

Fourth Wednesday of Lent ~ 3/21

"Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live." (John 5:25)

Every once in awhile there is a nasty little rumor that flares up which insists that people who do evil things are themselves evil and thus beyond redemption. It is a nasty little rumor for two reasons. First, because it blurs the lines between the evil thoughts, words and actions of a person with the redeemable person who commits the sin. Secondly, when we damn the sinner we forget that no one is beyond the power of God to save.

This nasty little rumor was quite prevalent at the time of Jesus. The Pharisees and Scribes could not be bothered with the rabble, the riffraff, the thieves and prostitutes. In the mind of the righteous, these people were simply walking corpses. They were already beyond hope.

In today's reading Jesus attacks this rumor head on. He proclaimed that these very 'dead' people were the ones that He had come to save. Jesus brought forth from their graves the tax collectors and adulteress, the possessed and pathetic masses of humanity. Lepers, the dead flesh walking of Jesus' time, were touched and brought fully back to life because Jesus did not believe the nasty little rumor.

Throughout history the words might change and the damned may be different but the nasty little rumor is basically the same. Fortunately our Savior Jesus Christ is also the same. He has continued to raise those that were thought to be dead into new life and He still reaches out His hand to the faint heart searching for redemption.

That nasty little rumor still floats around. There are still people that the self-righteous consider dead with no possibility of redemption. We choose to believe that evil deeds leave a person beyond redemption. We have famous evil faces floating on our television screens every evening. Have we already judged them dead? By their own choice they may someday indeed be lost, but as long as they have breath in their bodies the power of God can still work miracles.

The rumor exists in our neighborhoods as well. There are probably people right in your midst who have been relegated to the walking dead. Maybe they are just waiting for us to be the word of God that smashes the nasty little rumor and frees their souls.

Questions for Reflection

- 1. Who are the dead around you who need to be brought back to new life?*
- 2. Are there parts of my own person that seem to have died and need to know healing?*