

**JOHN**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to John chapter 12 as we continue our study through the Bible.

As we are going to see tonight, John takes us to the final week before Jesus goes to the cross, before He is crucified for the sins of the world.

Now as we will see as we dig into John chapter 12, John gives to us the account of Mary's anointing of Jesus. This is also spoken of in Matthew 26:6-13 and Mark 14:3-9.

But please understand that Luke 7:36-50 is not speaking of the same anointing. In Luke we see the event take place in Galilee not Bethany.

In Luke we see Jesus at the house of a Pharisee and here it is at the house of Simon the ex-leper.

In Luke we see a former harlot anoint the feet of Jesus while here we see Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus do the anointing.

So keep that in mind as we go through this story.

We also will go through His triumphal entry into Jerusalem and then some powerful teaching by Jesus as He prepares to go to the cross!

Now, with that said, let's begin reading in John chapter 12 starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

**JOHN 12****VERSES 1-2**

Keep in mind that Jesus came from the area of Ephraim, which was about 15 miles to the north of Bethany. And they have a dinner for Jesus, in honor of Him at the home of Simon the ex-leper. Bethany was about two miles from Jerusalem on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives.

Now if this was Simon's home, why was Martha serving? Some feel that she was related to Simon, maybe her husband. We don't know for sure but it can be as simple as this dinner being for the men of the village and Martha and the other women served. Keep in mind it is Passover and many people are traveling to Jerusalem to celebrate this feast.

John gives to us the timeframe here, only six days from the Passover. Keep in mind, as we looked at in our study of Matthew, that the Passover would be on Thursday, not the traditional day of Friday, for those in Judea including the Sadducees. And, for the Galileans, they celebrated it on Wednesday along with the Pharisees. So Jesus and His men, who were Galileans, would have celebrated Passover on Wednesday, allowing for them to share the Passover meal and yet, Jesus was crucified on Passover!

And I think we can clearly see that the events leading up to the cross, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus are important. You see, almost one-half of John's Gospel is given to this last week of Jesus' earthly ministry. Matthew used more than 33% of his Gospel to cover that week. For Mark, nearly 40% of that last week of Jesus' life. And finally, we see that Luke covers 25% of those last seven days of Jesus' life.

So these events are important and especially as we see the things that Jesus was teaching during this period of time. He is preparing His men for the work they were to do and He is preparing us for the work we are to do!

### VERSE 3

Here we see Mary's love for the Lord manifested in her actions. Now we may read what Mary did and not think much about it, but this oil of spikenard was costly.

You see, this oil was a very fragrant oil that was prepared from the roots and stems of an aromatic herb from Northern India. And yes, it was costly, 300 denarii or a year's wages!

And Mary took this flask, broke it and anointed the head of Jesus as Matthew and Mark tell us, and I believe it came down upon the feet of Jesus as John tells us.

Mary is showing us that there was nothing that she had that was too valuable to give to Jesus. Her life was a living sacrifice unto Him. And that should be our passion, to give to the Lord all we have, our entire being. You see, He is worthy of everything we have and everything we are! May we give it to Him, lay at down at His feet to be used for His glory.

Now Mary does not stop there. She then takes her long hair and wipes the feet of Jesus with her hair. What was that all about?

Mary was a worshiper and that is what we are seeing here. A woman's hair was her glory and yet Mary laid her glory down at the feet of Jesus! And what happens to a person who worships God like this? They take on the fragrance of Jesus, and, not only that, but the house where she was at also permeated the fragrance of Jesus, wherever she went, the fragrance of Jesus went with her.

That is what Paul tells us of our own lives in II Corinthians 2:14-16, **“Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?”**

Take a sniff of the person you are sitting next to, what do they smell like? No, don't do that! Just kidding. But as we spend time with Jesus the fragrance of Jesus will permeate our lives. As our homes are filled with Jesus then our homes will permeate the fragrance of Jesus. And it doesn't matter if people like it or not, if they are in your home, if they are around you, the fragrance of Jesus will flow from your life!

Now, the only way your life will smell like Jesus is by spending time at His feet in worship. If you don't, you will smell like something else and it won't be like Jesus!

Let me ask you a few questions here, give you something to think about.

Why wasn't Mary at the foot of the cross when Jesus was crucified?

Why didn't Mary go to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus after He died?

Maybe because she already did and she understood that death would not hold Him. How did she know that? Because she spent time at His feet in worship! What a great lesson for us to follow!

#### **VERSES 4-6**

Here we see the heart of Judas in comparison to Mary and the heart of a true worshiper of God. And the contrast is like comparing night and day.

You see, Judas was not interested in Jesus, but in money. In fact, we are told that he kept the money bag. And he not only kept it but he put his hand in the money bag and took money for himself.

Now the problem. Here goes all this money being poured out! He saw this money just fly out the window instead of entering his pocket!

But keep in mind that evil hearts try to cover their evilness and that is what we see Judas doing. He tries to hide his darkness with the cause of the poor. He says, “**Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and give to the poor?**”

That sounds so good and yet, he was not interested in the poor, not at all. This was money that was being taken from him, even though it was the Lord’s, he didn’t see it that way. And as he poured out these heart wrenching words, people were listening!

And guess what happened when Judas said this? The other disciples of Jesus joined in and agreed with Judas. Do you see how contagious evil can be? Who are you hanging out with because it will determine what fragrance you are emitting from your life!

Now we do know that none of the disciples of Jesus knew that Judas was a traitor, only Jesus knew that. And that can make things difficult at times. It can be difficult at times to tell the difference between the wheat and the tares because they are so deceptive in their actions!

Rlye put it this way as he said, “That anyone could follow Christ as a disciple for three years, see all His miracles, hear all His teaching, receive at His hand repeated kindnesses, be counted an apostle, and yet prove rotten at heart in the end, all this at first sight appears incredible and impossible! Yet the case of Judas shows plainly that the thing can be. Few things, perhaps, are so little realized as the extent of the fall of man.”

How true that is and in the end, people will be able to tell who you are worshipping by the fragrance you are emitting! What do you smell like?

Before we read on, imagine the atmosphere at this point. There is Mary, after she has poured out this oil on Jesus. There is Judas who rebuked her for doing that and the disciples of Jesus joined in with Judas. I am sure there was silence, so much so you can hear a pin drop. What is going to happen next? Let's read on and see.

### VERSES 7-8

When others were criticizing Mary for what she did, who comes to her aid? Jesus does. Make no mistake about it, our family, our friends, those in the church and those outside the church can criticize us but if we love and worship Jesus, He is not going to criticize us for that.

But Judas, who was not loving the Lord, he was full of criticism for those who loved the Lord. Be careful what flows from your lips!

First of all Jesus says, **“Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.”** How did she know that Jesus was going to die? Because she was not only a worshiper of Jesus but she listened to what He was saying.

I wonder all that we miss that Jesus has for us because we don't take the time to worship and listen to what He is showing us through His Spirit!

Then Jesus says some disturbing words, insensitive words it would seem. He said, **“For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.”**

Please understand that Jesus was not negating or ignoring the poor but He was saying that His day was coming and she was giving the gift of devotion to Him, preparing Him for His burial. Again, the apostles kept missing this one; they refused to accept His death and were looking to be heads in His Kingdom. So how did Mary know? Like I have said, she spent time at the feet of Jesus! Do you think the Lord is trying to show us something here? You bet He is!

Now in regard to the poor. Taking care of the poor is important but more importantly is God, worshiping Him, spending time with Him, listening to Him so that we can be directed in our actions, not only towards the poor.

You see, if we truly worship and listen to the Lord then we will minister to those in need. But if we just minister to their human needs we become just another social agency and we are not truly given them what they need, ***JESUS!***

Out of a relationship with God, we minister to the spiritual and physical needs of others, they go hand-in-hand! Remember, the Church is not a social institution, it is not an organization, but it is a living organism, the body of Christ on the earth! Never forget that!

#### VERSES 9-11

Keep in mind that the chief priests were mostly Sadducees, and the Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection. Thus, Lazarus was a problem for them because Lazarus was a living example of life after death. Therefore, having him around was an embarrassment to their theological system. For them, there was only one solution to this embarrassing problem – to put Lazarus to death.

And think about this man named Lazarus. He was a living testimony of who Jesus is, the Messiah. He was dead but now he is alive. And because of his witness, many people believed in Jesus, which irritated the religious leaders.

They should have rejoiced in Lazarus being raised from the dead, but instead, they want to kill him. Poor Lazarus, he died once and God raised him from the dead and now they want to kill him! What a witness he was and folks, we too our witnesses of Jesus!

You see, we too were once spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins and God has made us alive again in Christ. Thus, we are a living testimony of the power of God, of who Jesus is.

Paul put it this way in II Corinthians 3:2-5, **“You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart. And we have such trust through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.”**

Have you noticed that there are no words for Lazarus, he did not say one word and yet, his life was a witness of Jesus! How many Christians “Talk the talk” but they don’t “Walk the walk”? We are to let our light shine that when the world sees our good works, not necessarily hear our good works, but as they see our good works they will glorify our Father in heaven! We should be living our lives like someone brought back from the dead, because we have been, spiritually speaking!



Now, like with Lazarus, the world wants to put us to death, to silence our witness. Let me share with you what is going on in the world, the persecution that Christians are facing. We are told,

The Christian persecution watchdog group Open Doors has released its annual list of countries where Christians face the greatest persecution and found that it has reached unprecedented levels worldwide as over 7,000 Christians were killed for their faith between Nov. 1, 2014, and Oct. 31, 2015.

Although the California-based ministry, which works in over 60 countries, stated last January that 2014 was the worst year for Christian persecution than any other time in modern history, the organization said during the rollout of its 2016 World Watch List that 2015 surpassed 2014 as the deadliest year for Christians worldwide.

Open Doors found that over 3,000 more Christians were killed for faith-related reasons during its reporting period for the 2016 World Watch List than it found during the reporting period for the 2015 report. Additionally, over 2,400 churches were attacked, damaged or destroyed during the reporting period, which is more than double the number from last year.

- <http://www.christianpost.com/news/open-doors-world-watch-list-2015-deadliest-year-christians-killed-for-faith-jesus-christ-154875/>

And yet, it seems like the church in America is asleep. That we just want what we want when we want it and that is what the church is giving them. And folks, it is not healthy. Let me show you what I mean. We are told in this first article, “Why I Sleep in on Sunday”.

. . . People responded that the church they'd be attracted to would provide acting or backstage opportunities for actors trying to get a foot in the theater door. They wanted 12-step programs, and so on. The respondents were also asked why they preferred to sleep in on Sunday mornings rather than go to church. Some were against the idea of commitment. If they joined a church, they would be obligated to attend. They didn't want to feel they were duty-bound to go to church. . . .

- On Mission, Nov/Dec 2002 pp 42-43

Also, this article titled Church Splintered by Groups, and it says,

Too many people come to church expecting their own self-interests to be served. Singles, for example, attend because they like the activities, and they might find a future mate. Then, you've got the needs of junior-high groups, senior-high kids, the college crowd, young marrieds, young marrieds with children, empty-nesters, senior saints, etc. With such a conglomeration of interest groups in the congregation, the church has fallen into the trap of regarding these groups as consumers who are shopping for a church that will dispense the religious goods and services they need. How often do people visit a church and ask questions that pertain to the theological position of the church? How often do people approach a congregation with questions as to how they can serve in the kingdom? The church has forgotten that its essential unity lies in its confession of Jesus as Lord and its witness to the world.

- Clergy Journal, Oct 2002, pp 10-12

So I think you can see why the church is so weak in America, it is all about us and not about Him and His will for our life! We like to pray for revival to take place and really, what we should be praying for is persecution, for then people will no longer play church, they will live what they believe because their lives are on the line! May the Lord wake up the church in America! May we sit at the feet of Jesus and receive from Him as we worship Him so that we can go and do the work of the ministry instead of having all our wants met! And if we do, we will shine for Him and people will be drawn to Jesus through our words and through our deeds!

#### VERSES 12-15

We now come to the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and, according to the book of Exodus, this was the day that the people would bring their Passover lambs to be inspected for any spot or blemish. And from the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan to the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan this would take place.

Now, here it is the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and Jesus is entering Jerusalem, and our Passover Lamb will be inspected for any spot or blemish. He was inspected by the people, the religious leaders for any spot or blemish, and as Pilate rightly said, “**I find no fault in this Man.**” Luke 23:4. Jesus was sinless!

Also, this is the only day that Jesus allowed the people to worship Him as the Messiah the King and it was the day that Daniel spoke of.

In Daniel 9:25 we are told, “**Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.**”

Therefore, if you take 483 times 360 days, based on the Babylonian calendar, it would come to 173,880 days or 69 times 7 years. This command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem was given to Nehemiah in Nehemiah chapter 2 on March 14, 445 B. C. and if you count off 173,880 days you would come to April 6<sup>th</sup>, 32 A. D., we call it Palm Sunday!

But, as Luke 19:41-44 tell us, **“Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, ‘If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.’”** They did not recognize this day and thus, they were accountable and judgment was coming!

Now the people were excited, shouting out Hosanna or Save Now! They placed palm branches on the ground which was a symbol of Jewish nationalism since the time of the Maccabees.

What is going on here? The people saw this as a political rally as Jesus, in their minds, was going to free them from the Roman bondage they were under.

Jesus, on the other hand, as He fulfilled prophecy riding in on a donkey, a symbol of peace, came to set people free from their sin and rule and reign at this time on the thrones of their hearts.

Thus, when things didn't go like they thought they should, the people no longer cried, ***"Save Now!"*** but ***"Crucify Him!"*** I think you can understand why Jesus wept as He looked down upon the city of Jerusalem! He didn't come at this time as a national Savior but a spiritual Savior, not to rule and reign from a throne at this time, but to rule and reign, as I have said, in the hearts of man!

#### VERSE 16

After the death and resurrection of Jesus, the apostles began to understand that the Old Testament Scriptures spoke of Jesus as the Holy Spirit opened their eyes to these truths!

I think many times we don't understand God because we don't glorify Him in obedience. Spurgeon said, "Man has a desire to preach new doctrine, to set up a new church, to be an original thinker, to judge, to consider – to do anything but obey."

If you want to understand God, glorify Him in your obedience and He will teach you.

#### VERSES 17-18

Think about what the Jews were going through under Roman bondage. They lost their freedom and things were not easy. So the Jews who saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead were blown away.

Now I don't believe they saw Jesus as the One who came to save them from their sins, but the One who came to set them free from Roman bondage. It is as Bruce wrote, "One who could summon a dead man back to life would certainly be able to deliver the holy city from the yoke of Caesar."

I don't believe this is speaking of saving faith here but the following of Jesus continues to grow and out of that, we see the opposition from the Jewish religious leaders!

#### VERSE 19

This was not true but their own popularity, their own recognition was decreasing and they needed to do something quick, before it gets out of control, more than it already had!

You see, the Jews in general went after Jesus because of what they could get from Him, material things, physical things instead of the spiritual life He had for them. Thus, when things did not go their way, they rejected Him.

Regarding this verse, J. Vernon McGee wrote,

My favorite painting of the Crucifixion shows three empty crosses. The bodies of the crucified have been taken down from the crosses and lie in the tombs. In the background is a little donkey eating on a palm frond. What a message! The discarded palm branch and the Cross are the tokens of His so - called triumphal entry. Where is the crowd that cried, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord"? They may be the same crowd that on the next day shouted, "Crucify Him!" Now they are gone, and He is in the tomb. You see, He offered Himself to them publicly as their King, but He was rejected.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible, Vol. IV, P. 445

May we come to Jesus not for what we can get from Him, but because He is the King of kings and Lord of lords! He is Almighty God and deserves our worship!

VERSES 20-22

The Greeks were seekers of truth and these men had come to know the God of Israel, and thus, they were there for the Passover Feast. And what a question they ask Philip, we long for questions like that, **“Sir, we want to see Jesus.”** For the Jews, they wanted a **“sign”** but for these Greeks, they wanted to see Jesus!

Now why did they come to Philip in the first place? Some suggest it was because he had a Greek name, we don’t know for sure. The question that is intriguing to me is why did Philip hesitate in taking them to Jesus?

I believe it was because He didn’t understand that salvation was not only for the Jew but also for the Gentile. So he tells Andrew and they both go and tell Jesus!

Now Jesus is going to teach, maybe these Greeks these things, we don’t know, but the people who were around Him for sure. And He is teaching us as well. May we listen to what Jesus is saying to us.

J. Vernon McGee pastored a church in Los Angeles at one time known as the “Church of the Open Door.” And on the back wall, a place only the speaker or pastor could see as he stood behind the pulpit, was a sign that read, “Sir, we would see Jesus.” (John 12:21)

I like that. Now, J. Vernon McGee said that he would have loved to put up a sign behind the pulpit, a place only the congregation could see, that read, “Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16)

I like that as well. A pastor, a teacher is to make Jesus known so that they can see Jesus. And the congregation is to hear what is being taught and not be offended by the truth but seek direction from God as they receive the truth of God found in the Word of God.

Look at what Jesus said to them.

VERSE 23

In John 2:4 and 7:8 Jesus said that His time had not come yet, but now it has!

Remember what Psalm 118:24-28 tells us, **“This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD. God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You.”**

You see, not only the salvation that Jesus would bring, but the sacrifice would be bound on the altar and offered up – this is the day the Lord has made!

Of these words, Morris tells us, “In this Gospel we see Jesus as the world’s Saviour, and evidently John means us to understand that this contact with the Greeks ushered in the climax . . . Jesus sees it as evidence that His mission has reached its climax and that he is now to die for the world, Greeks included.”

Morris also said regarding the words, “has come”, “The verb ‘is come’ is in the perfect tense, ‘the hour has come and stays with us’. There is no going back on it.” (Morris)

I am so thankful. The work that Jesus has done for us is completed, He completed that work for us, all of us.

Now as you read these words of Jesus it doesn’t seem like He answers the Greeks here, but He does. Now we don’t know if they were there when He was speaking but I would guess that they were. You see, He doesn’t go back to the Old Testament prophecies because they would not know them. So He speaks to them at their level, an agricultural reference or science, and we will see that in the next verse.



VERSES 24-26

Just as a seed must go into the ground and die for a harvest to come, for fruit to come, so must Jesus be put to death and buried for life to come. Before there can be that resurrection power, before there can be fruit produced, there must be death!

Thus, through the death and resurrection of Jesus we see that He has provided ***THE WAY*** of salvation and thus, many will be saved, there will be much fruit.

Now please don't misinterpret verse 25 when it speaks of hating our lives. Don't go around and say, "***I hate my life! That is what Jesus said I was to do!***" No it isn't. And think about it. If you go around hating your life you are not praising God for your life, you hate what God has given you!

Then what is Jesus speaking of here? To hate your life means that you have no self-centeredness, you are Christ-centered! You are committed to Him. Thus, don't let anything or anyone get in the way of your relationship with Him! Death to the old life and raised up new in Christ!

Paul put it this way in Romans 6:5-9, where he said, "**For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.**"

Praise God for the life He has given us!

VERSES 27-28a

Jesus realized what the cross was all about, what He would have to endure, the separation from the Father for a time, and His flesh was saying “No!” But He knew what He had to do. He said, **“But for this purpose I came to this hour.”** “The very object of His Incarnation, the reason of this His Coming into the world and of His continuance to this hour was to meet this Suffering.” (Trench) You see, He had conflicting emotions, but what was His desire? To glorify the Father in His actions. And as Jesus pours out His heart listen to the response from heaven!

VERSES 28b-30

This was assurance from God the Father. Approaching the cross, the great concern of Jesus was to glorify the Father, and He was assured that He already had and would continue to do so.

You see, the Father was glorified by the work of Jesus. As we go through tough times, difficult situations, our emotions telling us one thing and God another, glorify the Father in your obedience to Him in spite of the conflicting emotions.

Now as God the Father spoke these words, some in the crowd thought it was the sound of thunder. I find that interesting in that so many people, when they see a supernatural work of God, want to attribute some kind of natural explanation to it. They just can’t accept it is from God!

Others did recognize that this was not thunder but they were unsure what it really was. Maybe an angel spoke, not really sure!

Let me say this. If you don’t have spiritual ears to hear, you will try to give earthly explanations to spiritual issues, spiritual things.

Paul said in I Corinthians 2:10-11, **“But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”**

If you have spiritual ears you will hear the voice of God, thus you are born again for the Spirit of God dwells in you, teaching you the things of God!

### VERSES 31-33

The judgment for the sins of the world would now be paid in full for us on the cross of Calvary by Jesus for all who will receive Him.

Isaiah 53:6 tells us, **“All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”**

Also, in Colossians 2:14-15 we are told, **“having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”**

What I want you to see here is that this gift of salvation, the forgiveness of sins is there for everyone to receive. In regard to what Jesus says in verse 32, **“all peoples”** Spurgeon wrote, “There is no exclusion of any class or creature from the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. ‘I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me’; and the history of the church proves how true this is: the muster-roll of the converted includes princes and paupers, peers and potmen.”

Also, not only were our sins nailed to the cross of Calvary but also the power of Satan was defeated at the cross. We don't have to walk after the flesh any longer but we can walk in the Spirit of God in victory because of Jesus!

And Jesus tells us how He was to die and draw people to Himself. You see, that phrase "**lifted up**" speaks of a literal elevation, the cross, and an exaltation as we share the love of Jesus with others.

It is as Paul said in I Corinthians 1:22-24, "**For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**"

Keep the cross in the center of your life, in all that you do for it is cross-generational, both young and old can gather together, it is cross-cultural, all people can come together. It is when we place the cross aside that divisions come! It is when we put the cross aside all hope is gone!

#### VERSES 34-36

There is some confusion here regarding the Messiah for the Jews. They thought that when the Messiah came, He would establish His Kingdom and it would last forever!

Micah 4:7 says, "**I will make the lame a remnant, And the outcast a strong nation; So the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on, even forever.**"

Daniel 7:13-14 tells us, **“I was watching in the night visions, And behold, one like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.”**

And lastly, in Isaiah 9:6-7 we are told, **“And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”**

And there are many other Scriptures that speak of His everlasting Kingdom.

Now, because they looked for a political leader to free them from the bondage of Rome, they negated, they overlooked the Scriptures that spoke of the Messiah being the suffering servant such as Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.

And then, in verses 35-36 Jesus answers them and He is speaking of His public ministry coming to an end, it was almost over. The light was going out, in a sense.

How does that relate to us? We are told in Genesis 6:3, **“My Spirit shall not strive with man forever. . .”** Thus, while it is light we must answer His call to us before it is too late and in the next few verses we will see that played out!

And John says in verse 36, **“... these things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.”** How sad. They didn’t want to see and thus, they remained blinded to the things of God!

VERSES 37-41

The key word in verses 37 through verse 50, the end of the chapter, is “**believe**”. It is used some eight times! Yes, they saw the signs that Jesus did showing that He was the One the Old Testament prophets spoke of regarding the Messiah. But “**they did not believe in Him.**” John 12:37.

You see, in spite of all the evidence, the Jewish religious leaders kept hardening their hearts to Jesus to the point where they could no longer believe, they could no longer be saved. They had committed what Jesus called back in Matthew chapter 12, the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit or the rejection of what the Holy Spirit was doing, drawing people to Jesus!

They were blinded to the things of God because of unbelief! And please understand that when Isaiah says that “**He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart**” it is not speaking of God just doing this to them.

It is as with Pharaoh as we see him harden his heart to the things of God in Exodus and then God made firm what was in Pharaoh’s heart! Morris explains it like this, “He does not mean that the blinding takes place without the will or against the will of these people. So with the hardening of their heart. These men chose evil. It was their own deliberate choice, their own fault.”

We see that portrayed for us in Romans 1:18-26a as Paul tells us, **“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man - and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. . . .”**

You see, they rejected God and God gave them over to their vile passions just as we see today! It is possible to harden your heart so much, that you reject Jesus so much that you reach a point where you can't believe! What a sad state to be in, as was the case for these Jewish religious leaders. Thus, while there is light, while the light is shining, receive Jesus!

VERSES 42-43

These religious leaders recognized Jesus as the Messiah. I do understand that many say that they were not saved, but I tend to lean on the fact that they were saved. The reason I say that is because of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. They were saved and yet they were secret believers for a time. The thing is you can't be a secret Christian for too long, you will have to make your faith known!

Be careful here. Do you love the praise of men more than the praise of God? Remember what Jesus said in John 12:25, "**He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.**"

VERSES 44-46

Here we see the last public address of Jesus. And once again we see Jesus stress the unity He has with the Father and He calls people to come to the light of God that is found in Him. John put it this way "**He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**" I John 2:6. It is a call to obedience.

VERSES 47-48

Jesus came into this world to save us from the consequences of sin by paying in full the penalty for our sin. But if we reject Him, the ultimate outcome will be judgment. You see, God's Word is clear and understandable, so much so that a child can understand it.

So if you reject the Word of God, you reject Jesus and all that He has said and done! His Word will put you to silence in judgment, you won't have anything to say!



You see, the Word of God can bring forth life or it can bring forth death. It all depends on how you receive it, if you receive it into your life. Because the Word of God testifies of Jesus and if you don't receive His gift of life, salvation, then you will be judged according to your sins!

Peter said in I Peter 1:23-25, **“having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because ‘All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, But the word of the Lord endures forever.’ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.”**

Also, as Paul said in Hebrews 1:1-3, **“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”**

Thus, listen to the voice of Jesus, believe in Him and you shall be saved!

#### VERSES 49-50

The Jewish people were to represent God and yet they had become so distorted in their views of God. So Jesus came and He shows us the love, the grace, the mercy, the compassion, the forgiveness of God towards us that is all nicely wrapped in the person of Jesus Christ, if you would only believe!

And let me say this because so many today are doing the exact opposite of what Jesus said here. He spoke on the authority of the Father and so must we. We don't speak on our own authority, but what is written in God's Word!

I am a representative of God and I am here to teach you the truth of God found in the Word of God. I am to point you to Jesus, the giver and sustainer of life! I am to show you the grace, the mercy, the love, the compassion, the forgiveness of God. I am not here to judge you but to see you saved.

If Jesus spoke on the authority of the Father who are we to say we are not? That is foolishness!

As I close this evening, let me leave you with these words from Paul in Colossians 3:15-17 where he said, **“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”**

Put on the new man, you have been transformed into a new creation in Christ, so live it, walk according to the high calling by which you have been called in Christ Jesus! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved!