

## **Find Life in the Son: Why Must Jesus Die? John 12:27-36**

### **Introduction**

Jesus' ministry is coming to its climax. As we saw last time, the hour had finally come for Him to be glorified in His saving mission, resurrection power, and fruitful death—all prophesied for centuries by the OT prophets, by John the Baptist, and by Jesus Himself.

*If all Jesus came to do was to give us a great example to follow as a compassionate and powerful teacher, then His dying on the cross has no purpose and makes no sense. If all the Messiah was to do was to rule over an earthly kingdom, the cross is scandalous. Was Jesus' death on the cross necessary at all?*

Some versions of so-called Christianity seem to make the cross nothing more than an unnecessary tragedy. So we ask like the crowd in our passage this morning, Why must Jesus the Son of Man die? Let's find out.

<sup>27</sup> "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.

<sup>28</sup> Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." <sup>29</sup> The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered.

Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."  
**30** 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?" **35** 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. **36** While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.

### Jesus Must Die

1. To Glorify the Father's Name (27-28)
2. To Dethrone the Ruler of this World (29-33)
3. To Transform Believers in Him (34-36)

### **1. To Glorify the Father's Name (27-28)**

**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."

What Jesus knew He was about to undergo was horrific physically, emotionally, and spiritually. He is fully God, sinless and powerful, but He is fully man, suffering all human beings suffer, yet without sin.

"Troubled"—to be shaken, agitated, disturbed  
 Used in a literal sense for the angel's troubling the water at the pool of Bethesda  
 Used of Herod's reaction (along with all Jerusalem) to the wise men's news of the newborn Christ child

Used of the disciple's fearful response to what they thought was a phantom walking on the water toward them during the stormy night

Despite the trauma Jesus knew He would have to endure, He was determined to go through with it. Why? Why not withdraw as He had done before? He was not a helpless victim of evil and powerful men.

Matthew 26:52-54

<sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. <sup>53</sup> Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup> But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"

He expresses this divine necessity this way in our text this morning:

John 12:27b-28a

"And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup> Father, glorify your name."

To glorify the Father's name is to reflect the shining splendor of the Father's revealed character. Who is God and what is He like?

He is full of steadfast love. He is utterly reliable and truthful. Just and holy, yet great in mercy, willing to forgive. When He makes a promise, He keeps it. Long ago, from the Garden of Eden onward, God promised a coming deliverer. He predicted through His prophets that the Messiah would be wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. The entire sacrificial system God instituted through Moses pointed to the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world through sacrifice, an innocent life to make blood atonement for many guilty lives.

Romans 5:8

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God's loving commitment goes beyond the bounds. It reaches to rescue the worst of

sinner and restore them to fellowship with Himself. That is His character. That is His name.

What is God like? Look at Jesus in His life and look at Jesus in His death. And then look at Jesus in His resurrection. He is God manifest/revealed in the flesh. He taught exactly what the Father wanted Him to teach. He did exactly what the Father wanted Him to do. They were one in mind and action.

Hence, the Father's voice from heaven to strengthen the faith of the disciples. Just as the Father had voiced His approval at Jesus' baptism and at the mount of transfiguration, He voices His approval once again.

John 12:28b

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

"I have glorified it"—

John 1:14 We closely observed His glory, the glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus at wedding feast of Cana

Jesus cleansing the temple by driving out the money-changers and merchants

Jesus in His night time conversation with Nicodemus

Jesus at the well with the Samaritan woman

Jesus

Jesus healing the nobleman's son

Jesus and the man at the pool of Bethesda, paralyzed 38 years: Take up your bed and walk. He healed him on the Sabbath because that is the character of God—rescue of this man was far more important than manmade extrapolations of how to keep the fourth commandment properly. "My Father is working until now, and I am working."

Jesus feeding the 5,000 men plus women and children with one boy's lunch

Jesus walking on water to rescue His disciples from the storm and teach them His authority over wild nature itself.

Jesus teaching I am the bread of life, I am the light of the world, before Abraham was, I am.

Jesus with the woman caught in adultery and brought before Him, shaming her and seeking to trap Him. He wrote on the ground. He who is without sin, cast the first stone. They withdrew, one by one, starting with the oldest. God sees exactly who you are. You can't fake it with Him. But humble repentance brings forgiveness.

Jesus and the man born blind.

Jesus the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep, and whose sheep hear His voice.

Jesus weeping at Lazarus' tomb then calling him forth from the dead.

Jesus had displayed the Father's revealed character in stunning and clear ways, and these are only a sample of all He did during His three and half years of ministry.

"And I will glorify it again"—

Jesus equipping His disciples in the upper room for the ordeal they would undergo

Jesus establishing the Lord's Supper

Jesus praying for His own (John 17)

Jesus speaking "I am" before the mob that came to arrest Him, knocking them to the ground.

Jesus enduring the illegal night-time trial, promising He would come in the clouds of heaven as the Son of man in great power and glory to judge the world.

Jesus confronting Pilate and Herod

Jesus hanging on the cross and giving John responsibility for His mother, Mary

Jesus dying, accompanied by earthquake, darkness, temple curtain torn in two, people resurrected from the tombs.

Jesus risen from the dead

Jesus ascending into heaven

Jesus interceding for His own to this day

Jesus one day returning for His own

John 17:1-5

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup> since you have

given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. <sup>3</sup> And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

A couple years earlier Jesus spoke of His role as Life-giver and Judge at the end of the age. John 5:20-23

<sup>20</sup> For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. <sup>21</sup> For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. <sup>22</sup> For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, <sup>23</sup> that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

Jesus' glory and the Father's glory are inseparable. Jesus glorified the Father throughout His earthly ministry. He continues to do so and will do so at the end of the age. And His death on the cross for our sins to make a way for us to be reconciled to God is an intrinsic part of that glory because it



fulfilled the Father's perfect will and displayed the Father's loving plan.

### **Applications**

- What does Jesus' suffering and death teach you about the Father's revealed character—His justice, His love, His reliability, His purposes, His heart toward you?
- How does that revealed character of God the Father give you hope and reason to trust Him?
- In what ways does your response to what Jesus has revealed about the Father bring God glory or not do so?

## **2. To Dethrone the Ruler of this World (29-33)**

<sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>31</sup> Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. <sup>32</sup> And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." <sup>33</sup> He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

The world refers to the organized rebellion of the human race against God. It is energized by Satan himself, the ruler of this world.

### Ephesians 2:1-3

<sup>1</sup> And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— <sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

### 1 John 5:19

We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

That's why in Satan's temptation of Jesus in the wilderness he offered him the kingdoms of the world (Luke 4:5-6).

### 2 Corinthians 4:4

In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

The night Jesus was arrested, He declared  
John 14:30

I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me.

Satan filled the heart of Judas to betray the Lord. Satan moved the chief priests, temple

officers, and elders to seize Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Luke 22:52-53

**52** Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?

**53** When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

But Satan's schemes backfired. He became a pawn in the Father's hand to bring about redemption through Jesus.

Acts 2:23

This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

Satan inspired the conspiracy to crucify Jesus, but Jesus willingly laid down His life to break Satan's power over human beings.

Through the blood of Christ the sins of those who believe are forgiven and cleansed. Satan's accusations avail nothing against them. They have been declared righteous by God. Where sin is purged, it no longer can enslave. Those who have been granted eternal life no longer fear death.

Hebrews 2:14-15

<sup>14</sup> Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

Through His death on the cross, Christ Jesus broke Satan's power over humanity. He had to die to get it done. And He rose again to ratify His victory.

*People all over the world have suffered under the tyranny of Satan ever since the Garden of Eden. At the cross Jesus broke that tyranny. People from all over the world would trust Him to save them, and that's exactly what He would do. He would draw people from every nation, kindred, and tongue to Himself and deliver them from the power of darkness.*

Colossians 1:13-14

<sup>13</sup> He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

## **Applications**

- Where do you see the tyrannical power of Satan over the world system of our day?
- What areas of your own life show Satan's power over you instead of God's?
- If you are trusting in Jesus, in what areas of your life do you see freedom from this world and the evil ruler of this world?

### **3. To Transform Believers in Him (34-36)**

<sup>34</sup> 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?"

The crowd knows some of what the Old Testament teaches about the coming Messiah, and they correctly connect the Son of Man title with the Messiah. But they cannot figure out how the Messiah can reign forever and yet be lifted up on a cross to die. It is the great paradox of the OT prophecies. How is it possible, they ask. Who is the Son of man you're talking about?

Jesus does not answer their question. It's not that there is no explanation. It's that it was yet to be revealed how it fit together. They did not need to know how to solve the theological riddle. They just needed to trust

Jesus on the basis of what He had already revealed in His words and His works.

Hebrews 2:10

For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

This is ever the problem. God has not explained everything to us about how all that He has promised will fit together. It will be clear someday when it is fulfilled. But He has revealed enough for you to believe. That was the case with the crowd that day. That is the case today. *You're being able to figure it all out is not yours to demand. Believe what has been revealed while you still can. The rest will be made clear in time.*

John 12:35-36

<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." When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.

When you believe the light, the light changes you. Your own character is transformed from

darkness to light. That is why Christ died and rose again. Not just to clear you from condemnation from your sin, but to give you life, to change you into the image bearer of God that He created us to be.

Ephesians 5:8-9

<sup>8</sup> For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true).

But if you do not lean into the light when you have it, instead of becoming light you will be overtaken by darkness. Believe in what has been revealed. *Don't resist what you do know for the sake of what you don't yet understand. That's rejecting the light. And that leaves you to the power of the darkness.*

So delay is deadly. You may think you have all the time in the world to make your choice, but you don't. Believe while you have the light to do so. If you don't, you are choosing the darkness. Jesus frequently gave this warning.

John 7:33-34

<sup>33</sup> Jesus then said, "I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. <sup>34</sup> You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come."

John 8:21

So he said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come."

### **Applications**

- In what ways has God given you light?
- In what areas are you resisting the light you have because of what you can't yet figure out?
- What are your excuses for delaying trusting in Jesus as He has been revealed to you?
- Why do you think this is a wise policy when Jesus so sternly warns against it?

### **Conclusion**

1. To Glorify the Father's Name (27-28)
2. To Dethrone the Ruler of this World (29-33)
3. To Transform Believers in Him (34-36)

### **Applications Summary**

- What does Jesus' suffering and death teach you about the Father's revealed character—His justice, His love, His reliability, His purposes, His heart toward you?
- How does that revealed character of God the Father give you hope and reason to trust Him?



- In what ways does your response to what Jesus has revealed about the Father bring God glory or not do so?
- Where do you see the tyrannical power of Satan over the world system of our day?
- What areas of your own life show Satan's power over you instead of God's?
- If you are trusting in Jesus, in what areas of your life do you see freedom from this world and the evil ruler of this world?
- In what ways has God given you light?
- In what areas are you resisting the light you have because of what you can't yet figure out?
- What are your excuses for delaying trusting in Jesus as He has been revealed to you?
- Why do you think this is a wise policy when Jesus so sternly warns against it?