

**Proper 8**  
**Year B**  
**July 1, 2018**

David's lament for Saul and Jonathan does not stand alone this week. The profiles of those who were shot on Thursday in Annapolis are there for the reading and you can be sure that our nation and the world will see them and lament.

There is no tidy theological explanation, for Saul and Jonathan or the dead employees of The Capital Gazette, only grief. The lives of those victims were certainly complicated, they were human after all. Like Saul and Jonathan - they had their ups and downs.

But this isn't the time to reflect on that... to us, today, they are beloved and lovely... swifter than eagles...stronger than lions.

This week I was reminded of a friend of mine. Chet White. We met at Western Kentucky University where we both studied photojournalism. I was taking a intro-level class and Chet had been invited to speak to us. He was going to tell us why he chose to pursue a career in photography.

Chet grew up in Louisville in the South End. His mom stayed at home and his Dad worked at Standard Gravure, a local printing press. On September 14th, 1989 Joseph Wesbecker, a former (and disgruntled) employee, came to the Standard Gravure plant and shot 20 people. Killing 8. One of the victim's was Lloyd White, Chet's dad.

Chet told us how he remembered the flood of journalists who - with stark objectivity - came to ask question after question...but he remembered, in particular, the photographers. They didn't even speak. Just clicking and snapping.

In the days following the murder of his father and his father's co-workers, Chet became so angry at the photographers - and their ubiquitous presence - that

somehow, amidst the grief and frustration, he decided that he would become a photographer...and he would do it better, with more sensitivity, he wanted to know the people on the other side of the lens.

That evening, as Chet and I walked home I asked him why he told that story. After all, he had shared it with at least half a dozen classes at WKU. Chet told me that he was invited to tell that story to help aspiring journalists to be sensitive to the people they were covering, to remember that they were people with feelings.

But he also said to me that telling the story helped him deal with the pain and the loss of losing his Dad so suddenly and tragically. For Chet, sharing in the grief healed him.

Sharing our grief heals our grief. We share in the grief with those who knew and loved those in Annapolis. Whether we compose songs, like David, or tell our stories, like Chet, we must share our grief because it heals us, however slowly, from the pain of loss.

Sharing is also what Paul is writing to the Corinthians about. This is, I would assume, the first stewardship letter in the Christian church. An old fashioned appeal letter, Paul's asking them for money on behalf of the Church in Jerusalem, the mother church, which was very poor. And in making his case, he provides two important insights into the value of sharing from our purses.

The first is a classic: what goes around comes around. "It is a question of a fair balance," Paul writes, "between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need..."

I think all of us can attest to the idea that life has a funny way of evening things out...Far more often than not we find that it is measured to us with the same measure as we measure to others."

There's another point about sharing our money that Paul makes which is less like an insurance policy and more like holistic medicine.

In this portion of the letter, Paul stresses the importance of completing the feeling with a deed. A feeling which remains only a feeling, a pity which remains a pity only of the heart, a fine desire that never turns into a fine deed, is a sadly truncated and frustrated thing.

Sharing from our abundance completes the circle. The action makes whole our thoughts and prayers. To make whole is to heal and that's good for the soul.

Finally, we arrive at the Chief Cornerstone, the pinnacle of sharing: Jesus Christ. In Gospel passages such as these we come to see so clearly that sharing is healing. But what Jesus is sharing is not able to be measured. It supersedes abundance and is there for the taking.

By this time in his ministry, crowds had begun to gather around Jesus, even pressing in on him. Of course folks wanted to be near him, he was transforming people's lives, he was performing healing miracles. And his gift had compelled two particular characters into the crowd that day. Both of whom came at some risk.

Jairus, a religious leader, would have risked rejection from his peers. Consorting with Jesus, who had claimed Messiahship, could have alienated him from his colleagues and congregations. The woman, who had been bleeding for 12 years, risked rejection from Jesus. She was, after all, unclean according to the law.

Both risked rejection but both were desperate. Jairus fell at Jesus' feet and begged him to help heal his daughter. The woman wouldn't even meet him face to face; "if I but touch the hem of his garment."

Regardless, both received what they had prayed for. Jesus healed Jairus' daughter and the woman. Showing us that God's grace is indiscriminate. God's grace disregards status, gender, ritual cleanliness. It disregards skin color and sexual orientation, bank accounts and any other pigeon hole that it encounters.

We could quit here. We could, justifiably, say that sharing is good and we should engage in it, as our Lord did, indiscriminately. But I want us to step out of the shoes of the sharers and into the shoes of the receivers, because, yes, sharing our stories and our resources heals ourselves and others.

But allowing ourselves to be shared to, by Jesus Christ, allows for a healing that would cause any of us to rise up from our slumber and live. Have you ever revealed your vulnerability in the midst of a crowd and fallen at the feet of Jesus? Maybe like Jairus you are afraid of what people will think, maybe like the woman, you think you're not good enough, too dirty. Or maybe, you've just never been that desperate.

In order to heal a hurting world we've got to share our stories of pain and suffering, we've got to share our resources, our money and our talents, but to bring healing into this world, fully, we must allow Jesus to share with us what he has to offer. A healing salve, the revelation of the kingdom of God that is so near.

What Jesus offers is himself, the way to God. He unites us to God and to one another. And we meet him here at this altar. We share in him, we commune with him that we might become a community, a Holy Temple acceptable to God.

So rise up, press in on him, here in the midst of our humble crowd, fall at his feet, bring your broken self to him, and share in this meal, that you may receive the grace and strength to share yourself.