

Lighthouse Bible Church

January 26th, 2014

John 12: 23 – 26 *Scripture Reading: Mark 8: 34 - 38*

‘Do you love or hate your life’

Stand – Read – Pray

Last week we saw Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem and being publically proclaimed as the Messiah, the Son of David, the King of Israel. We saw that Jesus earlier decided to no longer walk openly among the Jews because there was a plot to kill Him and that if anyone saw Him they were to report it so they could take Him by trickery.

After staying out of the public eye in the city of Ephraim Jesus comes back to the city of Bethany, where He had raised Lazarus from the dead. And because Lazarus was living proof that Jesus is the resurrection and the life and that He has the power of life and death as the Messiah, the chief priests now plotted to kill Lazarus as well as Jesus.

Rather than staying hidden, Jesus now openly leaves Bethany on His way to Jerusalem in what is known His triumphal entry on palm Sunday. Jesus tells two of His disciples to secure a donkey for Him to ride into Jerusalem on, which fulfilled scripture. *Zechariah prophecy and Daniel’s prophecy*

When Jesus begins to ride the donkey toward Jerusalem, large crowds of Jews, Gentiles, Pharisees and chief Priests begin to surround Him while He is moving toward Jerusalem. Then many in the crowd laid their clothing in the street and many cut down palm branches and laid them in the street before Him.

Many of those people began to shout Hosanna and were ascribing to Jesus the Old Testament titles for the Messiah and were publically proclaiming that is who He is. The Pharisees in the crowd told Jesus to tell them to stop saying those things and Jesus says 'if they stop then the rocks would cry out' in essence saying it is true what they are saying.

And because the chief priest and Pharisees were afraid of the crowds of people, they were not able to take Him at that time and they became more and more angry as the people continued hailing Him as the Messiah.

Different people in the crowds of people following Jesus bore witness as to who Christ is and what He has done and the Pharisees began saying to themselves 'we are accomplishing nothing, the whole world has gone after Him.

There were within that group of people following Jesus some Greek converts to Judaism who wanted to talk with Jesus so they asked Philip who in turn asked Andrew. Then they both went to Jesus and presumably brought these Greeks along with them and Jesus begins to teach them a most valuable lesson. Lets look at it starting in Verse 23.

Verse 23: but Jesus answered them saying the hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

Jesus here isn't addressing any particular group of people although Jew and Gentile, saved and unsaved were in the crowd that followed Him. He is addressing everyone with a most important truth about those who want to follow and serve Him. Like I said before in the Greeks may have been here as well.

Jesus finally tells them that **the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.**

He has told them over and over again, as we have seen, that His hour had not yet come. In **John 7: 30** it says **therefore they sought to take Him but no one laid a hand on Him because His hour had not yet come.** In **John 8: 58 – 59** when He told them before Abraham was I AM, they tried to stone Him but He walked right through the midst of them. But now His hour has come.

He says the hour has come for **the Son of Man to be glorified.** How will He be **glorified?** By allowing Himself to be taken to fulfill the chief priest plan to kill Him. Look at **John 13: 31:** *Read with background from previous verses.* Then look at **John 17: 1** *Read.* His being glorified is always in the context of His pending death, burial and resurrection.

And notice that the title He gives Himself and uses more than any other, is a Messianic title. You see it in **Daniel 7: 13 – 14** as a reference to the Son of Man who is referred to as the Messiah in **Daniel 9: 25 – 26.**

In Daniel 7 it says that **He**, the Son of Man, the Messiah, **will be given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all peoples nations and languages should serve Him...** and all the people are thinking that it is going to happen right now. With all the crowds of people gathering together, ready to overthrow the Roman government, ready to set up His kingdom and be glorified.

But Jesus has other plans, He is going to conquer in a totally different way and it will be through His death; look at:

Verse 24: **Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies it produces much grain or much fruit.**

Jesus uses an **agricultural illustration** familiar to the people to make His point.

He says just like you put a grain of wheat into the ground and its outer shell dies and decomposes and then from that seed comes the life of the plant and produces much grain, so too, when the Son of Man dies and rises from the dead He will bear much fruit in the salvation of many souls. If Jesus doesn't die, there is no salvation, there is no harvest. He must die.

“If Jesus came into the world and was nothing but a good teacher, if Jesus came into the world and was nothing more than a moral example, if He did nothing but just talk to us about God and tell us how to live, and show us the best that a man could be, and went right back to heaven, He'd stay there forever alone because none of us could get there. *MacArthur GTY John*

Jesus, in essence says, that by My death and my resurrection from the grave, I will have everlasting life and by My death and resurrection, you will have everlasting life. That was the **joy set before Him** that **Hebrews 12: 2** says allowed Him to **endure the cross and despise the shame.**

That is why **Philippians 2: 8** says that **He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross** because He knew that God would **exalt Him and give Him a name which is above all names that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow ...** then look what Jesus says in v25

Verse 25: He who loves his life will lose it and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

You know what Jesus is saying? He is saying that ‘if you want the eternal life that My death and resurrection brings, then you must give up your own life, you must die to self’. Jesus says ‘I’m going to die to give you life, you must die to receive that life. He says you can **love your life**, now, and **lose eternal life** or you can **hate your life in this world** and **have eternal life.**

What He is saying is; that you can love all that this life has to offer you and feel secure in it; in its money, prestige, fame, popularity, looks, religion, self-worth and if you do, you will be forfeiting eternal life. Or you can love Christ more than you love yourself and your personal wants and desire and have eternal life. This is a principle stated over and over again in scripture.

Matthew 10: 37 – 39 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 16: 24 – 26 if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me for whoever desires to save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. for what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world and (what) loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Matthew 19: 29: everyone who has left houses or brother or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for My names sake shall receive a hundredfold and inherit eternal life.

Mark 8: 35 – 37: whoever desires to save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. for what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul..

Luke 9: 23 – 26: if anyone desires to come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross, daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it....for whoever is ashamed of Me and My words of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory...

In other words, Jesus says you must turn from yourself and your sin and your selfish desires and pleasures and humble yourself and fall at My feet and acknowledge Me as the Lord of your life; and not you. You must deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Him.

Listen, that message, as we have seen, flies in the face of what the religions of the world are teaching today, right. They say that you are a good person, you deserve what you want and you can have it all, and Jesus is love so just ask Him into your heart. That **is not** the message that Jesus is telling the people in Chapter 12.

And can I add one more thing? Those of you who have abandoned all for Jesus and have given your life to Him and are following Him and He is Lord of your life; that is the place He always wants to have in your life and you must always be willing to give your life for Him and for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul said in **Acts 20: 24** **none of these things move me nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.**

Revelation 12: 11 says **and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony and they did not love their lives to the death.** What Jesus says marks a person for entrance into eternal life, should mark that person for all of their Christian life. In a world and in many religions today that focus on you and your felt needs, this flies in the face of that, but that is what God has called us to.

It is a call to the gospel life not the good life, it is a call to eternal life not to a happy life, but it is the most fulfilling life. It is about living in the presence of God today and the hope that we have on living in His presence forever in heaven someday. That's the promise that Jesus gives us in Verse 26.

Verse 26: If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me and where I am there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

Jesus says **if anyone serves Me, let him follow Me**. Those are both in the present active tense which means those who keep on serving Me, those who keep on following Me. As a born again believer, we are called to continually **serve Christ** and to continually **follow Him**. Not to **serve** our own desires and pleasures and wants, but to serve Him. And not to **follow** the ways of the world in the lust of the flesh, eyes and pride of life, but to follow Christ above all else.

It is what Jesus has said all along that we saw earlier in **Matthew 10: 38 – 39 he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.** It is **abiding in Christ and walking as He walked** as **1st John 2: 6** says.

And when you do that, Jesus says there will be two things that will result. He says if you serve Me and follow Me then **where I am, there My servant will be also**. Notice that twice in this verse it says **if anyone serves Me, if anyone serves Me**. How do we serve Christ? Well, **Colossians 3: 23 – 24 says and whatever you do, do it heartedly as to the Lord and not to men knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.** You serve Christ when you serve others out of love for them and for Christ.

Jesus later will show us the greatest example of that in Chapter 13 when He washes the disciples feet and says to them in **John 13: 14 – 17 Read**

He says when you do that **where I am, there My servant will be also**. That is the promise of heaven because that is where Jesus came from and that is where He is going back to. Jesus is going to say in **John 14: 2 – 3 ... I go to prepare a place for you ... and I will come again and receive you to Myself.**

John 17: 24 Jesus prays **Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me...and of course 1st Thessalonians 4: 17 says ...then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and thus we shall always be with the Lord...**

Jesus says ‘if you serve Me and follow Me, not only will you be with Me but you will be **honored by My Father in heaven.**

Think about that for just a minute. The promise to every one of us who has been born again is the promise of heaven and being **honored by the Father** in heaven. It is God the Father honoring the sinner who has been saved and cleansed in the blood of His Son.

That word **honor** means to fix a valuation on, to prize something, to revere or to highly value something; and this case it is us. Why does the Father place that kind of value and honor on us, because that is the value and honor He places on His own Son and as a born again believer we are then identified with Christ and His righteousness in our lives.

When we become a born again believer in Christ, then we are joint heirs with Christ, heirs of God, in all that the Father gives to Him. **Romans 8: 17** says. **Revelation 3: 21** says **to him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.**

Listen, what Jesus said to those Greeks, those Gentile converts to Judaism, what He said to everyone in that crowd, He says to us today as well.

You must believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God

You must believe that He is the only way of salvation

You must believe that He had to die and rise again to conquer sin & death

You must believe that in order to conquer sin and death and get to heaven, you must put your faith and trust in Jesus and His substitutionary atoning death on the cross for your sins.

You must believe that He was punished for your sins. That He died for the wages of your sin and that He was buried and rose the 3rd day to become the way to heaven, the truth about the Father and heaven and the life eternal in heaven.

Lighthouse Bible Church
January 26th, 2014
John 12: 23 – 26
‘Do you love or hate your life’

Introduction and Review:

Verse 23:

John 7: 30, 8: 58 – 59, 13: 31, 17: 1
Daniel 7: 13 – 14, Daniel 9: 25 – 26

Verse 24:

Hebrews 12: 2, Philippians 2: 8

Verse 25:

Matthew 10: 37 – 39, 16: 24 – 26, 19: 29
Mark 8: 35 – 37, Luke 9: 23 – 26
Acts 20: 24, Revelation 12: 11

Verse 26:

Matthew 10: 38 – 39, 1st John 2: 6
Colossians 3: 23 – 24, John 13: 14 – 17
John 14: 2 – 3, John 17: 24
1st Thessalonians 4: 17, Romans 8: 17
Revelation 3: 21

Lighthouse Bible Church
January 26th, 2014
John 12: 23 – 26
‘Do you love or hate your life’

Introduction and Review:

Verse 23:

John 7: 30, 8: 58 – 59, 13: 31, 17: 1
Daniel 7: 13 – 14, Daniel 9: 25 – 26

Verse 24:

Hebrews 12: 2, Philippians 2: 8

Verse 25:

Matthew 10: 37 – 39, 16: 24 – 26, 19: 29
Mark 8: 35 – 37, Luke 9: 23 – 26
Acts 20: 24, Revelation 12: 11

Verse 26:

Matthew 10: 38 – 39, 1st John 2: 6
Colossians 3: 23 – 24, John 13: 14 – 17
John 14: 2 – 3, John 17: 24
1st Thessalonians 4: 17, Romans 8: 17
Revelation 3: 21