

### Pastor Roy's Sermon from June 25, 2017

Perhaps as Jesus speaks of swords and peace, of losing and gaining life, of choosing priorities and crosses—he is calling us to consider carefully our loyalties. To choose carefully our investments in living.

When Jesus says, “Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both,” he is reminding us to be in regular touch with the deepest rhythms of the universe. He is calling us to listen carefully, lest we lose our way and find that we have wasted the energy of our brief time on earth. Let us make our days count. Look within. Listen to the Spirit of God calling us into peace, justice, mercy, rest—regardless of the cost.

For, “Those who find their life will lose it—those who find great satisfaction and have not a care in the world who seize every chance to gain more advantage and enjoy more pleasure for themselves, will find themselves without joy and peace. And those who lose their life for my sake (that is, for others, for the gospel, for grace, for wisdom, for faithfulness) will find joy and peace—though at a great cost to their own ease, happiness, sanity, and convenience.” But nothing else matters according to Jesus, to this Spirit at work in our world today.

We went on vacation this week with our children. Wherever I go, I am reminded that there are dear and troubled people everywhere. I see people who appear to be lonely, who need to be shown grace and kindness. This past week I observed what appeared to be the descendants of slaves, peasants, and wealthy landowners. I would guess my ancestors are more of the peasant class, but there is a wide variety in each of our family trees. The worries and fears of all are similar, though the specific concerns range in variety. Everyone regardless needs friends and family for support, comfort, and companionship.

Our faith, Grace is calling us to give away our lives for those who need a little bit more of life. May we take the time to get to know and help our neighbors. May we lose our life, not just so that we can find it waiting for us where we left it, but so that all may know of the peace and joy of resting, trusting, hoping. . .waiting on God's grace and mercy which is always closer and more true than our greatest efforts, worries, and fears.

Our spirituality, our faith is found in listening and loving as we are able. It's ok if we don't get it all right. But love is where the joy and peace are. Love, as each of us is able, is where we find ourselves. Compassion is how we give our life away to find it. Faith leads us to trust that everything is going to be alright. Indeed.

Amen.