

Subject: *God's Glory in Christ's Death*

Scripture: *John 12:23-33*

We are returning to the Gospel of John and to a very rich passage of Scripture. Near the end of John's Gospel, Jesus met with Peter and asked him: "Do you love me?" Three times Peter said, "Lord, you know I love you." Each time Jesus replied: "Feed my sheep." It is my duty and privilege to feed you, the Lord's sheep, from His Word. As we look together at John 12 we are in green pastures and beside still waters. In this passage two great Bible themes come together in a unique way: the glory of God and the death of Christ.

GOD'S GLORY

God has a glory all His own. It is sometimes called His intrinsic glory or His essential glory. He is glorious because of who He is. All of His attributes reveal His glory. There is another glory that God receives from the world and all things He has created. The ultimate purpose of all things is to glorify God.

- ***Psalms 19:1*** *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.*
- ***Romans 11:36*** *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

In life and in death our main purpose is to glorify God.

- ***1 Corinthians 10:31*** *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*
- ***Philippians 1:20*** *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.*

The salvation of lost sinners is to glorify God.

- ***Ephesians 1:12*** *That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

The life and ministry of Christ was to glorify God. God was glorified in Christ's birth. This is a main theme of the Christmas story. Mary glorified God, ***Luke 1:46*** *And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord.* The angels glorified God, ***Luke 2:14*** *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* The shepherds glorified God, ***Luke 2:20*** *And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.* Everything that happened in Christ's life and ministry was to glorify God.

- ***John 17:4*** *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

CHRIST'S DEATH

This was a theme that began early in the book of Genesis and carries through to Revelation. In the Bible we find some dominant truths like threads that run all the way through:

- The black thread of sin and death
- The golden thread of God's grace and glory
- The scarlet thread of blood sacrifice

In Genesis 4 we see Cain offered an animal sacrifice (a lamb for a man).

In Exodus 12 we see the sacrificial lamb of Passover (a lamb for a family).

In Leviticus 16 we see the sacrificial lamb on the Day of Atonement (a lamb for a nation).

In John 1:29 we see John the Baptist point to Jesus and declare: "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world."

The apostles preached about Jesus' death on the cross.

- **1 Corinthians 2:2** *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

If we were to be transported to heaven we would hear the angels praising Christ for His death on the cross:

- **Revelation 5:12** *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*

In John 12 we see these two magnificent themes together: God's glory and Christ's death.

REASONS WHY GOD WAS GLORIFIED IN CHRIST'S DEATH

In this message we will take a broad look at these reasons and then look at each one in detail. We will only have time to look in-depth at some of them and will come back next time to consider the rest in some detail.

1. His death fulfilled God's perfect timing (vs. 23, 27)

There are eight times when John refers to "the hour" in this gospel (2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 12:27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1). Now the hour had arrived (vs. 23). This was the hour for which He came (vs. 27). This was the hour He knew would come from the beginning of His ministry. This was the hour for which He was born. This was the hour that fulfilled God's eternal plan because Jesus was the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world. This was the hour of Christ's submission to the Father's will. It was the hour of His greatest humiliation and suffering. It was also the hour of His glorification.

2. His death resulted in the fruit of many souls saved (vs. 24)

Jesus used an analogy to explain the significance of His death. His death was like a seed planted in the ground to produce much fruit.

3. His death fully revealed God's character (vs. 28)

When Jesus asked the Father to glorify His name (His character, attributes), the Father answered in a loud audible voice. Some said it thundered. Others thought it was the voice of an angel. This is the third time when the Father spoke in an audible voice from heaven during Jesus' life on earth: at His baptism (Mt. 3:17); at His transfiguration (Mt. 17:5); and here.

God's glory is the sum total of His attributes. The cross was the supreme demonstration of God's character, not only His love and mercy, but also His truth honored, His wisdom revealed, His righteousness revealed, and His wrath against sin made known.

- **1 John 2:1-2**¹ *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* Christ's sacrifice on the cross satisfied the wrath of God against sin.

4. His death brought judgment on this world and its evil prince (vs. 31)

- **Hebrews 2:14** *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*

When Jesus was crucified it seemed like the devil and all the powers of darkness had won the victory, but actually it was his great defeat.

5. His death draws all believers to Him (vs. 32-34)

When Jesus spoke of being "lifted up" the people at that time knew what He meant. He would be lifted up in crucifixion. When the Jews executed criminals they threw them down and stoned them. But the Romans lifted them up and crucified them. The people who heard Jesus were confused (vs. 34). They could not accept that their Messiah would be crucified. The message that the Christ would be crucified was not only confusing, but it was offensive to the Jews. But for those who believe and are saved the truth that Christ was crucified for our sins is the power of God unto salvation. There is a drawing power and converting power in the death of Christ.

- **1 Corinthians 1:18** *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*

Jesus promised that when He was lifted up He would draw all men. This doesn't mean that all people will be saved, but people of every nation and every race, Jews and Gentiles, free men and slaves, men and women, young and old would be drawn to Him for salvation.

- **Revelation 5:9** *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;*
- **Romans 1:16** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*