

## Responding to God in Faithful Living

Gospel of John Series – 2014-2015

Text: John 12:27-34

Message #50

### GLORY AT THE CROSS

*27 “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. 28 Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” 29 The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.”<sup>30</sup> Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. 32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” 33 He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. 34 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?”*

#### Introduction

1. It is difficult to speak of Jesus without reference to His death. His death was mentioned in regard to eternity past (the Lamb slain before the foundation of the earth). It was at least implied at the time of His birth (“He shall save His people from their sins”). The apostles preached of His death after the actual crucifixion throughout the book of Acts and the Epistles, and it will be the focal point in heaven for eternity. As the death of Jesus drew closer He spoke more often of it.
2. Last week we saw the analogy Jesus used about the grain of wheat falling into the earth and dying and then bearing much fruit. That sets the scene for this paragraph.
3. What we have before us is a pulling back of the curtain just a little, offering a glimpse into the heart of God and the glory of God. In fact it is of the glory of God that we are about to catch a passing glance. Let’s hear this portion of God’s Word (**read**).
4. Kids, Jesus offered a prayer to His Father in Heaven. After He prayed, God the Father spoke. What did the Father say about His name (**He had and would again glorify it**)? The crowd heard something too. They made two guesses what they heard. What were the guesses (**thunder** and an **angel**)? When Jesus said He would be lifted up, what did He mean (**He would be crucified or killed**)? When Jesus said He would draw people to Himself what was He saying (**He would save them from their sins**)? Are you ready?
5. God is a glorious God. He has made His glory evident through the things He has made and in the work He continues to do. I think we could argue that the greatest display of His glory is found in the person of His Son! And His glory can be seen in this passage!

Here is the revelation of that glory, first, in divine communication, and then in the applying of judgment and finally in the unfolding of the revelation of the cross work of Christ.

## I. GLORY REVEALED IN DIVINE COMMUNICATION (27-30)

### A. The Son's requests

1. **"Save me...? But..."** We are on holy ground to be permitted to listen in on a conversation between the Son and the Father. Last week we briefly considered the concept of "this hour." The hour had come for Jesus to die. As Jesus prayed this prayer He was probably only 48-72 hours away from the cross. And He knew it. The full weight of what He knew He had to endure was upon Him. For Jesus to say, "Now is my soul troubled", surely is an understatement. He seems to ask a rhetorical question: **"And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'?"** Then He answers His own question with the acknowledgement that what is upon Him is the very reason for His incarnation! That's why He came in flesh. That does not make it any easier, but it is a reminder that this was the purpose for His coming to earth. Believe me when I say that we have no idea the anguish that is in that statement! (It is possible that the second sentence is not a question but a prayer much like Jesus prayed in the Garden (**"If possible, let this cup pass from me"**) – a request rather than a question. Either way, we hear the anguish). Then He prays, "Father..."
2. **"Glorify your name..."** We know that as followers of Jesus we are to do everything to the glory of God. We don't, but we are supposed to. All that Jesus did was to the glory of His Father. All that He did praised the Father and pleased the Father. All that He did was for the exaltation of the Father. This was no different. What Jesus was about to do would explain and exalt the Father's grace and mercy, as well as His wrath and judgment. It would make clear God's ultimate worth and His righteous indignation. It would give reason for the growth of evil and the presence of the evil one, and it would bring a deathblow to both. It would demonstrate the reason for the endless sacrifices of the past and it would bring to an end once for all the need to continue. All of the attributes of God would be on display at this hour. While the temptation would have been intense to cry out to be delivered from this hour, it would be necessary to endure it that the purposes of God might be fulfilled and the glory of God made known! As Jesus concludes His brief prayer,

for the third recorded time a voice from heaven is heard: **“I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”** The Father’s voice was heard also at Jesus’ baptism and at His transfiguration. Now here just before His death, Jesus receives affirmation from the Father.

B. The Father’s responses

1. **“I have glorified it”** The Father’s name had been glorified in the coming of His Son. Certainly the glory of God was seen in the birth of the Lord Jesus – “Glory to God in the highest...” The glory of God was seen in the life and ministry of the Son of God who did everything to the glory of God. Even now as His hour had come, the Son’s mission is to glorify the name of the Father. And there would soon be future glory.
2. **“I will glorify it again”** The Father does not articulate what that glory will be, but Jesus does and we will see that in a few minutes. He will glorify Himself in the judging of the world and in the casting out of the ruler of this world and in the drawing together of His sheep – all of that glory will result from the cross! (The Father’s response was audible, and not just to Jesus. The Father’s words were bound to receive a response! And so we have the following)

C. The hearers’ reflections (It appears that Jesus was the only one able to clearly discern these words from the Father. The crowd heard sound, but did not pick up on the meaning. In fact some of the crowd thought this was merely...

1. Atmospheric rumblings – Thunder! They just heard noise and they quickly dismissed it. “It was just thunder!” Others thought perhaps it was...
2. Angelic communication – They heard more than a noise. They heard speech; it was a voice. There is no evidence in this text that they were able to discern what the voice said. It is clear that they did not believe it was the voice of God. At best it was a voice of an angel. (If this is so, then why did Jesus say, **“This voice has come for your sake, not mine?”** Why would it be for them if they couldn’t understand it? Here are two suggestions from Carson (p. 442).
  - a. **“Even if the message of the heavenly voice is mediated through Jesus and not grasped immediately by the bystanders, that message, recorded in v. 28, is for the enormous benefit of the disciples amongst the bystanders once they have lived through the period of the cross and find themselves in urgent need of making sense of it all.”** (In other words, like much of Jesus teaching, it would

really make sense after Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension. It would be brought back to their minds and it would clarify what had happened).

- b. ***“Even though the crowd did not understand the voice, the very fact that a voice from heaven spoke should have been sufficient to alert those with any spiritual sensitivity that a turning-point in redemptive history was impending.”*** This is something new and something big. We need to pay careful attention! So the glory of God is revealed in this divine exchange. It is also revealed in what Jesus says about the application of God's judgment (in the next verse).

## **II. GLORY REVEALED IN THE APPLICATION OF JUDGMENT (31 - *Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out*).**

### A. Judgment of the world

1. Judgments draw lines – declared guilty or declared innocent. ***“The death of Jesus becomes the decisive dividing line between the condemned and the vindicated”*** (Piper, Dec. 3, 2011). It is true that we often think of judgment as something reserved for the end of the age. But there is a sense in which judgment is clearly at the cross – ***“Now is the judgment of this world...”*** The world here would soon believe that it was passing judgment on Jesus, when in fact the opposite is true.
2. The cross incarcerates as much as it sets free. It does both. At least in this verse the negative is the focus. God's glory is revealed in the positive judgment against sin by setting the sinner free. But here it is seen in the negative as judgment in condemnation of the sinner. Each side of judgment speaks of the attributes of God whether that is His holiness and justice and wrath or His mercy and grace and love. ***Now is the judgment of this world...***

### B. Judgment of the world's ruler

1. From the time of his rebellion, Satan has been working to undermine, corrupt, render impossible, cut off, even prematurely “fulfill” the purposes of God to redeem people through the death of God's Son. But now that Jesus' hour had come, His dying on the cross –His being lifted up, will result in the deathblow to the current ruler of this world. In the words of Paul in Colossians 2 as he speaks of Jesus' death on the cross, he says of Satan and his demonic forces, ***He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.***

2. Though Satan continues to bring havoc to people's lives, including the lives of those who believe in Jesus, he cannot change his destiny that was absolutely sealed at the cross. He has been stripped of the weapon he has used throughout the centuries – the accusation of our un-forgiven sin! (There is a great picture of this in the OT book of Zechariah chapter 3)! Revelation 12:10-11 provides a wonderful commentary to these words – ***“Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb...”***

### III. GLORY REVEALED IN THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE CROSS (32-34)

#### A. Lifting up

1. We sometimes speak of “lifting up Jesus” meaning that we are exalting Him. That's not inappropriate, but here John defines the phrase for us – ***He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die*** (v. 33). The means of His death – crucifixion on a cross, though utterly humiliating, would lead to His exaltation. Because He was lifted up to die, He would be lifted up in glory.
2. Reference was made to this in chapter 3 when Jesus met Nicodemus. Jesus said, ***13 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.*** There you have the glory in the granting of eternal life through the humiliation of death on a cross! He would be lifted up, but in doing so, He would be...

#### B. Drawing people

1. In John 6:44 it was stated that the **Father** draws – ***No one can come to me (Jesus) unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.*** Here it is the **Lord Jesus** who is said to draw people to Himself. There is little reason to make much of this in relation to the work of the Triune God. In chapter 6 the emphasis was on the individual. Here it is “all people.”
2. While “all people” could refer to every single individual, such an interpretation creates a problem because clearly some are not drawn to Him. The passage has already spoken of judgment coming on the world. Further, the Greeks in this context, who were seeking Jesus, suggest that those who would be drawn goes

beyond the Jew to the Gentiles, thus not just Jews , but all people. Quoting Carson (p. 444), ***“The critical event in Jesus’ ministry that sanctions his drawing of all people without distinction, and not Jews only, is his cross/exaltation, his being ‘lifted up.’ This is the implicit answer to the Greeks: the hour has come for him to die and be exalted, and in the wake of that passion/glorification they will be able to approach him as freely as do the children of the old covenant.”***

**CONCLUSION** (It is interesting to note what the crowd understood and what they failed to grasp. The same may well be true today. Let’s check it out.

1. “What we think we know about the Christ...” (***“We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever***). No passage is specifically cited, but there are several OT passages that certainly suggest the eternal nature of Messiah – the Christ, and any of those may have been on their minds. (Some suggested include Isaiah 9:7 - ***Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.*** Ezekiel 37:25 – ***They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever.*** Psalm 72:17 - ***May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in him, all nations call him blessed!*** Psalm 89:35-37 - ***Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David. His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me. Like the moon it shall be established forever...***” So the conclusion of the crowd – ***“We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever.”*** But that was not a good fit in regard to...
2. “What we think we know about you...” Jesus had called Himself the “Son of Man” in verse 23. He had just told the crowd that He would be lifted up – which they correctly understood Him to be speaking of His death. Jesus didn’t actually say that the Son of Man **must** be lifted up – though that was certainly true. They are confused. ***How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?***” Here’s how it goes. If the Christ is to remain forever and you are going to be lifted up, then who is this “Son of Man?”
3. Perhaps you are asking some of those same questions. What they failed to understand was that Jesus was God, that He had to die, but that He would also rise from the

dead. So He could die and still remain forever. He could be perfect and die. He could take our sin and offer us His righteousness. He could be lifted up and at the same time draw us to Himself. He could die and yet grant eternal life! What a Savior!

4. We will look at this more next week, but hear this: <sup>35</sup> **So Jesus said to 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. <sup>36</sup> While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”**
5. In the words of one of the sources I used this week, **“Here is where all of this becomes very personal... God’s glory is revealed for us to cherish as our highest treasure. It’s revealed supremely in the death of Jesus, because there the world is judged, Satan is cast out, and the homecoming of all believers is invincibly secured. The question is, will you trust Jesus for all of this? Will you welcome it and treasure it as his blood-bought gift for you? Will your heart say,**
  - **‘I believe that my judgment is over and I have passed from death to life.**
  - **I believe that Satan has no claim on me, but is cast out of the courtroom of my vindication.**
  - **I believe that Christ purchased me and secured me invincibly by his blood, and I am not my own. I belong to him, my Savior and my God.’**

**If you believe... you don’t just see the light of Christ; you become children of the light...you share his bright and holy nature... You don’t just see the glory of God, you shine forth the glory of God. That is Jesus’ word and promise to you...”** (Piper, December 3, 2011).