

No. 8

Baccalaureate Sermon  
May 13-1934

SERMON

Cotulla - April 6, 1941

BY

Text. John 12: 24

Scripture Lesson. 12: 12-36.

Psalter 487. John 3: 14-23.

Subject. Life by Death.

Prelude

Processional

Salutation Hab. 2:20 and 14

Doxology

Invocation - Lord's Prayer

Res. Reading Sel 487 21 (Cotulla bk)

Hymn. X. 279

Script Les. 12:12-36.

Anthem

Prayer

Affertory

Hymn 279 263

Sermon

Hymn 312 219

Benediction

Recessional

Cotulla

April 6-41

Palms Sunday

DIRECTIONS.

To allow this cover and the sheets to lie open  
and flat, tie loosely.

- Life by Death -

John - 12<sup>24</sup> - Verily, Verily I  
say unto you, except a grain of  
wheat fall into the <sup>earth</sup> ground and  
die, it abideth by itself alone;  
but if it die it beareth much  
fruit."

The teachings of Jesus  
sparkle with similies and  
metaphors illustrating  
His universal truths. It  
is a mustard seed that grows  
into a tree of many branches  
or a lost sheep out upon  
the hills or a sneaking  
wolf in sheep's clothing.  
He pointed to the bird sitting  
undisturbed upon the

branch as the wind flows  
it violently up <sup>and</sup> down in the  
air, as a sample of Trust in  
God and not to worry. See  
the wild flowers grow. Solomon  
in all his splendour was not  
dressed like one of them. At  
evening He calls their attention  
to the sunset. At night He  
teaches illustrating the New Birth  
by the wind that blew about  
Him and Nicodemus. Every  
one, therefore, who listens to His  
teaching of mine and acts  
upon it, will be like a sensible  
man who built his house  
upon a rock. In all His illus-  
trations lie universal  
teachings. In the text for

This year's <sup>morning</sup> graduating class  
 He uses a grain of wheat  
 to illustrate His most  
 astounding policy in  
 His Kingdom - life by death.  
 "Except a grain of wheat fall  
 into <sup>the</sup> earth and die, it abideth  
 by itself alone; but if it die  
 it beareth much fruit."

His followers were expecting  
 Him to establish anew the  
 power and Kingdom of David;  
 to drive the Romans out  
 of the land of Israel. For  
 their instruction and  
 education He uses a  
 single grain of wheat. <sup>unless</sup> ~~it~~

that grain of wheat was sowed  
it could not amount to any-  
thing. Not many years ago  
they discovered several  
grains of wheat <sup>wrapped up</sup> in a mummy  
of Egypt. For four thousand  
years those grains rested  
and were taken out mere  
grains of wheat. Had they  
been planted at the time  
they were embalmed, they  
would have oversupplied  
the world's population today  
with flour directly from those  
grains. He says this grain  
of wheat has to be covered  
duply under the soil. It  
must give up its identity -  
allowing the moisture of the

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earth and the heat of  
the sun to play their part  
in its physical transfor-  
mation. The outer shell must  
break. The inner substance  
must surrender itself be-  
fore the kernel sprouts.  
Death must weaken <sup>the grain's</sup> ~~its~~  
coat of defense before life  
can spring from its heart  
in triumph and vigor.  
Otherwise it must continue  
a hard seed and abide  
by itself alone. To become  
the foundation for a large  
harvest it must give  
up everything - die.

To the Greeks who came to see Him, Jesus replied and meant to have them understand that if He lived on, He would live on by Himself alone - a single blade in the world's acres of grass. He could preserve His own life but in so doing He could not become the great Deliverer of humanity from the enslaving, usurping powers, not of Rome but of sin. No word did man speak more truly than did the chief priests and scribes <sup>when they,</sup> standing at the foot of the cross mocking Jesus said: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save." Jesus came



to ~~make~~<sup>set me</sup> free spiritually.  
 Political freedom is secondary,  
 really not essential. Rome  
 with its millions of soldiers  
 and triumphs over civil &  
 temporal powers, could  
 not change the heart  
 of an Elizabeth or a Mary  
 nor compel a St Paul  
 to renounce the life giving  
 power of his inner soul.  
 The seed that died on Calvary  
 sprung up in Paul's heart  
 and he, in the face of per-  
 secution and death for  
 the name of Jesus, cried out to

Greeks and Romans:

"We are ambassadors on

behalf of Christ, as though  
God was entreating by us;  
we beseech you on behalf of  
Christ, be ye reconciled to  
God. Him who knew no sin  
he made to be sin on our  
behalf; that we might become  
the righteousness of God in  
Him." Death in itself is  
not sufficient. It is how He died.  
A grain of wheat on a rocky soil  
dies but bears no fruit; in a  
fertile soil, it bears a hundred  
fold. Christ died the just for  
the unjust, the perfect for  
the imperfect, the faultless one  
for the faulty ones. It was  
a death that sprang up in  
abundance of life.

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What a King! They could  
not understand him. A humble,  
quiet, most <sup>apparent</sup> unostentatious King  
whose <sup>main</sup> principle of life in  
his kingdom was ~~death~~ by  
life life by death. He had  
no chariot of gold in which  
to ride — only a humble  
donkey and <sup>one borrowed and used</sup> that, but one  
time. His feet were burned  
by the hot sands, blistered  
by the rubbing thorns of  
his sandals while He walked  
the roads of Palestine to re-  
lieve the afflicted, to comfort  
the sorrowing and to raise  
the dead as He <sup>lived</sup> preached +  
His doctrine of life by death.

He had no attendants to care for his needs, nor to accompany Him in His deepest experiences and struggles of life. Did not all His followers sleep on the night He prayed till the sweat like drops of blood streamed from His face? He had no palace, yet it is not recorded that He ever slept on a bed but it was said: "He was in the wilderness forty days and nights, tempted of Satan and was with" not fellow companions, but "wild beasts." <sup>and at the last</sup> So far was He from the thought and care of even His disciples, that God had to send angels from heaven to minister to Him

in His loneliness while his  
disciples slept.

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He was a King? Yes, but  
not such as the people of  
Palestine had ever seen or  
heard of. He began His  
reign? Yes, but there was  
no grand procession; no  
coronation trumpet blew, no  
music swelled the air when  
He marched up that hill  
of Calvary to seal His univ-  
ersal reign in His own  
blood. There stood no  
priest to take the oath of  
fidelity and loyalty from  
His subjects. There was no  
ivory throne for Him to  
ascend; no ointment to  
pour on His head; no

crown ~~to~~ of precious stones  
to place on His head. Yes, there  
was a crown but of Thorns, no  
shouts of long live the King  
only the murmur of curses and  
mockery from a crazed,  
misled multitude. But  
Jesus' power came from  
above. The heavens stooped  
in silence. At the height of  
the noon hour, darkness covered  
the face of the Sun, the stars  
came out and the earth  
shook when this King of Kings  
and Lord of lords gave up  
the physical, and His crown  
head dropt down and they  
came and said "He is dead".

Here is a King beginning His

reign in such a way that <sup>(7)</sup>  
man cannot understand it,  
angels cannot comprehend it.  
Only God knows and under-  
stands. Many other kings  
had fought to rule but  
Christ Jesus gave up all—  
even life itself as He as-  
sumed His universal  
reign.

When David died, the leaders  
of the people gathered from Dan &  
Bersheba to bury his body  
in the sepulchre of the  
great. Here is David's greater  
son whose body is lowered  
into a borrowed sepulchre,  
~~which he~~ who broke forth from  
~~and great~~ that sepulchre  
and became the first

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fruit of a new era of subjects  
who find life by death.

His kingdom was different from  
all others not alone in the  
principle that actuates His  
true subject but also in the  
benefits it confers upon those  
who comprise that kingdom.

Name over all the virtues of life -  
the unselfishness, the altruism,  
the hope, the peace, the joy, the  
meekness, the temperance, the  
love - all are the expression  
of that life which Jesus has  
bestowed on us through  
the cross. And this is the  
way He rules today in the  
world, life by death.

The grain of wheat has lost  
none of its meaning to the one



who observes, who reflects on  
the lives of men who have made  
history.

Had not Williams, Harris, ~~and~~  
Paton and others gone to the  
South Sea Islands, some to die  
at the hands of the savages, others  
to suffer for years, those  
Islands would have remained  
cannibals and the great life  
and joy of Christ would not  
be the transforming power  
in the Islanders' lives. Had  
not Livingstone opened up  
Africa by leaving his heart  
buried under a tree in  
the wilds of its Central forest,  
~~history of Africa~~  
it would not have been  
changed as it is today. Had

Not Adamson Judson suffered in  
Burhna. to pave the way, the  
other missionaries could not have  
done the work as they did. If  
a man <sup>suffers</sup> succeeds without  
~~suffering~~ succeeding it is  
that some one who came after  
him may succeed without  
suffering. If a man suc-  
ceeds without suffering it  
is because some one has  
suffered ~~without succeeding~~  
before him. However there  
is always suffering in  
the success of any worthy  
enterprise. It is the princi-  
ple that actuates in the natural  
world. The larva of the lepidopt<sup>er</sup>  
~~er~~ous insects must undergo

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That which is death to the  
worm. <sup>the worm</sup> It climbs a bush, spins  
a web around its body and  
goes to sleep. <sup>In that sleep</sup> ~~while~~ death  
<sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ transformation into a  
chrysalid and finally into  
a beautifully colored butterfly.  
The worm had to die - to lose  
its life but in so doing it  
gained a new and better life.  
Before, it had to content itself  
by crawling along on the ground  
at midnight. Now it, after death,  
flits ~~as~~ with silken wings  
through the sunlight of noon  
day. Once as a worm it  
fed on dirt, now as a trans-  
formed butterfly it sips  
the honey from the choicest

flowers of the gardens.

How like man is this insect. So long as one continues his old original self he must content himself by walking on a low plain of life - growling, grumbling, finding fault with others and <sup>with</sup> himself, discouraged, blue, actuated by selfishness - and some go so far as to take their own lives, without God and without hope in the world. His motives may be, but usually are not, altruistic but self-centered. He arrives at and sees truth from the lower side - the dark, earthly side of life. The reverses of life embitter him. The criticism by others enrage him. When his

his fellowman differs with him,<sup>(11)</sup>  
he considers his fellowman  
as inferior or stupid. Nothing  
pleases him unless it brings  
him some personal recom-  
pense. He is still a worm  
dragging himself along on  
the surface of the earth. He  
does not know that life comes  
by death, that there are  
principles of action, if followed,  
as Jesus has outlined <sup>them,</sup> will  
lift him up above all the  
rocky paths and marshy  
bogs of his path, into above  
the clouds and storms  
and into the great spaces  
of action and love <sup>with</sup> of God  
and mankind as his friends.

Notice here that Christ did not say grains but grain. He individualized, personalized religion. He speaks for individuals, which of course finally work out into all our social contacts. I cannot be saved because my mother or father is saved. I cannot bear fruit because my parents bore much fruit.

I am called to a personal accounting. I am willing to pay the price? It must be a real, personal demand to me as it is to Christ who asks it of me. It was an intensely personal and real demand on Christ - to carry his heavy cross, to feel those nails being

driven into his hands and feet <sup>(12)</sup>  
His knowledge of scripture fulfilled  
in His suffering did not lessen  
the pain any at all but it did  
take away remorse and supply  
satisfaction in suffering.

<sup>Young People's Co</sup>  
Young people of the class  
of 1934, this truth of life by  
death as the only legitimate  
means of success in  
life, has got to come to your  
hearts with the same serious  
thought, the same conscious  
reality, the same personal  
content, if you are to bear  
much fruit in life.

Success in the way that Jesus  
outlined will hurt you but  
will enlarge your life and

your sun will set in splendour.  
People, some of them, will tell you  
that you are to deny yourself nothing  
that will bring you a thrill or  
a joy. Be careful to get that kind  
of a philosophy under your feet  
and not in your heart.

The question in your mind  
is no doubt, How can I die to  
the world? The Holy Spirit will  
lead you day by day if you will  
seek Him in prayer and the study  
of God's word, and will get busy  
out some worthwhile service  
to your fellow man. Many  
young people start life by  
trying to find out what is  
prohibited. If you will occupy  
yourself in all the good you



(13)  
can do ~~all~~ to aid for all the people  
you meet in both speech and action,  
you will soon find yourself so thoroughly  
engaged in worthwhile service  
that questionable amusement and  
scathing criticism will not tempt you.

"To place no value on anything I  
possess ~~except~~ in relation to  
the Kingdom of God", was the  
way David Livingstone faced  
the demands of life. "To do all things  
for the glory of God;" is how St Paul ex-  
pressed it. To bear much fruit  
you must invest much in that which  
produces fruit. To bear the most fruit  
you must invest all you are and all  
you have - give yourself unconditionally  
to Jesus Christ, to be used by Him

the soul cries & can't give up: friends,  
loved ones, home, country.  
as He wills in His service. However  
Through tears & the broken ties blossoming fruit

This is Mother's Day - when we remember our mothers especially. Our thoughts go back to that mother, blessed above all women, Mary the mother of Jesus, as an example for all mothers. ~~in~~ She loved her son, Jesus. She suffered for and later with Him. Long after all hope of saving Him from the cross had vanished it is written that Mary stood at the foot of the cross - a mother's love to the end. There she stood till Jesus charged John to take her home. What a picture! That of Mary with breaking heart, calmly looking upon her son on the cross and longing to stay with Him but more ready to obey Him. She takes a last look at Jesus on the cross and walks away with John to his home - perfect obedience to

the very best. If she could speak out of the fullness of her experience to you of the class of 1934 today, I am sure she would say to you just the same words your own mothers of sainted memory would want to say to you as you are soon to going out into life alone -

Yes <sup>many</sup> ~~she~~ would say with <sup>you</sup> ~~her~~ mothers what she said once to those who served at the wedding of Cana of Galilee

"So, whatsoever Jesus tells you."

"Whatsoever Jesus says unto you, do it."

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