

Christ's Future Glory

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- [0 : 00] I would like you to turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 8, and we will take you. So they said to him, Who are you? Jesus said to them, Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him. They did not understand that he had been talking to them about the Father. So Jesus said to them, When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him. Now, I'm going to preach, you are going to pray, and you are going to listen with the enabling of the Spirit of God.
- [1 : 32] Does that make sense? It says in 2 Thessalonians that part of the responsibility of God's people in the presence of the teaching ministry of the Word of God is to pray for the earthy vessel that God uses. And some of you have known me long enough to know that that is desperately necessary, and I trust that you do it often and always. There's nothing wrong with praying midstream. You know, just stop every now and then and throw up one of those dark prayers and say, God help him. We look forward to God working in our fellowship in the teaching ministry of the Word of God. And also, I encourage you that as I preach, that what you are doing is not only paying attention to the text that we are looking at, but you're allowing your understanding of the Scriptures to kind of cross-reference what we're talking about, and you're thinking along and saying, well, does that make sense, and where else in the Bible does that appear? We know that in Acts chapter 17, the believers in Berea were commended, because what they did as Paul was preaching the Word, they were kind of following along and tracking and being certain that what he said matched up with the Bible.
- [2 : 57] And I would appeal that that is what you always do, no matter what the tone or the individual that stands in this place to minister the Word of God. The thing that is essential is that he speaks with the clarity of what the Scriptures have to say, and you keep it in prayer and bathe it with attention to what the Word of God has there in front of you. Well, we look at this passage, and I'll launch right into the text, and understand that in verse 25, we find that in the background of what Jesus had been saying about, I am the light, I am the bread of life, I am the one who has come into the world to be the Savior of the world, no question about what he had to say, the Jews, they did not like what they were hearing. And so they came out with this kind of sarcastic little question that is asked there in verse 25, so who are you? I mean, I can just hear it right now, kind of, it wasn't like that, really, who are you?

It's like, yeah, who do you think you are? It kind of reminds me, actually, of an experience that I had as a father in our home.

[4 : 08] My children would be playing in the basement, and my boys tended to be a little over the top, you know, like nothing but male testosterone in the early developmental stage in the basement, and I would hear things crashing and banging, and so I would send my daughter, you know, they kind of stayed out of the fray, and they'd be upstairs, and I'd say, would you go down and tell Joseph and Sam to stop whatever they're doing?

And, oh, nothing like the privilege of going down and bringing the authority of the law into the basement, you know, the dark underpinnings of the house, and they'd stomp down, Dad said stop, you know, they didn't start by saying Dad said stop, they'd just go down, stop what you're doing!

And my sons, you know how they would do it? He'd say, yeah, who are you? And then they'd kind of, they'd go with the real deal, it's like, Dad said, okay? And so here are the Jews, Jesus has made the issues of their hearts pretty clear, they don't like it, and they react, and they say, yeah, and who are you?

Well, Jesus gets right to the point, he's not a politician, don't ever mistake that. And what he says is, just what I've been telling you from the beginning. There was no need to fact check what Jesus had to say.

How many of you understand fact checking? It's a big thing today. No matter what politician steps out to the front and says whatever they say, you can always find somebody is doing fact checking to kind of double check that what they said today is comparable to what they said two years ago and what they said five years.

[5 : 43] You know, it's fact checking, it's popular and it's probably necessary. You didn't have a problem with fact checking Jesus when he said something, it was the truth. And you could check it against other things that he'd said.

And so I want you to understand that Jesus was consistent in letting his listeners know, know what? The condition of their soul. Now follow with me.

You see, he had been consistent in announcing his mission. He had been consistent in declaring that he was the savior of the world. He had been consistent in letting them know that he was God's son.

And he had been consistent in letting them understand the darkness of their heart. And so as he had warned the Jews in the chapters immediately preceding to chapter 8 in this portion, you need to understand that it wasn't like the first time they heard him say, you got a problem and it's with your heart.

Look back just for a moment to John chapter 7 verse 7. Now go look at all the passages, but just mark what it says there in John chapter 7 verse 7.

[6 : 56] The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it, its deeds or its works are evil.

You see, when Jesus spoke to the people who came into his presence and around him, there was no waffling, there was no evasion.

He made them understand clearly that the fundamental problem in their life was not other people. How many of you have ever thought that in your marriage?

Don't want to admit it here in church, but how many of you have ever thought that in your job? Or how many of you have ever thought that in the different relationships and issues that you're involved in? You just think to yourself, well if I was in a different place or I was around different people, or you know what?

The greatest problem Tim Knoyer has is with Tim Knoyer. And I am very thankful for the clarity with which Christ communicates that to all of us, that he helps us understand, hey, you have a problem and it's you.

[7 : 57] And Jesus made that undeniably clear and it didn't go over very well. Well as we look at him saying what he does there in verse 26, he says, hey, I have much to say about you and much to judge.

I want you to understand that one of the things that we should take away from this is that Jesus was completely truthful about man's condition. He was completely truthful about man's condition.

And in the moment that we are studying, we find that what he was clear about was the issue of sin in people's lives. Now I want you to understand that the hope of salvation fundamentally begins by bringing us face to face with the reality of our sinful condition and helping us understand that we can't solve the problem by ourselves.

Jesus never compromised. Whether he was speaking to Nicodemus, or whether he was speaking to the woman at the well, or he was speaking to the Pharisees, what he let people know is that the need of their heart was centered in their sinfulness and their desperate need to come to grips with the reality of that.

Listen to what he said over in Mark chapter 2 verse 17. Why don't you turn there just for a moment. Mark chapter 2 verse 17. Classic illustration of the clarity with which Jesus spoke about the issues of the heart.

[9 : 24] Mark chapter 2 verse 17. We find here that there were some people who were really kind of irritated a great deal that Jesus was around sinners. By the way, where is it that you will not be around sinners?

Does anybody have an idea? Everybody raise their finger and go like this. When we're up there, we will not be around sinners. Until we get there, guess what? We're going to be around sinners.

And so here is Jesus. He was ministering to sinners and the Pharisees were kind of being very critical about, oh yeah, yeah, you're around sinners all the time. He said, well, you know what? Look at 17.

When Jesus heard it, he said to them, those who are well have no need of the physician, but those who are sick, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners. Question. Have you ever wondered about whether or not Jesus was just moderately sarcastic?

Okay. Now, everybody look up so you don't miss this one. That doesn't give you a lot of license to be sarcastic all the time. I've heard people say, my love language is sarcasm.

[10 : 28] That is not a fruit of the Spirit. You got it? Let Jesus pull that one off. Try not to imitate that part most of the time.

There is a time for being sarcastic, and here was the classic illustration. He was using it as a smack across the face of ungodly people who didn't get the memo.

Were the Pharisees sinners? What's the answer? You bet. And he was in a sarcastic way saying, you know what? You guys are so full of yourself that you don't think you have a problem.

I came to help people that are sick. By the way, is there anybody here that came to faith without, first of all, realizing the desperate condition of their soul? It doesn't happen.

And so when you are there lying awake at night and kind of struggling with the burden of the mess of your life, it may be the Spirit of God that is prompting you to say, you can't fix this mess.

[11 : 24] But Jesus died on the cross to take away the pain and the heartache of sin, and to help you with that, he came to save you. So I want you to understand that Jesus was completely truthful about man's condition.

Another thing that he made clear was that his judgment came from God. You look there in the passage, go back to John chapter 8, and mark what we find next in verse 26.

I have much to say about you and much to judge. Oh, yeah? Well, who made you to judge? I mean, I love that tone of voice that these people had as they were kind of irritated with Jesus. Yeah, who told you to judge me?

You know, I mean, Jesus said, hey, get this. My Father told me to do it. And by the way, my judgment is entirely accurate in that it comes from the Father. Look at this.

But he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him. Understand that the world hates to have its sin exposed and judged.

[12 : 28] And I can tell you as we move forward into the years to come, listen carefully because I think it's appropriate for you to understand this fact, those who are faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ don't have to go out of their way to be highly offensive to an unbelieving world.

But at the end of the day, when you let them know that sin is sin, you're not going to be what? Popular. We specialize today.

The world has specialized in calling everything that happens by another name other than just plain old ordinary sin. And the problem, listen to me carefully, the problem with not being accurate in your diagnosis of the problem of the heart is you end up being inaccurate with your prescription.

You want your doctor to get it right because you don't want to walk out of the office having a couple aspirin because you really have cancer or whatever.

You want something dealt with. And Jesus was straight up with the problem of men's hearts. And I like the fact that here he was, the Son of God, making it undeniably clear that what he was engaged in was speaking clearly and plainly what the Father had sent him to do.

[13 : 50] Now, keep your finger there in John chapter 5. Let's go back. I'm sorry. Keep your finger in 8. Go back to 5 just for a moment. I really am struck. By the way, question, quiz.

Who was Jesus? Who was Jesus? He was the second person of the Godhead. Do you understand that? He was the second person of the Godhead, entirely divine, with all power, glory.

We're going to spend all of eternity worshiping him. I have to stop and go off page here just for a second, put my watch right there so I don't remember the time. But listen to me. I love listening to you sing.

Do you follow that? And every now and then, I don't know if you pay attention, but I'll turn around and look over the congregation. And one of the things I'm just looking at is seeing whether you're into it. You know, hey, look up.

Someday there will be no absentee singers. What's he mean by that? Well, in Revelation chapter 5, it says that when we are before the throne, we're going to be blowing it out.

[14 : 56] I mean, do you follow what I mean by blowing it out? There are none of you going to be sitting there cross-armed. I mean with a perpetual frumpy frown. Send me an email.

You know, get with it. All we're doing here is warm-up for the main event. How many of you understand that? Okay? So, nothing wrong with saying to the Holy Spirit, hey, help me.

Help me to kind of get stepped away from the baggage of my life. And remember that all of eternity is going to be about you. And I just get to kind of practice today. Okay? Okay?

I come back around full circle. I understand that it amazes me that Jesus, all about doing exactly what his Father called him to do.

Exactly. Over in John chapter 5, verse 30, listen to what he says. I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge.

[15 : 58] Yeah, and who said that I'm a sinner? The Father. Okay? As I hear, I judge. And my judgment is just because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

I want to ask you a question. I had to ask myself that question this week. Do I speak his words and do I do his will? Do I speak his words and do I do his will?

Well, going back to John chapter 8, we find next that the response that the Jews had in the face of Jesus speaking so clearly to them in verse 27, they did not understand.

That word understand that is used here is a word that is not talking about whether or not their ears heard. It's talking that they didn't connect the dots.

They didn't really believe that Jesus was talking about their hearts and their own desperate condition, and they just didn't get it. And I want you to understand that as they were listening to Jesus, their ears were shut.

[17 : 11] And as they saw the things that Jesus was doing, their hearts and their eyes were closed. And it's kind of stunning to realize. I remember hearing someone say, actually, last week, you know what?

I wish, I just wish that God would speak to me. And if I would just hear him tell me what to do, I would do it.

And I thought to myself, no, you wouldn't. No, you wouldn't. And why do I say that? Remember the story of the rich man and Lazarus, and they both end up in eternity.

The rich man is in hell. He's really suffering. And he says, you know, he says, would you dip your finger in the water? Let me touch the tongue. No, can't be doing that.

Okay, okay. Well, would you send someone back? I have five brothers, and they're just not getting it. And if someone came back from the dead, they'd get it. And do you know what Jesus says? He says, if they won't listen to the law and the prophets, they're not going to get it, even if someone showed up from the dead.

[18 : 19] Huh? And here's Jesus speaking to them, and he says, you know, you've got a major problem. It's sin in your life. And who are you talking to me about? What's the deal? And so here's Jesus.

And probably one of the practical things that you ought to be saying to yourself here this morning is this, Lord, never let me play with hardness of heart. How many of you understand that you can harden your heart?

You can harden your heart. And for the unbeliever, you can harden your heart when you say no to the gospel. For the believer, you can harden your heart when you say no to the prompting of the Spirit of God or to the clear indication of the Word of God.

I mean, God says do this, and you say no, thank you. Can I tell you something about my father, our father? He'll bring it up again. How many of you learned that? And if you are his child, he'll keep on bringing it up, and he'll just keep on dialing it up until it really gets pretty painful.

That's one of the advantages of being 67, honestly. I have so much scar tissue that all he has to do is tap the outside of it, and I say, I get it, I get it, I've been there before. Don't go any further.

[19 : 31] I'll follow. Some of you here this morning that are refusing to listen, and I would plead with you, don't do that.

Well, as you look at the passage, the next thing that stands out is in verse 28, and put your finger on it. So Jesus said to them, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he.

And in broad kind of terms, let me step back from this and say, those who refuse to listen now will someday hear. Those who refuse to listen now will someday hear.

And so what I want to do is kind of dive into this statement that Jesus makes in verse 28. When you have lifted up the Son of Man, actually 27 through 30 kind of deal with the issue of the cross.

How many of you noticed the cross songs that we sang this morning? Everybody look at me so you follow this and listen. Listen, the things we sing about are not just kind of accidental choices.

[20 : 37] You know, John is sitting there in a dark room and thinking, hmm, what should we sing? What John does, just so you're kind of surprised, John pays attention to what I'm going to preach about.

And he knows in advance. And he picks songs that are going to follow the biblical track of what we're going to study. So here we are. We're singing songs about the cross.

Guess what's that a signal of? We're going to dive into the word and we're going to get into the cross. So here we are. Jesus makes the statement, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he.

And you see that what Jesus was doing in that case was he was announcing the day was coming of his crucifixion. And for starters, I want you to realize that this is one of three statements in the book of John in which Jesus talks about being lifted up.

And when we find a statement and kind of think, well, what is that? I'm being lifted up. What's the deal with that? It helps when you have a study Bible that lets you kind of track that down or when you ask, okay, where else does that appear?

[21 : 57] And so what we're going to do is that we need to understand that when Jesus spoke about being lifted up, he was speaking about the cross. We're going to find that.

Let's look at the first case where this statement is made and turn back in your Bible just for a moment to John 3, verse 14. John 3, verse 14. Here is Nicodemus having a conversation with Jesus.

And Jesus, by the way, Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews. He knew the Old Testament backwards and forwards. In fact, he probably had it memorized, the whole thing. So here is Jesus.

And he makes a very startling statement. He says, As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must, must the Son of Man be lifted up.

And so I want you to fix your eyes just for a moment on that one word, must. And what I want you to recognize is that when Jesus was speaking about his crucifixion, what he was saying is that it was necessary.

[23 : 06] The cross was absolutely necessary. Now, why is that so? Why is the cross absolutely necessary? Well, let me kind of make a world religion comparison.

Do you realize that Muhammad, Muhammad is only revered as a prophet? And he came to give the Islamic faith information with which to work at being good.

How many of you know that Buddha? Buddha? You know who Buddha is? Buddha. Okay, I'm sorry.

Gar? Gar is going to have a talk with me after the service about smacking the microphone that costs \$400. You know, like, that thing? Yes, I'm sorry. Forgive me, Gar.

Okay, we can move ahead. Buddha. He was a teacher. Divine enlightenment. I'll teach you and give you all kinds of information and you can really get smart and be spiritual.

[24 : 20] And along comes all the Hindu gurus. And whoever else. I mean, it's all about information and education and doing better. The more you know, the better you are, right?

What did Jesus come to do? He came to die for me. He came to save me. He came to sacrifice his own life for my life and to pay the penalty for my sins upon the cross.

And he came to do for me. He came to do for me what I could not do. And when he said, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

If you're sitting here and you're thinking to yourself, well, you know what? If I just kind of clean up my life a little bit, maybe I can get to heaven. The answer is not on your life.

The cross was necessary because Jesus died for you. I want you to look at the second text, John 8, verse 28. And here is Jesus saying, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He.

[25 : 32] Now, I want you to take and follow me. Write down the cross was revealing. First, the cross was necessary. And I realized as I looked at my notes earlier this morning that I didn't underline and bold this, so it's my fault.

But write this down. 8, 28, the cross was revealing. We read in this passage in chapter 8, Jesus makes a statement. He says, hey, listen, when you lift me up, then you'll get it.

And there is a sense in which there is a present sense to that statement, but also a futuristic sense to it. One is that when Jesus died on the cross and was resurrected, undeniably, those who had put Him to death were terrified in one sense because it made it evident that He was the Son of God.

But there is something else that I want you to recognize. The cross made it profoundly revealing that the love of God and the judgment of God were satisfied in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Unbelievable. God, loving us the way He loves us, was not willing to overlook sin, but was willing to sacrifice His own Son for our sin.

[26 : 43] And it revealed Him as the sacrifice sufficient for our own sin. Third, look at John chapter 12, verse 32. And this is a profoundly sobering statement.

And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. Hold it. Does that mean that at His crucifixion, everybody will be magnetically drawn to believe in Christ?

What is the answer to that? No. No. There's some of you actually sitting here this morning that don't believe in Christ. There's some of you sitting here this morning that will spend the rest of your life just rejecting the reality of the necessity of your salvation through Christ alone.

And when Jesus made this statement, He wasn't just speaking about, well, everybody's going to get it. I want you to be clear with this. The cross will be universally understood someday, not for its blessing, but for its judgment.

And a logical question that all of you are asking is, where in the world does that come from? Turn over in your Bible to Revelation chapter 1, verse 7. Revelation chapter 1, verse 7.

[27 : 57] When will all the world understand clearly that salvation is only in Christ and that there is no other way?

And that Christ lifted up in His glory, revealed fully for what He is, the Savior of the world and the Lamb of God. Revelation 1, verse 7. Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him.

And all the tribes of the earth will wail on account of Him. Why will they wail? They will wail, listen to me, because I want you to understand this, because it's so sobering.

They will wail because they will see clearly redemption and salvation in the person of Christ. And yet, in the face of that undeniable physical revelation of Christ, risen and glorified and coming again, they will still refuse Him as their Savior.

And here is Jesus saying, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will understand. There's a reason why the cross is a symbol of our faith.

[29 : 15] There's a reason for that. The Romans meant it to be the most vile means of public shame and execution. It was reserved, essentially, for those that the Roman government wanted to make an example of and to say, whatever you do, don't do this.

And Jesus, taking the wrath of God for my sins, died in my place.

That's what He did. He died for my sins. And the cross is a reminder that someone else died for me.

And throughout all of eternity, all eternity, everyone will break down into one of two groups.

You will be a worshiper of the Son of God, who is the Lamb of God, who sacrificed His life for your sins. And I'm going to tell you, when we are in His presence, we are going to be whooping it up.

[30 : 28] You got it? No frumpy grumpy. Lots of fun. You will be in the presence of Christ, enjoying glory, or you will spend forever with resentment and rebellion and hardness and suffering.

And the reality of the eternal condition of the person who is unrepentant and unbelieving is one of the things that brings passion to a preacher's voice and his heart when he pleads with people instead to decide and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you understand that? When I see people, I think to myself, where will they spend eternity? That's true. Jesus took the full measure of the wrath of God.

He died for our sins. He rose again. And the purpose of preaching is to put you on the spot. You've heard me say this before. To put you on the spot of doing what?

Saying yes or no to God. Yes or no to God. Let's close in prayer. Father God, this morning we are thankful for the clear declaration of the Scriptures that the cross is the only hope we have in salvation.

[32 : 07] Not in the physical instrument of judgment, but in the reminder that Jesus died in our place and for our sins.

I'm thankful also that your spirit is at work in people's lives this morning, in the lives of those who don't know Christ, convicting them that they cannot be saved by their own efforts, but must depend upon what Jesus did for them and in their place.

I'm thankful also for the Spirit of God that is working in the lives of believers that says, you, blood-bought person, are to spend every breath you have between now and glory, making Jesus, who is the Savior of the world, sweet and pleasing Him in a life that is marked by joy in the midst of the adversity of life, that Jesus is lifted up.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing a song in closing, and let's stand together as we do that. Without question, let me encourage you, if you are here today and the Spirit of God is addressing a matter that you need to care for publicly, encourage you to respond to the leading of the Spirit of God.

He may be speaking to you this morning. I need Jesus as my Son. Thank you.