

“The Hour has Come” (John 12:20–36)(3.31.23)

John 12:20–36 (NIV84) *Jesus Predicts His Death*

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” ²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

²³ Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

²⁷ “Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!”

Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.” ²⁹ The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

³⁰ Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine."³¹ Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.³² But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."³³ He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

³⁴ The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?"

³⁵ Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going."³⁶ Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

The word of God for the people of God.

LET US PRAY.

Title: **"The Hour has Come"**

INTRODUCTION:

Think about it, "this hour." From the beginning of Jesus' ministry, the issue of "His time" is on his mind. At the wedding feast in Cana, his mother,

Mary, tells him that they have ran out of wine. Jesus asks his mother, "Woman, why involve me, my hour has not yet come?" But now, in Jerusalem, in His final week, His hour has come.

Jesus, is the perfect Lamb of God, who was slain before the foundation of the world, at the beginning of time. John 1:1 (NIV84) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. From the beginning of time to this particular time and place, the One through whom all things were made, has taken on human flesh and dwelt amongst us, for this hour.

BODY:

After the great Palm Parade into Jerusalem, we find this announcement made in response to the request from some Greeks who had gone to worship at the Passover Feast. They wanted to see Jesus. What did they mean by that? They could have been in the crowd shouting Hosanna, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel! But it seems, they meant more than a mere observing of Jesus.

We Would See Jesus – not the one in our hymnal

1. We would see Jesus, for the shadows lengthen
Across this little landscape of our life;

We would see Jesus, our weak faith to strengthen
For the last weariness, the final strife.

2. We would see Jesus, the great rock foundation
Whereon our feet were set with sov'reign grace;
Nor life nor death, with all their agitation,
Can thence remove us, if we see His face.

3. We would see Jesus; other lights are paling,
Which for long years we have rejoiced to see;
The blessings of our pilgrimage are failing;
We would not mourn them, for we go to Thee.

4. We would see Jesus: this is all we're needing;
Strength, joy, and willingness come with the sight;
We would see Jesus, dying, risen, pleading;
Then welcome day, and farewell mortal night.

So, it appears that a crowd has gathered around the Greeks; or, Jesus was amongst a crowd and the Greeks were brought to Him. In any case, the Jews in Jerusalem, other than the Pharisees, are eagerly awaiting Jesus to be crowned King of Israel. How does Jesus respond?

Jesus starts talking about death. He talks about his death. He talks about the death of those that follow him. Now, while we just spent 12 weeks in Ecclesiastes we heard the constant refrain that death is the common denominator for all humanity. Now here we are in the gospels, which

means “good news,” and we are still hearing about death.

BUT, this is a different kind of death. This is not a sterile death where the body returns to dust. This not death as annihilation or void or nothingness. This is a death that brings a harvest. The seed planted in the ground has its outer casing decay and it releases its lifeforce.

When we serve Jesus, this lifeforce brings a harvest. The kingdom is multiplied. When we serve Jesus, we will constantly be in the presence of Jesus. When we serve Jesus, our Heavenly Father will honor us. These are tremendous promises.

By following Jesus, we are dying to self. 2
Corinthians 5:17 (NIV84) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! We view the life in this world as no value in comparison to the life to come. Yes, we must live in this world, minister in this world, disciple in this world, demonstrate the love of God in this world; but, we are NOT TO BE **OF** this world. It is the things of the Kingdom that we treasure.

Last Sunday night, I was at a wedding. For the reception, I sat next to a 21-year-old man named Matthew. He has never been to church. He doesn't know anything about God. He doesn't know anything about Jesus. He was asking questions as

we got to know each other. He asked me if I thought it was possible to live forever. I told him, "Yes. I'm going to live forever." How do I know? Because right here in this text, along with many others, Jesus promises eternal life.

Jesus continued. He was deeply troubled within himself, in his innermost being. At Christmas we sing "Mary Did You Know." Jesus knew and had known. Think about that and how it demonstrates His love.

Jesus gathers His disciples. Even the one that would betray him; even the one that would deny him; even the one that would doubt him. These are the ones for whom Jesus would die.

Jesus feeds the five thousand. Then he feeds the four thousand. He casts out demons from the possessed. He heals the blind. The crippled walk. The prisoners are set free. For the leper who was cleansed who came back and thanked him, and the other nine who did not show their gratitude – Jesus died for them all.

King Herod decapitated Jesus' cousin and friend, John the Baptist. The Sanhedrin that illegally convicted Jesus - Those that stripped and beat Jesus. - Those that spat upon and mocked Jesus as he carried the Calvary Cross – Those that nailed

Him to the cross – Even the one that pierced Jesus' side. Jesus died for them all.

In effect, Jesus was carrying that cross His whole life. You and I would have been so heavily burdened with such knowledge that we would have been crushed. We do not seem able to love our enemies, yet Jesus died for His enemies. While Jesus embraced the little children, this cloud of pain was building on the horizon.

Imagine the very worst storm you have ever experienced. Think of the thunder, the rain, the wind, and the lighting. Imagine the worst emotional anguish you have experienced: the heartache, the mourning, the depression. Combine them and mix them together and multiply them by infinity. If on top of that, you knew that you had lived the perfect sinless life, that you didn't deserve any of it, how would you feel?

John 12:27 (NIV84)

27 "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour."

The cross looms large before Jesus. But the physical pain and death were not to be the worst of it. The spiritual sacrifice was the true crucible. The wrath of God the Father for every sin of

commission and sin of omission by all of humankind was boiling in the cup. This is the cup Jesus bemoaned in the Garden of Gethsemane.

As ugly as this picture is that I have painted for you, it is framed in glory. There is glory for the Father. There is glory for the Son. Why? Because this divine sacrifice will bring lost men and women to Jesus, **"When I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all men to myself."** This is the message of the thundering voice of heaven.

But...it makes no human sense. Who could conceive it? The crowd spoke up, "We don't understand. That is not the way we read the scriptures." They had imposed their finite human minds with their failed human desires and understandings for a human kingdom upon the scriptures. Too often Christians do the same thing today. We try to make the scriptures fit our personal preconceived perceptions.

They ask, "Who is the Son of Man?" This is the key question. It is key for all time. It is key for your eternity. In Daniel, it is the term for the Messiah coming on the clouds. In Ezekiel, it refers to the prophet repeatedly. It is the humble title Jesus claimed more than any other title.

Before Jesus and the inner circle of disciples would ascend the Mount of Transfiguration, that same

question is asked in a different way. Matthew 16:15–16 (NIV84)

¹⁵“But what about you?” he [Jesus] asked. “Who do you say I am?”

¹⁶Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Here we have a parallel lifting up. Here we have a parallel glorification. Here we have a parallel question. Yes, God has glorified His name and will glorify it again.

In response to this crowd, Jesus tells them, “Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of the light.” When we die to self and live for God, we become sons and daughters of the light. The Apostle John tells us in the opening verses of this Gospel, “In Jesus was life, and that life was the light of men. Jesus is the true light that gives light to every man.” My brothers and sisters, without light, you and I cannot see.

CONCLUSION:

We Would See Jesus – from our hymnal

1. We would see Jesus; lo! his star is shining
above the stable while the angels sing;
There in a manger on the hay reclining;

haste, let us lay our gifts before the King.

2. We would see Jesus, Mary's son most holy,
light of the village life from day to day;
shining revealed through every task most lowly,
the Christ of God, the life, the truth, the way.

3. We would see Jesus, on the mountain teaching,
with all the listening people gathered round;
while birds and flowers and sky above are
preaching
the blessedness which simple trust has found.

4. We would see Jesus, in his work of healing,
at eventide before the sun was set;
divine and human, in his deep revealing
of God made flesh, in loving service met.

5. We would see Jesus, in the early morning,
still as of old he calleth, "Follow me!"
Let us arise, all meaner service scorning;
Lord, we are thine, we give ourselves to thee.

My friends, it was our Heavenly Father's plan from the beginning to send His beloved and only begotten Son. Jesus died to save us from sin and from death. Through faith in the finished work of Jesus on the Calvary Cross, we have eternal life that starts in the here and now.

Have you seen my Jesus?

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.

Amen and amen. Let us pray.