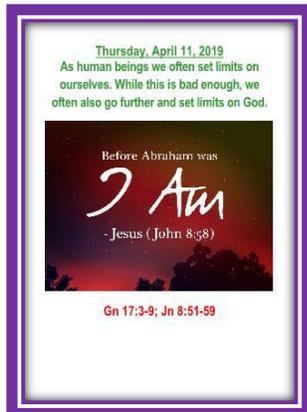


HOMILY



"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

When the Jewish authorities asked Jesus who do you claim to be? he answered, "before Abraham was, I am." Jesus claims to be timeless and there is only one in the universe who is timeless, namely God. Scripture tells us that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus was not just a man who came, lived, died, and then rose again. He is the immortal timeless One, who always was and always will be. In Jesus, we see the eternal God in visible flesh. He is God who became a man for our sake and for our salvation. His death and resurrection make it possible for us to share in his immortality.

Jesus declares that his words are the source of life, and if we listen to his word and try to live by it then we will share in God's own life, here and now and, more fully, beyond the moment of our physical death. Elsewhere in John's gospel, Peter says to Jesus, 'you have the words of eternal life'. In this morning's gospel reading, Jesus declares that he faithfully keeps his Father's word. Our calling is to faithfully keep Jesus' word. Our relationship with Jesus is to be modeled on his relationship with the Father. If we faithfully keep Jesus' word, as he faithfully kept his Father's word, then we will know its life-giving power in our lives. We greatly value the gift of the Eucharist, because it is the bread of life. We equally value the Lord's word, because it is the word of life.

In this morning's gospel reading Jesus says that he does not seek his own glory but that his glory is conferred by his Father. In that culture, seeking glory, honor, renown for oneself was a very important value. In this regard, as in so many other ways, Jesus stood against the culture. He did not seek glory for himself but he trusted in God to give him glory in God's own time. He was critical of those who sought glory from others, who looked for earthly honors. **Are we seeking glory**

from others? Earthly honors? In this morning's gospel reading Jesus says, 'I faithfully keep his word (God's word)'. This was the driving force of Jesus' life, not seeking glory for himself from others. He knew that if he faithfully kept God's word, he would receive glory from God. The driving force of Jesus' life is to be the driving force of all of our lives.

Keeping and following faithfully the word of God and its effects in our life:

1. Our primary desire as Jesus' followers is to faithfully keep God's word, as he did. If we keep trying to be faithful to God's word, as spoken and lived by Jesus, then we are assured that we will receive glory from God; **we will be honored by God, and this is the only glory and honor worth having.**
2. The Word became flesh. He offered the life of this other world, eternal life, to all who believed in him, to all who opened their lives to his coming. His journey from this world back to his heavenly Father was a journey that all who believe in him would also travel. This is good news which brings meaning and joy to our lives. The life Jesus speaks about is the fruit of our relationship with him, and that **relationship is not broken by death but, on the contrary, deepens beyond death.**
3. In Jesus, we see the eternal God in visible flesh. He is God who became a man for our sake and for our salvation. His death and resurrection make it **possible for us to share in his immortality.**

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, let your word be on my lips and in my heart that I may walk in the freedom of your everlasting love, truth, and goodness. Let me honor you and you alone by following your word faithfully and become a sharer of your immortality.

Jesus, I trust in you.