

Pastor Dave – Sunday 11th March 2024

Journey to The Cross

John 12:20-33

Story shared of General Douglas MacArthur and Japanese Emperor Hirohito remaining in power after his nation's surrender.

And the fact that this was an unexpected outcome.

- Emperor Hirohito took full responsibility for all that took place.
- Accepted judgement upon himself.
- Found to be a man of honor.
- It was considered a better outcome for him to be left in post would enable Japan to be rebuilt.
- But not as an emperor with the same level of power.

The passage we are about to look at speaks of a meeting that a group of individuals had with Jesus that didn't go as they expected it to go.

As was mentioned last week with reference to the last week of Jesus life – so much took place in that final week and this is an interaction that took place in that week.

- This being right on the heels of Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
- Passover Festival

Greeks travelling among those heading to the Passover festival.

- Greeks – being gentiles.

Safe to say that they were Greek God-fearing gentiles – Jewish proselytes – following Jewish customs – recognising the God of the Old Testament.

[John 12:20-33 Christian Standard Bible](#)

Jesus Predicts His Crucifixion

²⁰ Now some Greeks were among those who went up to worship at the festival. ²¹ So they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and requested of him, "Sir, we

want to see Jesus.”²² Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

²³ Jesus replied to them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces much fruit. ²⁵ The one who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves me, he must follow me. Where I am, there my servant also will be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

²⁷ “Now my soul is troubled. What should I say—Father, save me from this hour? But that is why I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name.”^[a]

Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”

²⁹ The crowd standing there heard it and said it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.”

³⁰ Jesus responded, “This voice came, not for me, but for you. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³² As for me, if I am lifted up^[b] from the earth I will draw all people to myself.” ³³ He said this to indicate what kind of death he was about to die.

- People wanting to have a meeting Jesus – an audience with Jesus.
- The outcome not as they anticipated.

John 12:20-33 Christian Standard Bible

Jesus Predicts His Crucifixion

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Greek gentiles didn't generally worship at the temple – they may have been in the gentile portion.

Question – Why were these Greek gentiles here? - Why did they approach Philip?

Plausible that because Philip was a Greek name – their thinking was that if they approach Philip that he was a safe person to approach.

Maybe also that they and Philip were from Bethsaida – Decapolis – a Greek gentile area.

Conversation between Philip and Andrew.

“Do we let these guys get to see and speak with Jesus”?

- Maybe they just wanted to know more about Jesus, about God?

Question – Salvation – what did it mean to them as gentiles?

Verse 23 and onward.

Point # 1 – There is no life without death.

- Death producing fruit.
- The Apostles were commissioned to go out and preach the gospel.
- To bear fruit by preaching the life changing news of Jesus Christ.

²³ Jesus replied to them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Prior to this Jesus had said that the time had not yet come – now he is saying the time has come.

- This to the Greeks is a weird thing to say.
- Certainly not what the Greeks were expecting and probably even for the disciples this would not have been an expected outcome.

²⁴ Truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces much fruit.

- Seed.

Pause here for a moment.

Reference made to a social media video file that Pastor Dave had been shown where a prosperity preacher had used this passage.

- Preaching a false gospel – making reference to if you give me this your seed of money God will make it so much more and you will become wealthy.

We need to know what this passage is actually teaching.

- These characters (Prosperity Preachers) are misteaching the word of God.

Jesus is talking about His – that His death will bring about salvation.

- This can be traced through the gospels and into the other books of the bible to come.

Jesus is going to give His life so that others can have eternal life.

²⁷ “Now my soul is troubled. What should I say—Father, save me from this hour? But that is why I came to this hour.

- Jesus came for this hour.
- To save sinners.
- He knows what he is about to experience.
- The wrath of Almighty Gd poured out on Him.

Announcing to everyone – “I am going to the cross to die.”

²⁸ Father, glorify your name.”^[a]

Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”

- God saying, “I have and will again”!

Jesus saying – “The voice of God is not for me, it’s for you”.

Now is the judgement of the world.

The sinful nature of this world under the judgement of God.

²⁹ The crowd standing there heard it and said it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.”

³⁰ Jesus responded, “This voice came, not for me, but for you.

John 3:16 Christian Standard Bible

¹⁶ For God loved the world in this way:^[a] He gave^[b] his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

- And on those who don't believe – the world is under judgement.

John 12:31 Christian Standard Bible

³¹ Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

- Now the ruler of this world will be cast out.
- Satan will have nothing left to rule over or influence.

As more and more people hear the good news, they respond to the gospel.

- It undermines Satan's influence on the world around us.

Reference made to Pastor Josh and the story of the head-hunter – cannibals that loved each other into a false security only then to kill and eat each other.

- The life changing news of the gospel being shared.
- Their whole culture, community, and way of living completely transformed.
- Now recognising and understanding the sinfulness of their actions.

Revelation 12:10 Christian Standard Bible

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say,

The salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Christ
have now come,

because the accuser of our brothers and sisters,
who accuses them
before our God day and night,
has been thrown down.

Satan casting doubt as he approaches the throne – that we aren't saved – that we are still sinners – casting doubt through to the end.

We cannot have eternal life without Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection.

John 12:32 Christian Standard Bible

³² As for me, if I am lifted up^[b] from the earth I will draw all people to myself.”

A profound statement in 2 different ways.

³³ He said this to indicate what kind of death he was about to die.

Question – What is he saying? – What would be going through people heads in hearing this?

1. Giving an indication of how he is going to die – to be crucified.
 - To the Jews this would have been an offense – Old Testament scriptures would say that anyone who is hanging in a tree is a curse.

Supporting scripture.

Deuteronomy 21:22-23 Christian Standard Bible

Display of Executed People

²² “If anyone is found guilty of an offense deserving the death penalty and is executed, and you hang his body on a tree, ²³ you are not to leave his corpse on the tree overnight

but are to bury him that day, for anyone hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not defile the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Galatians 3:13 Christian Standard Bible

¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, **Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.**^[a]

2. If I am lifted up^[b] from the earth I will draw all people to myself.
 - Sinners need to look to the cross of calvary for salvation.

Verse 25 – Challenge.

John 12:25 Christian Standard Bible

²⁵ The one who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Point # 2 – There is no following without forfeit.

- No eternal life without faith.

Luke 14:28-30 Christian Standard Bible

²⁸ “For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn't first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, after he has laid the foundation and cannot finish it, all the onlookers will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰ saying, ‘This man started to build and wasn't able to finish.’

- Counting the cost – we don't always do that as believers.

We once did!

²⁸ “For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn't first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?

Question – Who does that? – That is not wise!

Following Christ we need to count the cost.

A continual cost with regards to our own wants and desires, family, friendships, job and even freedom.

Question – Are we willing to follow Christ no matter what the cost?

Think about this – culture tells us lies all of the time – The world says follow your heart – do what you want.

Jeremiah 17:9 Christian Standard Bible

The Deceitful Heart

⁹ The heart is more deceitful than anything else,
and incurable—who can understand it?

Polyamory is the practice of, or desire for, romantic relationships with more than one partner at the same time, with the informed consent of all partners involved.

- These are things that are considered to be ok – when they are sinful.
- Things that society teaches.
- A result of following your heart.

Example of biblical truth.

- The heart is desperately wicked – as people who have sinful flesh.

Jeremiah 17:10 Christian Standard Bible

¹⁰ I, the LORD, examine the mind,
I test the heart^[a]
to give to each according to his way,
according to what his actions deserve.

- Sinful man will stand before God and give an account.

Instead of spending eternity in hell we have the opportunity to place our faith, hope and trust in Jesus Christ for salvation.

As Christians we are not to follow our hearts, we are to follow God.

Romans 6:16 Christian Standard Bible

¹⁶ Don't you know that if you offer yourselves to someone^[a] as obedient slaves, you are slaves of that one you obey—either of sin leading to death or of obedience leading to righteousness?

- Our lives are not to be characterised as a slave to sin.

But a slave to righteousness.

Romans 6:17-18 Christian Standard Bible

¹⁷ But thank God that, although you used to be slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching to which you were handed^[a] over, ¹⁸ and having been set free from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness.

- Set free from sin.
- Enslaved to righteousness.

Romans 6:19 Christian Standard Bible

¹⁹ I am using a human analogy because of the weakness of your flesh.^[a] For just as you offered the parts of yourselves as slaves to impurity, and to greater and greater lawlessness, so now offer them as slaves to righteousness, which results in sanctification.

God is calling us to grow in our sanctification to become more and more like Jesus.

Romans 6:20-23 Christian Standard Bible

²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with regard to righteousness.^[a] ²¹ So what fruit was produced^[b] then from the things you are now ashamed of? The outcome of those things is death. ²² But now, since you have been set free from sin and have become enslaved to God, you have your fruit, which results in sanctification—and the outcome is eternal life!

Concludes with verse 23.

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We live in a crooked and perverse generation.

We need to be about shining forth the light of Jesus Christ to a dying and sinful world.

- We need to be slaves to righteousness to do this.

John 12:35-36 Christian Standard Bible

³⁵ Jesus answered, "The light will be with you only a little longer. Walk while you have the light so that darkness doesn't overtake you. The one who walks in darkness doesn't know where he's going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become children of light." Jesus said this, then went away and hid from them.

We are to shine this light forward into a dark and sinful world.

Question – Are we slaves to sin? – Or are we slaves to righteousness – with our light shining forth?

We live in a world that is continually pushing back against the Christian faith.

- Persecution – pushing back against the gospel of Jesus Christ – the training of pastors and missionaries.

We need to more than ever gospel lights in our community – prayer warriors.

It is going to be more costly in the days to come to be a follower of Jesus Christ.