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BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELKHORN, NEBRASKA
MARCH 25, 2007
PASTOR MARK FRY

1 PASTOR FRY: We have been having inanimate objects
2 coming to life on the Wednesday nights.

3 We had the nail, the spear, the robe, the crown of
4 thorns, the shroud just last week and so I have invited a
5 very special family to consider maybe sharing a little bit
6 today.

7 Exactly a year ago yesterday was the death of a very
8 special person in our lives.

9 Her name is Dawn Quevedo and Dawn's youngest son and
10 daughter, Marcus and Cat, would you welcome them and
11 encourage them?

12 (Applause)

13 They are going to come up and share a little bit of
14 their faith journey.

15 And, Marcus, I heard you're going to go first. What
16 grade are you in now?

17 MARCUS: I'm a freshman.

18 PASTOR FRY: A freshman at Elkhorn. And I don't
19 have any kind of lead in to it, so just go ahead and go.

20 MARCUS: My name is Marcus Quevedo. I'm 14 years
21 old. My mom died one year from yesterday.

22 But the amazing thing is not that she died a year
23 ago, but that she was told she would die fourteen years ago.

24 Her life taught me a lot of important things. Never
25 give up, have faith in God and yourself, and open your heart

1 to others and always think positive.

2 She taught me that it is okay to just stop and smell
3 the roses, or that going for a walk isn't just going from
4 point A to point B, but just having time for yourself.

5 What I'm trying to say is that she taught me not to
6 take life too seriously and to appreciate what you have.

7 You see, I was not even a year old when my mom was
8 diagnosed with cancer.

9 She was told she would only have six months to live,
10 and even if she received a transplant she would only have a
11 fifteen percent chance to live.

12 But you had to know my mom. The only thing she was
13 worried about was what would happen with the other 85
14 percent.

15 Even after thirteen years of cancer, over 1200 days
16 in the hospital, mostly in intensive care, she was still
17 loving, friendly, and always had time for us.

18 People used to feel sorry for me, but I never really
19 understood why, because I believed I had the best mom in the
20 world.

21 Her death also taught me a lot of important things.
22 Probably the most important thing I can express by telling
23 you about a movie, "Keeping the Faith" and the scene where
24 the actor Ed Norton says, "Faith is like a hunch, something
25 that can never be proven. It's a hunch that there is

1 something bigger, a feeling connecting us all, and that
2 feeling is God," and that was the most important gift her
3 death gave me.

4 (APPLAUSE)

5 PASTOR FRY: Awesome, Marcus, thank you. You were
6 just six months old when your mom was diagnosed.

7 Now I'll hand it over to big sister.

8 CAT: Hi. My name is Cat Quevedo. I'm Marcus'
9 sister.

10 I'm 18 years old and a student at the University of
11 Nebraska at Lincoln.

12 The most significant time in my life was probably
13 about three years ago, my sophomore year at high school.

14 I had a good friend in a car accident die. Her name
15 was Kayla Wilkins. Maybe some of you know her.

16 It was a really hard thing to cope with because it
17 happened so suddenly and just all of a sudden everything was
18 going on and you didn't know what to do.

19 It was just a real tragedy and I just saw some
20 amazing things happen that weekend and I couldn't imagine
21 where we would be without her today, because I can't count
22 how many people accepted Jesus Christ into their lives that
23 week, including myself, I also accepted him into my heart and
24 I don't know where I would be without her today.

25 And the thing that she taught me was, she had this

1 amazing relationship with Jesus, and I wanted that in my
2 life.

3 And I wanted to know that if I died tomorrow, I want
4 to know I am going to heaven and that I can trust God with my
5 life and he has a wonderful plan for me.

6 And it's easy to find the pain and the suffering and
7 the hardships and things, but it takes real courage to find
8 the good and the reason God for God's plan and that's one of
9 the things that she taught me.

10 PASTOR MARK: Cat, when you sent me that e-mail, I
11 was so struck by the fact that you were so humble in saying
12 that, it was almost like you were thankful for the death of a
13 friend in order to prepare you for the richness of life.

14 And that sounds almost like a paradox, doesn't it?
15 And that's the Christian message, we are thankful for the
16 death of a friend that allows us to be able to go through
17 some horrible stuff like family stuff and all the other
18 darkness and stuff in the world.

19 So that is just such a cool testimony. Would you
20 encourage these two freshmen?

21 (Applause)

22 There are two beautiful stories within the story
23 there, aren't there, of a sudden death and a death that took
24 so very long.

25 Dawn was so amazing. She just taught us every day,

1 1200 days in the hospital, a lot of them in intensive care,
2 to just keep on fighting and to die well.

3 We have a story today that I think segues that
4 beautifully.

5 There is an in between story in the Bible that I
6 want to hold up and marinate in with you.

7 It's from John 19. I want you to get into this a
8 little bit with me, because it brings together so many
9 interesting paradoxes and so many different pieces.

10 And I find that on page 108 in my Bible, you might
11 have a slightly different page, it's from John 19, beginning
12 at Verse 38.

13 "After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a
14 disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of
15 the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of
16 Jesus.

17 "Pilate give him permission so he came and removed
18 his body.

19 "Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night,
20 also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing
21 about a hundred pounds.

22 "They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the
23 spices in linen cloth, according to the burial custom of the
24 Jews.

25 "Now there was a garden in the place where he was

1 crucified and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no
2 one had been laid.

3 "And so, because it was the Jewish day of
4 preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there."

5 This is the gospel of our Lord. Would you turn to
6 the person next to you and say the story doesn't end here.

7 The very next thing that happens is Easter Sunday,
8 but we aren't there yet.

9 It would be really easy for us to just stay in the
10 in between stages of life, kind of between death and life;
11 kind of between birth and death.

12 But what we need to see from this text is it's
13 inviting a transformation, but in order to understand that we
14 have to rewind a little bit and then come back, because this
15 is one of the few stories in the Bible that, to my knowledge,
16 there are no sermons written on, at least in my list of
17 resources, because usually they end with Good Friday and then
18 they start with Easter Sunday.

19 But there is this in between time that we are
20 reading about here in this story.

21 So we need to rewind slightly in John's Gospel and
22 what I would like for you to see is this has been an amazing
23 forty-eight hours of time.

24 If you look in John 13, this is found on page 102,
25 when we read this, "Now it was Passover," that means that

1 Palm Sunday has already taken place, Jesus has ridden into
2 town on the donkey, there is this huge celebration, and they
3 had just had the Passover meal together.

4 They had just had the lamb and the bitter herb
5 dinner.

6 And then Jesus gets up from the table, they just had
7 the supper together, the Lord's Supper, where he did what we
8 just did, we ate together.

9 And then in John 13 he takes off his outer robe and
10 he starts to teach them about accountability and he washes
11 the disciples' feet.

12 And that's amazing. Peter is like, no, no, you are
13 not going to wash my feet; you can have my hands and my head,
14 but not my feet.

15 And Jesus says you don't understand, I need to
16 cleanse you of your past, and I need to prepare you for the
17 future, and then you need to wash each other's feet, so the
18 disciples get their feet washed in the 13th Chapter.

19 Judas leaves into the night. Jesus continues to
20 teach in John 14.

21 He can sense in the disciples that they are a little
22 bit concerned.

23 We see in John 14:1, "Don't let your hearts be
24 troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my
25 Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, would I

1 have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?"

2 And "So that where I am, you may be also."

3 Thomas says where are you going? He asks how can we
4 know the way?

5 "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

6 He continues to teach in John 15, we can almost
7 imagine Jesus gets up from that teaching, because disciples,
8 they only have so much time they can sit, and so they are
9 probably walking over the rooftops in Jerusalem, you can
10 smell roast lamb in the entire city, because it's Passover.

11 They are walking over the housetops and they come to
12 the temple facade, the front of this massive temple, and on
13 the very top peak there is a little branch.

14 In John 15:1 Jesus says, "I am the vine and my
15 father is the vinegrower."

16 The disciples are asking, what is that all about?

17 He teaches them this important teaching about
18 abiding and bearing fruit, I'm the vine, you are the
19 branches, abide in me and I'll abide in you, you need to work
20 from your rest, you need to be in it for the long haul, it's
21 going to be tough. John 15 has all of that in it. John 16.

22 John 17, he starts to now pray for the disciples and
23 he's teaching them some different things.

24 All of this is taking place in between twenty-four
25 and forty-eight hours. Isn't it amazing?

1 John 17 comes along and there is a great verse, John
2 17, Verses 10 and 11, "All mine are yours and all yours are
3 mine," he's talking to God, "and I have been glorified in
4 them. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have
5 given me so that they may be one as we are one."

6 Jesus is getting ready to leave and he wants unity.
7 He wants them to hang in there.

8 But what happens in John 18 then is they flee. They
9 leave. They deny. They betray. They hide.

10 And then John 19, we come along and Pilate is there,
11 he's trying Jesus in this mockery of a trial.

12 He hands him over to be crucified and that's what
13 happens in the 19th Chapter.

14 He's crucified. His last words are spoken from the
15 cross in Chapter 19, Verses 26 and 27, "Woman, here is your
16 son. Here is your mother."

17 "I'm thirsty," he says.

18 And then he says "It's finished" in Verse 31 and he
19 breathes his last.

20 Now is the in between story. That's the context.

21 It is said that a text taken out of context is a con.

22 We need to understand where the story has been, and
23 we need to understand where the story is going.

24 We need to understand the in between times of life;
25 that the story isn't over yet. Something good is coming.

1 Don't let anybody tell you the story is over.
2 Easter is not here yet, but it's coming, and so that is where
3 we enter in.

4 I especially enjoyed the drama on Wednesday night.
5 Karl Schaphorst has been doing this wonderful job of
6 interviewing these inanimate objects.

7 And I was kind of a skeptic when that whole thing
8 started.

9 You mean you're going to interview a shroud? What
10 is that about?

11 But the shroud interview this past week was
12 wonderful.

13 She was talking about, she being the shroud, how her
14 life was a story of transformation.

15 It reminded me of Cat's testimony. A story of
16 transformation.

17 The shroud said I was just born a weed, some flax,
18 and I had hopes of maybe becoming a royal garment for a king
19 or maybe a beautiful table cloth on the palace table.

20 But life was different, it turned out differently,
21 and she shared what a wonderful experience it was for her as
22 the shroud, that transformation from being a weed into being
23 this beautiful garment that these two men, Joseph of
24 Arimathea and Nicodemus, wrapped around Jesus.

25 Life doesn't always end like we think it will.

1 There are those in between times.

2 So we need to look at this in between story, a
3 closer look at this story, beginning down at Verse 38, "After
4 these things," we needed to see after these things. What
5 things?

6 Well, all that stuff that has been taking place.
7 John 13, the foot washing.

8 John 14, don't let your hearts be troubled.

9 John 15, abide in me.

10 John 16 and 17, be united, not divided, and then
11 they flee.

12 After all these things Jesus is crucified. He's
13 dead.

14 They have just stuck the spear into his side, "They
15 will look on the one whom they have pierced," Verse 37.

16 "After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a
17 disciple of Jesus, although a secret one."

18 You may say to yourself, what is the deal with
19 secret disciples? I didn't know they had them.

20 Yes, they had them. The ones that weren't secret
21 were hiding. The recognized ones were nowhere to be found.

22 But a secret one now is stepping up, and it's
23 interesting, the intriguing irony is because we notice his
24 name, Joseph of Arimathea, and if we are familiar with the
25 story of Jesus, we might think back about, who was that other

1 Joseph?

2 Joseph of Bethlehem. That was Jesus' father at his
3 birth.

4 Joseph of Arimathea is stepping into the gap and
5 being his father at death.

6 Scholars suggest that maybe Joseph died early in
7 life, tragically, Jesus' earthly father. We don't know.
8 That's speculation.

9 The last time we heard from him, Jesus was about
10 Marcus' age, he's in the temple, and we never hear from
11 Joseph again.

12 So we don't know. Maybe Joseph was dead, but that's
13 the way God is.

14 See, he provides another father. This time Joseph
15 of Arimathea.

16 And we notice that both of them are noble and
17 righteous men.

18 The one that was there at his birth was unwilling to
19 divorce Mary for a suspected breaking of the engagement vow,
20 didn't do it, but Joseph is unwilling to disgrace her
21 publicly. He married her anyway.

22 Remember, there's nobility in both of these Josephs.
23 This Joseph is going to these incredible lengths and he's
24 risking his career, to go to Pilate and ask for the body of
25 Jesus.

1 He says give me Jesus. And he didn't ask of the
2 communion assistant, give me Jesus.

3 He asked the most powerful man in the community,
4 Pilate, give me Jesus.

5 And he knew that to do so was risking not only his
6 career, but his very life, but he's a secret disciple.

7 I get so frustrated when I hear that we are a
8 Christian nation.

9 70 percent of our population is supposedly
10 Christian, and I'm like, boy, the public ones aren't doing
11 much. Maybe it's up to the secret ones.

12 Isn't it a paradoxical thing? The real ones, it
13 seems, are hiding, especially in front of the authorities.

14 But this Joseph, he steps up, the very intriguing
15 irony of that, and Joseph of Arimathea was a secret disciple,
16 it says.

17 And we have rewound already to Joseph of Bethlehem
18 and we might even rewind a little bit further to another
19 Joseph in the Bible.

20 This would be Joseph in the Old Testament. We have
21 Joseph of Arimathea, we have Joseph of Bethlehem, we have
22 Joseph, remember Joseph, he had eleven brothers and sisters,
23 the "Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat" Joseph, who has this
24 amazing story of his family dysfunction.

25 He's thrown into a pit, thrown into slavery, rises

1 to a position of incredible power in Egypt

2 And instead of giving his brothers what they
3 deserved he has this wonderful statement at the end of
4 Genesis 50, "Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God?
5 Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it
6 for good."

7 It's almost as though Jesus is saying that same
8 thing.

9 Am I in the place of God? Well, yes, actually he
10 is.

11 But what you intended to do harm to me, you wanted
12 to kill me, God intends it for good.

13 So we see those ironies in these three Josephs.
14 It's a beautiful thing.

15 It's interesting also when we look a little closer
16 at this narrative of birth and death.

17 It's not hard for us to think back to there is no
18 room in the inn when Jesus was born, and the text tells us
19 there is no room for him to be buried either.

20 Isn't that interesting?

21 We see that in all the different texts and we learn
22 that according to Edward Sweitzer, an imminent New Testament
23 theologian, he says, "According to Roman custom, a body was
24 turned over to friends or relatives, but according to Jewish
25 custom, a person who was executed had no right to a private

1 grave."

2 Further evidence of how courageous Joseph is,
3 because executed Jewish people were supposed to be buried in
4 the garbage dump.

5 But he has this beautiful unused tomb at his
6 disposal that he offers for Jesus.

7 He has just offered his life, his career, and now
8 his tomb, his family tomb.

9 Amazing, this Joseph, secret disciple, fancy that.
10 Again, the public ones are all hiding.

11 So these are two generous disciples filling in the
12 gap.

13 These two disciples provided while the others were
14 divided and fled into the night.

15 The other one is Nicodemus. We read about him there
16 in the 39th Verse.

17 "Nicodemus, who at first had come to Jesus by
18 night," what does that mean?

19 Well, back up to John 3. Nicodemus is occasionally
20 confused with Zaccheas.

21 He was the vertically challenged guy. Zaccheas was
22 the wee little man from the story, also a leader in the
23 community.

24 But Nicodemus met Jesus in John 3 and when it says
25 he came to Jesus by night, that says in the beginning of his

1 faith journey he was afraid.

2 He went to Jesus by night because he didn't want
3 anybody seeing him go there.

4 So he comes to him in secret, under the guise of
5 nightfall, and he has this amazing conversation with Jesus
6 about the kingdom of God and how to get in.

7 And he's a religious leader, a Pharisee. He's a
8 leader in the Jewish community and Jesus says you have to be
9 born again.

10 He says what do you mean? I have to crawl back into
11 my mother's womb? What are you talking about, be born again?

12 Jesus says the wind blows where it wills, and I tell
13 you, unless a person is born of spirit, then you won't get
14 into the kingdom of heaven.

15 And he gives these two images that you cannot
16 control, wind and birth.

17 It's a total letting go process, see?

18 We don't hear of Nicodemus again for thirteen
19 chapters.

20 Jesus had dropped this incredible teaching on him,
21 right in the middle of that is John 3:16, for God so loved
22 the world that he gave his only son, whoever believes in him
23 will have eternal life. I didn't come to condemn the world,
24 he gives that.

25 We don't know if Nicodemus heard that part or if his

1 ears were still buzzing over the whole born again thing.

2 The point being he went back into the night. We
3 don't see him for thirteen chapters. Probably about two
4 years.

5 Interesting, though, isn't it, because we don't know
6 what happens to him and then all of a sudden it comes.

7 It seems to me that the longest distance in the
8 universe has been traversed, from his brain to his heart.

9 The wiring got installed and he understood. Now
10 he's willing to put it on the line, and now he's willing to
11 step up as a disciple of Jesus, although a secret one.

12 So Joseph and Nicodemus, fascinating secret
13 disciples, they took great public risk.

14 They were generous, and respectful of death, but
15 notice they aren't paralyzed by it.

16 They put their faith into action through word and
17 deed.

18 They were initiators and instigators. It's
19 interesting to just think for a moment now, this has been at
20 a breakneck pace.

21 All this stuff that has been happening to Jesus not
22 in the 24, 36, 48 hours is just amazing, from John 13 all the
23 way up.

24 But finally the crucifixion is taking place on
25 Friday, and he's dead.

1 They aren't having a long committee meeting, is my
2 point.

3 Joseph immediately goes out before the shops are
4 closed, because they are all going to close before the
5 Sabbath, gets this beautiful linen cloth.

6 And Nicodemus goes out and he gets a hundred pounds
7 of spices, of myrrh and aloes.

8 They come back, get the permission from Pilate, and
9 he was a bureaucrat, so he's going to be worse than the Omaha
10 City Council when you try to get your building permit now
11 that you are not in Elkhorn anymore kind of thing -- that was
12 a horrible little jab there, that's not true -- he's a
13 bureaucrat. This all takes place in a matter of breakneck
14 speed.

15 They get the body, and they don't have a long
16 committee meeting, they don't have a big vote or anything.

17 Joseph gets the linen and he says you get down to
18 the spice shop and get a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes
19 and I'll go make the arrangement for this tomb.

20 But they are not paralyzed by death. They literally
21 give Jesus back to God, into the womb of the tomb.

22 But it's interesting, isn't it, because there is
23 another irony in there that I noticed.

24 Notice the spices, where it says a hundred pounds
25 worth of myrrh and aloes.

1 Have you heard of myrrh before? It's used three
2 times in the New Testament.

3 At Jesus' birth, three gifts, gold, frankincense,
4 and myrrh.

5 It's used here in John 19.

6 It's used one other time in Mark 15 when Jesus is
7 coming through the city dragging the cross and they want to
8 give him a little bit of anesthesia, so somebody mixes up
9 some wine mixed with myrrh and they put it at him and he
10 won't take it.

11 So, again, there is a birth thing in here and a
12 death thing in here.

13 Myrrh, I got on the internet, here is the deal with
14 myrrh.

15 It's a brown resinous material. It's the dried sap
16 of a specific tree native to Somalia.

17 It's a constituent of perfumes and incense. It was
18 highly prized in ancient times and often worth more than its
19 weight in gold.

20 In ancient Rome myrrh was priced at five times as
21 much as frankincense, though the latter was far more popular.

22 Myrrh was burned in ancient Roman funerals to mask
23 the smell of a charred corpse.

24 They were big into cremation of bodies back then and
25 this was something that was used in that time of death.

1 Myrrh was one of the gifts of the wise men to the
2 infant Jesus.

3 Myrrh was also used as an embalming ointment and was
4 used up until the 15th Century as a penitential incense at
5 funerals and cremations.

6 But here is what struck me about doing a little
7 research on myrrh.

8 It's worth more than its weight in gold, and they
9 had a whole boatload of it.

10 Joseph goes out and he buys the finest linen cloth
11 imaginable.

12 Nicodemus goes out and he gets a hundred pounds of
13 myrrh and aloes that's worth more than its weight in gold.

14 Not only were these secret disciples not paralyzed
15 by death, but they were incredibly generous.

16 I love the expression big hat, lot of cattle. These
17 guys have big hats and a lot of cattle as disciples, because
18 they have just put their faith on the line.

19 They have just done this incredibly generous thing.
20 They have just done this incredibly well organized thing for
21 Jesus, while all of the disciples are hiding like a bunch of
22 cowards.

23 Isn't that a great story?

24 These secret disciples generously give God's son
25 back to God, respectfully putting him into the womb of the

1 earth.

2 I don't want to fast-forward too quick to Easter,
3 but we have to remind ourselves something better is coming.

4 We have been under attack, and we're in those in
5 between places in our own lives right now, some of us,
6 between life and death, between a death and hope again,
7 between unemployment and another job, between divorce and
8 possibility.

9 This is an in between story that speaks to us, that
10 something better is coming.

11 So I have three questions for your thought and
12 action at the end.

13 How much of a secret is your discipleship?

14 It's interesting that as John writes this story it's
15 almost like his confession, he's like we were off being a
16 bunch of cowards and these two secret disciples came and did
17 this wonderfully honorable thing, and we're just cowering in
18 this room, shivering and shaking.

19 So how secret is your discipleship? Do you have any
20 Joseph or Nicodemus in you that maybe God is calling you to
21 put your faith on the line with somebody in authority?
22 Pilate, for heaven's sake.

23 How is your generosity quotient with Jesus? These
24 guys are secret disciples. How secret is your discipleship?

25 Are you willing to ask Pilate for the body? You

1 asked the communion caregivers today, you put your hand out
2 and you got the body, but would you be willing to ask Pilate
3 for the body of Jesus?

4 I don't know who your Pilate is. Think of that.
5 That's risky.

6 John is being incredibly transparent as he writes
7 this.

8 Secondly, what in between are you struggling with?
9 I don't know where your life is right now.

10 I know where mine is. I have a middle life thing
11 going on, lot of in between, tons of them.

12 Are we willing to ask for Jesus in the in between?
13 Are we willing to go where he tells us to go in the in
14 between?

15 Are we willing to understand that something better
16 is coming? It might not be easier, but it's better.

17 And third, finally, how do you treat Jesus? I will
18 never forget a wonderful teaching I heard.

19 It was in the context of the Ten Commandments,
20 talking about keeping the Lord's name and not using it in
21 vain.

22 And they talked about how sometimes some people use
23 God's name as casually as the flick of a Bic, and that's
24 people that use Jesus' name in vain.

25 I hear people do that. Just yesterday I was

1 shopping at Baker's and this kid, he was a kid, teenage kid,
2 and he had a baby.

3 And he was just the most profane person talking to
4 his significant other and the baby is crying and he's like
5 blank-blank-blank, will you get ahold of yourself to the kid,
6 treating Jesus' name that way.

7 But how do we treat Jesus? Do we treat him with
8 generosity and the respect that he demands and deserves?

9 Or do we just sit, throw him around, wrap him up,
10 put him in a little box, get him out once a week, keep him in
11 a little bite size chunk?

12 Or do we treat him with the reverence and the
13 dignity of Joseph and Nicodemus.

14 You can just imagine them getting the permission to
15 have the body and they wrap him so reverently, interspersed
16 with spices and aromas, fragrance.

17 Then they lay him in this tomb that was this
18 beautiful holding tank, and they thought everything was over
19 at that point.

20 They didn't even have Easter faith yet, and yet
21 that's what they are doing.

22 What about those of us that have Easter faith? How
23 do we treat Jesus?

24 So those are three things to think about.

25 How much of a secret is our discipleship?

1 What in between are you struggling with?

2 And how do you treat Jesus?

3 I don't know where you're at with some of that. We
4 are going to have prayer ministers up here today, but those
5 are three wonderful categories for us to think about, because
6 death comes.

7 Death comes, and we aren't always prepared;
8 sometimes we are.

9 Sometimes it doesn't come quick enough; sometimes it
10 comes too quick.

11 Sometimes it just comes in and stinks everything up,
12 but that's not the end of the story.

13 Let's pray for a minute. Lord, thank you for Marcus
14 and Cat and their story today with us.

15 They aren't secret disciples, Lord. They publicly
16 spoke.

17 Secret disciples like Joseph and Nicodemus came to
18 Pilate and said give us the body.

19 Lord, you have given us your body today, and now may
20 we not just think the story is over for another week, but may
21 we sense your power, may we sense your encouragement now,
22 Lord, to do something with what you have given us.

23 Thank you, Lord, for disciples of all ages. We pray
24 your blessing on those that grieve.

25 We pray your anointing on those that think the end

1 of the story is death.

2 And we pray that you might give us words to
3 encourage people that that is not the case; that hope is the
4 final word. Resurrection and life is the final word. Thank
5 you, Jesus, for being our Savior. Amen.

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