

The Compassion of Christ for Sinners

John 12:32-36

John 12:32–36 (NKJV)

³² **And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.** ³³ This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

³⁴ The people answered Him, “We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how *can* You say, ‘**The Son of Man must be lifted up**’? Who is this Son of Man?”

³⁵ Then Jesus said to them, “**A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in 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.**” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

Introduction:

Matthew 15:29–32 (NKJV)

²⁹ Jesus departed from there, skirted the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the mountain and sat down there. ³⁰ Then great multitudes came to Him, having with them *the* lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them. ³¹ So the multitude marveled when they saw *the* mute speaking, *the* maimed made whole, *the* lame walking, and *the* blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

³² Now Jesus called His disciples to *Himself* and said, "I have compassion on the multitude,...."

The compassion of Jesus Christ. Basically, the word coming from the Latin means to suffer with; but, really, in the English, it's even enriched beyond that, for the English dictionary describes compassion as this:

A feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow... accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the pain and remove its cause.

For the Latins, it meant to suffer with; but in English, it has come to mean not only to suffer with someone or to feel their pain and their hurt, but to have a strong desire to see its cause permanently eliminated; and I think that's a marvelous definition of

what was in the heart of our Lord, who looking upon anyone in need, identified with that need, felt sympathy and sorrow for that need, and had a strong desire to see its cause removed.

The Greek term itself is a most interesting term. It...it's basically a verb form added to a word that means bowels or visceral area or guts, stomach; and it means that Jesus actually felt physical pain in His stomach over the needs of people with which He identified and for whom He desired deliverance.

Now, if you learn anything at all about God, you learn in the Scriptures that He is a God of great compassion. He suffers with people. He feels their pain; and, more than that, He seeks to alleviate its cause. That's exactly why He moves in the world. That's exactly why He redeems man. That's exactly why He heals and comforts and extends grace and mercy and loving kindness, in order to reach men in their need and deliver them from it.

In Lamentations, there is a most marvelous statement about the compassion of God.

It says this, "It is because of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not." Lam 3:22-23

In other words, if we got what we deserved, we would be consumed; but it is His compassion toward us that restricts that and extends mercy; and it says,

"They are new every morning. Great is Thy faithfulness."

God is faithful to be always all that He is. He is faithful to be just, faithful to be wise, faithful to be loving, faithful to be omnipotent, and faithful to be compassionate.

God is a God of great compassion. Over and over again in God's dealings with Israel in the Old Testament, you can read it in...particularly I was thinking of 2 Kings 13 and then in 2 Chronicles 36, but many places where God says to His people, "I have compassion on you. I'm withholding My judgment. I'm withholding the trouble that could come upon you because of my compassion."

In other words, "When I strike you, I, in a real sense, strike Myself." God even has gone so far as to say that His people are the...the pupil of His eye; and when His people are touched, it's as if He was poked in His own eye.

God is a God of great compassion. In Romans 9:15, it says that God said, "I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion; and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Now, if God is a God of compassion, a God who cares, a God who cares about every small hurt and every small need in every life, if that's the kind of God God is, then we would expect Jesus Christ to be

compassionate, would we not? For He is God incarnate, in human flesh; and so when we come to chapter 15 of Matthew verse 32, we are not surprised to hear Jesus say, "I have compassion." We've heard Him say it before. Chapter 14 verse 14, "Jesus went forth, saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion." Chapter 9 verse 36, Jesus looked on the multitude, and it says, "He was moved with compassion, because they were scattered as a sheep without a shepherd."

Here we have a great display of The Compassion of Christ for sinners.

He know that not long from know most of those praising Him as messiah are going to be calling for His blood.

The Greatness of His Compassion is magnified against the sinful rebellion of the crowd.

³² *And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."*

³⁵ Then Jesus said to them, *"A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in 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.”

Review.

John 12:23–32 (NKJV)

²³ But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

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.

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

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.

²⁷ “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

²⁸ Father, glorify Your name.”

Then a voice came from heaven, *saying*, “I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again.”

²⁹ Therefore the people who stood by and heard *it* said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

³⁰ Jesus answered and said, “**This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.** ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³² And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.”

Lesson:

I. The Compassion of Christ

II. The Confusion of the Crowd

III. The Command to Commit

I. The Compassion of Christ.

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.”

33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

This follows 2 other statements regarding the accomplishments of the Cross

1. The World is Judged
2. The Devil is Cast Out.

31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.

What this is not

1. Not the lifting up by the preacher in preaching
2. Not the lifting up of Christ by the believer in evangelism
3. Not the lifting up of Christ in Praise and Worship.

This same wording is used other places in John.

John 3:14 (NKJV)

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

John 8:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Then Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and *that* I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.

Then the next verse seals the meaning

33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

He knew how He would die—by being “lifted up” on a cross. Jews, however, normally stoned those they considered worthy of death (cf. Stephen’s death, Acts 7:58–60).

Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 318). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.”

This is not:

1. **A reference to Universal Salvation.**

All will not be saved. We know this for 2
Reasons:

1. Jesus in the only way. Other religions are wrong.
2. Many end up in Hell

1. Jesus in the only way. Other religions are wrong.

John 14:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 10:9 (NKJV)

⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

Acts 4:12 (NKJV)

¹² Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

1 John 2:23 (NKJV)

²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

2 John 9 (NKJV)

⁹ Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

2. Many end up in Hell

This is clear from passages that state many will be lost.

Luke 2:34 (NKJV)

³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this *Child* is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against

John 3:36 (NKJV)

³⁶ He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

John 5:28–29 (NKJV)

²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice
²⁹ and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Daniel 12:2 (NKJV)

² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.

Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Revelation 20:11–15 (NKJV)

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.
¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book* of Life. And the

dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

2. This is not a reference to the attraction of the Cross.

Bruner, F. D.

But this “*hoisting*” is really the single most *magnetic* power on the planet, attracting the “filings” of human hearts all over the world like no other magnetic force in the universe. The Cross is world history’s most magnetic power, and even gravity cannot rival it.

Bruner, F. D. (2012). [The Gospel of John: A Commentary](#) (p. 719). Grand Rapids, MI;Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans.

The Cross is not attractive. They are not drawn to it rather they are repelled by it.

The World hates the cross. There is nothing magnetic about a man hanging on a cross.

1 Corinthians 1:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing,...

1 Corinthians 1:23 (NKJV)

²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

John 3:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ **And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.** ²⁰ **For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.**

O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
 Has a wondrous attraction for me;
 For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above
 To bear it to dark Calvary. [2]

3. This is not a reference to Prevenient Grace

Arminian theologians teach Prevenient Grace.
(grace before)

Clarification:

Calvinist believe in a prevenient Grace.
A grace that goes before salvation. It is different from the Arminian in that the Calvinist believes in a efficacious grace. It will completely accomplish its salvific work. There is grace in eternity past, in Election, There is grace in time in Revelation and Regeneration.

R.C Sproul defines Prevenient Grace as

“prevenient grace is grace that "comes before" something. It is normally defined as a work that God does for everybody. He gives all people enough grace to respond to Jesus. That is, it is enough grace to make it possible for people to choose Christ. Those who cooperate with assent to this grace are "elect." Those who refuse to cooperate with this grace are lost.”

R. C. Sproul, *Chosen by God*. Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, Ill., p. 123-125

A good link for other study

<https://www.gotquestions.org/prevenient-grace.html>

The first of the two prominent positions on the doctrine of prevenient grace in classical Arminianism is that until the Gospel, the instrument by which God draws sinners to Himself, is presented to a sinner, the sinner is in complete bondage to sin. The Holy Spirit works with the presentation of the Gospel through teaching ([John 6:45](#)) and convicting ([John 16:8](#)) the sinner, enabling the sinner to respond in the exercising of saving faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit opens the heart ([Acts 16:14](#)) and mind ([Luke 24:45](#)) of the sinner, thus drawing the sinner to Christ ([John 6:44](#), [12:32](#)), and the sinner is then enabled to exercise his newly freed will in placing his faith in Christ for salvation. This falls in line with the biblical teaching that the natural man is unable to understand spiritual things ([1 Corinthians 2:14](#); [Romans 8:7-8](#)), which would include the message of the Gospel. However, Arminians teach that, although the sinner is now enabled to place his faith in Christ, this enablement by no means guarantees that the sinner will actually do so.

This contradicts the proclamation by Jesus that all those the Father gives to Him will come to Him ([John 6:37](#)).

The second position is a bit more complicated than the first. In this position there is, essentially, a lesser and greater drawing via prevenient grace,

which comes through the proclamation of the Gospel and the internal calling of God, sometimes referred to as the “full intensity” of prevenient grace.

The last position on the doctrine of prevenient grace is that of the Wesleyans (also known as Wesleyan-Arminians). In this position, because of the first coming and atoning work of Christ, God has dispensed a universal prevenient grace that fully negates the depravity of man. Thus, man is now in a neutral state. Those who adhere to this position assert that because of Christ’s promises that speak of “all men” being drawn ([John 12:32](#)) and the “world” being convicted ([John 16:8](#)) after His sacrifice, it means that the prevenient grace we experience today was something purchased by Christ’s work on the cross. Since Wesleyans believe in unlimited atonement as opposed to limited atonement, Wesleyans then further state that when Paul speaks of God giving those whom Christ died for “all things” ([Romans 8:32](#)), this universal prevenient grace is one of those “all things.”

Prevenient grace defined as follows by "Wesley's Order of Salvation":

"Human beings are totally incapable of responding to God without God first empowering them to have faith.

This empowerment is known as "Prevenient Grace." Prevenient Grace doesn't save us but, rather, comes before anything that we do, drawing us to God, making us WANT to come to God, and enabling us to have faith in God. Prevenient Grace is Universal, in as much as all humans receive it, regardless of their having heard of Jesus. It is manifested in the deep-seated desire of most humans to know God."

A Short Response to the Arminian Doctrine of Prevenient Grace
BY JOHN HENDRYX

The problems with these view are numerous but a few examples will help clarify

First, What ever God Starts in the saving process he finishes. It is not open ended for us to determine the outcome.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)

⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the

called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

John 6:37 (NKJV)

³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

John 6:44 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Second. The Arminian or Wesleyian Prevenient Grace is not taught any where in the New Testament.

So, ³² And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.

Does not mean

1. Universal salvation
2. Attraction to the Cross
3. Prevenient Grace.

What does in mean?

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.

We need to understand 2 things

1. What is meant by the term “draw”
2. Who are the “all” in the passage.

1. What is meant by the term “draw”

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.

draw

helkó: to drag

Original Word: ἔλκῦω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: helkó

Phonetic Spelling: (hel-koo'-o)

Definition: to drag

Usage: I drag, draw, pull, persuade, unsheathe.

to attract powerfully ⇔ **haul** v. — to attract powerfully, conceived of as drawing a heavy object out of something with great effort.

① **to move an object from one area to another in a pulling motion, *draw***, with implication that the object being moved is incapable of propelling itself or in the case of pers. is unwilling to do so voluntarily, in either case with implication of exertion on the part of the mover τὴ *some*th. a sword

Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). [*A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*](#) (3rd ed., p. 318). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jeremiah 31:3 (NKJV)

³ The Lord has appeared of old to me, *saying*:
 “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love;
 Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.”

Jeremiah 38:13 (NKJV)

¹³ So they pulled Jeremiah up with ropes and lifted him out of the dungeon. And Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

3 Maccabees 4:7

⁷ In bonds and in public view they were violently dragged along as far as the place of embarkation

The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version. (1989). (3 Mac 4:7). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

John 18:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.

John 21:6 (NKJV)

⁶ And He said to them, “**Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find *some*.**” So they

cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.

John 21:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken.

Acts 16:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged *them* into the marketplace to the authorities.

James 2:6 (NKJV)

⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?

In modern Semitic culture we should note the concept of the *mağdûb* (as distinct from *mağnûn*). “The *mağdûb* (from *ğadaba*, “to draw”) is one who is drawn to God by an irresistible and supernatural force, whereas the *mağnûn* is a person indwelt by demons. The former is holy, elected by God and filled with His grace; the latter is the dwelling-place of a devil or one of his fellows. Notwithstanding, the

words are popularly used as synonyms. When a man is suddenly, supernaturally and irresistibly called to God, he often loses the balance of thought (OT par.: 1 S. 10:5; 19:19 ff.; 2 K. 9:11; Jer. 29:26; Hos. 9:7; cf. also Mk. 3:21).“ → ἑκστασις, 450.

Oepke, A. (1964–). [ἐκστο](#). G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 2, p. 503). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

John 6:44 (NKJV)

44 **No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

2. Who are the “all” in the passage.

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.

Since the word draw has a very clear salvific restriction to it. In other words, the ones that are drawn are saved.

That necessarily restricts the word all to a limited group of people.

But who is he talking about.

Context is Jews and Greeks

John 12:20–22 (NKJV)

²⁰ Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. ²¹ Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

²² Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

The all refers to all kinds Jews and Greeks

Jews believe the Messiah was for them alone and not the Gentile World. Gentiles are defiled, not the chosen of God.

John 4:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

Acts 10:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Then he said to them, “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

Acts 11:2–3 (NKJV)

² And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision contended with him, ³ saying, “You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!”

Acts 21:27–28 (NKJV)

²⁷ Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, ²⁸ crying out, “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all *men* everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.”

Acts 22:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Then he said, ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. ¹⁵ For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.

Acts 22:21–22 (NKJV)

²¹ Then He said to me, ‘**Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.’ ”**

²² And they listened to him until this word, and *then* they raised their voices and said, “Away with such a *fellow* from the earth, for he is not fit to live!”

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.

The Term all in this passage and the term World in John when referring to Salvation refers to Jews and the Greeks, the Gentiles

But before we get lost in the details, I want you to notice the Compassion of Christ.

That he would draw any is an amazing reality.
That sinners could be saved is astonishing
That those who are rebels against God’s Law could be justified is miraculous
That we are not all in hell is unbelievable.

Romans 5:6–11 (NKJV)

⁶ For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Ephesians 2:11–18 (NKJV)

¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once

were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace, ¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. ¹⁷ And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.