

“Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.”

Clearly, in one sense, Jesus is **referring to himself**. He is that grain of wheat which will “fall to the ground” and die. The “dying” of the seed is precisely what brings about an abundance of life.

This we know and believe **in faith**. We wouldn’t be sitting here week after week if we didn’t at some level accept the most central statement and truth of our faith...that Jesus **saved the world and transformed it through his life, death and resurrection**. Jesus died so that we could live. **That** is the Good News. We should never forget what Jesus did for you and for me and for the whole world. The purpose of Lent (in part) is for making sure we are always **grateful** for the **selfless, saving acts of our Lord**.

What we don’t always know, believe, or understand is that **this is precisely what we are to be about too**. That means you and me...are also called to be grains of wheat, **called to “die” so that others may “live.”** That’s how God made us. That’s how God wants us to live our lives. Yet, that’s the deep truth about life that so often **gets lost amid our own needs and wants**.

Put simply...**self-emptying love** is at the heart of what it means to be a child of God.

Yet, it can be so difficult to embrace. We want to protect our money. We want to protect our reputations and image. We want to protect our status and looks and... you name it. In a very deep way, we **want to protect our lives**...everything that goes along with that, everything that we feel can **enhance and support and contribute to making sure that we are taken care of** (materially, physically, emotionally). Letting go of that kind of attitude can be one of the most challenging things we will ever be asked to do.

And so, if you are ready to **embrace these profound and challenging words** from the mouth of Jesus, if you are ready to **be a grain of wheat**, if you are ready to **“die” so that life may grow abundantly** on this earth...reach out to a lonely person...be kind to the people you don’t really like...go to counseling for the sake of your marriage...you fill in the blank.

Dying, a bad thing? Not when we **do it for someone else**. Not when we **do it for our God who has done it for us first**.