

For This Purpose

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[0 : 00] Amen. Please take your Bibles and open them up to John chapter 12. Our text this morning is John chapter 12 verses 20 through 36.

And when you found that there in your Bibles, I do ask that if you're able, physically able to stand, would you please stand as I read God's Word. John 12 verses 20 through 36 this morning. Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip who was from Bethsaida in Galilee and asked him, Sir, we wish to see Jesus. Philip went and told Andrew. Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

[1 : 05] Whoever loves his life loses it. And whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me.

And where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say?

Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name. Then a voice came from heaven.

I have glorified it. And I will glorify it again. The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, an angel has spoken to him.

Jesus answered, the voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world. Now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

[2 : 00] And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. So the crowd answered him, We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever.

How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? So Jesus answered them, The light is among you for a little while longer.

Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.

This is God's holy word. If you would please be seated. Let's pray together once more. Lord, we pray that the light of your word and the light of your spirit would shine on us this morning.

That we would see the truth and not just see it, but love it and believe it and become children of the light. And walk as children of the light as we leave this place this morning. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

[3 : 09] Today we celebrate communion. It's the Lord's Supper. Remember, we do this once a month, but it's good for us as we prepare ourselves to come to the table to remember and to remind ourselves what exactly we're doing when we come and we take this meal together.

For us, this isn't just tradition. It's not just something to fill the time. We believe that this is a meal with a message. It's proclaiming something to us this morning as we prepare to take it.

This is the body of Jesus broken for you. This is the blood of Jesus poured out for you. But we need to understand this morning why.

What's the point? And why do we as a church family, why do we as Christians make such a big deal about the death of Jesus? Our mission as a church family, I'll remind you, is that we exist to magnify the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Why? Well, it's because we believe that the gospel is the place where we see God's glory most clearly displayed. So we want to make a really big deal about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[4 : 25] We believe that the best way to see a magnified, big vision of God's glory is to look through the telescopic lens of the gospel.

And so that's our aim this morning as we prepare to come to the table together. And that's the aim of our passage this morning in John chapter 12. The focus is narrowing here in John's gospel. We're getting closer to the death of Jesus and his resurrection. We're getting closer to the moment of the cross. And as we make our way there, Jesus wants us to understand why he came to die. The short answer to that question is that Jesus died for the glory of God. Jesus died to magnify God's glory.

But what I want us to see in our passage this morning is two specific ways this happens in the death of Jesus. So the question we're asking is how does the death of Jesus magnify God's glory?

[5 : 28] And the answer is two ways. God is glorified in the death of Jesus as sinners are saved and as Satan is defeated.

God is glorified in the death of Jesus as sinners are saved and as Satan is defeated. First, we see God is glorified in the salvation of sinners.

You remember our context here. We're at the Passover feast in Jerusalem. The crowds are gathering. And last week, if you were here, you remember from last week, Jesus entered into the city of Jerusalem to the cheers of the crowds.

They were celebrating his arrival. And the Pharisees concluded in verse 19, if you look there with me, he said, the whole world has gone after him.

They were wringing their hands at the attention that Jesus was getting. The whole world has gone after this man, Jesus. Well, ironically, here as we start our passage this morning in verse 20, we see that they're not wrong.

[6 : 32] Look there to verse 20 with me. John tells us that among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. And these Greeks came to Philip and what did they say?

They asked him, sir, we wish to see Jesus. Now think about what's happening here. It's this Jewish festival, this Jewish Passover, and this Jewish city with this Jewish Messiah coming in.

And here come these Greeks seeking the presence of Jesus. What are they doing here? Why is John drawing our attention to this?

Why is he telling us this? Why is it that at this moment with the nation seeking Jesus, that Jesus responds and says, now my hour has come?

You know, up to this point in John's gospel, that hour of his death, that hour of his glorification, every time it spoke of his hour, it was future. Not yet.

[7 : 31] Not yet. Not yet. Now as the nations are seeking the presence of Christ, Jesus responds and says, now the hour has come. Now is the time for the Son of Man to be glorified.

This has been the plan all along. Now Jesus knows God's wise plan of salvation was to glorify his name by sending his Son to live and to die and to rise in place of sinners, not just from the Jewish people, but sinners from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

God is glorified in the death of Jesus because his death on the cross opens up the door wide for the nations to come to him, for the nations to be forgiven of their sin, for the nations to be transformed, and then to praise the name of God for his glorious grace to the rest of eternity.

That's the purpose. And we see a hint of that purpose here, don't we? See, ethnic Jews were God's chosen people in the old covenant, but here in the death of Christ, as we come to the table, we're reminded, Jesus says, a new covenant is being inaugurated in my blood.

My blood is poured out for undeserving sinful Jews and undeserving sinful Gentiles, any who would come to me in faith.

[9 : 12] This has been one of John's points of emphasis throughout the book. You remember, John 3.16, what does it say? For God so loved, what? The world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

Philip and Andrew, they came to Jesus, they tell him, hey, the nations are here. The Greeks, they're seeking you out. They've come to see you. And Jesus responds to them, it's time.

I have come for this purpose. I have come to die in order to bear the fruit of salvation and transformation, not just for the Jews, but for the nations.

Truly, truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, if it dies, it bears much fruit.

We see here the necessity of the death of Jesus for salvation of sinners like us, don't we? It is necessary that Jesus die for sinners like us to live.

[10:31] Unless he dies, he remains alone. But if he dies, he bears much fruit. You see, if all Jesus does is come and live perfectly, all we have is a good example.

If all Jesus does is come and live perfectly, all we have is maybe inspiration, motivation, a great example of how to live. If he doesn't die in our place, in the place of sinners, all we have is inspiration.

But what good is that for sinners who are dead in the trespasses and sins in which we walk?

Sinners need more than just inspiration. Sinners like us, we need salvation.

Sinners need more than just salvation. As Jesus says, that's exactly why I've come. To die. Jesus died to save us, helpless sinners like us who couldn't ever save themselves for the glory of God and then to transform us into his image.

You have to get the order right, don't we? I grew up during the WWJD bracelet phase. You remember seeing those, what would Jesus do?

[11:47] Most of you are probably familiar with that. What would Jesus do is a fantastic question to ask. But only if it's the second question you ask.

The first question we have to ask has to be, what did Jesus do? And when we come to this table together this morning, we're reminded of what Jesus did.

He came to do what we couldn't do. He lived perfectly. And then he died in our place so that now, now if you trust him and you receive his finished work, what he has done, now, now you look to him for an example to follow.

And now you look to him for inspiration of how to live your life. See, they go together. Salvation and imitation, salvation and transformation, salvation and motivation, salvation and replication.

Should I keep going? The order is important. Receive his work first by faith and then, Jesus says, then, then you must follow him.

[12:59] You must imitate him. Look there again to verse 25. Jesus says, whoever loves his life loses it and whoever hates his life in this world keeps it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me, he must follow me. And where I am, there my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, anyone Jew, anyone Greek, if anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

I'm in over my head with these agriculture, I can't even pronounce it, agriculture examples, farming, gardening, I don't know much about that, but I do know that if you sow a seed into the ground and that seed takes and it reproduces and it bears fruit and there's life that comes from that seed, whatever grows up out of the ground ought to look a lot like what was planted into the ground, right? So Jesus says the same thing is happening here for those who receive the life that comes from my death. If you have received what I've given you, then you ought to look like me.

You ought to imitate me. What does it look like to follow Jesus? The answer is it looks a lot like dying.

[14:25] The call to follow Christ is a call to die with Christ. He says you must hate your life here on earth in order to keep it for eternal life.

This is a hard saying, isn't it? That word hate, that's a strong word. How do we make sense of this? There's a parallel passage in the Gospel of Matthew that I think helps us out in Matthew chapter 10. You can write that down for later. He says whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it. Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Now of course we're not called to actively hate one another. Right? We understand this. Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church.

[15:38] Children honor your father and your mother. Love one another. It doesn't mean we actively hate one another but what it does mean is that to follow Jesus that we have to radically change how we view our priorities and our relationships and our very own lives.

Following Christ is not just about receiving salvation it's about transforming affection. If we want to be like Jesus the glory of God has to be the greatest affection.

of our heart. If we want to be like Jesus God's glory must be the greatest treasure of our heart. Not your spouse whom you love.

Not your children whom you love. Not your job your career your goals your comfort your safety your money. Jesus' glory must be the greatest love of your heart.

So now Christian the question for us becomes every single day how do I die to myself today? How do I die to my self seeking desires and live for the glory of Christ today?

[17 : 03] How do I love my spouse today as one who is seeking to bring honor and glory to King Jesus today? How do I love and serve my children in ways that don't make it all about my children?

That's difficult isn't it? But I seek to bring glory and honor to King Jesus today. How do I reframe my goals, my desires, my ambitions, my career, my priorities in ways that it's not just climbing the ladder of success and bringing honor to self but instead is now transformed by a new heart affection to bring glory to God.

God, the glory of Christ must now be the greatest love of your heart, Christian. And if it is, your life will look totally different.

And if we live like this for the glory of God, guess what? Church, the world takes notice and God is glorified. This is a high call.

The following Jesus is the highest, costliest call in all the world. Hate your life. Die to yourself. If you're here and you're not a believer, if you're here just joining us for the meal this morning, again you're welcome.

[18 : 25] We're glad that you're here. Maybe you're wondering right now, why in the world would anybody live like this? This sounds crazy. And I want to say, that's a fair question to ask.

I'm glad you asked. Maybe you remember the call of Abram. You remember his call? Go from your country, from your kindred, go from your father's house, leave everything you know, leave your comfort, leave your family, leave your life, and go to a land that I will show you.

That's a high call. Costly call. Difficult call. Do you remember, do you know what it was that propelled him forward and caused him to go?

Go. He had the command of God and he had the promise of God. That's it. A difficult command and a simple promise.

Obedied and believed by faith. Go. That's the command. And I will make of you a great nation. And I will bless you. And I will make your name great so that you will be a blessing.

[19 : 35] And I will bless those who bless you. And him who dishonors you, I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. A difficult command with a clear promise.

Don't we see the same thing here with Jesus? Look there to verse 27. Verse 27. We see the humanity of Jesus on display here, don't we?

He says, now my soul is troubled. What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. He knows the cost he's about to pay.

But what is it that pushes Jesus forward towards the cross? For this purpose I have come to this hour. What purpose? Why has Christ come to die?

Father, glorify your name. Jesus went to the cross because he loved the glory of God more than his own life.

[20 : 37] Do you see that here? A difficult command, go to the cross, lay down your life, die, but a clear promise. I have glorified it, God said, and I will glorify it again.

What about us, church? What about us, Christian? We are called like Abram and like Jesus to die to ourselves, to lay down our life, to leave everything we know and love behind for the glory of God. But he has not called us to go anywhere where he's not already gone before us. Christ has gone before us. And he's not called us to go anywhere without a very clear promise.

What's the promise for us? Look there again to verse 25 and 26. I see three promises here. Why would anybody live like this? Consider these promises, church. First, the promise of eternal life. Whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Here's the promise. Forsake your life now, die to yourself now, and live forever with Christ.

[21 : 54] That's a deal. Promise number two, the presence. presence of Jesus. Verse 26, if anyone serves me, he must follow me. And where I am, there my servant will be also.

Do you want the presence of Jesus? Follow him. Follow him. Serve him. And Paul says in Romans 6, if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

If we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. Die with him that you may live with him.

Promise number three. The promise of the honor of the father. Verse 26, if anyone serves me, the father will honor him.

God himself will honor you. This is the highest aim of the human life, is it not? God himself will honor you.

[23 : 02] God himself will bless you. God himself will be with you. Whatever it costs to get this, it's worth it, is it not?

Whatever gain we had, we count as loss for the sake, for the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus our Lord. God is glorified in the salvation of sinners, but not only this second, we see God is glorified in the death of Christ because God is glorified in the defeat of Satan.

Look at verses 31 and 32 with me. Verses 31 and 32, they show us that at the cross, at the death of Jesus, something of cosmic significance happened.

at the death of Jesus, a decisive victory was won that opened up the door for salvation to now go out to the ends of the earth.

Look there to verse 31. Jesus says, now is the judgment of this world. Now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

[24 : 14] This is very interesting, isn't it? We know that there is a future judgment. All the earth, every single person to ever live, all of us, we will all give an account of ourselves to God, but Jesus says, it's here.

Now is the judgment of this world. Romans 2 verse 16, it tells us that God judges the secrets of men by Christ.

Christ himself is the dividing line of history. You are either perfected in him, by trusting in him, by receiving his perfect work, by faith alone, or you are judged outside of him, according to the standard of perfection that he alone obeyed.

The cross of Christ is the dividing line, separating line of judgment for all the world. Now that final day of judgment is yet to come, it's future, but Jesus speaks of it as absolutely and as certainly as if it is already here.

As if to say, you want to know how that day plays out? Look to the cross now. Those who look to the cross in faith, the verdict is in, they are cleansed, they are forgiven, they are accepted, the verdict is in, they are innocent by virtue of what I have done and those who reject the cross are guilty lest they turn and repent.

[25 : 54] The final day of judgment, Jesus says, now is the judgment of this world, but also he says, now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

What does that mean? What does that mean? Who is the ruler of this world? I think it's clear Jesus, he's speaking here about Satan.

There's other places of scripture that speak this way, 2 Corinthians 4 says, the God of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God.

Ephesians calls Satan the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. It's clear that in the wisdom and sovereignty of God, Satan has been given a sort of measured, delegated, temporary authority to operate here on earth, to reign over the domain of darkness, and to influence the world, to rage against the Lord and his anointed.

but Jesus says, here, now, at the cross, in my death, the ruler of this world is cast out.

[27 : 24] And God is glorified in the death of Jesus because it is here at his death that Satan is kicked out of his position of authority in the world.

Jesus says the cross is victory over sin, death, and the devil. Now, how can this be true? How can this be true?

Because if you're paying attention and you're seeing the same things that I'm seeing when I turn on the news and I look around and I pull up social media or I drive down Highway 17, it looks like Satan is alive and well, doesn't it?

Amen? Now, we look around and we see that he's active, he's at work, he's seeking to devour you, believer. He's seeking to devour the witness of the church, he's influencing people all over the world.

How do we understand this? Did Jesus get it wrong here? Did he fail in his mission? Because everywhere I look, there's not a place on earth where Satan isn't at work seeking to rob God of his glory.

[28 : 38] How is this victory? The truth is, there is one place in all the earth where we can look and see the victory Jesus won on the cross.

Do you know where it is? It's not a place even, church. It's a people. It's the church. It's you. Do you want to know why I give my life to build up the church?

I feel called that the Lord has led me to give my life for the good of the local church. It's because this is the only entity in the world where victory is guaranteed before the return of Christ.

We may never win countries, cities, policies, politics, but we have the church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. because of the cross of Christ there is now a people from every tribe, tongue, and nation where the enemy has no power at all.

Because of the cross of Christ there is now a people called the church who have been delivered from the domain of darkness and now transferred into the kingdom of his beloved son.

[29 : 56] what happened on the cross was a devastating decisive fatal blow to our enemy Satan. This is the head of the serpent crushed.

He's a roaring lion lashing out because he knows he's been beaten. He's been dealt a fatal blow. He's a roaring lion but he's on a leash that's being pulled tighter and tighter and tighter closer and closer to his end as the number of the redeemed bears fruit and multiplies over all the earth like grain.

This is why Jesus says now he's cast out. Now when I am lifted up I will draw all people to myself Jew and Gentile the gospel will go forth and bear fruit and Satan can't do anything to stop it.

I will build my church. So now church the good news for us we are fighting a defeated enemy.

This is a little bit like the difference between D-Day and V-E-Day. Okay historians in the room know what I'm talking about. Do you remember on D-Day allied forces they stormed the beaches in Normandy this was the decisive victory the decisive turning point of World War II in essence at this point the war was over the influence of the Axis powers their effectiveness began to recede and erode but on the ground on the ground the battle continued the war continued on the ground the battle raged on until it was about a year later when Germany officially surrendered and there was victory in Europe V-E-Day Church for those who belong to Christ the battle is over it's won the enemy has been defeated at the cross but he's not yet surrendered when Christ comes our enemy will finally be defeated and the war will finally be won but for now church as we as we wait for that day and long for that day this ought to give us great confidence amen

[32 : 20] Satan has been disarmed at the cross for all who trust in Christ by faith Satan has no new weapons did you know that just the same old tricks recycled for generation after generation after generation I want to focus on just four of his greatest weapons this morning four of his greatest weapons that were disarmed at the cross for any who trust in Jesus by faith deception temptation accusation and darkness every single one of them was ripped from the hands of Satan lost its power and effectiveness for the church right now because of the life and the death and the resurrection of Christ because of the gospel all who are in him truly by faith are safe from his schemes of deception temporarily we may fall but those who are covered by the blood of Jesus will not ultimately finally be deceived we are safeguarded by faith in the truth of the gospel so we're called now in Ephesians 4 to grow up into mature manhood to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine by human cunning by craftiness in deceitful schemes and now because of the gospel all who are in Christ are free from the power of sin and the enticements of temptation do we struggle with sin?

tell me I'm not the only one do we struggle? absolutely we struggle with its presence yes but we are now decisively freed from its power when we realize this it begins to lose its persuasiveness and we can actually say no we're no longer dead in the trespasses and sins in which we walk we have by the grace of God woken up we have now a new God given grace enabled Christ purchased capacity to say no to sin and yes to God that is a powerful weapon ripped from the hands of the enemy and although we may fall although we we still wrestle with sin right now because of the gospel all who are in Jesus are totally completely safe from the accusations of the enemy now this is his biggest gun and what case could we make before God when we are guilty when we are sinful when Satan points his finger at us and he says look at them look at their sinfulness look at how they've earned your judgment we had no case to make because he was right but now because Christ has taken away our reproach because Christ has borne our sin because God made him who knew no sin to become sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God our

enemy has nothing to say we're free holy in the sight of God and now because of the death of Jesus

Satan's weapon of blinding darkness has lost its effectiveness how because the light of the gospel shines forth in the darkness for God who said let light shine out of darkness has shown in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ do you see the confidence this gives us church I want us to come to the table this morning with confidence confidence to say no to sin confidence to know that the evil around us and within us will not have the last word confidence to share the gospel of Christ knowing that by the grace of God he will call his own out of darkness and into the light that's the invitation that Jesus makes here as we close isn't it he says the light is among you for a little while longer walk while you have the light lest the darkness overtake you the one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going while you have the light believe in the light that you may become sons of light did you hear that now we live in a dark world church everywhere around us all around us we have friends and family neighbors co-workers who are walking in darkness they don't know where they're going they don't understand that they're in darkness because the dark is all they know but there's still time while the light shines isn't there for God through us to extend this invitation would you would you would you believe in the light would you would you trust the light would you would you come out of the darkness and let that old life die that you may not just see the light but belong to it believe in the light that you may become sons of light what an offer has extended to you right now in Christ do you want to be free do you want to know

God do you want to truly have life do you want to escape the judgment that you earned for your own sin you are invited now this is the invitation that goes out to all the ends of the world from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the uttermost ends of the earth to the Jew first and also the Greek do not walk in darkness Christ came he lived he died he rose to glorify God in the illumination of the hearts of men come to Christ and live as we come to the table in just a moment church I want to invite you to fix your minds on the death of Christ for your salvation set your hearts to value him to love him above every other desire of your heart remember his body broken for you remember his blood shed for you to bring you to

God and see here at this table your new life freed from the chains of darkness and freed to magnify God's glory in the gospel of Jesus Christ let's pray Lord that is our prayer father Christ has come and lived and died and risen the good news of the gospel is is so good for sinners like us because it means life for us who believe so would you now by your grace enable us to live and to walk in the light we pray in Jesus name Amen s and they go to