

Coming To The Cross

John 12:12-36

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Beginning in John 12:12, John tells us, “On the next day much people that were come to the feast,” this is the feast of Passover, “when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried,” as we just sang, “Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. 14 And Jesus, when he had found a young donkey, sat thereon; as it is written,” and he’s quoting from Zechariah 9:9, he says, “Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on a donkey’s colt.”

Now, we come in our study of John’s gospel to the last week of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. It’s interesting that you have the first twelve chapters cover most of the life of Jesus, and then, beginning in John 13, you have just a few hours left before the cross. I’ve mentioned it several weeks, but please, I encourage you to join us on Wednesday because when we get to John 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17, known as the Upper Room Discourse, it’s where Jesus had the Passover meal with His disciples in which He was arrested and then crucified. He’s alone with them for these several hours teaching, instructing, and ministering to them. In John 17, is the chapter that is the great prayer of Christ. We commonly call the Lord’s prayer—Our Father, which art in heaven—that’s not really the Lord’s prayer, that’s our prayer. That’s the pattern for prayer. But in John 17, is the true Lord’s prayer where He interceded for His disciples and for us and for all those who would believe on Their name. It’s a marvelous, marvelous truth. It starts in John 13 with the washing of the disciples feet and some lessons on humility but we enter into these last few hours.

Tonight, and next Wednesday night, we come to the end of the public ministry of our Lord in John’s gospel. The scene shifts from a quiet dinner with friends at Bethany to a noisy public parade in Jerusalem. Notice in John 12:12, “On the next day,” that is, the next day after the supper that was given in honor of Lazarus, who was raised from the dead, in the home of Simon the leper in the town of Bethany, the town of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. We saw in the first eleven verses that Lazarus was invited, Mary and Martha were there, Jesus and His disciples were there, and Mary came in with her alabaster jar of ointment. She poured the ointment on Jesus’ feet, wiped them with her hair, and Judas objected that it was a wasteful extravagant thing that could have been sold and the money given to the poor. The Scriptures make it clear that Judas carried the bag and was stealing what was in it and didn’t really care for the poor. Jesus said, “Leave her alone because she’s done this,” listen carefully, “to prepare My body for burial.” She saw what no one else saw. Jesus had instructed them, “I’m going to be crucified and slain in Jerusalem,” but they didn’t understand or comprehend that. Even tonight, when we see this triumphal entry into Jerusalem, it didn’t register with them that Jesus still had to be crucified and would be buried, resurrected, go back to heaven, and there would be this long period known as the Church age before Jesus Christ would return. This statement in John 12:12, “On the next day,” is the next day after the feast at Simon the leper’s home when

Jesus had been anointed for His burial.

What we have here in verses 12-15 is a very abbreviated version of what is known as the triumphal entry. It's a very, very pivotal and key point in the life of Jesus Christ when He got on the little donkey from Jerusalem, Mt. Olivet, rode down through the Kidron Valley, up to the Eastern Gate, and all the pilgrims were singing Hosanna and praising the Lord, and the great entrance that Jesus had there on that Palm Sunday.

I want you to notice in verse 12 that there were "much people that were come to the feast," and as I pointed out, this is the Passover feast, the annual feast of the Jews when they celebrated their exodus out of Egypt when God passed over their homes and the firstborn was spared within their homes. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of this feast. They took a lamb in Egypt and slew it. They took the blood and put it on their house—the door post and the lintel (the crossbeam over the door)—and when this angel came through the land of Egypt, every home where he saw the blood applied to the house, he passed over it, and the firstborn was not killed in that house. Jesus is our Passover Lamb. The lamb slain in the book of Exodus at the Passover was a type. Jesus is what's called the antitype, the fulfillment, of that lamb. All the lambs that were slain in the Old Testament system of sacrifice pointed to the ultimate Lamb, Jesus Christ, who would be the Lamb of God.

Verse 12, "...when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna," the word "Hosanna" literally means save now. We think of it as a word of praise or worship, but it's a petition. It's actually asking Jesus to save them and do it now—Hosanna, save us now, save us now, save us now. What they meant by that was get rid of the Romans and set up Your Messianic Davidic Kingdom and let us reign in power and righteousness with You for that thousand-year period. They were thinking of what we know to be the Millennium, which happens at the Second Coming. They were actually praising the Lord, but they were actually petitioning Him, "Would You save us, would You save us now."

This was a fulfillment of many prophecies in the Old Testament. To begin with, the Scripture is in Psalm 118:25-26. This is actually a reference to the King would come on a donkey, they would cry, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." That's a Messianic Psalm, Psalm 118:25-26. The fact that He came on a young donkey, the foal of a donkey, was prophesied in Zechariah 9:9. Even more exciting than that, write down Daniel 9:26, where Daniel actually, in giving what's called the seventy-week prophecy, gave the very day when Messiah would be presented to the nation of Israel. It says in Daniel 9:26, "...shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself," but for the sins of the people. So, it was 183,880 days from 445 B.C. when King Artaxerxes gave the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. It was actually a period of 483 years when Jesus then got on the little donkey and rode into the city of Jerusalem declaring publicly that He was the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy and indeed the Messiah.

Let me mention a few things that are omitted by John. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record a lot

more information, but the truth is, is that Jesus came to the brow of the hill overlooking the city of Jerusalem and actually began to weep and lament over it. This is where Jesus, before He rode in, said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" He then prophesies and says, "Behold, your house," your nation, "is left unto you desolate." Just a few years after this the Roman troops would come in and destroy the city of Jerusalem and the Jews would be wasted and become the wandering Jews for almost two thousand years.

It doesn't mention either, in this situation, not only does he omit the lament of Jesus, but he doesn't mention the details about how they got the donkey. That's a neat story. Remember, Jesus told His disciples, "Go into such a village, you're going to find a donkey tied, untie it and bring it. If anyone asks you what's going on, just say, 'The Lord has need of it.'" Don't you love that? The Lord has need of him? Think about that, The Lord has need of him? He doesn't need anything. He gives to everything life and breath, and He's God. To think that Jesus, in His humiliation, in His incarnation, needed a donkey. He had to borrow a donkey. He had to borrow a room to have the Last Supper, and He had to borrow a donkey to ride into Jerusalem.

They find this donkey and bring it to Jesus, but I'm encouraged. If the Lord needed and used a donkey, there's hope for me! I remind myself of that sometimes. People say, "Oh, John, you're such a great Bible teacher, and God really speaks through you," and I'm thinking, No big deal. He uses donkeys. Remember He even spoke to Balaam through the mouth of a donkey, so big deal. If Jesus needed and used a donkey, there's hope for you and me. Amen? You see the Creator of the entire universe, He created that donkey. Think of the privilege that this little burrow, this little donkey, and its big floppy ears, this humble beast of burden has the Creator of the whole universe riding upon its back. What a privilege this little donkey had!

Jesus, as I said, wept over Jerusalem, and they were singing Hosanna. The Pharisees, the religious leaders, were upset. They knew that this was a claim to be Messiah, so they said, "Tell Your disciples and the people to stop singing." Jesus said, "I tell you that if they are quiet, the very rocks would cry out." I'm sure they'd sing, rock of ages cleft for me, but all creation would basically be praising the Lord.

What did this event mean to Jesus? A couple of thoughts. It meant that He obediently kept the Father's will to come to die. He could've gone a different direction. He knew that there was hostility in Jerusalem. He could've gone back to Galilee. He could've gone way north to Caesarea Philippi. He could've avoided it altogether, but He had set His face to go to Jerusalem. He had put His hand, so to speak, "to the plough" and was not going to look back. Jesus said, "No man...looking back, is fit," to be one of My followers, and He was obedient to the Father's will.

Secondly, as I've already pointed out, He fulfilled Bible prophecy—Psalm 118, Zechariah 9:9, and Daniel 9:26. Thirdly, it was a public announcement that He was the Messiah. Jesus, up to this point, had been saying, "My time has not yet come." Remember when He turned the water

into wine there in Cana of Galilee and told His mother, "My time has not yet come," but now His time has come. He's almost, in a sense, forcing the hands of the religious leaders, who did not want to crucify Him at the Passover because they knew the crowd would be there and it would be a dangerous thing, but it was in God's purpose and God's plan to fulfill the type of the Passover feast when Jesus would die. It was a public presentation and announcement that He was the Messiah.

At this point, you can do a little contrast, which is kind of cool, where in the first coming of Jesus Christ He came in humility on a donkey. In the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, He's coming in majesty and glory on a white horse, "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood...and a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." We read the description on Sunday morning from Revelation 1, "...and his hairs were white like wool...and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass...and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword." What a contrast between Jesus coming in humility...and I do believe, though some kind of present other ideas, that the donkey represented humility. Most kings or generals by this time came on horses. They didn't ride donkeys. It was a beast that was a humble beast. It's a picture of our humble King. He is the King. He's being presented to Israel, but He came to suffer and die. I love what Ray Stedman said, "He came on a donkey, a symbol of peace and humility. His only scepter is a broken reed, his only crown a crown of thorns, his only throne was a bloody cross."

It's interesting, the scene really reminds us, this humble picture of Jesus on a donkey and they're waving the palm branches, that God is not about outward appearance. The Bible says God looks on our hearts. Who, that day, looking at this Galilean peasant from Galilee would actually believe this is the King, the Messiah, as He rides triumphantly to Jerusalem that Sunday before His crucifixion. How amazing that is. God looks not on the outward appearance, but God looks upon the heart.

Now is the response. You have in verses 12-13 the setting and the scene, in verses 14-15 the prophecy, and in verses 16-19 we have the reaction. There were three different groups or crowds that reacted to this triumphal entry. "These things understood not his disciples," this is group number one. They didn't understand the significance of this triumphal entry. It's too bad they hadn't studied Daniel 9:26 or Psalm 118, and they weren't really attune to what was going on even though Mary had anointed His body for burial. They didn't understand at first (verse 16), "...but when Jesus was glorified," that's a reference to His death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and His sending the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost. "...then remembered they that these things were written of him." All of the sudden, sometime after Acts 2 when the Holy Spirit came, they realized how it all fit together biblically, "and that they had done these things unto him."

In verse 17 there's the second group, the people. "The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record." There were the disciples, they didn't really know what was going on, and then there were the people who saw Lazarus raised from the dead. They were there at the supper, no doubt, there in

Bethany and followed Him over to Jerusalem. It's only about a two-mile journey from Bethany to Jerusalem. There is a third group (verse 18). It says, "For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle." These are not the ones who saw Lazarus raised from the dead, but they heard the testimony of Lazarus and began to come and celebrated Jesus as the King.

In verse 19 are the Pharisees, "The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him." They're freaking out that this giant crowd of people are celebrating Jesus as...they knew it was a declaration of Messiah—save now, O son of David, save now. They said, "Don't you realize the whole world has gone after Him?" This is what turns the tide. This is where it turns where they realize, "We must kill Him, and we must do it soon." It's interesting, "...the world is gone after him," oh that the world would go after Him. How interesting that John's gospel is universal—it's written for the whole world. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world...that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John's gospel is a universal gospel, and is, kind of in a sense, like when Caiaphas says, "Don't you realize it's important that one man die for the nation, that the whole nation perish not?" They are, in a sense, prophesying that the world would go after Him, Jesus the Son of God. It's interesting that Jesus is declared to have the whole world following after Him. So we have the response in verses 16-19.

Then, you come to verses 20-36, this large second section, where we have Jesus and the Gentile visitors. It's an interesting episode. It says, "And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast," now when it says "there were certain Greeks," what it's conveying there is that they were Gentiles and possibly, we don't know for sure, could've been classified as what were known as God fearers. What is a God fearer? It's a Gentile who begins to worship the God of Israel, but doesn't fully proselyte into Judaism, but would come and worship at the Jewish feast. They had abandoned the pagan gods of the Greeks and Gentiles and were fearing the God of Israel. They were Gentiles coming to see Jesus at the feast of Passover. Some develop an interesting contrast that when Jesus was born, wise men came from the east to worship Him, and now the contrast of when He's coming to the cross, that these Greek, so-called philosophers, came from the west to seek Him and understand who He was.

Notice verse 21, "The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus," or "We would like to meet Jesus. We'd like to talk to Jesus. We'd like to interview Jesus." "Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus." Now, they come to Philip, and we don't know why. Some point out that the name Philip is a Greek name and maybe they thought that they would have an inroad there with them being Greeks talking to Philip. We don't know. Maybe Philip just had a friendly face and they thought, That guy looks like he won't get mad at us. Let's talk to Philip. They came to Philip, and Philip didn't quite know how to handle the situation, "Wow, I don't know. You're Gentiles."

Why would Philip be hesitant to just run over and introduce these Greeks to Jesus? Because

several times in His ministry, Christ said, "I'm not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He indicated that He shouldn't take the children's bread and give it to the puppies, so there was indication that they could maybe think, I don't know if it's okay or kosher for us to introduce Jesus to these Gentiles, so he goes to Andrew. This is kind of cool because Andrew, if you know the story of Andrew, is known as the friendly disciple. Why? Because every time Andrew is mentioned in the Bible, he's bringing someone to Jesus. The first time, he's bringing his own brother here, Philip**(**Peter?), he went to Philip**(**Peter?) and said, "Come, we've found the Messiah," and brings him to Jesus. Then, when Jesus fed the multitudes in northern Galilee, and found the little boy with the bread and the fish, guess who brought the little boy to Jesus? It was Andrew. I don't know if he had him by the shirt or holding him by the collar, "You're going to share your lunch, kid, whether you like it or not," you know. He brought the little boy to Jesus. The third time we see Andrew is our text here when he's bringing these Gentiles to Jesus.

I think that we should all be Andrews. Amen? We should always be seeking to bring people to Jesus, people that have that heart's cry, "Sir, we would see Jesus." That should be our desire, that we point and bring other people to Jesus.

In verses 23-36, we see the response to these Greeks. Now, here's a little interesting point. The Scriptures don't really tell us if Jesus entertained or met with or talked to these Greeks. Now, He met with the Samaritan woman at the well at Sychar in John 4 and reached out to other Gentiles so we know that Jesus didn't have a problem with Gentiles, but the passage doesn't say Jesus talked to them. If He did, the interview isn't recorded for us, but the response of Jesus to these Greeks wanting to see Him is recorded for us, and that's what you have beginning in verse 23, "And Jesus answered them, saying," He's probably answering Andrew and Philip.

Here's how I picture it. I could be wrong, but with a little sanctified imagination I have Jesus addressing Philip and Andrew and the three Greeks or the Gentiles...I don't know if there were three of them, but a group of these Gentiles, were kind of standing there listening, so they could overhear. I think Jesus was actually talking to His disciples but in order for the Gentiles to hear them as well. His response is amazing. "Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come," again, this is the turning point. He knows it's time to be crucified, "that the Son of man should be glorified. 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. 25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour."

The dialogue goes on where Jesus explains these things, but I want you to notice here, that Jesus starts with a parable. It's a different parable of a sort. Some think it be an allegory or a metaphor. Some have called it an illustration, but He's answering the issues that are going on right now that He's coming to the cross and the fact that these Greeks or Gentiles wanted to see Him. He said, "Verily, verily," truly, truly, "I say unto you, Except," here's an exception and

the parable, “a corn of wheat,” or a grain or kernel of wheat, has to “fall into the ground and die,” if it doesn’t die then, “it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit,” and then He describes what that means, “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.” Basically, He’s telling this little story about a seed.

Seeds are amazing. I look at seeds and it blows my mind—no batteries, no electric wires, no plugs, just this little seed. You put it in a drawer, and it sits in the drawer for months or years. You pull it out of the drawer, put it in the ground—at the right time, the right depth, the right kind of soil, water it—and the seed dissolves or dies. What comes out of that seed? A plant. Now, think about what happens when you put a tulip bulb in the ground. The idea of a tulip bulb to me is one of the classic pictures that could be used. A tulip bulb is one of the most ugly things to look at. No one would decorate their table with a pile of tulip bulbs. If a tulip bulb dies, what happens? You get a tulip. By the way, it’s a picture of our bodies. Our bodies are tulip bulbs. They’ll die and be buried, and out comes a glorious tulip—the resurrection body. Jesus is using the same kind of thing, and He’s using the illustration of a piece of grain or wheat that’s put in the ground, it dies, and it brings forth fruit. He’s talking about Himself dying, raising from the dead, and the result will be the fruit; and, I believe in context, that even Gentiles will be saved, that Gentiles will be brought into the Kingdom of heaven.

Jesus then gives it more of a personal application. He said, “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” In the other gospels, He talks about that you should die to yourself so that you can live, that if you seek to “find your life,” He uses that expression, you’ll lose it; but if you lose your life for My sake and the gospel, you shall find it. This verse has always been a real encouragement to me is that if we die to ourselves our lives will be transformed and we’ll bring forth fruit to the glory of God.

Now, at this point, I want you to get ready, if you’re taking notes. I want to give you a series of thoughts about the cross of Jesus Christ. It begins in verse 23. The cross of Christ leads to glory. Notice it in verse 23, “The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.” This is a contrary thing to the world. This is the paradox of God’s Kingdom. The way to glory is the cross, not so with the world. The world is: Find your life. Get your life. Love your life. Do what you want with your life, but then you lose your life. In God’s economy it’s die to yourself, give your life, and find glory. Actually, the cross of Jesus Christ, I believe, in God’s redemptive purpose and plan throughout all of Bible revelation, is the apex, the high point. It is that the Old Testament points to the cross and the New Testament points back to the cross. This is why Paul said, “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

When you think about it, all of God’s glory, attributes, wisdom, power, and majesty are displayed in the cross. Ancient theologians used a term for this. They called it the theatre of the cross. By looking at the cross, you see the glory of God, you see the character of God, the holiness of God, the righteousness of God, the mercy of God, the love of God, the power of God, the

compassion of God. All of God's attributes are displayed in the theatre of the cross. So many times we want to run from the cross, and we don't want to carry the cross. We don't want to humble ourselves before the cross, but it's the place of glory.

Verse 23, "And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man," the Messianic title for Jesus, "should be glorified." He didn't say crucified, He said glorified. It was through and by and in the cross that God would receive greater glory.

Let me give you the second point about the cross in verse 24. The cross leads to fruit or fruitfulness. The cross brings fruit. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Through the death of Jesus Christ, His burial and resurrection, there would be this massive fruit to the cross of Jesus Christ. What a glorious thing that is! Not by His example, not by His teaching, but by His substitutionary, blood-atoning death upon the cross. You cannot diminish the substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross. He died on the cross to bear fruit.

I heard the story of a group of Christians that visited some missionaries that were way out in a very primitive and remote area. One of the visitors said to the missionaries, "Boy, you guys have really buried yourselves out here. This is so remote." The missionaries finally said, "No, we haven't buried ourselves, we've planted ourselves, and we've died to ourselves so that our lives might bring forth more fruit."

Notice thirdly about the cross, verse 25, the cross leads to life. "He that loveth his life shall lose it," so you try to hang onto life, you try to live it yourself. This is what the world tells you to do, by the way, "and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." The cross leads to life. How important that is to understand.

Fourthly, write it down, verse 26, the cross leads to honor. I love this. "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." If you die to yourself, you live for Christ, you take up your cross, you follow Him, God will honor you. I love Psalm 91:14-16, God speaking in the psalm, says, "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore...I will...honour him...with long life will I satisfy him." Again, that's consistent with the idea that if you love your life, you lose it; but if you lose your life, you'll find it. God will bless you. God will honor you. God will do the best for those who leave the choice to Him. Those who say, "Lord, take my life, and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee," God will not disappoint you. God will not be your debtor. God will not short-change you. If you want to get the most out of life, give your life to God! If you want to miss life altogether, grab it for yourself and live for yourself. The cross leads to honor. How glorious that is!

We come to verses 27-30, where Jesus begins to pray. He says, "Now is my soul troubled," this is John's version of the Garden of Gethsemane, and some have actually called it John's "little Gethsemane" because it's so brief and abbreviated. He says, "Now is my soul troubled," in His humanity as He faced the cross, He was beginning to be in agony. "...and what shall I say?" That's a great question, "Father, save me from this hour," that's what I would say if I were going

to be crucified, "Lord, deliver me. Lord, save me." "...but for this cause came I unto this hour." He actually prayed, "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. 29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. 30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. 31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. 32 And I, if I be lifted up," He's referring to His crucifixion on the cross, "from the earth, will I draw all men unto me. 33 This he said, signifying what death he should die."

Go back with me to verse 27. Jesus is troubled. This is kind of John's, as I said, version of Gethsemane in miniature or brief. He's facing the cross and asks this question: What shall I say? We have the same question to pose. When we face dying to ourselves, dying to the world, dying to our affections and our lusts, dying to the things of this world and living for Christ, we have basically the same question: What shall I say? Shall I say, "Lord, save me from this hour?" or shall I say, "Father, glorify thy name," two responses to one question. I want you to think about that. You're hearing the message tonight. If you seek to find your life, you'll lose it; if you lose your life for My sake, you'll find it. Then you ask yourself the question: What shall I say? Okay, I'll die to myself. I'll die to my affections and my lusts. I'll live for Christ. Or, do you say, "Father, have Your way in my life and glorify Yourself in me." The right response, obviously, is, "Lord," not "save me from this hour," but, "Lord, glorify Yourself in this hour." That's what Jesus prayed in verse 28 as He was going to the cross. The minute He prayed that (verse 28), one of three times the heavenly Father spoke audibly, "Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Three times in the earthly life of Jesus, as far as the Bible's recorded, there was an audible voice from God the Father from heaven. Now, the first one was at Jesus' baptism. Remember when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and the heavens opened, a dove descended, and an audible voice spoke out of the heavens and said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," or "in whom my soul delights," which is, by the way, what we want God to say about us. The second time was when Jesus was on Mount Transfiguration with Peter, James, and John. Peter was talking about, "Let's build three tabernacles, three booths," and the Father spoke from heaven and said, "Peter, this is My Son. Hear ye Him," listen to Him. In other words, "Peter, be quiet. Listen to My Son."

The third is our account here in John 12 when Jesus said, "Father, glorify thy name," as He was facing the cross. The Father spoke audibly from heaven and said, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Now, there were some people there that weren't very attuned spiritually (verse 29), "...and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him." John, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, knew that the voice came from heaven, and, I gather from the other times the voice came from heaven, that it is the Father who indeed is speaking concerning the Son. Notice (verse 30), "Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. 31 Now is the judgment of this world," that's an interesting statement in verse 31, "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes," and this time, when I go to the cross, in the cross the devil will be judged, and this is (write it down)

the fifth about the cross.

The cross defeats the devil (verse 31), "...the prince of this world," referring to satan, will "be cast out." In the cross, the devil was defeated. The Bible tells us that Jesus and the cross divested satan of his power over us. When we become believers and children of God, satan has no power or authority over us. It's just usurped if he does tempt us or come against us, but his power has been broken at the cross. Someone said, "He's a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, but as far as we're concerned as God's people, his teeth have all been pulled. All he can do is gum you." He can't destroy you. Satan was divested of his power at the cross, and Jesus makes that statement there in verse 31.

In verse 32, He says, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. 33 This he said, signifying what death he should die." Here's the sixth and last statement about the cross before we wrap this up; that is, the cross of Christ is the great attraction. Now, I believe that verse 32 has been misinterpreted. I'm not sure I know for sure how it should be interpreted, but I know how it should not be interpreted. The interpretation that has been missed, I think over the years, and it's not that it's a bad teaching, I think there's truth to it and it's consistent with other Scriptures, but that's not what this text is, is that if we preach Christ and talk about Jesus and lift Jesus high, that people will be drawn to Jesus. People use this verse to apply it to telling people about Jesus, talk about Jesus, and lift Jesus high in our speech. Now, should we do that? Yes, we should do that, but that's not what Jesus was talking about.

Jesus was talking about the cross. "...If I be lifted up," is a reference to crucifixion, and then He said, "If I am lifted up, if I am crucified, that I will draw all men unto me," and this is where it gets a little sticky trying to understand, "What does He mean, draw all men unto Him?" Well, He doesn't mean that all men will be saved, but I believe He means that all men have provision in the death of Christ on the cross. You might think of it as all men meaning all races of men or all mankind. John 3:16, once again, says, "For God so loved the world."

I don't believe in what's called the doctrine of limited atonement, that is, Jesus only died for the elect. I believe that Jesus died for all humanity. Not all humanity will be saved, only those who believe on Him, those who appropriate the death of Christ by faith, but I believe the death of Jesus Christ was for all mankind. There is some truth to the idea that we can't come to Him unless the Holy Spirit draws us to Him. The Scriptures speak a lot of times about the Spirit drawing us. Notice, as I said, in verse 32, Jesus said, "...will draw all men unto me." It reveals the need for man to be drawn because we're sinners separated from God, and it also reveals that a person cannot come to God unless he is drawn. John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," and when He uses the word "draw," it's always used in the New Testament to draw someone to salvation. He's drawing those people through the cross who will believe. And, there's mystery there between God's divine elective purposes and His atoning sacrifice in who is saved and who isn't saved, but I believe that we will be saved by faith as we trust Christ and that we must repent and believe on Him. We have to be drawn and convicted by the Holy Spirit, we believe, and at that moment we're regenerated and

given new life. Jesus is talking about His death on the cross.

Now, in conclusion, verses 34-36, we have what is called the final appeal here. "The people answered him," and said, so they've been listening to this whole thing that's going on, and the crowd has been listening in on Jesus' dialogue after the Greeks came and Philip and Andrew presented the Greeks and Jesus gave this discourse, "We have heard out of the law that Christ," or Messiah, "abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?" It's interesting. These are people who heard what Jesus was talking about and actually understood that He was teaching that He would go to the cross and die. They're a little confused and say, "Well, we read in the Scriptures that Messiah abides forever. How is it that He's going to be crucified?"

Verse 35, "Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them." As I said, this is the end of His public ministry. We're going to move into John 13 to the upper room where He's alone with His disciples.

In this final appeal, Jesus says, "The issue is I'm here right now. The issue is that I'm the light. The issue is that if you believe on Me, you come to the light, and you walk in the light. If you reject Me, you're in the darkness, and you will walk in the darkness." He doesn't explain this, "Messiah shall live forever." We know that He would be resurrected, ascend back to heaven, He would return from heaven, set up His Kingdom for a thousand years, and He would live forever. He's the Son of David and sits on David's throne forever. He's the King. But they didn't understand the Messiah going to be crucified. It just didn't register with them. Even the disciples couldn't fathom or comprehend it; and after He was crucified, their faith was destroyed, devastated, and they didn't look for the resurrection. They were surprised by it. Jesus just says, "Look, I am the light. If you believe on Me, you come to the light, you're walking in light, you'll not walk in darkness, but you will have that light. You will become the children of light."

Jesus came to die on the cross, to be buried and raised from the dead, so that we could come to Him in faith, believe on Him in faith, come to the light and walk in the light, as Jesus is the light. Remember last week when we opened this study I told you that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. He's the way, but they didn't follow Him; He's the truth, but they didn't believe on Him; He's the life, but they didn't put their faith on Him and receive the life of God in their souls. Jesus tonight is the light. Are you walking in the light? You come to the light. Have you put your faith in Jesus Christ? Are you a child of light? I love the fact that this section of John ends about coming to the light and that you become the children of the light, children of the day walking in that light. How glorious it is in this dark world that we live in that we're God's children and we can walk in His light. Amen? Let's pray.