all times. the white blood cells and antibodies are always at work. So, the difference between being sick and well, is whether we need outside help to combat the illness, be it medicines or surgery and the like. Are mental illness and issues any different?

This means all of us at certain times need to be called out and encouraged in various in different ways. These last two years have set us on the path questioning and dark imagination. This means that we can understand and relate to what others are going through and have gone through. Therefore, we have a part to play when Jesus says to the crowd gathered unbind him and let him go.

This seems to mean that our response is twofold. There are times when we like Lazarus are to come out. That we are feeling sorry for ourselves, and seeing the glass of our lives is only half empty. And times we are called to be like the crowd and help to unbind him and let him go.

This may also mean a call to action. The challenge to live out our ministry in relationship to others in the community. Question still remains, do we act, or do we wait?

Maybe that's where discernment comes in and seeking God first. Last week, if it had been up to Samuel alone, David would not have been chosen king, but one of his older brothers. Yes, we can wait too long, and that may be a real temptation, but we can also get ahead of God. In Ezekiel, we hear about the breath of God in the valley of the dry bones. But our value is there as well. Not get ahead of God, therefore God with us not behind us. And not God without us either.

Amen.

May the God who shakes heaven and earth,  
whose Spirit blows through the valleys and the hills;  
whom death could not contain and  
who lives to disturb and bring us life;  
bless us with the power to endure,  
to hope and to love. Amen.

(Source: [\*Elizabeth Raine\*](#))