

**WHEN I WAS IN ABOUT GRADE FOUR AT SCHOOL OUR TEACHER SHOWED US HOW SEEDS GROW.**

**SHE PUT SOME COTTON WOOL ON A SAUCER, DAMPED IT DOWN AND LAID WHEAT SEEDS ON IT.**

**OVER DAYS AND WEEKS WE WERE AMAZED TO WATCH WHAT HAPPENED. THE SEED SKIN SPLIT OPEN. THEN THE SEED SPLIT IN TWO AND SOON THERE WAS A LITTLE GREEN SHOOT AND A SMALL ROOT. AS THE SHOOT AND THE ROOT GREW, THE SEED GRADUALLY DISAPPEARED AS IT FED THIS NEW GROWTH.**

**SO THE SEED GAVE ITSELF COMPLETELY IN ORDER TO MAKE NEW LIFE. IT IS AN AMAZING PROCESS OF NATURE, AND IT HAPPENS TIME AND TIME AND TIME AGAIN.**

**THIS PROCESS IS WHAT JESUS TALKS ABOUT IN THE GOSPEL. OF COURSE IT DOESN'T STAND UP TO A LITERAL EXPLANATION.**

**BUT JESUS, JUST AS THE SEED, GAVE HIMSELF INTO DEATH SO THAT NEW LIFE COULD COME. NEW LIFE, NOT ONLY FOR HIMSELF, BUT ALSO FOR US.**

**JESUS SPEAKS OF THIS TRANSFORMATION, THIS PASSAGE FROM DESTRUCTION TO LIFE, AS HIS HOUR OF GLORY. IT WAS FOR THIS PROCESS OF LIFE FROM DEATH THAT JESUS SAYS IS THE VERY REASON WHY HE CAME.**

**HERE WE MUST ALSO BE VERY CAREFUL. FOR MOST OF OUR CHRISTIAN HISTORY THE MOST VEXING QUESTION IS: "WHY DID JESUS DIE?" THE REAL QUESTION WE HAVE TO ASK IS: "WHY WAS JESUS KILLED?"**

**BECAUSE JESUS DIDN'T JUST DIE. HE WAS MURDERED. JESUS WAS A MARTYR TO ALL THAT HE BELIEVED ABOUT GOD, HIS FATHER,**

**ABOUT THE LIVING PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH HIM EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY DAY. HE UNDERWENT**

**THE ULTIMATE PROOF OF WHAT HE BELIEVED, WHAT HE HOPED, AND HOW MUCH HE LOVED. HE WOULD NOT COMPROMISE HIS PRINCIPLES.**

**FOR ALL OF US, IT IS THE WILL OF GOD FOR US TO BE FAITHFUL, HOPEFUL AND LOVING.**

**THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JESUS IS ABOUT THE FATHER STRENGTHENING AND EMBOLDING HIM TO STAY ON THE WAY, TO SPEAK AND BE THE TRUTH, AND TO WITNESS TO THE LIFE, EVEN IF IT COSTS HIM HIS OWN.**

**IT IS IN THIS CONTEXT THAT JESUS SPEAKS TO US OF SERVING AND FOLLOWING HIM. IT IS OUR LIVING IN FAITH AND HOPE AND TO WITNESS TO GOD'S LIFE WITHIN US, EMPOWERED BY THE LIVING SPIRIT OF GOD.**

**LIKE THE SEED, WE GIVE OF OURSELVES TO BRING FORTH NEW LIFE.**