

[Jer. 31:31-34](#)    [Ps. 51:1-13](#)    [Heb. 5:5-10](#)    [Jn 12:20-33](#)

In the name of ... Amen

## **Anti-coagulant**

The Psalmist prays:

Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*  
and renew a right spirit within me.

I am reminded of a science experiment from my youth;  
how soap acts as a dispersant in a bowl of dirty water,  
breaking up grease and sending it to the edges.

“Dove” works really well for this,  
no pun intended!

This metaphor can be applied  
to the action of God in the world  
and how it bears on being Church.

Because everyone, for *or* against:  
seekers, naysayers, the curious as well as the ambivalent  
are all drawn to Jesus in the days before the Passover;  
and like “Dove” – God’s got other ideas in mind  
about this coagulation of people  
at the religious epicenter in Jerusalem.

In this moment we stand, perched at a pivotal time,  
in the middle of John's gospel,  
the conclusion of the first half known as the "Book of Signs".  
As Jesus announces to his disciples, "The Hour Has Come"  
reaching the end of His public ministry,  
and heads toward that epicenter – his fate sealed,  
John leads us into the second half of the gospel  
referred to as "The Book of Glory".

The Jews who have come up for the festival from the  
countryside, in preparation and purification for the Passover  
are *seeking* Jesus.

They're drawn to the spiritual center of the bowl.  
The religious leaders, the chief priests and Pharisees  
are also seeking Jesus for nefarious reasons.

While Jesus is sheltering at his friends' home,  
that of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus  
(whom he raised from the dead),  
a great crowd accumulates around them,  
at the dismay of the religious authorities.

We learn in verse 12:10, of the chief priests plot to not only put Jesus to death but Lazarus as well, because “on account of *him* many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.”

The living organisms continue to coagulate at the center. Merriam-Webster’s second definition of coagulate means to gather together or form into a mass or group. This is beginning to feel like an experiment of cosmic scope, and there’s lots of variables, that is, humans.

Now, the throngs are fully activated,  
like yeast hopped up on sugar,  
broiling, bubbling and frothing over the edges of the bowl.  
It will be the next day (v. 12) when the Hosanna’s ring out,  
as the masses celebrate their Messiah, riding in on a colt.  
The Pharisees are on red alert, seething, disgusted,  
between clenched teeth no doubt, they spew,  
“You see that you can do nothing;  
look, the [whole] *world* has gone after him.” (v.17)

Just as there was no room at the Inn,  
there is *not enough room* in this bowl.

Just as thunderstorms relieve the atmospheric pressure,  
this pressure cooker must spill over. It must disperse.  
The hour has come and Jesus is ready.  
You can practically hear it; the one grain of wheat  
as it falls in slow-motion to the ground –  
drowning out the din all around, a whisper in a hurricane.

Now back to the anticoagulant science experiment  
as it relates to ‘the world’  
perched on the threshold of salvation.

From my own observations  
while living across from a pond for 25 years,  
pond scum tends to sort congeal and coagulate,  
especially in corners, nooks and crannies.  
Healthy, unhealthy organisms, wanted, unwanted,  
all manner of life amasses, safe out of the reaches of wind.

What if God is like the pond, all life growing up out of it;  
mostly trying to cling to the edges – safe, undisturbed?  
But this ‘pond of God’  
is infinitely elastic, unlimited, uncontainable.

What (who) has attempted to cling to the surface, unruffled might have even sunk to the bottom trying to ‘play it safe’, descending into the depths of despair and sin.

But Jesus has arrived at the center of the cosmic pond and the attraction to this divine epicenter is irresistible, positively and negatively, like metal filings to a magnet or more simply – hungry fish looking for food!

The Holy Spirit operating in Jesus’ life signals that the hour has come, the ‘glorification’ at his death is near. She is the dispersant, the ‘soapy’ drop in the experiment at once purifying and cleansing, sending the coagulated muck abroad, out into the world.

This is all very well and good.

God disperses the gathered out into the world.

Isn’t that what happens to the disciples?!

But why?

Why is this necessary?

Is God just pulling strings?

I don’t believe so.

Jesus in the fullness of his humanity *did* experience a moment of hesitation, facing the reality and consequences of what that dispersment meant.

Imagine that God, the Son of God/Son of Man would take on such horrific suffering, excruciating pain, denial of Self, anguish of abandonment; all in the laying down His life for the soul of the world. To *gather* the world for Love's sake would require dispersal by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” (v.24)

His sacrifice of His life,  
a sacrifice of love is the way to disperse violence.  
It is The Way to *effect* the Kingdom of God,  
on Earth as it is in heaven.

The turning point for Jesus,  
when He *knew* “*The Hour*” had come,  
was precisely *when the Greeks showed up* at the festival;  
asking Philip if they could see Jesus.

The specific use of the Greek word *to see*  
indicated much more than just getting a good look at him,  
a chance to gawk at a celebrity.  
They wanted to see for themselves if He was *the revealer*.

The Kingdom of God had spilled over the edges of the bowl  
rapidly flowing into the realm of the Gentiles.  
It triggers a chain reaction as Philip consults Andrew,  
who together inform Jesus of the events taking place.  
Jesus read the sign and deduced the hour was at hand.

Not only was this the divinely appointed time  
for the dispersal of God into the land of the Gentiles;  
it was also simultaneously the catalyst to drive out,  
cast out the unholy ruler of this world.  
It is a cyclical if not spiral divine energy at work.  
A continual process of gathering and dispersing.  
Drawing in and casting out.

The questions for us to ‘pond’er might be this:  
What draws me in, what is it that I chase after?  
And where does it send me?

Amma Susan