

# John 12 Commentary

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Click chart to enlarge  
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
Another Chart from Charles Swindoll

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**John 12:1 Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.**

BGT John 12:1 ο ν ησο ς πρ ξ μερ ν το π σχα λθεν ε ς Βηθαν αν, που ν Λ ζαρος, ν γειρεν κ νεκρ ν ησο ς.

KJV John 12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

NET John 12:1 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom he had raised from the dead.

CSB John 12:1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus was, the one Jesus had raised from the dead.

ESV John 12:1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

NIV John 12:1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

NLT John 12:1 Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus-- the man he had raised from the dead.

NRS John 12:1 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

NJB John 12:1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom he had raised from the dead.

NAB John 12:1 Six days before Passover Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

YLT John 12:1 Jesus, therefore, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where was Lazarus, who had died, whom he raised out of the dead;

MIT John 12:1 Six days before the Passover Jesus went to Bethany, the hometown of Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead.

- **six:** Jn 11:55
- **Bethany:** Jn 11:1,44 Mt 21:17 Mk 11:11 Lu 24:50
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 21:17 And He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

Mark 11:11 Jesus entered Jerusalem and came into the temple; and after looking around at everything, He left for Bethany with the twelve, since it was already late.

Luke 24:50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.

#### John 12 Summarized:

- Anointing of Jesus by Mary (Jn 12:1-11)
- Triumphal Entry (Jn 12:12-19)
- Coming of the Greeks (Jn 12:20-26)
- Jesus' conscious of approaching Passion (Jn 12:27-36)
- Unbelief of the people and their rulers (Jn 12:37-43)
- Jesus' final public plea for faith (Jn 12:44-50).

The Final Week  
(Source: [Swindoll's Insights on John](#))

## JESUS COMES TO BETHANY

**Therefore** ([oun](#)) - **Therefore** (Gk. *oun*) ties this verse to the previous one and is a reminder that John is constantly aware of God's providential ordering of all these events and of Jesus' obedience in following the path that he knew would lead to the cross. (BORROW [ESV Study Bible](#))

**Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover** ([pascha](#)) - John had just mentioned **Passover** in Jn 11:55. John 12:20 records the last week of our Lord's life on earth. It's almost as if the Lord says to us, "Take the shoes off your feet, you are standing on Holy ground." **Six days** is most likely the Saturday preceding his "Passion Week" when He would be the fulfillment of what the Passover had been pointing to since the first Passover in Exodus 12:13, 23, 27+. Now He would be the actual sacrifice, "the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29+, cf Paul's description after the crucifixion - 1Cor 5:7+).

**J C Ryle** on 6 days versus 2 days in Matt. 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9 - There is no conflict. The time-indications in Matt. 26:2 and Mark 14:1 do not say that the supper at Bethany was given two days before the Passover, but that two days before the Passover the following happened: a. Jesus predicted that he would be delivered up to be crucified after two days, and b. the rulers resolved that he should not be put to death at the feast.

Note that this John's third record of a **Passover** First in John 2:13, second in John 6:4, and the final Passover of His crucifixion in John 11:55–57), the last of His ministry and the last Passover recognized by God under the Old Testament economy. It was the last because the shadow that had been pointing to the Substance for over a 1000 years would now finally and fully be fulfilled in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29+, 1Pe 1:19+). Thus Paul would later write (about 55 A D - note his use of the past tense) "Christ our Passover also **has been sacrificed**" (1Cor 5:7). (

**Hiebert** - John's arrangement (Jn 12:1-8) suggests that it occurred on Friday or Saturday evening before "Palm Sunday," while the synoptic order suggests that it occurred on Tuesday, or possibly Wednesday, evening of Passion Week. Most modern scholars prefer John's chronology as being more precise and hold that the synoptic arrangement is due to a desire to show the close connection between the anointing and the treachery of Judas.

**Came to Bethany where Lazarus was** - Notice it does not say to Lazarus' home but to where he **was**, that is, in **Bethany**. The actual scene of this meal and anointing seems to be in the home of Simon the Leper (Mt 26:6-13, Mark 11:3-9, 10, 11+ ). As you can see, I am interpreting the anointing in John as synonymous with the anointing in Matthew and Mark (see [comments below](#)).

**Spurgeon** notes that "It was in the house of Simon the Leper; a near acquaintance, perhaps a relative of this beloved family, for we find that Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. The two families had coalesced for this festival, and well they might, for one case someone had been healed of leprosy, and in the other case Lazarus had been raised from the dead. It was a holy, happy feast."

**Whom Jesus had raised** ([egeiro](#)) **from the dead** ([nekros](#)) - Lazarus was undoubtedly the "talk of the town," or as we might say to day one with "celebrity status." And so John rightly reemphasizes the resurrection of Lazarus.

John 11:1+ Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

John 11:43-44+ When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, **come forth**." The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus \*said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

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**Raised** ([1453](#))([egeiro](#)) means to rise (stand up) from a sitting or lying position (Mt 8:26, 9:5), to awaken from sleep (Mt 8:25), figuratively to "awaken" from death (rise up). **Egeiro** was used literally also to raise up or lift up a person either sitting or lying down. Figuratively **egeiro** was used to "raise up" a person from illness, thus restoring them to health. Figuratively as used in Romans 4:24, **egeiro** describes the bringing back of Jesus from the dead and thus raising Him or causing Him to rise. The idea of wake up

from death is conveyed by **egeiro** because sleep was used as metaphor of death for believers (there is however no "soul sleep"). To raise up to a position as was David in Acts 13:22 (referring to his "promotion" to king).

**Egeiro** - Jn. 2:19 = ""Destroy this temple, and in three days I will **raise** it up."; Jn. 2:20; Jn. 2:22; Jn. 5:8; Jn. 5:21; Jn. 7:52; Jn. 11:29; Jn. 12:1; Jn. 12:9; Jn. 12:17; Jn. 13:4; Jn. 14:31; Jn. 21:14 = "This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was **raised** from the dead."

Related Resources:

- [Passover & Unleavened Bread](#)
- [Leviticus 23 Feast of Unleavened Bread & Day of Pentecost \(cp Acts 2\)](#)
- [Leviticus 23 Commentary](#) - deals with the Jewish feasts
- [What are the Jewish Festivals?](#)
- [Passover - Wikipedia](#)
- [Should Christians celebrate Passover?](#)
- [Yeshua and the Feast of Unleavened Bread](#)

THE SEVEN GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL

Note that each of the Seven Great Feasts has a specific eschatological (prophetic) fulfillment. The four Spring feasts have been fulfilled at the First Coming of the Messiah. The final three feasts will be fulfilled at the Second Coming of the Messiah when He returns to to establish His Kingdom (cf Lk 17:20ff+, Lk 22:18+) and fulfill God's literal promises to the literal nation of Israel, promises which are summarized by Paul when he wrote "all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB." (Ro 11:26+)

SPRING FEASTS				FALL FEASTS		
1st Month = Nisan Festival of Passover (Pesach)		3rd Month = Sivan Feast of Pentecost		7th Month = Tishri Festival of Booths (Tabernacles) (Sukkot)		
Passover Pesach	Unleavened Bread	First Fruits	Feast of Weeks	Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Booths
Lamb's blood on Door Ex 12:6-7+	Purging Leaven (Sin)	Wave Offering (Promise of Harvest to come)	Wave Offering of two loaves of leavened bread (promise of harvest to come)	Trumpet Blown - A Holy Convocation	Atonement shall be made to cleanse you Lev 16:30+	Celebrates harvest, memorial of God's care in wilderness
1st Month, 14th Day Lev 23:5+	1st Month, 15th Day Lev 23:6-8+ (1st & 8th are Sabbath)	Day after Sabbath Lev 23:9-14+	50 Days after first fruits Lev 23:14-21+	7th Month, 1st Day Lev 23:23-25+ (A Sabbath)	7th Month, 10th Day Lev 23:26-32+ (A Sabbath)	7th Mo, 15th Day 7 Days; Convocation on 8th Day Lev 23:33-44 (1st & 8th are Sabbath)
				I N T E R L U D E		

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed	Clean out the old leaven... just as you are in fact unleavened	Christ has been raised... the first fruits	Promise of the Spirit, Mystery of Church - Jews and Gentiles in one body		Regathering of Israel before final day of atonement Jer 32:37-41+	Israel repents and looks to Christ in one day Zech 3:9-10, Zech 12:10+, Zech 13:1+, Zech 14:9+	All families come to Jerusalem for Feast of Booths Zech 14:16-19+
1Cor 5:7	1Cor 5:7-8	1Cor 15:20-23	Acts 2:1-47+ 1 Cor 2:13 Eph 2:11-12		Ezekiel 36:24+	Ezekiel 36:25-27+ Heb 9-10 Ro 11:25-29+	Ezek 36:28+

**John 12:2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.**

BGT John 12:2 πο ησαν ο ν α τ δε πνον κε , κα Μ ρθα διηκ νει, δ Λ ζαρος ε ς ν κ τ ν νακειμ νων σ ν α τ .

KJV John 12:2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

NET John 12:2 So they prepared a dinner for Jesus there. Martha was serving, and Lazarus was among those present at the table with him.

CSB John 12:2 So they gave a dinner for Him there; Martha was serving them, and Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

ESV John 12:2 So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table.

NIV John 12:2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.

NLT John 12:2 A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him.

NRS John 12:2 There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him.

NJB John 12:2 They gave a dinner for him there; Martha waited on them and Lazarus was among those at table.

NAB John 12:2 They gave a dinner for him there, and Martha served, while Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with him.

YLT John 12:2 they made, therefore, to him a supper there, and Martha was ministering, and Lazarus was one of those reclining together (at meat) with him;

MIT John 12:2 Local people made a dinner for Jesus there. Martha prepared the food, and Lazarus was one of those who reclined at the table with him.

- **they made:** Song 4:16 5:1 Lu 5:29 14:12 Rev 3:20
- **Martha:** Mt 26:6 Mk 14:3 Lu 10:38-42 12:37 22:27
- **Lazarus:** Jn 12:9,10 11:43,44
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 10:38-42+ (MARTHA AND MARY) Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman

named Martha welcomed Him into her home. 39 She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. 40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." 41 But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; 42 but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

## LOOK WHO'S COMING TO DINNER!

**So they made Him a supper** ([deipnon](#)) **there, and Martha was serving** ([diakoneo](#)) - **Supper** ([deipnon](#)) refers to the main meal of the day which was most often held in the evening and is the same word used later of the Last Supper (John 13:2, 4; 21:20). **Martha**, true to her form described in Lk 10:38-42+, was **serving** ([diakoneo](#)), a word that can mean waiting on tables and in the imperfect tense pictures her shuffling back and forth between the kitchen and the dining table. **John Calvin** said that "The highest honour in the church is not government but service. (and added)...We shall never be fit for the service of God if we look not beyond this fleeting life. **Vance Havner** adds "There are no trivial assignments in the work of the Lord." **Henrietta Mears** says "Serving God with our little is the way to make it more; and we must never think that wasted with which God is honoured or men are blessed."

Note there is no correction of Martha's service as there was in Luke 10:41-42+ - But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; 42 but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

**MacArthur** - That John describes **Lazarus** as **one of** the guests **reclining at the table with** Jesus suggests that the feast was not in his and his sisters' home. Matthew 26:6 and Mark 14:3 make more than a suggestion, stating specifically that the meal was held in the house of Simon the leper....Although it tends to be overshadowed by Mary's dramatic act of worship, Martha's humble service on this occasion was no less commendable and pleasing to the Lord. (See [John Commentary](#))

**J Vernon McGee** - What a picture we have here! There is Lazarus alive from the dead and in fellowship with Christ. Then we see Mary sitting at Jesus' feet, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. Then, thirdly, we see Martha serving, putting on a meal. That is her gift and she is exercising it. These are the three essentials in the church today: new life in Christ, worship and adoration, and service. This home at Bethany should be a picture of your church and mine. (BORROW [Thru the Bible - John 11-21](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** has a similar analysis - It is interesting to note that the entire family at Bethany demonstrates what the Christian life is like. Mary is always found at Jesus' feet, listening to His Word (Luke 10:38-42; John 11:32; 12:3). Martha is a picture of service; she is found busily doing something for Christ. Lazarus speaks of testimony, a daily walk that leads others to Christ. These three practices must be in our Christian experience: worship (Mary), work (Martha), and walk (Lazarus). (BORROW [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#) - excellent resource to supplement your sermons and teaching)

**Gilbrant** - In Bethany Jesus' friends defied the command that "if any man knew where he were, he should show it, that they might take him" (Jn 11:57). At great risk to themselves "they made him a supper." With tension running so high, it was a bold thing to schedule a banquet where Jesus was the chief guest of honor, but true love wins over fear in doing what pleases the Lord. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**But Lazarus was one of those reclining** ([anakeimai](#) - present tense) **at the table with Him** - The last time we encounter **Lazarus** in John 11, he was "aroused" by the Word of Jesus ("Lazarus, come forth" Jn 11:43) from the stiff, supine posture of a 4 day old corpse to the upright posture of a newly resurrected man. Here we see him again assuming a supine posture, but this time alive and in the presence of the One Who revived him. **Reclining** describes the way meals were eaten, which was not sitting but while reclining on one's side on the floor with the head closest to the low table and the feet farthest away. It is notable that **Lazarus** is a keyword (so to speak) in John 12 (Jn. 12:1; Jn. 12:2; Jn. 12:9; Jn. 12:10; Jn. 12:17) mentioned in the context of the anointing (Jn 12:1-2), at the conclusion of the anointing (Jn 12:9-11), and at the conclusion after the triumphal entry (Jn 12:17-19).

**Warren Wiersbe** writes "As we look at this event, we see some "representative people" who are examples to us. Martha represents *work* as she served the dinner she had prepared for the Lord. This was just as much a "fragrant offering" as was Mary's ointment (see Heb. 13:16). Mary represents *worship*, and Lazarus represents *witness* (John 11:9-11). People went to Bethany just to be able to see this man who had been raised from the dead! As mentioned we have no recorded words from Lazarus in the New Testament, but his miraculous life was an effective witness for Jesus Christ. (In contrast, John the Baptist did no miracles, yet his words brought people to Jesus. See John 10:40-42.) We today ought to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4) because we have been "raised from the dead" (Eph. 2:1-10; Col. 3:1ff). Actually, the Christian life ought to be a beautiful balance of worship, work, and witness. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

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**Supper** (dinner) (1173) **deipnon** refers to breakfast in Homer, but is generally among the Jews and Greco-Roman culture it referred more to the evening meal (dinner, supper), and could refer as here in Luke 14 (Lk 14:12, 16, 17, 24) to a banquet or feast in general. Deipnon was used of the Passover meal (Jn 13:2, 4, 21:20) and the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:20). It was used to speak of the food taken at supper in 1 Cor 11:21 ("in your eating", cf Lxx - Da 1:16 = King's "choice food").

**Deipnon - 16v - banquet(1), banquets(3), dinner(4), supper(8).** Matt. 23:6; Mk. 6:21; Mk. 12:39; Lk. 14:12; Lk. 14:16; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 14:24; Lk. 20:46; Jn. 12:2; Jn. 13:2; Jn. 13:4; Jn. 21:20; 1 Co. 11:20; 1 Co. 11:21; Rev. 19:9; Rev. 19:17

**Serving** (waiting on) (1247) **diakoneo** - derivation uncertain - cp **diakonís** = in the dust laboring or running through the dust or possibly **diako** = to run on errands; see also **diakonia**) means to minister by way of rendering service in any form or to take care of by rendering humble service. In its earliest uses diakoneō probably did not have any religious connotations and simply meant "to render a service" of any kind. Greeks generally viewed serving with disdain, but Christianity gave it new value and meaning for even Jesus declared He "did not come to **be served**, but **to serve**, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45+) Yes, Jesus was being served by Martha, but He would soon carry out the greater service for her by giving His life for her on the Cross. A good picture of the meaning of **diakoneo** is depicted by Peter's mother-in-law who was healed by Jesus "and she immediately got up and **waited** (**diakoneo**) on them." (Lu 4:39+)

**Augustine** said that "We do the works, but God works in us the doing of the works. Without God, we cannot. Without us, God will not." (The former statement is excellent which is like "Let God, let's go." His closing statement is not completely true, because God does many things that we will not do.

The root word **diakonos** refers to one who serves as a waiter upon tables performing menial duties (see below Matt 8:15; 20:28; 27:55; Mark 1:31; 10:45; 15:41; Luke 4:39; 10:40; 12:37; 17:8; 22:26, 27; John 12:2). **Diakoneo** conveys the basic idea of personal service, and depending on the context can mean specifically to serve, to wait on, to see after or to care for someone's needs by performing a service (conveying the sense that help is provided to the one being served - see Mt 4:11, 25:44, Mark 1:13).

**Diakoneo - 38x -** Matt. 4:11; Matt. 8:15; Matt. 20:28; Matt. 25:44; Matt. 27:55; Mk. 1:13; Mk. 1:31; Mk. 10:45; Mk. 15:41; Lk. 4:39; Lk. 8:3; Lk. 10:40; Lk. 12:37; Lk. 17:8; Lk. 22:26; Lk. 22:27; Jn. 12:2; Jn. 12:26; Acts 6:2; Acts 19:22; Rom. 15:25; 2 Co. 3:3; 2 Co. 8:19; 2 Co. 8:20; 1 Tim. 3:10; 1 Tim. 3:13; 2 Tim. 1:18; Phlm. 1:13; Heb. 6:10; 1 Pet. 1:12; 1 Pet. 4:10; 1 Pet. 4:11

**Reclining** (345) **anakeimai** from **aná** = an emphatic + **keímai** = to lie down. Friberg - "1) generally lie, recline (MK 5.40); (2) predominantly in the NT of being at a table, where in the Roman style reclining couches were used " It actually carries the more restrictive sense of "to recline at table." Thus when Mary anointed Jesus' head with ointment, "He reclined (at table)" (Mt 26:7). To lie down, recline, which was the posture used in eating at a table by the Jews, Greeks, and Romans (Matt. 9:10; 26:7, 20; Mark 14:18; 16:14; John 13:23, 28). In Luke 7:37, we have the Lord reclining at meat in the Pharisee's house with His face toward the table and His feet toward the outside on the couch. In John 13:23, the Lord's last supper, one of His disciples was reclining on Jesus bosom.

**Anakeimai - 14x - dinner guests(3), reclined(1), reclines(2), reclining(7), seated(1).** Matt. 9:10; Matt. 22:10; Matt. 22:11; Matt. 26:7; Matt. 26:20; Mk. 6:26; Mk. 14:18; Mk. 16:14; Lk. 22:27; Jn. 6:11; Jn. 12:2; Jn. 13:23; Jn. 13:28

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### **Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - "Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him."— John 12:2**

He is to be envied. It was well to be Martha and serve, but better to be Lazarus and commune. There are times for each purpose, and each is comely in its season, but none of the trees of the garden yield such clusters as the vine of fellowship. To sit with Jesus, to hear his words, to mark his acts, and receive his smiles, was such a favour as must have made Lazarus as happy as the angels. When it has been our happy lot to feast with our Beloved in his banqueting-hall, we would not have given half a sigh for all the kingdoms of the world, if so much breath could have bought them.

He is to be imitated. It would have been a strange thing if Lazarus had not been at the table where Jesus was, for he had been dead, and Jesus had raised him. For the risen one to be absent when the Lord who gave him life was at his house, would have been ungrateful indeed. We too were once dead, yea, and like Lazarus stinking in the grave of sin; Jesus raised us, and by his life we live—can we be content to live at a distance from him? Do we omit to remember him at his table, where he deigns to feast with his brethren? Oh, this is cruel! It behoves us to repent, and do as he has bidden us, for his least wish should be law to us. To have lived without constant intercourse with one of whom the Jews said, "Behold how he loved him," would have been disgraceful to Lazarus, is it excusable in us whom Jesus has loved with an everlasting love? To have been cold to him who wept over his lifeless corpse,

would have argued great brutishness in Lazarus. What does it argue in us over whom the Saviour has not only wept, but bled? Come, brethren, who read this portion, let us return unto our heavenly Bridegroom, and ask for his Spirit that we may be on terms of closer intimacy with him, and henceforth sit at the table with him.

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### **James Smith - A SUPPER SCENE JOHN 12:1–8**

According to Matthew and Mark, this supper which “they” made for Jesus, was in the house of Simon, who had been a leper, and may have been a united effort, with the two families, to do honour to Jesus and His disciples because of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, and, perhaps, the healing of Simon. It took place six days before the passover, which meant six days before His death and burial. It must have been a hallowed time. Let us think of—

I. Mary, the Sacrificer. While others rejoice to sit at the table with Jesus, and learn of Him, Mary, who had before sat at His feet, feels impelled by the love of her heart to embrace this opportunity of proving her faith and affection by personal sacrifice. To her, at that time, it was more blessed to give than to receive. There surely must be seasons in our lives when we shall find it more blessed to sacrifice than to seek, to give than to take, to praise than to pray. See the nature of it. “Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly.” Judas reckoned its value at “three hundred pence”—more correctly, shillings As money goes now, it would mean probably about £60. The costlier the better for Mary’s deep purpose of love. Hypocritical worshippers are content to give the Lord the lame and the blind, the odd coppers and the spare moments. They never cross the threshold of the sanctuary of self-sacrificing service.

See the manner in which it was given. She “anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair.” It is possible to give even a costly gift in such a way as to sting the soul of the receiver. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver. Mary not only offered Him her precious treasure, but her personal glory was also laid at His feet and surrendered to His service. The ointment was all the more precious to the Saviour because the soul of the offerer was in it. See the influence of it. “The house was filled with the odour of the ointment.” Such a self-sacrificing act could not pass without being felt by all who saw it. Such costly offerings, made for such a sacred purpose, are sure to betray themselves (Prov. 27:16). A consecrated life has always a sweet odour to Christ and His faithful disciples.

II. Judas, the Criticiser. The only one who did not appreciate the holy deed of Mary was Judas. The “odour of the ointment” poured upon the Son of God had no sweet savour to him, “because he was a thief,” and would rather have had the “three hundred shillings” in his bag for his own advantage. His hypocritical plea was, that it might have been sold and the money given to the poor. “Not that he cared for the poor.” Surely the Saviour of sinners was more interested in the poor than he was. He who was rich, for our sakes became poor. “To what purpose is this waste?” (Matt. 26:8). Judas, the son of perdition, could not see that the breaking of this alabaster box, and the pouring out of the fragrant treasure upon the Person of Christ was the consecrating of both to the greatest possible service. It is noteworthy that the word “waste” used by Judas is literally the same word used by our Lord in referring to him as the “son of perdition.” Where the spirit of self-seeking is there is blindness to the honour and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mary’s vision of Jesus was such that it constrained her to surrender all. Judas could not see beyond the black shadow of his own sinful self-interest.

III. Jesus, the Justifier. “Then Jesus said, Let her alone; against the day of My burying hath she kept this.” He understood the full significance of this singularly solemn service, and always puts the highest value upon such gifts. The costly offering was in no sense wasted on Him. To His soul, in view of His death and burial, it had a sweet savour. “Let her alone.” The Son of God who sacrificed Himself for sinners will never put any hindrance in the way of a believing, grateful heart showing its devotion to Him to the fullest extent. He knows that such love and sacrifice will have its corresponding reward (Mark 14:9). “Let her alone.” Well He knew that there are so few who care to go this length in honouring Him. She broke through all the forms of etiquette, and gave to Christ exceeding abundantly above all that they would have asked or thought of. Such a spontaneous outburst of self-sacrificing affection was to Jesus the principal part of the feast. Love feasts on love. Here He had a meat to eat that others knew not of. “The poor,” he said, “always ye have with you, but Me ye have not always.” But those who reckon it waste to pour out wealth for the cause of Jesus Christ will not be likely to break their treasure boxes in behalf of the poor. The best friends of the poor have always been those who are the most devoted friends of Jesus Christ. The love of Christ constraineth us.

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### **David Jeremiah - Three-Dimensional Giving SCRIPTURE: John 12:1–11**

INTRODUCTION: The Bible often presents both sides of an issue so we can see it in balance. Two people are placed at opposite poles of reality in this passage—the generous Mary and the selfish Judas.

1. A Sacrificial Attitude Is Essential in Christian Giving. Mary gave to Jesus something that was very costly. The Bible tells us that we should not offer to the Lord that which costs us nothing.
2. A Servant Attitude Is Essential in Christian Giving. She came to His feet and worshiped Him.
3. A Submissive Attitude Is Essential in Christian Giving. She bathed His feet, wiping them with her hair.



4. A Scriptural Attitude Is Essential in Christian Giving. She gave to Jesus because she really believed what God had said to her through Him. She was anointing Him for His burial.

**CONCLUSION:** In contrast, look at Judas. He didn't care about Mary's worship nor did he care about the poor. He thought only of money. Every time the offering plate comes our way, each of us responds either like Mary or like Judas. Are you giving to God's work in a way that pleases Him?

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**Skip Heitzig "sister" joke** - So there were three sisters, elderly sisters, who live together. Their ages were 92, 94, and 96, respectively. They were old gals. They had survived, and they were sharing a home. And as they were getting older, they were getting more frail. And the 96-year-old was upstairs. She was running a bath. And she put her foot over one side of the tub, and then she cried out, she yelled out to her sisters downstairs, now was I getting in the tub or was I getting out of the tub. And the 94-year-old sister answered, and she said, I don't know. I'll come up, and I'll see. So she was going up the stairs, she paused, and she said, now, was I going up the stairs or coming down the stairs, she yelled out. And her other sister, the 92-year-old was sitting at the kitchen table downstairs, and she shook her head. And she said, man, I hope my mind doesn't go like that when I get older. And she said, and then she went like this. Knock on wood, you know, just reassurance. And then she said, I'll be up to help you gals in a minute. But first, let me see who's at the door.

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### **SPECIAL TOPIC: "ANOINTING" IN THE BIBLE**

1. Used for beautification (BDB 691 l. cf. Deut. 28:40; Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; 14:2; 2 Chr. 28:15; Dan. 10:3; Mic. 6:15)
2. Used for guests (BDB 206, cf. Ps. 23:5; Luke 7:38,46; John 11:2)
3. Used for healing (BDB 602, cf. Isa. 61:1; Mark 6:13; Luke 10:34; James 5:14) [used in hygienic sense in Ezek. 16:9]
4. Used in preparation for burial (cf. Mark 16:1; John 12:3,7; 19:39-40; note 2 Chr. 16:14, but without the VERB "anoint")
5. Used in a religious sense (of an object, BDB 602)
  1. Gen. 28:18; 31:13 (a pillar)
  2. Exod. 29:36 (the altar)
  3. Exod. 30:26; 40:9-16; Lev. 8:10-13; Num. 7:1 (the tabernacle)
6. Used for installing leaders
  1. Priests
    1. Aaron (Exod. 28:41; 29:7; 30:30)
    2. Aaron's sons (Exod. 40:15; Lev. 7:36)
    3. standard phrase or title (Num. 3:3; Lev. 16:32)
  2. Kings
    1. by God (cf. 1 Sam. 2:10; 2 Sam. 12:7; 2 Kgs. 9:3,6,12; Ps. 45:7; 89:20)
    2. by the prophets (cf. 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1; 15:1,17; 16:3,12-13; 1 Kgs. 1:45; 19:15-16)
    3. by priests (cf. 1 Kgs. 1:34,39; 2 Kgs. 11:12)
    4. by the elders (cf. Jdgs. 9:8,15; 2 Sam. 2:7; 5:3; 2 Kgs. 23:30)
    5. of Jesus as Messianic king (cf. Ps. 2:2; Luke 4:18 [Isa. 61:1]; Acts 4:27; 10:38; Heb. 1:9 [Ps. 45:7])
    6. Jesus' followers (cf. 2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20,27 [chrisma])
  3. possibly of prophets (cf. 1 Kgs. 19:16; Isa. 61:1)
  4. unbelieving instruments of divine deliverance
    1. Cyrus (cf. Isa. 45:1)
    2. King of Tyre (cf. Ezek. 28:14, where he uses Garden of Eden metaphors)
  5. term or title "Messiah" means "an Anointed One" (BDB 603, cf. Ps. 2:2; 89:38; 132:10)

Acts 10:38 is a verse where all three persons of the Godhead are involved in anointing. Jesus was anointed (cf. Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38). The concept is widened to include all believers (cf. 1 John 2:27). The Anointed One has become the anointed ones! This may be parallel to Antichrist and antichrists (cf. 1 John 2:18). The OT symbolic act of physical anointing with oil (cf. Ex 29:7; 30:25; 37:29) relates to those who were called and equipped by God for a special task (i.e., prophets, priests, and kings).

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### **Draining or Replenishing?**

They made Him a supper; and Martha served . . . Then Mary . . . anointed the feet of Jesus. —John 12:2-3

Today's Scripture: John 12:1-11

If someone spent the whole day with me, how would he feel at the end of the day—worn out or built up? That's the kind of question I began to think about as I listened to Clark Hutchinson talk about relationships. He said he has noticed three kinds: draining, neutral,

and replenishing.

Hutchinson pointed out that Jesus experienced all three kinds of relationships. Those that exhausted His energy were perhaps the most common in our Lord's earthly experience, for He spent much of His time giving. He healed the sick, encouraged the downtrodden, and taught the masses. We know that sometimes He must have been worn out by these experiences. He often went away to pray and renew Himself (Matt. 14:23; Luke 5:16).

Some of His relationships were probably just casual contacts. But the replenishing ones encouraged Jesus. They were relationships with people such as Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, whose love and presence uplifted the Lord.

How do we relate to our friends, acquaintances, and family members? We can add to their lives a measure of happiness by giving them a chance to talk, encouraging them, and suggesting life's brighter side.

Do we leave people drained or replenished? By: Dave Branon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

A smile, a word, a touch—  
And each is easily given,  
To rescue someone from despair  
Or smooth the way to heaven.  
—Anon.

To get the most out of a relationship, put all you can into it.

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### **What Are You Looking For?**

A woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil. —Mark 14:3

Today's Scripture: Mark 14:1-9

"Stop! There's a good pair of shoes! Slow down, you just passed a hammer! Look at that jacket in the ditch!" As the car was speeding down the highway at 70 miles an hour, these were the exclamations of a hitchhiker to the driver who had just picked him up. After several hours of similar comments, the driver reached two conclusions:

1. The hitchhiker's life consisted mainly of things he found by the side of the road.
2. All of us see what we're looking for. As we go through life, the focus of our eyes reveals the desire of our hearts.

During the week before Jesus was crucified, the chief priests and scribes were looking for any excuse to arrest and kill Him (Mark 14:1). Judas was looking for a convenient way to betray Jesus (v.11). A woman whom we know to be Mary of Bethany was looking for a way to show her love to the Lord (John 12:1-3). And they all found the opportunities they were seeking.

Our Bible reading today calls us to focus on Christ and His great passion that caused Him to die for our sins. Like Mary, may we have hearts that are always looking for opportunities to say to our Savior, "I love You." —David McCasland (Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

If you'd like to know the love of God the Father,  
Come to Him through Jesus Christ, His only Son;  
He'll forgive your sins and save your soul forever,  
And you'll love forevermore this faithful One.  
—Felten

**We can love Jesus too little, but we can never love Him too much.**

**John 12:3 Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.**

BGT John 12:3 ο ν Μαρι μ λαβο σα λ τραν μ ρου ν ρδου πιστικ ς πολυτ μου λειψεν το ς π δας το ησο κα  
ξ μαξεν τα ς θριξ ν α τ ς το ς π δας α το · δ ο κ α πληρ θη κ τ ς σμ ς το μ ρου.

KJV John 12:3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

NET John 12:3 Then Mary took three quarters of a pound of expensive aromatic oil from pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus. She then wiped his feet dry with her hair. (Now the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfumed oil.)

CSB John 12:3 Then Mary took a pound of fragrant oil-- pure and expensive nard-- anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped His feet with her hair. So the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

ESV John 12:3 Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

NIV John 12:3 Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

NLT John 12:3 Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance.

NRS John 12:3 Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

NJB John 12:3 Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair; the house was filled with the scent of the ointment.

NAB John 12:3 Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

YLT John 12:3 Mary, therefore, having taken a pound of ointment of spikenard, of great price, anointed the feet of Jesus and did wipe with her hair his feet, and the house was filled from the fragrance of the ointment.

MIT John 12:3 Then Mary took twelve ounces of genuine oil of nard, an expensive perfume, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped them with her hair. The building was filled with the aroma of the perfume.

- **took:** Jn 11:2,28,32 Mt 26:6,7-13 Mk 14:3-9 Lu 10:38,39
- **perfume:** Ps 132:2 Song 1:12 4:10,13,14
- **anointed:** Mk 14:3 Lu 7:37,38,46
- **filled:** Song 1:3
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 26:6-13 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, 7 a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at the table. 8 But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, "Why this waste? 9 "For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor." 10 But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me. 11 "For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me. 12 "For when she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. 13 "Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

Mark 14:1-9+ Now the Passover and Unleavened Bread were two days away; and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to seize Him by stealth and kill Him; 2 for they were saying, "Not during the festival, otherwise there might be a riot of the people." 3 While He was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, and reclining at the table, there came a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard; and she broke the vial and poured it over His head. 4 But some were indignantly remarking to one another, "Why has this perfume been wasted? 5 "For this perfume might have been sold for over three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they were scolding her. 6 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you bother her? She has done a good deed to Me. 7 "For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them; but you do not always have Me. 8 "She has done what she could; she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial. 9 "Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

## EXTRAVAGANT DEVOTION: WORTHY IS THE LAMB!

**Is Luke describing the same event in Luke 7:36-50?** Some (J C Ryle says "many" not "some" and one notable proponent is the excellent expositor Dr Charles Swindoll) think this anointing of Jesus is the same as described by Luke 7:36-50+ but comparison of the details seems to leave little doubt that Luke is describing a different anointing. Here are five points comparing the accounts (see [another similar discussion below](#)):

- (1) Luke's description is in the home of a Pharisee in Lk 7:36, 39+. Mt 26:6 says this event occurred in the house of Simon the leper.
- (2) Luke's version involves an immoral woman but there is no other evidence Mary of Bethany was an immoral woman. Mary and Martha are not introduced until Lk 10:38, 39+. Mary is always characterized as a devout disciple of Jesus.
- (3) In Luke's version the woman wet His feet with tears, wiped the tears from His feet with her hair, and kissed and anointed His feet (Lk 7:38, 39, 45-46+). There is nothing like this described in the three accounts in John, Matthew or Mark. John says Mary "wiped His feet with her hair." (Jn 12:3)
- (4) Luke's anointing appears to take place in Galilee not in Bethany.
- (5) Note the different results - In Luke's version He sharply rebuked the Pharisee, praised the woman and dismissed her with an encouraging word. In the three accounts in John, Matthew or Mark He rebuked Judas Iscariot for criticizing Mary and thus defended her deed in light of the purpose (preparation for His burial).

Now as to whether the accounts in John, Mark and Matthew describe the same event, it is less clear, the consensus is that they do favor the same event. Some think the anointing described by Mark and Matthew is different especially because (1) timing -- Mark 14:1 says "2 days before the Passover" and (2) the location -- Matthew and Mark both say it occurred at the home of Simon the Leper (Mt 26:6, Mk 14). (3) Woman unnamed - Mt 26:7, Mk 14:3 (whereas John identifies Mary). [See table below comparing the 3 anointing accounts](#) in the last week of Jesus' life.

**J C Ryle** - It is claimed by **many** interpreters that, in describing the beautiful deed of Mary, the evangelist borrowed from Luke 7:36–50, and that the Mary mentioned in John 12:3 is the same as the sinful woman of Luke 7; or, that, while the two events are distinct, the author of the Fourth Gospel got his sources mixed and simply added to the story which he had found in Matthew 26:6–13 and Mark 14:3–9 the detail concerning the wiping of Jesus' feet, which feature he had found in Luke 7. **We completely reject this theory.**

**Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume (muron) of pure nard (nardos)** - A **pound** would be about half a liter by Roman weight, and would have been enough to anoint both His head (Mt 26:7, Mk 14:3) and His feet (John's account). In Jn 12:5 and Mk 14:5 the nard was estimated to be worth 300 denarii. Matthew adds that the liquid was also in an [alabaster vial](#) which would have also been costly.

**THOUGHT-** Mary's message is clear that there was nothing too valuable to give to Jesus, Who is worthy of all we are and all we have. Is He worthy to you dear reader? Do your acts of extravagant devotion demonstrate this is true in your life? The angels and four living creatures know He is worthy crying out "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." (Rev 5:12+)

In effect Mary anointed the [Messiah, the Anointed One](#) (synonym "Christ" [Christos](#)), the One described in the great prophecy in Da 9:25-26+ as "the anointed one" or Messiah ([mashiach/masiyah](#)).

It is worth noting that clearly Mary loved her brother Lazarus, but she did not put the treasured perfume in her dead brother's tomb but saved it for Jesus.

**Swindoll** has an interesting comment that "the perfume she collected was a treasure kept by women for their dowry, which she emptied on Jesus. Her lavish act of worship left her without a dowry, thus reducing her prospects for a favorable marriage."

See **R K Harrison's** in depth description of **spikenard** in his book [Healing Herbs in the Bible, page 48 \(BORROW\)](#).

**NET NOTE** on **nard** - Nard or spikenard is a fragrant oil from the root and spike of the nard plant of northern India. This aromatic oil, if made of something like nard, would have been extremely expensive, costing up to a year's pay for an average laborer.

**Kostenberger on nard** - Nard, also known as spikenard, is a fragrant oil derived from the root and spike (hair stem) of the nard plant, which grows in the mountains of northern India ([Harrison 1966: 48–49](#)). This “Indian spike,” used by the Romans for anointing the head, was “a rich rose red and very sweetly scented” (W. Walker 1958: 196).

**And anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair** - Matthew and Mark (in my opinion) describe the same incident but specifically say she anointed His head (Mt 26:7, Mk 14:3). Assuming Jesus was in a reclining position as was common in an oriental meal, she could easily have then anointed His feet. In short, as a manifestation of her great love for Jesus, she anointed Him from “[head to toe](#)!” His recumbent position (reclining to eat) made the anointing of both head and feet readily possible. Pouring some oil on the head was common treatment of a festive guest (Ps. 23:5; Luke 7:46), but anointing the feet was unusual, and an act of special esteem. Attending one's feet was servant's work which emphasize Mary's humility and devotion. In a act of supreme humility Jesus washed the disciple's feet in Jn 13:1-15, declaring to them that He had given them “an example that you also should do as I did to you.” (Jn 13:15+) Have you ever imitated Jesus in this way?

In light of the fact that Paul says the glory of a woman is her long hair (1Co 11:15KJV), in a sense, Mary laid her glory at Jesus' feet! In her culture, for a woman to let her hair down was considered indecent (and even immoral), but Mary was unashamed in her demonstration of love to Jesus. Mary in an act of total abandonment, completely fixed her eyes on Jesus and not on the onlookers! And in Mk 14:9+ (Mt 26:12) Jesus declared this selfless, sacrificial act would result in her renown throughout the world! What a challenge Mary's fearlessness is to us today for when we hear His name (the Name above all names! Php 2:9+) used as a curse word in a conversation and yet fail to say anything for fear of what others might think about us! (I am convicted by my own words!) As an aside, this picture of worship at the feet of Jesus recalls to mind the words of Paul “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Ro 10:15NIV).

**Lowell Johnson** - In Christ's day, people did not sit at a table to eat their meals. The tables they used were low to the floor, and the people reclined around the table at meal time. Typically, their heads were near the table while their feet were farther away. This would mean that anyone walking up to a person in such a position would be considerably taller than the person at the table. It is, therefore, assured that Mary would have assumed a kneeling position near Jesus, in order to anoint His head and His feet with the ointment. In this one moment of time, Mary was making a great statement of surrender. By kneeling to Him and anointing Him, she was declaring her faith in Him as the Messiah. She was telling everyone who saw her do what she did that her faith was in the Lord Jesus Christ. She, at that moment, surrendered all to Him! Mary was more in touch with Jesus than any of His disciples were. Jesus had said over and over that he was going to die, but none of them got it. In fact, only one person got it, and that was Mary. The disciples were with Jesus much more than Mary and heard Him speak many more times than Mary, so why did she get it and they did not? Every time we see Mary, she is at our Lord's feet listening and learning and loving Him. Three times Mary appears in the Gospels center stage....

(1) The first time she appears is at her own home. Martha is working, preparing a meal for Jesus and others and Mary is sitting at His feet listening to Him teach. Luke 10:38-42.

(2) The next time we meet her is at the tomb of Lazarus. He has just died and Jesus has arrived at the tomb. Mary runs to Jesus and bows at His feet in supplication, John 11:28-32.

(3) The last time we see her, she offers her worship to Him because of what He means to her, John 12:1-11; Mark 14:1-9; Matt, 26:6-13.

1. The first time, she is at His feet Learning: Hearing His word.
2. The next time, she is at His feet Leaning, Experience His works, John 11
3. Here, she is at His feet Loving: Declaring His worth, John 12

**Rodney Whitacre** - The picture of Mary is also true to that in Luke (Luke 10:38-42); that is, she is a devoted disciple who ignores the taboos of her society in her commitment to Jesus. Sitting at his feet as a disciple (Lk 10:39) was not the place for a woman, but she is commended by Jesus (Lk 10:42). Now she acts in an even more scandalous manner in anointing Jesus' feet with extremely expensive perfume and then wiping them with her hair (Jn 12:3). ([Jesus Is Anointed at Bethany John 11:55-12:11](#))

**THOUGHT** - Imagine the aroma of Mary for the next few days, an aroma that reflected her worship of Jesus. When believers worship Jesus like Mary, we too exude a fragrant aroma. In fact Paul writes “thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and **manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place**. For **we are a fragrance of Christ to God** among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?” (2Co 2:14-16+) Does your life give off this fragrant aroma of Jesus to the lost and found? It should, especially as we spend time with Him.

[Lord, when in Simon's house of yore,](#)

Thou with Thy friends didst sit at meat,  
Mary the precious spikenard bore,  
And poured it at Thy sacred feet.

Like incense sweet, the perfume rare,  
Rose through the house, and sought the skies;  
And Thou didst own with blessing there  
A woman's loving sacrifice.

So unto Thee, O Lord, this day,  
A year of labor here we bring;  
So at Thy feet the gift we lay;  
Accept, O Lord, the offering.  
--Sarah Henshaw

**Rodney Whitacre** has an interesting thought writing that "with twelve ounces to work with (not a full pint, as in the NIV) she could have anointed his whole body. Indeed, since he interprets this as an anointing for his burial (John 12:7) it seems she did anoint more than his head and feet, as Matthew and Mark suggest (Mt 26:12 = "on My body" par. Mk 14:8 = "anointed My body"). ([Jesus Is Anointed at Bethany John 11:55-12:11](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - When she came to the feet of Jesus, Mary took the place of a slave. When she undid her hair (something Jewish women did not do in public), she humbled herself and laid her glory at His feet (see 1 Cor. 11:15). Of course, she was misunderstood and criticized; but that is what usually happens when somebody gives his or her best to the Lord. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Kostenberger** - Attending to the feet was servant's work (see Jn 1:27; 13:5), so Mary's action shows humility as well as devotion. Mary wiped Jesus' feet with her hair (cf. 11:2).<sup>17</sup> The use of hair rather than a towel for wiping Jesus' feet indicates unusual devotion. The act is all the more striking since Jewish women (esp. married ones) never unbound their hair in public, which would have been considered a sign of loose morals (cf. Num. 5:18; b. Soṭah 8a; see J. Lightfoot 1859: 3.376; Morris 1995: 512)

*God spilt the life of His Son that the world might be saved;  
are we prepared to spill out our lives for Him?*  
-- Oswald Chambers

**Scroggie** comments, "The story of Mary's graceful act is one of the most beautiful on record; it is a story of loving devotion revealing the acceptable motive, natural modes, and true measure of Christian service." (Hiebert)

**Spurgeon** - The other evangelist said "anointed his head." And they are both right. She anointed his head and his feet.

**And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume-** This is a parenthetical account by an eye (nose) witness, the apostle John. While the fragrance of the literal perfume would dissipate in a short time, as Jesus alludes to in the parallel accounts the "fragrance" of Mary's act would have a lasting effect and would fill not just the house, but the entire world (Mt 26:13, Mk 14:9+). "No house is so filled with pleasant aroma as the house where Jesus is given His rightful place." (William MacDonald)

I gave my life for thee, My precious blood I shed  
That thou might'st ransomed be, and quickened from the dead  
I gave, I gave my life for thee, What hast thou given for me?  
I gave, I gave my life for thee, What hast thou given for me?

One is reminded of Paul's praise to the saints at Philippi for contributing to his cause...

But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a **fragrant aroma**, an **acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God**. (AS WAS MARY'S SACRIFICE! BECAUSE JESUS IS GOD AND IT PLEASED HIM!) Phil. 4:18)

**Wiersbe** - Nothing that is given to Christ in faith and love is ever wasted. The fragrance of Mary's ointment faded from the scene centuries ago, but the significance of her worship has blessed Christians in every age and continues to do so. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Lowell Johnson** - What a beautiful scene this is! Simon opens his Home to Jesus. Martha opens her Hands and serves the guest, Mary opens her Heart of love and anoints the head and feet of Jesus with a perfume worth a year's wages, between 20,000 and 25,000 dollars in today's economy. The essence of love is to ask, "How much can I do;" not, "How little can I do." Love has no limits and neither does hatred as we shall see as we look at the **first recorded words of Judas**. Mary is about to express extravagant



love to our Lord as she takes a pound of spikenard and anoints the head and feet of our Lord. A Roman pound was twelve ounces; not sixteen. Why was the spikenard so expensive? Spikenard grows in the Himalaya mountains in India at high elevations from 11,000 to 17,000 feet. The roots and spikes of the plant were used to make perfumes. Mary is about to express extravagant worship upon the Lord Jesus. The word “extravagant” is defined as spending too much, by spending excessive; beyond what is reasonable, of going overboard and doing too much. When it comes to worshiping our Lord Jesus, nothing is too extravagant. After all, He is worthy of everything we can render to Him, because all we have comes from Him anyway. No gift is excessive; no expression of love is over the top. The worship of Mary has much to teach us about our own worship of the Lord Jesus.

**NET NOTE** - In the later rabbinic literature, Ecclesiastes Rabbah 7.1.1 states “The fragrance of good oil is diffused from the bedroom to the dining hall, but a good name is diffused from one end of the world to the other.” If such a saying was known in the 1st century, this might be the author’s way of indicating that Mary’s act of devotion would be spoken of throughout the entire world (compare the comment in Mark 14:9).

**Gotquestions** favors different anointings - Similar but distinct episodes are featured in Luke 7:36–50 and John 12:1–8. The event in Luke transpired at the home of a different Simon, “Simon the Pharisee,” with a woman referred to as only “a sinner.” The event in **John** happened on a different day and involved Mary of Bethany.

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**Hendriksen:** Jesus calls what she did “**a beautiful thing**,” And such it was indeed: unique in its thoughtfulness, regal in its lavishness, and marvelous in its timeliness.

Mary saw the incomparable worth and beauty of Jesus and responded appropriately by anointing His body from head to toe with precious oil. This reminds me of Twila Paris' song. Play it as you ponder with wonder, awe and gratitude the beauty of the body of Christ, given for you and for me for the remission of our sins forever and ever. Amen....

### **How Beautiful**

How beautiful the hands that served  
the wine and the bread  
and the sons of the earth.  
How beautiful the feet that walked  
the long dusty roads  
and the hills to the cross.  
How beautiful  
how beautiful  
how beautiful is the body of Christ.  
How beautiful the heart that bled  
that took all my sin  
and bore it instead.  
How beautiful the tender eyes  
that chose to forgive  
and never despise.  
How beautiful  
how beautiful  
how beautiful is the body of Christ.  
And as He laid down His life  
we offer this sacrifice  
that we will live just as he died:  
willing to pay the price  
willing to pay the price.  
How beautiful the radiant Bride  
who waits for her Groom  
with His light in her eyes.  
How beautiful when humble hearts give  
the fruit of pure lives  
so that others may live.  
How beautiful  
how beautiful  
how beautiful is the body of Christ.

How beautiful the feet that bring  
the sound of good news  
and the love of the King.  
How beautiful the hands that serve  
the wine and the bread  
and the sons of the earth.  
How beautiful  
how beautiful  
how beautiful is the body of Christ.

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**Perfume** (ointment)([3464](#))(**muron**) is ointment, perfume, sweet-smelling substance made not from animal fats. A girl's name Muriel is from the same root, and means perfume. Apart from a single reference in Revelation 18:13, muron occurs only in the four Gospels (13 times). The Synoptic Gospels record anointings of Jesus' head by Mary of Bethany. Matthew and Mark clearly link this anointing to Jesus' upcoming burial (Matthew 26:12; Mark 14:8). **Gilbrant** adds that "**Muron** is the juice-like aromatic extract from plants, or perfumed oil. As a cosmetic muron could be translated "perfume." "Ointment" is perhaps a useful English translation, since muron was often medicinal and at times cultic in significance, being used for anointing (e.g., for burial). Another common use was in the embalming process (cf. Bauer)." NT uses - Matt. 26:7; Matt. 26:12; Mk. 14:3; Mk. 14:4; Mk. 14:5; Lk. 7:37; Lk. 7:38; Lk. 7:46; Lk. 23:56; Jn. 11:2; Jn. 12:3; Jn. 12:5; Rev. 18:13

**Nard** ([3487](#))(nardos) a fragrant plant native to India (spike)nard and the aromatic oil extracted from its roots. Only in Jn 12:3 and Mk 14:3

**ISBE - SPIKENARD** - spik'-nard (nerd; nardos (Song 1:12; 4:14); neradhim; nardoi (Song 4:13), "spikenard plants"; nardos pistike (Mk 14:3; Jn 12:3), "pure nard," margin "liquid nard"; the English word is for "spiked nard," which comes from the *Nardus spicata* of the Vulgate): Spikenard is the plant *Nardostachys jatamansi* (Natural Order, Valerianaceae); in Arabic the name Sunbul hind, "Indian spike," refers, like the English and Latin name, to the "snike"-like shape of the plant from which the perfume comes. The dried plant as sold consists of the "withered stalks and ribs of leaves cohering in a bundle of yellowish-brown capillary fibres and consisting of a spike about the size of a small finger" (Sir W. Jones, *As. Res.*, II, 409); in appearance the whole plant is said to look like the tail of an ermine. It grows in the Himalayas. The extracted perfume is an oil, which was used by the Romans for anointing the head. Its great costliness is mentioned by Pliny. With regard to the exact meaning of the pistike, in the New Testament, there is much difference of opinion: "pure" and "liquid" are both given in margin, but it has also been suggested among other things that this was a local name, that it comes from the Latin *spicata* or from *pisita*, the Sanskrit name of the spikenard plant. The question is an open one: either "genuine" or "pure" is favored by most commentators.- E. W. G. Masterman

See **R K Harrison's** in depth description of **spikenard** in his book [Healing Herbs in the Bible, page 48 \(BORROW\)](#).

**Wikipedia** - **Spikenard**, also called **nard**, **nardin**, and **muskroot**, is a class of aromatic amber-colored [essential oil](#) derived from [Nardostachys jatamansi](#), a [flowering plant](#) in the [honeysuckle](#) family which grows in the [Himalayas](#) of [Nepal](#), [China](#), and [India](#). The oil has been used over centuries as a [perfume](#), a [traditional medicine](#), or in religious ceremonies across a wide territory from India to Europe. Historically, the name *nard* has also referred to essential oils derived from other species including the closely related [valerian](#) genus, as well as [Spanish lavender](#); these cheaper, more common plants have been used in perfume-making, and sometimes to [adulterate](#) true spikenard.

**Gilbrant** - Classical Greek Nardos refers to a fragrant and very valuable oil used as a perfume and for the anointing of important guests and persons. It was extracted from the *Nardostachys Jatamansi* plant which was found in the Himalayan mountains. In the classical Greek nardos is used in reference both to the plant and to the oil from the plant. The Septuagint uses the word in the sense of the oil or perfume only (Song of Solomon 1:12; 4:13,14). In the 4:14 passage it is mentioned in a list of some of the other most valued ancient aromatics. The two references in the New Testament (Mark 14:3 and John 12:3) refer also to the oil or perfume from the plant. In these passages great emphasis is given to the extreme value of the oil that was used to anoint Jesus. Obviously, it was of great value. The oil was so expensive because of the distance it had to be transported (from the Himalayan mountains), the difficulty of its transportation, the further difficulty of its preservation, and also because Jesus was anointed with the oil in its unadulterated form. According to R.K. Harrison, "The best spikenard was imported from India in scaled alabaster boxes, which were opened only on very special occasions" ("Nard," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 3:490f.). ([Complete Biblical](#)



COMPARISON OF JESUS' ANOINTING IN THREE GOSPELS			
	John 12:1-8+	Matthew 26:6-13	Mark 14:1-9+
Time Before Passover	6 days Jn 12:1+	None	2 days Mk 14:1+
Town	Bethany Jn 12:1+	Bethany Mt 26:6	Bethany Mk 14:3+
Home	no home mentioned Jn 12:1+	home of Simon the leper Mt 26:6	home of Simon the leper Mk 14:3+
Name of one anointing	Mary Jn 12:3+	A woman Mt 26:7	A woman Mk 14:3+
Perfume	Very Costly Pure Nard Jn 12:3+	Very Costly Mt 26:7	Very Costly Pure Nard Jn 14:3+
Container	--	Alabaster Vial Mt 26:7	Alabaster Vial Broke Mk 14:3+
Amount	Pound Jn 12:2+	--	--
Value	300 Denarii Jn 12:5+	High Price Mt 26:9	300 Denarii Mk 14:5+
Proposed Purpose	Sold...given to poor Jn 12:5+	Sold...given to poor Mt 26:8	Sold...given to poor Mk 14:5+
Conclusion	--	Why this waste? Mt 26:8	Wasted Mk 14:4+
Persons Reacting	Judas Iscariot Jn 12:4-6+	Disciples indignant: waste Mt 26:8	Some indignant: waste Mk 14:4+
Where Anointed	Anointed feet Jn 12:3+	Poured on His Head Mt 26:7	Poured over His head Mk 14:3+
Jesus' Words	Let her alone Jn 12:7+	Why bother the woman Mt 26:10	Let her alone. Why bother her Mk 14:6+

<b>Rationale</b>	Poor you have with you always Jn 12:8+	Poor you have with you always have Mt 26:11	Poor you always have & can do them good Mk 14:6+
<b>Woman's Purpose</b>	Preparation for burial Jn 12:7+	Prepared Me for burial Mt 26:12	Done a good deed to Jesus Mk 14:6+
<b>Woman's Renown/Reward</b>	--	Woman's act remembered wherever Gospel preached Mt 26:13	Woman's deed be memory wherever Gospel preached Mk 14:9+

Note that the similarities of the three accounts are highlighted in red. Even many of the differences can be explained. E.g., name of the one anointing named Mary and then referred to as woman is easily resolved. The location of the anointing in Simon the Leper would still fit John's description because he says Jesus went to Bethany but does not specifically say he went to a home.

**Grant Osborne** adds "There are two issues related to this account that need to be addressed: (1) harmonizing the Gospel accounts and (2) the chronology of the event....The story in Mt 26:6-13 and Mk 14:3-9 has some interesting differences (the home of Simon the leper, an unnamed woman who breaks the jar and anoints Jesus' head), but the similarities are far greater, and as the discussion below will show, the differences can be reasonably harmonized. These are the same account, so historically Jesus was anointed twice—first, the one in Luke and second the one reported in the other three Gospels....As to the second issue (CHRONOLOGY), the story in Matthew and Mark occurs after the Triumphal Entry, while the one here in John occurs before that event. However, this is only a problem if we demand that the Gospels follow a strictly chronological pattern. Actually, this is a modern development, and ancient historians did not do so. It has long been realized that the Gospel writers often arranged their material topically, especially the Synoptics (cf. Blomberg 1987). It is generally agreed that John probably has the correct order (he tends to have a more chronological arrangement, so Coakley 1988) and that Matthew and Mark place it where they do in order to contrast the woman's worshipful act with Judas's betrayal (cf. Carson, Blomberg 2001, Keener). (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**THOSE IN FAVOR OF ONE ANOINTING DESCRIBED IN ALL THREE ACCOUNTS** - John MacArthur, Grant Osborne, Edwin Blum (Bible Knowledge Commentary, Tom Constable, J C Ryle, A B Bruce, [Rodney A Whitacre](#) (IVP Commentary), Warren Wiersbe, William Cook (Focus on the Bible), NIV Study Bible, Reformation Study Bible, ESV Study Bible, J Vernon McGee, C L Blomberg, H. Ridderbos, William MacDonald (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#)),

**THOSE OPPOSED** - Gotquestions.org, John Phillips

NOTE: I AM SURE THERE ARE OTHERS, BUT IN MY CURSORY SURVEY OF THIS ISSUE, IT SEEMS THAT BY FAR MOST WRITERS FAVOR THE FACT THAT THE ANOINTINGS ARE PARALLEL IN JOHN, MATTHEW AND MARK.

I will admit I was extremely surprised to find Charles Swindoll also included Luke's account as parallel with John, Matthew and Mark. He is in the minority on that unusual interpretation! [See discussion of this interpretation.](#)

**Here is an excellent discussion for Third Millenium ministries an excellent, conservative resource.**

**QUESTION** - Atheists point to these two different renderings of the anointing of Jesus and state that the Bible is unreliable. In one Jesus' head is anointed, in the other his feet. In one it is an unnamed woman, and in the other it is Mary.

**ANSWER** - Matthew 26:6-7 While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

Luke 7:36-38 When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisees house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisees house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

There is no discrepancy. **These are not the same events.** Hendriksen and Kistemaker maintain:

It is claimed by many interpreters that, in describing the beautiful deed of Mary, the evangelist borrowed from Luke 7:36-50, and that the Mary mentioned in John 12:3 is the same as the sinful woman of Luke 7; or, that, while the two events are distinct, the author of the Fourth Gospel got his sources mixed and simply added to the story which he had found in Matthew 26:6-13 and Mark 14:39 the detail concerning the wiping of Jesus feet, which feature he had found in Luke 7.

### Compare the Accounts

In Luke:

- (1) The Occasion: The dinner was in all probability occasioned by the desire of a certain unfriendly Pharisee to examine this famous rabbi, perhaps in order to confirm his suspicions with respect to Jesus. Note the unfriendly manner in which he treated the Lord. See Luke 7:44-46.
- (2) The Place: The house of a Pharisee.
- (3) The Main Female Character: A woman who was in the city, a sinner. Even according to Luke, this woman was not Mary the sister of Martha, for these sisters are subsequently introduced as new personages (in Luke 10:38-39).
- (4) The Act: This woman wept. Her tears dropped on Jesus' feet. She then proceeded to wipe off these tears. She also kissed and anointed them.
- (5) The Result: Jesus sharply rebuked the Pharisee. He praised the woman and dismissed her with a friendly and encouraging word.

In John

- (1) The Occasion: The dinner is in all probability occasioned by the desire of a group at Bethany friendly to Jesus to honor him and to express their gratitude.
- (2) The Place: The house of Simon the leper, according to Matthew 26:6.
- (3) The Main Female Character: Mary of Bethany, a devout disciple of Jesus. She is mentioned in connection with her sister Martha and her brother Lazarus.
- (4) The Act: Mary did not weep. She did not wet Jesus' feet with her tears. She anointed these feet with ointment and then wiped off the excess ointment. It is clear, therefore, that even the detail concerning the wiping of the feet is completely different in the two accounts. '

(5) The Result: Jesus rebuked Judas Iscariot for criticizing Mary. He defended Mary's deed in the light of its purpose.

So, the anointing of Jesus recounted in Luke 7:36-50 is a different incident from this anointing by Mary, which is related also in Matthew 26:6-12 and Mark 14:39.

## Reference:

Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953-2001). Vol. 1-2: New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to John. (John 12:3). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

Answer by [Dr. Joseph R. Nally, Jr.](#)

SOURCE: [Third Millennium Ministries - an excellent, conservative resource](#)

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**Dave Guzik** - "The life of Mary is painted for us, in three memorable pictures, in each of which she is at the feet of Jesus." (Eerdman)

- Luke 10:39: Mary sat at Jesus' feet and learned
- John 11:32: Mary fell at Jesus' feet and surrendered
- John 12:3: Mary anointed Jesus' feet and honored Jesus

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## WORSHIP: ACT OF AWE AND ADORATION

Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. John 12:3

Worship: The act of centering one's attention on another worthy to receive it.

Mary, the sister of Lazarus, had good reason to adore Jesus. After all, he had raised her brother from the dead. But how could she turn her awe and adoration into action?

In his nineteenth-century masterpiece *The Suffering Savior*, German preacher F. W. Krummacher portrays Mary's worship.

## WALK WITH F. W. KRUMMACHER

"The Lord has just placed himself at the table when Mary approaches. She feels impelled to display to him her inmost soul and to manifest her devout attachment to him.

"But how is she to do this? Words seem too poor. She has precious little to give.

"But what she has is an alabaster vessel of pure oil of spikenard, much valued. She brings it with her.

"With the utmost reverence she approaches her divine friend, breaks the vessel, spreads the spikenard on his head and feet, then humbly bends down and wipes the latter with her loosened tresses.

"In this affectionate act, she demonstrates a rare degree of devotion. She desires to worship him. He is always in her thoughts as her sole delight and the supreme object of her affections—all of which she expresses in the act of anointing."

## WALK CLOSER TO GOD

Why would Mary willingly go to such lengths—in terms of cost and inconvenience—to magnify her Savior? And why would countless others like her do the same?

In short, why is Jesus worthy of your reverence and worship?

Go back to Calvary. Think of what was broken and poured out for you there.

Then come and pour out your richest offering of praise upon him. He is worthy! (See [Once a Day - Walk with Jesus](#))

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While John does not record Mary's breaking of the alabaster vial, the parallel account in Mark 14:3 does and this breaking allowed her to pour some of the perfume on His feet. Be blessed as you listen to [Broken and Spilled out](#) a beautiful song by Steve Green

One day a plain village woman  
Driven by love for her Lord  
Recklessly poured out a valuable essence  
Disregarding the scorn  
And once it was broken and spilled out  
A fragrance filled all the room  
Like a pris'ner released from his shackles

Like a spirit set free from the tomb

Broken and spilled out  
Just for love of you Jesus  
My most precious treasure  
Lavished on Thee  
Broken and spilled out  
And poured at Your feet  
In sweet abandon  
Let me be spilled out  
And used up for Thee

Lord You were God's precious treasure  
His loved and His own perfect Son  
Sent here to show me  
The love of the Father  
Just for love it was done  
And though You were perfect and holy  
You gave up Yourself willingly  
You spared no expense for my pardon  
You were used up and wasted for me

Broken and spilled out  
Just for love of me Jesus  
God's most precious treasure  
Lavished on me  
You were broken and spilled out  
And poured at my feet  
In sweet abandon Lord  
You were spilled out and used up for Me

In sweet abandon, let me be spilled out  
And used up for Thee

**THOUGHT** - HOW EXTRAVAGANT IS YOUR DEVOTION TO JESUS CHRIST?  
BROKEN AND SPILLED OUT?

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**QUESTION** - [What is the significance of Jesus being anointed by a woman with expensive perfume?](#)

**ANSWER** - All four gospels present an account of Jesus being anointed by a woman with a costly jar of perfume (Matthew 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; Luke 7:36–50; John 12:1–8). Matthew and Mark relate the same event but do not give the woman's name; Luke tells of a different woman, also anonymous, on an earlier occasion; and, in yet another event, the woman in John is identified as Mary of Bethany (John 11:2), sister to Martha and Lazarus. To understand the significance of Jesus being anointed on these three occasions, we'll look at each account separately and then compare and contrast them in conclusion.

The anointing of Jesus in Matthew takes place two days before Passover in the town of Bethany at [Simon the leper's](#) home: "Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table" (Matthew 26:6–7ESV).

Matthew focuses on the anointing of Jesus as a teaching episode for the disciples, who react with anger because of the woman's wasteful extravagance. But Jesus defends her, saying, "She has done a beautiful thing to me" (Matthew 26:10). Christ explains that the anointing is to prepare His body for burial and that the woman's act of love will forever be remembered wherever the good news is preached.

Mark tells the same story in similar terms, with an anonymous woman with an [alabaster box](#) interrupting a meal in Simon the leper's home to anoint the head of Jesus with expensive perfume. Again, the woman's critics describe her gift as excessive, complaining that it could have been sold for more than a year's wages (Mark 14:5). But Jesus receives the woman's gift as a selfless act of love and devotion—an appropriate way to honor the Messiah. Jesus reveals that He will not be with them much longer, which references His impending death and burial.

Both Matthew and Mark's accounts emphasize the prophetic significance of the anointing of Jesus, alluding to His death and burial. There may also be an implication of Jesus' kingship, since, in the Old Testament, the anointing of the head was often associated with the dedication of kings (1 Samuel 9:15—10:1; 16:12—13; 1 Kings 1:38—40).

In Luke's account of a similar, yet different, instance, Jesus uses the occasion of being anointed to tell a parable about forgiveness (Luke 7:39—50). About a year before His death, Jesus was dining in the home of [Simon the Pharisee](#), (ED: SIMON WAS A COMMON JEWISH NAME) who had arrogantly neglected to extend the customary respect and hospitality to his guest, while a sinful woman anoints Jesus' feet, lavishing her love and gratefulness upon Jesus.

In John's gospel, Lazarus' sister [Mary](#) is the woman who anoints Jesus with a high-priced perfume at a dinner in Bethany. The story is similar to those in the other gospels, although this anointing takes place six days before Passover, and Judas is named as the disciple who objects to the "waste." On this occasion, "Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair"(John 12:3NLT). Jesus defends Mary from Judas's criticism by pointing out the unique opportunity Mary had: "You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me" (John 12:8).

Mary's anointing again points to Christ's identity as Messiah-King, but it also points to His humble position as Servant-King. When Mary anoints Jesus' feet and then wipes them with her hair, she foreshadows Jesus' actions at the upcoming Last Supper when the Lord washes the disciples' feet and teaches them how to love one another through sacrificial, humble service (John 13:1—20).

In each account, a woman pours out a precious and costly perfume in an extravagant act of worship. The three women who anointed Jesus recognized Christ's unequaled value and expressed their gratitude with unreserved love and devotion. Two anointings of Jesus happen during the week of Passover and are linked with His imminent death and burial. The earlier anointing, in Luke's account, is in the middle of Jesus' ministry in Galilee and draws a different lesson on forgiveness and love.

In each case, the woman's actions signal more than she knows. But, although she may not fully comprehend the messianic significance of her anointing, each woman had come to appreciate Christ's worth more than anyone else at the table.

Jesus Christ is God's anointed [Messiah](#). The word *Messiah* means "anointed one" and derives directly from the Hebrew word for "anointed." *Christ* comes from the Greek word [Christos](#), also meaning "anointed one." Thus, *Christ* is the Greek equivalent to *Messiah*. When Jesus receives the Holy Spirit at His baptism, He is "anointed" by God in preparation for His life's work (Luke 3:22; cf. Acts 10:38; Luke 4:18). On three separate occasions, Jesus is anointed with fragrant ointment in His work as the Savior, the King of heaven who was in preparation to die to save His people. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [What is spikenard in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Spikenard was an expensive perfume mentioned in the Song of Solomon 1:12; 4:13—14 and in the gospels' accounts of women anointing Jesus (Mark 14:3; John 12:3). The word *spikenard* is found in the King James Version; other translations simply say "pure nard."

Spikenard had a strong, distinctive aroma, similar to an essential oil, that clings to skin and hair and continues to give off its heady perfume. It was also thought to have medicinal properties. According to Eastman's Bible Dictionary, spikenard "is the root of an Indian plant, the *Nardostachys jatamansi*, of the family of Valerianaceae, growing on the Himalaya mountains. It is distinguished by its having many hairy spikes shooting out from one root." The ointment prepared from the root was highly valued. Spikenard symbolized the very best in ancient cultures the way that "Tiffany diamond" or the "gold standard" does to us.

Spikenard had a unique fragrance, and the presence of its aroma was an indication that the very best had been offered. In the Song of Solomon, spikenard is mentioned in reference to the love between bride and groom. In Song of Solomon 1:12, the bride says, "While the king was at his table, my perfume spread its fragrance." Those words imply that, despite all other fragrances in the room, only his bride's would matter to the groom. The presence of spikenard represented their passion for each other and their desire to have only the best define their love.

When [Mary of Bethany](#) broke her [alabaster jar](#) of spikenard (John 12:3) and bathed the feet of Jesus with the oil, she, too, wanted only the best to define her love for Him. It has been speculated that this jar may have been Mary's dowry or her inheritance. In other words, this jar of spikenard ointment may have been all she had of value, and she poured it out on Him. Her extravagant gift is a picture of the kind of offering expected of each of us. Only the best was worthy of her Lord, and she was willing to give everything as an act of worship. The same should be true of us (see Numbers 18:29).

When Judas rebuked Mary for wasting such a precious ointment (John 12:4—5), Jesus silenced him: "Leave her alone. . . . It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial" (John 12:7). Only Jesus truly understood what He was saying.

He knew that in a few days He would be arrested, tried, and crucified. It may well have been that, as He felt the whip lacerate His flesh, as He felt the nails pierce His hands and feet, He could also inhale the fragrance of that gift of spikenard and remember why He was doing this. Mary's gift may have strengthened and encouraged Him, even throughout His horrific ordeal, as its strong scent still clung to His skin. Mary had not known it at the time she offered her valuable gift, but she was the first to anoint the Son of God as He became no longer simply their teacher but the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of the world (John 1:29; 2 Corinthians 5:12). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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### **Oswald Chambers - Have you ever been carried away for Him?**

She hath wrought a good work on Me. Mark 14:6.

If human love does not carry a man beyond himself, it is not love. If love is always discreet, always wise, always sensible and calculating, never carried beyond itself, it is not love at all. It may be affection, it may be warmth of feeling, but it has not the true nature of love in it.

Have I ever been carried away to do something for God not because it was my duty, nor because it was useful, nor because there was anything in it at all beyond the fact that I love Him? Have I ever realized that I can bring to God things which are of value to Him, or am I mooning round the magnitude of His Redemption whilst there are any number of things I might be doing? Not Divine, colossal things which could be recorded as marvellous, but ordinary, simple human things which will give evidence to God that I am abandoned to Him? Have I ever produced in the heart of the Lord Jesus what Mary of Bethany produced?

There are times when it seems as if God watches to see if we will give Him the abandoned tokens of how genuinely we do love Him. Abandon to God is of more value than personal holiness. Personal holiness focuses the eye on our own whiteness; we are greatly concerned about the way we walk and talk and look, fearful lest we offend Him. Perfect love casts out all that when once we are abandoned to God. We have to get rid of this notion—'Am I of any use?' and make up our minds that we are not, and we may be near the truth. It is never a question of being of use, but of being of value to God Himself. When we are abandoned to God, He works through us all the time.

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### **Stephen Olford - According to Your Word**

"Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard,[and] anointed the feet of Jesus." – John 12:3

This act of Mary expresses three things:

Her Faith. Faith had revealed to her that Jesus was none other than the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world. Thus, she took the pound of oil, breaking it upon Him in anticipation of His atoning death.

Her Hope. Hope had carried her beyond death and the grave. Had she thought that Christ would not rise, she would have kept the oil until the burying for embalming.

Her Love. Above her faith and hope shines forth her love in this act. For in that expensive gift was expressed her unstinted, unreserved love. Love is only measured by the sacrificial gift; and the breaking of the vessel of spikenard upon Him meant the sacrifice of her all. No wonder the room was filled!

O, that my life would be as Mary's oil –  
a sacrificial, unreserved gift to my Lord.

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**See devotional by Rick Renner - [When Mary Brought Jesus A Lavishly Expensive Gift](#)** John 12:3

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### **Vance Havner - Do What You Can**

He had found a little box in the attic. With his crayons he had tried to make it more presentable. Inside he had placed a cut-out Santa Claus and a larger Santa of his own drawing. He had scrawled "Season's Greetings" for a touch of dignity. Then he had wrapped it in a manner all his own, with plenty of seals all over and a big yellow ribbon tied all around.

It wouldn't bring much on sale, but no one could buy it from me, because it was the expression of a little boy's love and, oh, so welcome!

He had done what he could. Which sets me thinking of the woman who anointed Jesus. "She hath done what she could." Do not let not being able to do it better keep you from doing what you can. Bring to the Saviour such as you have, the best you have, all you have. He will receive it. It may seem a poor little thing to others, but if it is the love gift of your heart, it will be precious in His sight.



Do what you can.

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### [The Coffee-Bean Bowl](#)

We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ. 2 Corinthians 2:15-

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 12:1-7

I'm not a coffee drinker, but one sniff of coffee beans brings me a moment of both solace and wistfulness. When our teenage daughter Melissa was making her bedroom uniquely hers, she filled a bowl with coffee beans to permeate her room with a warm, pleasant scent.

It's been nearly two decades since Melissa's earthly life ended in a car accident at age seventeen, but we still have that coffee-bean bowl. It gives us a continual, aromatic remembrance of Mell's life with us.

Scripture also uses fragrances as a reminder. Song of Songs refers to fragrances as a symbol of love between a man and a woman (see 1:3; 4:11, 16). In Hosea, God's forgiveness of Israel is said to be "fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon" (Hosea 14:6). And Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet, which caused the house of Mary and her siblings to be "filled with the fragrance of the perfume" (John 12:3), pointed ahead to Jesus' death (see v. 7).

The idea of fragrance can also help us be mindful of our testimony of faith to those around us. Paul explained it this way: "We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing" (2 Corinthians 2:15).

Just as the scent of coffee beans reminds me of Melissa, may our lives produce a scent of Jesus and His love that reminds others of their need of Him. By: Dave Branon (Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How can you be "the fragrance of Christ" to someone today? How has your life caused others to sense the presence of the Savior?

Dear heavenly Father, help me to pass along an aroma of life that makes others know I represent You.

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### [She Did What She Could](#)

She did what she could. Mark 14:8

Today's Scripture & Insight: Mark 14:3-9

When her friends say thoughtless or outrageous things on social media, Charlotte chimes in with gentle but firm dissent. She respects the dignity of everyone, and her words are unfailingly positive.

A few years ago she became Facebook friends with a man who harbored anger toward Christians. He appreciated Charlotte's rare honesty and grace. Over time his hostility melted. Then Charlotte suffered a bad fall. Now housebound, she fretted over what she could do. About that time her Facebook friend died and then this message arrived from his sister: "[Because of your witness] I know he's now experiencing God's complete and abiding love for him."

During the week in which Christ would be killed, Mary of Bethany anointed Him with expensive perfume (John 12:3; Mark 14:3). Some of those present were appalled, but Jesus applauded her. "She has done a beautiful thing to me," He said. "She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial" (Mark 14:6-8).

"She did what she could." Christ's words take the pressure off. Our world is full of broken, hurting people. But we don't have to worry about what we can't do. Charlotte did what she could. So can we. The rest is in His capable hands. By: Tim Gustafson (Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, help us not to define our self-worth by what we do for You, but by what You have done for us. Show us how we can show Your love to others.

For further study, read [Being Jesus Online at discoveryseries.org/q0737](http://discoveryseries.org/q0737).

*Do thy duty, that is best;  
leave unto the Lord the rest.*  
--Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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### [Let Down Your Hair](#)



Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. John 12:3

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 12:1–8

Shortly before Jesus was crucified, a woman named Mary poured a bottle of expensive perfume on His feet. Then, in what may have been an even more daring act, she wiped His feet with her hair (John 12:3). Not only did Mary sacrifice what may have been her life's savings, she also sacrificed her reputation. In first-century Middle Eastern culture, respectable women never let down their hair in public. But true worship is not concerned about what others think of us (2 Sam. 6:21–22). To worship Jesus, Mary was willing to be thought of as immodest, perhaps even immoral.

Some of us may feel pressured to be perfect when we go to church so that people will think well of us. Metaphorically speaking, we work hard to make sure we have every hair in place. But a healthy church is a place where we can let down our hair and not hide our flaws behind a façade of perfection. In church, we should be able to reveal our weaknesses to find strength rather than conceal our faults to appear strong.

Worship doesn't involve behaving as if nothing is wrong; it's making sure everything is right—right with God and with one another. When our greatest fear is letting down our hair, perhaps our greatest sin is keeping it up. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Search me, God, and know my heart. . . . See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23–24.

Whenever we gather to worship  
Let's not hide behind a façade;  
Instead, let's be open and honest  
With others and also with God.  
—Sper

Our worship is right when we are right with God.  
Our worship is right only when we are right with God and with others.

**John 12:4 But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said,**

BGT John 12:4 λ γει δ ο δας σκαρι της ες [ κ ] τ ν μαθητ ν α το , μ λλων α τ ν παραδιδ ναι·

KJV John 12:4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

NET John 12:4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was going to betray him) said,

CSB John 12:4 Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot (who was about to betray Him), said,

ESV John 12:4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said,

NIV John 12:4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected,

NLT John 12:4 But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said,

NRS John 12:4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said,

NJB John 12:4 Then Judas Iscariot -- one of his disciples, the man who was to betray him--said,

NAB John 12:4 Then Judas the Iscariot, one (of) his disciples, and the one who would betray him, said,

YLT John 12:4 Therefore saith one of his disciples -- Judas Iscariot, of Simon, who is about to deliver him up -

-

MIT John 12:4 Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples—the one about to betray him—said,

- **one:** 1Sa 17:28,29 Ec 4:4
- **Judas Iscariot:** Jn 6:70,71 13:2,26 18:2-5 Mt 10:4 Lu 6:16
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A FALSE DISCIPLE COMES "CLEAN"

To come clean is an idiom meaning to be completely honest or keep nothing hidden. Judas was coming clean by not keeping his unclean heart under cover. Judas was being completely honest about his complete dishonesty. Of course, at this time only Jesus recognized Judas' showing his true colors, for the other 11 disciples were deceived by him until he betrays Jesus in the Garden!

**But** (de), a term of contrast, introduces one of the more dramatic contrasts in the Bible - Mary's selflessness contrasted with Judas' selfishness!

**Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples** ([mathetes](#)), **who was intending** ([mello](#)) **to betray** ([paradidomi](#) - deliver or hand over) **Him, said** - Now we go from pure devotion to pure deception, which is not surprising for Judas' spiritual father was Satan, the master of deceit. It is sad that Judas sullies the name **disciple** which means learner, clearly a trait something Judas did not exhibit. Judas had a physical attachment to Jesus, but no spiritual attachment. He saw and heard supernatural things, but they did not affect his callous heart. It is always dangerous to be given much truth and continually refuse to respond to it, until eventually one can no longer even hear truth and begins to believe the lie! **Intending** ([mello](#)) **to betray** ([paradidomi](#)) **Him** more literally means he was about to deliver Jesus over to the enemy. Note that every time John mentions **Judas Iscariot** he refers to his betrayal (Jn 6:71; Jn 13:2, Jn 13:26-29; Jn 18:2-3, Jn 18:5, cf Mt. 26:25; 27:3; Mk 3:19; 14:10; Lk 6:16; 22:4,48; Acts 1:16). It is notable that in one dictionary of synonyms, "**Judas**" is listed as a synonym for treachery! (In fact see this list of some [42 synonyms for Judas](#)!)

**THOUGHT** - This section teaches clearly that **not** everyone who calls themselves a disciple of Jesus is a genuine blood bought, heaven bound disciple. You must test the tree by its fruits (Mt 7:17-20+). Apparently the fruit of Judas' "tree" looked [ostensibly](#) orthodox to the other 11 disciples, which serves to emphasize how difficult it can be to discern a "tare." (cf Mt 13:25-30+). But as we see in the case of Judas, the "rotten fruit" of a false disciple will eventually begin to give off a foul odor (so to speak)!

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**Judas** ([2455](#))(**loudas**) is translated as the tribe Judah (11), the betrayer Judas and other men with this name (32), and the half brother of Jesus, Jude(1). Note that loudas is also translated as "good guys" also Judah(11) and Jude(1). The first is the tribe Jesus was from and the second is Jesus' half brother!

**Judas 42v - Judah(11), Judas(32), Jude(1).** Matt. 1:2; Matt. 1:3; Matt. 2:6; Matt. 10:4; Matt. 13:55; Matt. 26:14; Matt. 26:25; Matt. 26:47; Matt. 27:3; Mk. 3:19; Mk. 6:3; Mk. 14:10; Mk. 14:43; Lk. 1:39; Lk. 3:30; Lk. 3:33; Lk. 6:16; Lk. 22:3; Lk. 22:47; Lk. 22:48; Jn. 6:71; Jn. 12:4; Jn. 13:2; Jn. 13:26; Jn. 13:29; Jn. 14:22; Jn. 18:2; Jn. 18:3; Jn. 18:5; Acts 1:13; Acts 1:16; Acts 1:25; Acts 5:37; Acts 9:11; Acts 15:22; Acts 15:27; Acts 15:32; Heb. 7:14; Heb. 8:8; Jude 1:1; Rev. 5:5; Rev. 7:5

**Iscariot** ([2469](#))(**iskariotes**) The meaning of this word is uncertain but usually taken to refer to a place, the village of Kerieth (Josh 15:25) in southern Judea. There are 11 uses of Iscariot in the NT and most uses are associated with a description of the fact that he was a betrayer of Jesus. Even in this verse, Satan entering him indicates he will soon carry out his devilish deed. **Stein on Iscariot** - The latter designation probably means *man (Is[h]) from [the town of] Karioth (cariot)*. This would make Judas a Judean and the only non-Galilean of the group.(NAC) **Guzik** writes "Others think the name Iscariot is linked to the word sicarius, meaning "assassin" – a connection to the Jewish zealots who carried out underground warfare against the Roman occupiers." (I think this supposition while intriguing is unlikely).

**Iscariot** - 11x in 11v - Matt. 10:4; Matt. 26:14; Mk. 3:19; Mk. 14:10; Lk. 6:16; Lk. 22:3; Jn. 6:71; Jn. 12:4; Jn. 13:2; Jn. 13:26; Jn. 14:22

**Intending** ([3195](#)) (**mello**) means to be about to do something, to be at the point of, to be impending, to be destined or likely to. To take place at a future point of time and so to be subsequent to another event. It indicates that something is about to be done with a strong probability in the present or the future. Mello is used of purpose, certainty, compulsion or necessity. When followed by a verb in the present infinitive (about 80x in the NT), it means "about to" as in "melle teleutan" which means "about to die" or "at the point of death." (Lk 7:2, Jn 4:47)

**Gingrich** 1. be about to, be on the point of Mk 13:4; Lk 7:2; 19:4; 22:23 ; Ac 12:6; 16:27; Ro 8:18; 1 Ti 1:16; 1 Pet 5:1; Rev 3:2, 16.—2. be destined, must Mt 17:12, 22; Jn 11:51; Ac 26:22; Gal 3:23; Heb 1:14; Rev 1:19.—3. intend Mt 2:13; Lk 10:1; Jn 6:15, 71; 7:35; Ac 17:31; 20:3, 7, 13.—4. the participle often means future, to come Mt 12:32; Ro 8:38; Eph 1:21; Col 2:17; 1 Ti 6:19; Hb 2:5; 13:14.—5. delay Ac 22:16. (BORROW [Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Friberg on mello** - (1) predominately with an infinitive following; (a) with the future infinitive = will certainly take

place, will come to pass (Acts 11.28); (b) with the aorist infinitive = be on the point of, be about to (Rev 3.2); be destined to, be inevitable (Gal 3.23); (c) with the present infinitive = be about to, be going to, begin to (Mk 13.4); as a future or as a periphrasis for settled futurity will, be going to (Heb 10.27); denoting intended action have in mind to, intend to, want to (Mt 2.13); denoting an action resulting from a divine decree be destined to, must, certainly will (Acts 26.22); (2) the present participle used absolutely to denote what is coming future, = to come, coming (Heb 2.5); neuter participle as a substantive, for an unlimited extent of time to come the future (1T 6.19); (3) as extending time because of indecision; Why do you delay? What are you waiting for? (Acts 22.16) (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Gilbrant** - Although the New Testament is not deterministic in a way that would violate an individual's free will, the New Testament uses *mellō* in a way that the degree of probability of something happening is so great that it can be spoken of as inevitable, such as "the glory which shall be revealed" (Romans 8:18; 1 Peter 5:1). When the disciples asked Jesus concerning the things which were to be fulfilled (Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7), there was no doubt that they would be fulfilled. *Mellō* may also denote an intended action: "Herod will seek the young child" (Matthew 2:13; see John 6:15). *Mellō* can also indicate an action that necessarily follows a divine decree: "Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them" (Matthew 17:12; see Matthew 17:22; Luke 9:44; or Acts 26:22 where the words of the prophets must come to pass). In one place in the New Testament *mellō* has the meaning "to delay": "And now what are you waiting for?" (Acts 22:16, NIV). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Mello** - 94v - **about(30), almost(1), am about(2), certainly(1), come(12), delay(1), future(1), going(19), intend(1), intending(8), later(1), must(1), next\*(1), point(1), propose(1), ready(1), things to come(3), will(6), will certainly(1), would(3), would live...thereafter(1), would certainly(1).** Matt. 2:13; Matt. 3:7; Matt. 12:32; Matt. 16:27; Matt. 17:12; Matt. 17:22; Matt. 20:17; Matt. 20:22; Matt. 24:6; Mk. 10:32; Mk. 13:4; Lk. 3:7; Lk. 7:2; Lk. 9:31; Lk. 9:44; Lk. 10:1; Lk. 13:9; Lk. 19:4; Lk. 19:11; Lk. 21:7; Lk. 21:36; Lk. 22:23; Lk. 24:21; Jn. 4:47; Jn. 6:6; Jn. 6:15; Jn. 6:71; Jn. 7:35; Jn. 11:51; Jn. 12:4; Jn. 14:22; Jn. 18:32; Acts 3:3; Acts 5:35; Acts 11:28; Acts 12:6; Acts 16:27; Acts 17:31; Acts 18:14; Acts 20:3; Acts 20:7; Acts 20:13; Acts 20:38; Acts 21:27; Acts 21:37; Acts 22:16; Acts 22:26; Acts 22:29; Acts 23:3; Acts 23:15; Acts 23:20; Acts 23:27; Acts 24:15; Acts 24:25; Acts 25:4; Acts 26:2; Acts 26:22; Acts 26:23; Acts 27:2; Acts 27:10; Acts 27:30; Acts 27:33; Acts 28:6; Rom. 4:24; Rom. 5:14; Rom. 8:13; Rom. 8:38; 1 Co. 3:22; Gal. 3:23; Eph. 1:21; Col. 2:17; 1 Thess. 3:4; 1 Tim. 1:16; 1 Tim. 4:8; 1 Tim. 6:19; Heb. 1:14; Heb. 2:5; Heb. 6:5; Heb. 8:5; Heb. 10:1; Heb. 10:27; Heb. 11:20; Heb. 13:14; 2 Pet. 1:12; 2 Pet. 2:6; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 3:2; Rev. 3:10; Rev. 3:16; Rev. 8:13; Rev. 10:4; Rev. 10:7; Rev. 12:4; Rev. 17:8

**Mello in the Septuagint** - Gen. 25:22; Gen. 43:25; Exod. 4:12; Job 3:8; Job 19:25; Job 26:2; Ps. 65:1; Prov. 15:18; Isa. 15:7; Isa. 28:24; Isa. 47:13; Isa. 48:6; Isa. 59:5; Jer. 29:10

**Betray** (hand over) ([3860](#) **paradidomi** from **para** = alongside, beside, to the side of, over to + **didomi** = to give) conveys the basic meaning of to give over from one's hand to someone or something, especially to give over to the power of another, exactly what Judas did to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. **Paradidomi** is used in legal parlance to describe handing someone into the custody of the police, authorities, etc. To deliver up one to custody, to be judged, condemned, punished, scourged, tormented, put to death.

**Paradidomi in Gospels** - Matt. 4:12; Matt. 5:25; Matt. 10:4; Matt. 10:17; Matt. 10:19; Matt. 10:21; Matt. 11:27; Matt. 17:22; Matt. 18:34; Matt. 20:18; Matt. 20:19; Matt. 24:9; Matt. 24:10; Matt. 25:14; Matt. 25:20; Matt. 25:22; Matt. 26:2; Matt. 26:15; Matt. 26:16; Matt. 26:21; Matt. 26:23; Matt. 26:24; Matt. 26:25; Matt. 26:45; Matt. 26:46; Matt. 26:48; Matt. 27:2; Matt. 27:3; Matt. 27:4; Matt. 27:18; Matt. 27:26; Mk. 1:14; Mk. 3:19; Mk. 4:29; Mk. 7:13; Mk. 9:31; Mk. 10:33; Mk. 13:9; Mk. 13:11; Mk. 13:12; Mk. 14:10; Mk. 14:11; Mk. 14:18; Mk. 14:21; Mk. 14:41; Mk. 14:42; Mk. 14:44; Mk. 15:1; Mk. 15:10; Mk. 15:15; Lk. 1:2; Lk. 4:6; Lk. 9:44; Lk. 10:22; Lk. 12:58; Lk. 18:32; Lk. 20:20; Lk. 21:12; Lk. 21:16; Lk. 22:4; Lk. 22:6; Lk. 22:21; Lk. 22:22; Lk. 22:48; Lk. 23:25; Lk. 24:7; Lk. 24:20; Jn. 6:64; Jn. 6:71; Jn. 12:4; Jn. 13:2; Jn. 13:11; Jn. 13:21; Jn. 18:2; Jn. 18:5; Jn. 18:30; Jn. 18:35; Jn. 18:36; Jn. 19:11; Jn. 19:16; Jn. 19:30; Jn. 21:20;

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#### QUESTION - [Who was Judas Iscariot?](#)

**ANSWER** - Judas Iscariot is typically remembered for one thing: his betrayal of Jesus. He was one of the twelve disciples who lived with and followed Jesus for three years. He witnessed Jesus' ministry, His teaching, and His many miracles. He was the treasurer for the group and used this trusted position to steal from their resources ([John 12:6](#)).

Judas was a common name in that era, and there are several other Judases mentioned in the New Testament. One of the other disciples was named Judas (John 14:22), and so was one of Jesus' own half-brothers (Mark 6:3). To differentiate, John

6:71 and John 13:26 refer to Christ's betrayer as "Judas, son of Simon Iscariot."

Scholars have several ideas about the derivation of the surname. One is that *iscariot* refers to Kerioth, a region or town in Judea. Another idea is that it refers to the Sicarii, a cadre of assassins among the Jewish rebels.

The possible association with the Sicarii allows for interesting speculation about [Judas' motives](#) for his betrayal, but the fact that he made a conscious choice to betray Jesus (Luke 22:48) remains the same. The surname Iscariot is useful, if for no other reason, in that it leaves no doubt about which Judas is being referred to.

Here are some of the facts we glean from key verses about Judas and his betrayal:

Money was important to Judas. As already mentioned, he was a thief, and, according to Matthew 26:13–15, the chief priests paid him "thirty silver coins" to betray the Lord.

Jesus knew from the very beginning what Judas Iscariot would do. Jesus told His disciples, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (John 6:70). And at the Last Supper, Jesus predicted His betrayal and identified the betrayer: "Jesus answered, 'It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.' Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon" (John 13:26).

Jesus said that Judas Iscariot was not "clean"; i.e., he had not been born again and was [not forgiven](#) of his sins (John 13:10–11). In fact, Judas was empowered to do what he did by the devil himself: "As soon as Judas took the bread [that Jesus had given him], Satan entered into him" (John 13:27).

The other disciples had no clue that Judas Iscariot harbored treacherous thoughts. When Jesus mentioned a betrayer in their midst, the other disciples worried that it was *they* who would prove disloyal (John 13:22). No one suspected Judas. He was a trusted member of the Twelve. Even when Jesus told Judas, "What you are about to do, do quickly," (John 13:27), and Judas left the Last Supper, the others at the table simply thought Judas had been sent to buy more food or to give something to charity (verses 28–29).

[Judas Iscariot betrayed the Lord with a kiss](#), perfectly in keeping with his brazen duplicity (Luke 22:47–48). After committing his atrocious act, Judas "was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders" (Matthew 27:3). But we learn that remorse does not equal repentance—rather than make amends or seek forgiveness, "he went away and hanged himself" (Matthew 27:5).

Judas Iscariot fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 41:9, "Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me" (cf. John 13:18). Yet Judas was fully responsible for his actions. Jesus said, "The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born" (Matthew 26:24).

Matthew 27:6–8 reports that the chief priests took the "blood money" from Judas and bought a potter's field as a place for burying foreigners (thus fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 11:12–13). Acts 1:18–19 continues the story of what happened after Judas' death and gives some additional information. Luke reports, "With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood." The additional detail we learn from Luke is that, after [Judas hanged himself](#), his dead body fell into the very field purchased with his ill-gotten gains.

Given the fact of Judas' close proximity to Jesus during three years of ministry, it is hard to imagine how he could follow through on such a dastardly betrayal. Judas' story teaches us to guard against small, gradual failings that gain strength and power in our lives and that could open the door to more deadly influences. His story is also a great reminder that appearances can be deceiving. Jesus taught, "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matthew 7:22–23). [GotQuestions.org](#)

#### **Related Resources:**

- [Why did Judas betray Jesus? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How did Judas die? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Was Judas Iscariot forgiven / saved? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why did Jesus choose Judas? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the significance of Judas betraying Jesus with a kiss? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the Gospel of Judas? | GotQuestions.org](#)

## John 12:5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?"

BGT John 12:5 δι τ το το τ μ ρον ο κ πρ θη τριακοσ ων δηναρ ων κα ὁ θη πτωχο ς;

KJV John 12:5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

NET John 12:5 "Why wasn't this oil sold for three hundred silver coins and the money given to the poor?"

CSB John 12:5 "Why wasn't this fragrant oil sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor?"

ESV John 12:5 "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?"

NIV John 12:5 "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages. "

NLT John 12:5 "That perfume was worth a year's wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor."

NRS John 12:5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?"

NJB John 12:5 'Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?'

NAB John 12:5 "Why was this oil not sold for three hundred days' wages and given to the poor?"

YLT John 12:5 'Wherefore was not this ointment sold for three hundred denaries, and given to the poor?'

MIT John 12:5 "Why was this perfume not sold for the equivalent of three hundred days' wages and the proceeds given to the poor?"

- **was:** Ex 5:8,17 Am 8:5 Mal 1:10-13 Mt 26:8 Mk 14:4 Lu 6:41
- **three hundred:** Jn 6:7 Mt 20:2 \*marg: Mk 14:5
- **and given:** Mt 26:9 Lu 12:33 18:22
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Mark 14:5+ "For this perfume might have been sold for over three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they were scolding her. (**Scolding** = embrimaomai used of the snorting of horses and thus moved to admonish sternly with irritation or even anger in expressing a reproof).

John 6:7+ Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little."

## SAD FIRST WORDS OF JUDAS

**Why was this perfume ([muron](#)) not sold for three hundred denarii ([denarion](#)) and given to poor ([ptochos](#)) people** - How sad and foreshadowing that these are the first words recorded of Judas speaking. They are a smokescreen hiding his malice and greed which will soon come into "full bloom!" When one compares the parallel passages, it seems very likely that Judas' criticism stirred the hearts of the other disciples, Mt 26:8 recording "the disciples were indignant (Greek pictures them snorting their indignations like an angry horse) when they saw this, and said "Why this waste?" What they seem to miss is that nothing we do for Jesus is a waste! **300 denarii** represented a whole year's work for a common laborer (cf. Mk 6:37), the number falling short of 365 days in a year because no money could be earned on the Sabbath or other holy days. Judas sold Jesus out for 30 pieces of silver, about a tenth of Mary's sacrificial gift!

*"It's a great compliment to be criticized by certain people."*

-- G. Campbell Morgan

**J C Ryle** says of Judas "That anyone could follow Christ as a disciple for three years, see all His miracles, hear all His teaching, receive at His hand repeated kindnesses, be counted an apostle, and yet prove rotten at heart in the end, all this at first sight appears incredible and impossible! Yet the case of Judas shows plainly that the thing can be. Few things, perhaps, are so little realized as the extent of the fall of man."

Contrast Judas' first words with his **last words** "saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" (Matthew 27:4) (Sinners have some tragic last words - BORROW Hebert Lockyer's interesting book [Last](#)

[words of saints and sinners](#)).

*Judas sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, or about 120 denarii.*

*Mary gave an offering of two-and-a-half times that amount in worship of the Lord!*

-- Lowell Johnson

**Wiersbe** says "Like David, Mary would not give to the Lord that which cost her nothing (2Sa 24:24)." [Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

What is sad is that Judas not only demeaned Mary's use of the perfume but far worse, he in effect also demeaned Jesus, Who Mary saw as worthy of such a sacrifice of extravagant love. While we can not be positive that it was Judas that objected first, it is very likely what happened. And this would also explain what we read in Mark 14:4+ where it was not just Judas but the disciples who "were indignantly *remarking* to one another, "Why has this perfume been wasted?" They began to talk amongst themselves but apparently not loudly which is why Matthew 26:10 says "Jesus, aware of this." In His omniscience (or perfect hearing), He detected their grumblings. On the other hand, Mark 14:5+ records "they were scolding her ([see above](#))" which would indicate audible reproof.

**THOUGHT**- Indeed it is very likely that the evil of Judas "infected" (or affected) the other disciples, which is a warning to all of us to carefully guard our words in the assembly (cf Ps 141:3) lest they affect and "infect" other saints adversely! This reminds us of Paul's admonition that a "little leaven leavens the whole lump" (1Co 5:6+, Gal 5:9+). As an aside, did you notice that Mary never tried to defend herself? And look Who came to her defense, her Covenant Defender. Beloved, He is also our Defender. [Listen to Marty Goetz's "He is My Defense"](#) based on Psalm 62 (recorded live with Temple Mount in the background).

Judas' hypocritical pious words **given to poor** are a lie (like his father Jn 8:44+) and are spoken to cloak his desire to have more funds to pilfer! He is a master deceiver as he chooses the Greek word for **poor** ([ptochos](#)) which speaks of those who were utterly destitute and dependent on others for support. He surely reasoned this would generate a compassionate response from Jesus. Of course, Judas does not know that Jesus, in His [omniscience](#), was fully aware of Judas' evil intentions (cf Jn 6:64+, Jn 6:70+).

*"Oh for a 1000 lives to be spent in service for Christ!"*

-- George Whitefield

**THOUGHT** - Mary was willing to be poor in her possessions in order to be rich in her devotion to Jesus. Are we not all convicted by Mary's extravagant love for Jesus?

**Spurgeon** - Observe that the sharpest critics of the works of good men are very often no better than they should be. This Judas is indignant with what Mary does, and claims that he cares for the poor, but all the while he is thief. Whenever a man is very quick, condemning gracious men and women, you may be quite as quick in condemning him. He is a Judas usually.....Somebody or other always seemed to object to Mary. If Martha does not do it, Judas will. To be found guilty of excess of love to Christ is such a blessed criminality that I wish we might be executed for it. It were sweet to be put to death for such a crime. It was that that Christ died of. He was found guilty of excess of love.

**Kostenberger** - Neither Mark (who obliquely refers to "some" [Mk 14:4]) nor Matthew (who speaks of "the disciples" [Mt 26:8]) reveals the identity of the persons objecting to the anointing. It is also John who alone adds the incriminating piece of information about Judas being a thief. The account of the anointing is, at its core, a tale of contrasts: Mary's lavish devotion to Jesus is set against the backdrop of the looming prospect of Judas's betrayal of his master. In another contrast, the man whom Jesus had raised from the dead, Lazarus, takes part in the dinner, while Jesus himself is anointed for burial. This is the time for devotion or antagonism toward Jesus to be displayed.

**J Vernon McGee** applies the lurid example of Judas - May I say to you today, the real test of a Christian, the hard-coin test, is the way he handles his finances. The real test of a church or a Christian organization is the way it handles its finances. Is the money used for the cause for which it was given, or is it shifted and used in some other way? (BORROW [Thru the Bible - John 11-21](#))

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**Daniel Akin** - The world, and sadly many in the church, will never have a problem with moderate, measured devotion to Christ. They will have little or no problem with too many possessions, too much wealth and a pursuit of a comfortable and convenient Christianity. But, walk away from a "real career" in athletics, business, medicine, law or real-estate and you will be marked as foolishness, living a "wasted life." Walk away from mom and dad and serve the Lord in an inner city in America among the poor and hurting and you will be deemed foolish and impractical. Walk away from family and friends and head out to the mission field among an unreached people group (7,055 as of 5-18-12) taking your small children with you and you will be chided as foolish, radical, even imbalanced in need of serious counseling (and maybe 6 even drugs!) Yes, you may be criticized here but in heaven you have a Master who applauds your love and devotion for Him! Paul puts it all in perspective does he not in Galatians 1:10+, "For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a slave of Christ." George Whitefield the evangelist of the 1st Great Awakening said, "Oh for a 1000 lives to be spent in service for Christ!"



However we must never forget, we only get one!

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**Denarius** (1220) **denarion** from Latin origin) denoted a Roman silver coin equivalent to a laborer's average daily wage. Here the specific name of the coin was retained in the translation, because not all coins in circulation in Palestine at the time carried the image of Caesar. ([Dictionary article](#)). See [ROMAN COINAGE](#) It was the practice of all new emperors to issue new coins with their own likeness stamped on the face. There is a sense in which the coin was considered to be the personal property of the king. It bore testimony to the rule of the king whose likeness it carried. The first thing that a conqueror would do would be to issue new coins with a new face. The silver denarius, weighing 3.8 grams, had been in use in the Roman world since 268 B.C. and continued to be used into the reign of L. Septimius Severus (A.D. 193–211). Its value is relative; it equaled approximately 1 day's wage during the New Testament period (Matthew 20:2,9,10,13)

**Poor** (4434) **ptochos** from **ptosso** = crouch, cringe, cower down or hide oneself for fear, a picture of one crouching and cowering like a beggar with a tin cup to receive the pennies dropped in!) is an adjective which describes one who crouches and cowers and is used as a noun to mean **beggar**. These poor were unable to meet their basic needs and so were forced to depend on others or on society. Classical Greek used the **ptochos** to refer to a person reduced to total destitution, who crouched in a corner begging. As he held out one hand for alms he often hid his face with the other hand, because he was ashamed of being recognized. **Ptochos** describes not simply honest poverty, and the struggle of the laboring man to make ends meet but also describes abject poverty, which has literally nothing and which is in imminent danger of real starvation.

**Ptochos - 35v** - Matt. 5:3; Matt. 11:5; Matt. 19:21; Matt. 26:9; Matt. 26:11; Mk. 10:21; Mk. 12:42; Mk. 12:43; Mk. 14:5; Mk. 14:7; Lk. 4:18; Lk. 6:20; Lk. 7:22; Lk. 14:13; Lk. 14:21; Lk. 16:20; Lk. 16:22; Lk. 18:22; Lk. 19:8; Lk. 21:3; Jn. 12:5; Jn. 12:6; Jn. 12:8; Jn. 13:29; Rom. 15:26; 2 Co. 6:10; 2 Co. 8:9; Gal. 2:10; Gal. 4:9; Jas. 2:2; Jas. 2:3; Jas. 2:5; Jas. 2:6; Rev. 3:17; Rev. 13:16

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**CALCULATING VALUE** - Efficiency is the relentless taskmaster that drives all our decisions, all our proposals, all parts of our life, said French philosopher and theologian Jacques Ellul. Efficiency (he called it by a special term, *la technique*), pervades the church as well as the corporation. Everything we do is justified by its calculated contribution to established goals. Thus the disciples were quite modern to protest the "waste" of valuable oil. Jesus alerts us that efficiency is an inadequate governor for at least one crucial encounter: people with God. In worship, let efficiency take its place, but not a primary place. In evangelism, use resources wisely but do not calculate cost-benefits as accountants are trained to do. What appears to be waste may well bring Jesus supreme enjoyment, and that matters most. (Life Application Bible Commentary)

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### Five Brooms - Do You Give to Jesus Like this Woman?

There was a man in a particular church, who opened a broom closet and found five brand new brooms. He hit the ceiling. He went to the one in charge of buying commodities for the church. And he said, "Whoever authorized the buying of five brand new brooms at one time? We're not even meeting our budget!

That's a waste of money!" And he was very angry. The man couldn't satisfy him, and finally, the man was in to the pastor's office to see the pastor. The pastor tried to pacify him. And the pastor said, "Well, I don't know. Maybe we use a lot of brooms! Maybe there was a sale on brooms. But don't fall out of fellowship over it." But the man never was satisfied, and he left the pastor's office in a huff!

After awhile, the pastor was having coffee with the church treasurer, and the pastor told the church treasurer about this. The church treasurer just smiled. And, "Ah," he said, "Pastor, I can understand that." He said, "That's easy for me to understand why he was so upset." Well, the pastor said, "Would you please explain it to me?" And the treasurer said to the pastor, "Well, how would you feel if you saw everything you had given to the church in the past year tied up in five brooms?"

Note the comment by Judas in John 12:4-6 that relates to Mark 14:3-9 and introduces the following illustration...I like the story of the young man whose habit of criticizing backfired on him. One evening, while waiting for a bus, he was standing with a crowd of people looking in the window of a taxidermist shop. In the center of the window was a large owl that attracted the attention of all who passed by. The self-appointed expert began to criticize the job done on it. "If I couldn't do better than that," he said pompously, "I'd find another business. Just look at it. The head is out of proportion, the pose of the body is unnatural, and the feet are pointed in the wrong direction." Just then the owl turned his head and gave the fellow a broad wink. The crowd laughed as the critic slicked away.

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**OVERCOMING OUR WEAKNESSES** The cynical attitude of Judas, described in John 12, stands in sharp contrast to that scene of surpassing loveliness presented by the adoring Mary anointing the feet of Jesus with her costly perfume. Judas had become a thief and a warped personality who could no longer see beauty even in an act of unselfish love.

I have often asked myself why Jesus made Judas treasurer for the Twelve. Undoubtedly our Lord had a good and loving purpose in doing so. Knowing that Judas had a tendency toward dishonesty the Lord Jesus gave him a position where he would be brought face to face with his weakness. Judas should have recognized his need of help and turned to the Lord with a humble petition for the necessary grace to overcome his weakness. Instead, he became increasingly greedy, gradually yielded to the temptation to steal, and finally betrayed the Lord for a paltry thirty pieces of silver.

God sometimes permits us to be tested in the very areas where we are weak, not because He desires us to fall into sin, but because He wants us to recognize our spiritual need and so turn to Him for aid. Whenever such trying situations arise, remember the truth of 1 Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not permit you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will, with the temptation, also make the way to escape." Be honest enough to admit your infirmities, depend upon God to help you, and someday in Glory you will be counted among the overcomers.

Are you halting and struggling, o'erpowered by sin?  
Full of evil enticements without and within?  
Lo, the Savior stands waiting to strengthen your soul,  
He will make you o'ercomer, and "ev'ry whit whole!"  
—Kirkpatrick, alt.

Temptation is the abrasive God uses to rub off the rust of our sinful self-sufficiency!

**John 12:6 Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.**

BGT John 12:6 ε πεν δ το το ο χ τι περ τ ν πτωχ ν μελεν α τ , λλ τι κλ πτης ν κα τ γλωσσ κομον χων τ βαλλ μενα β σταζειν.

KJV John 12:6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

NET John 12:6 (Now Judas said this not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief. As keeper of the money box, he used to steal what was put into it.)

CSB John 12:6 He didn't say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief. He was in charge of the money-bag and would steal part of what was put in it.

ESV John 12:6 He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.

NIV John 12:6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

NLT John 12:6 Not that he cared for the poor-- he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples' money, he often stole some for himself.

NRS John 12:6 (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.)

NJB John 12:6 He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he was in charge of the common fund and used to help himself to the contents.

NAB John 12:6 He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and held the money bag and used to steal the contributions.

YLT John 12:6 and he said this, not because he was caring for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and what things were put in he was carrying.

MIT John 12:6 He said this not because he had any compassion for the poor. He was an embezzler from the bag he carried that held the group's money.

- **not:** Jn 10:13 Ps 14:1 Pr 29:7 Eze 33:31 Ga 2:10 Jas 2:2,6
- **because:** Jn 10:8-10 2Ki 5:20-27 Ps 50:16-20 Mt 21:13 1Co 6:10
- **the money box:** Jn 13:29 2Ki 12:14,15 Ezra 8:24-34 2Co 8:19-21 1Th 5:22



- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

John 13:29 (THE ELEVEN TRUSTED JUDAS) For some were supposing, because Judas had the **money box**, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast"; or else, that he should give something to the poor.

## STENCH OF GREED

What a contrast in a room filled with the sweet odor of precious perfume to now see the stench of greed and avarice rear its ugly head.

**Now he said this, not because he was concerned ([melo](#)) about the poor ([ptochos](#)), but because he was a thief ([kleptes](#))** - John gives us a parenthetical explanation. Concern for the poor was a mark of a pious Jew, but in this case it was the hypocritical remark of a pilfering Jew! Judas hides his pathetic hypocrisy and his avarice under the mask of charity. He was a forerunner of the greedy prosperity gospel preachers of our day, who need to repent lest they end up like Judas! The Greek word for **thief** ([kleptes](#)) gives us our English word "kleptomaniac," which is a person who is a compulsive thief, a perfect description of Judas who held the bag of money and had been lifting, robbing, and pilfering from the bag all along. It is notable that of all the Gospel writers, John has the harshest statements about Judas (cf Jn 6:70).

**Jones** remarks, "It is not the concern of the philanthropist you have here, but the rage of a disappointed thief, parading itself as the concern of a philanthropist."

**and as he had the money box ([glossokomon](#)), he used to pilfer ([bastazo](#) - carry away, purloin) what was put into it** - Judas was an embezzling disciple. **Pilfer** ([bastazo](#)) is in the imperfect tense which pictures Judas repeatedly dipping his hand in the money pot! **Tasker** says [bastazo](#) means both carry and carry off. Judas did both! This "little" sin would soon lead to the greatest sin every committed since Adam sinned! Sin by its "sinister" (pun) nature usually gives birth to other sins, which is why quick confession and repentance is so important!

If we compare John's version of Jesus' anointing with the parallel accounts in Matthew 26:6-13 and Mark 14:1-9, these latter accounts would strongly support the premise that it was after the "wasting of the perfume" episode that Judas "went off to the chief priests in order to betray Him to them," (Mk 14:10-11+, cf Mt 26:14-16)

**THOUGHT**- One other point to make is that while Satan had not yet entered into Judas (Jn 13:27+) to "inspire" him to betray Jesus for money, it is almost certain that Judas' greed here in John 12 opened a crack in the door of his heart for Satan to enter in! Sin is deceitful and none of us can be sure exactly how far or where an initial unconfessed sin will take us (cf Pr 28:13+, Nu 32:23b+). The following little ditty is all too true, so if you are reading this note and think "Never me," then you need to read and heed Paul's command in 1Co 10:12+ "Therefore let him who thinks he stands **take heed** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#) - [blepo](#) - continually keep your eyes wide open!!!) that he does not fall." (See also Deceitfulness of Sin, Are You Entangled? and Backsliding)

*Sin will take you further than you ever wanted to stray!  
Cost you more than you ever dreamed you would pay!  
Keep you longer than you ever thought you would stay!*

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**Thief** (2812) [kleptes](#) from **klépto** = steal; kleptomaniac) is a stealer or thief who acts with stealth or subterfuge. The **kleptes** steals by fraud and in secret (Mt 24:43; Jn 12:6) whereas the robber or [lestes](#) steals by violence and openly. The NT uses **kleptes** in a figurative sense to describe the false teachers and deceivers who "steal" men away from the truth. The Fourth Gospel's discourse on the Good Shepherd opens with a description of a prospective sheepstealer as **kleptes kai lestes**, i.e., using stealth or force as required to get into the sheepfold, and not the proper entrance (Jn. 10:1). Judas, who pilfered money, was a **kleptes** (Jn. 12:6); Barabbas, who was implicated in violence, was a [lestes](#) (Jn. 18:40).

**Kleptes - 16v** - Matt. 6:19; Matt. 6:20; Matt. 24:43; Lk. 12:33; Lk. 12:39; Jn. 10:1; Jn. 10:8; Jn. 10:10; Jn. 12:6; 1 Co. 6:10; 1 Thess. 5:2; 1 Thess. 5:4; 1 Pet. 4:15; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15

**Money box** (1101) ([glossokomon](#) from **glossa** = tongue + **komeo** - to keep, preserve) originally meant a small case in which mouthpieces were kept for wind instruments. The root word [glossa](#) alludes the fact that it was a box in which to keep the tongues or

reeds used in playing wind instruments. Then it came to mean any small box, and especially a money box. **Vincent** adds **glossokomon** was used for a coffin (**ED**: Judas' coveting would soon lead to a coffin!). Josephus applies it to the coffer in which the golden mice and emeralds were preserved (1Sa 6:11). In the Septuagint, of the chest which Joash had provided for receiving contributions for the repairing of the Lord's house (2Chr 24:8).

**Gilbrant** - This noun is a compound apparently derived from the noun glōssa (1094), "tongue," and the verb komeō, "to take care of, to attend to." The word appears in the vernacular form glōssokomeion of the case used to store the reeds of musical instruments, though more generally of caskets. More frequently it appears as glōssokomon and refers to various containers or receptacles, e.g., case, casket, cage, or money box. Moulton-Milligan calls it "decidedly vernacular" in its usage. Its original meaning is all but lost in the papyri and nonliterary records of the common language. **Glōssokomon** occurs in the **Septuagint** only five times, one of which appears only in Codex Vaticanus (B) (2 Samuel 6:11). Interestingly, Codex Vaticanus reads glōssokomon where the other manuscripts read kibōtos, usually rendered "ark" (Hebrew 'ārōn) in the Septuagint. 'Arōn stands behind glōssokomon in the remaining texts as well, all of which are found in 2 Chronicles 24 (2Chr 24:8,10,11). In 2 Chronicles 24 Joash ordered a "chest" to be constructed. This chest was placed outside of the temple gate, and the people were then instructed to bring their contributions (in accordance with Mosaic precedent, Exodus 38:21) and drop them into the container. This revenue was then used in the repair work on the temple (2 Chronicles 24:1-13ff.).

**New Testament Usage** - The two instances of glōssokomon in the New Testament, both in John's Gospel (12:6; 13:29), reflect the usage seen in both classical Greek and the Septuagint of "money box." John tells us that Judas (whom John also described as a "thief") kept the "money box." Apparently money was a major motivation for Judas' betrayal of Jesus (cf. especially Matthew 26:14-16). Here the definition "money box" is probably appropriate; it is attested elsewhere (cf. Bauer) and certainly implied in the Old Testament. ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Glossokomon** is used in Jn. 12:6; Jn. 13:29 and 3 (or 4) times in the Septuagint - 2Chr 24:8; 2Chr 24:10; 2Chr 24:11 - Some add 1Sa 6:11 (but I cannot find it in the Septuagint of that verse - see note above).

**John 12:7 Therefore Jesus said, "Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial.**

BGT John 12:7 ε πεν ο ν ησο ς· φε ς α τ ν, ν α ε ς τ ν μ ρ α ν τ ο ν τ α φ ι α σ μ ο μ ο υ τ η ρ σ α τ ·

KJV John 12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

NET John 12:7 So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She has kept it for the day of my burial.

CSB John 12:7 Jesus answered, "Leave her alone; she has kept it for the day of My burial.

ESV John 12:7 Jesus said, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial.

NIV John 12:7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. " It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.

NLT John 12:7 Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial.

NRS John 12:7 Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial.

NJB John 12:7 So Jesus said, 'Leave her alone; let her keep it for the day of my burial.

NAB John 12:7 So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial.

YLT John 12:7 Jesus, therefore, said, 'Suffer her; for the day of my embalming she hath kept it,

MIT John 12:7 Jesus said, "Get off her back. She saved this for the day of my burial.

GWN John 12:7 Jesus said to Judas, "Leave her alone! She has done this to prepare me for the day I will be placed in a tomb.

BBE John 12:7 Then Jesus said, Let her be. Let her keep what she has for the day of my death.

RSV John 12:7 Jesus said, "Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial.

NKJ John 12:7 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.

ASV John 12:7 Jesus therefore said, Suffer her to keep it against the day of my burying.

DBY John 12:7 Jesus therefore said, Suffer her to have kept this for the day of my preparation for burial;

NIRV John 12:7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "The perfume was meant for the day I am buried.

RWB John 12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: for the day of my burial hath she kept this.

WEB John 12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burial hath she kept this.

- **Let:** Ps 109:31 Zec 3:2 Mt 26:10 Mk 14:6
- **against:** Jn 19:38-42 Mt 26:12 27:57-60 Mk 15:42-47 Lu 23:50
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 26:10-12 "But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me. 11 "For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me 12 For when she poured this perfume on My body, **she did it to prepare Me for burial.**

[Lowell Johnson](#) comments on "**good deed**" - There are two Greek words for good. One means morally good. The other word [kalos](#), which is used here, means something beautiful, winsome, lovely. It is communicated love. Why did Jesus call it a beautiful work? Because He was aware of her loving motive; her beautiful heart and spirit. There is a beautiful truth here: She could not pour the perfume on Jesus and wipe His feet with her hair without getting some on herself and blessing others as well. Many of us have unused perfume. We need to break a vase and anoint the Lord. He would be honored. We would be blessed and so would others.

Mark 14:8 "She has done what she could; **she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial.**

### LET HER ALONE

Don't miss who it is that comes to Mary's rescue! Beloved, even though He is not physically present, He still functions as our Advocate with the Father when we sin (1Jn 2:1, cf Satan accusing Joshua in Zech 3:1-2). As Paul said "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Ro 8:31).

**Therefore (oun) Jesus said, "Let her alone, so that (hina) she may keep it for the day of My burial.** (See [related passages above](#)) While there is no evidence to suggest Mary fully understood the full import of her act, from Jesus' words it is clear that her act of extravagant love had symbolic significance but prophetic sense. In other words her act of anointing the Anointed One (meaning of [Christos](#)) foreshadowed His death and the anointing that would soon be carried out by Nicodemus with "a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds." (Jn 19:39) As explained below the meaning of **keep it for that day** is unclear for two reasons -- first Mk 14:3 says the alabaster vial was broken and second Judas was upset that it had been wasted (implying it had been completely used in the anointing). (see notes below)

**Westcott** comments that "Mary in her devotion unconsciously provides for the honour of the dead. Judas in his selfishness unconsciously brings about the death itself"

[Bob Utley](#) adds "This (REFERRING TO MARY'S ANOINTING OF JESUS) is one of John's double entendres. This spice was used for preparing a body for burial (cf. John 19:40). Mary may have understood more of Jesus' message about His imminent death than the disciples did!

It is interesting that Mary of Bethany was not one of the women who went to Jesus tomb taking spices to anoint Him (Mk 16:1). It is as if she anointed Him while He was still alive for what was soon to come.

As **Wiersbe** said Mary "was "giving the roses" while He was yet alive, and not bringing them to the funeral! Her act of love and worship was public, spontaneous, sacrificial, lavish, personal, and unembarrassed. Jesus called it "a good work" (Matt. 26:10; Mark 14:6) and both commended her and defended her. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur** - This act by Mary, as in the case of Caiaphas (Jn 11:49-52) revealed a far greater reality than she realized at the time. Her anointing prefigured the one Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus would later perform on His body after Jesus' death (John 19:38-40). (See [John Commentary](#))

**NET NOTE** - Greek "Leave her alone, that for the day of my burial she may keep it." The construction with [hina](#) is somewhat ambiguous. The simplest way to read it would be, "Leave her alone, that she may keep it for the day of my burial." This would imply

that Mary was going to use the perfumed oil on that day, while Jn 12:3 and Jn 12:5 seem to indicate clearly that she had already used it up. Some understand the statement as elliptical: "Leave her alone; (she did this) in order to keep it for the day of my burial." Another alternative would be an imperative use of hina with the meaning: "Leave her alone; let her keep it." The reading of the Byzantine text, which omits the hina and substitutes a perfect tense tetereken, while not likely to be original, probably comes close to the meaning of the text, and that has been followed in this translation.

**Grant Osborne** on **Let her alone** - This is difficult Greek and can be translated several ways (cf. Carson 1991:429-430): (1) "Let her alone so she can keep it [the perfume] for the day of my burial," but she has already poured it all out onto Jesus; (2) she has "done this [i.e., saved the perfume] for the day of my burial," a definite possibility; (3) an imperative: "let her keep it [the perfume] for the day of my burial," but this does not quite fit the Greek; or (4) "let her keep the credit for having poured this [perfume] out for the day of my burial," but this adds too much to the actual Greek. On the whole, the second is preferable. (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**John MacArthur** explains it this way - "While commentators disagree on how to understand these words, the most satisfactory solution is to understand an [ellipsis](#) in the Lord's statement. Supplying the missing words, the sense would be, "Let her alone; she did not sell the perfume [*as you wish she had*], so that she could keep it for the day of my burial"

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**Illustration** (From a sermon by **Adrian Rodgers**) Children were bringing to Sunday School class show and tell items. One boy brought some water, and that illustrated, "I'm the Water of Life." The other brought some flowers, and that illustrated, "Jesus was the Rose of Sharon." And somebody else brought some bread, and "Jesus is the Bread of Life." A little boy brought a banty egg. (I know you know what a banty hen is?) He brought one of those little eggs, and the teacher said, "What does that represent?" The little fellow said, "She hath done what she could."

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**Illustration of this woman's love** - A famous king, depressed by circumstances in his realm and feeling rejected by many of his subjects, called for his three daughters to comfort and reassure him. After they had talked awhile, he asked how much they loved him.

Two of them answered that they cared for him more than all the gold and silver in the world; but Mary, the youngest, said she loved him like salt. The king wasn't pleased with her answer, for he considered salt to be of very little value. The cook, who overheard the conversation, knew that the child's reply had more significance than the father imagined. She dared not speak to the monarch about the matter, but devised a subtle way to emphasize the true meaning of the young girl's words.

The next morning at breakfast she withheld the salt from everything she served, and the meal was so insipid that the king didn't enjoy it at all. Then he realized the full force of his daughter's remark. She loved him so much that nothing was good without him! With a smile he said, "I understand now, Mary. Your love is the greatest of all!"

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**D L Moody** - I CAN imagine that Mary thought that if she waited until Jesus was dead she might not have a chance to anoint His body, and so she came before His death to anoint Him. There is a lesson there. How very kind and thoughtful we are to a family that has lost some member, and what kind words are said after the person is dead and gone! Would it not be better to say a few of those good things before they go? Wouldn't it be well to give some of your bouquets before a man dies, and not go and load down his coffin?

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**F B Meyer - Jesus said, Let her alone.**

The lovers of Jesus are often misunderstood. Those who judge only by a utilitarian standard refuse to acknowledge the worth of their deeds. You might as well despise the electric light because it makes no register on a gas-meter. But when the voices of criticism and jealousy are highest, Jesus steps in and casts the shield of his love around the trembling, disconcerted soul, saying, Let him alone. So He speaks still:—

To Satan. — The adversary stands near to resist and tempt. As Judas criticised Mary, so the Evil One seems at times to pour a perpetual stream of chilling criticism on all we say and do; or he meets us at every turn with some evil suggestion. But Jesus is on the watch, and He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear; but when heart and flesh fail, He will step in and say, Let him (or her) alone.

To sorrow. — We must pass through the fire, and be subjected to the lapidary's wheel; we must drink of His cup, and be baptized with His baptism; we must bear our cross after Him. But He is always on the alert. And whenever the feeble flesh is at an end of its power of endurance, He will step in and say, Let be — it is enough.

To human unkindness. — Some of us are called to suffer most from our fellows; our foes belong to our own household; our brother Cain hates us. It is hard to bear. To have one's motives misunderstood and maligned; to lose one's good name; to be an outcast —

all this is hard. But God has planted a hedge about us, and none may pass through it, except He permit. Even Satan recognizes this, as we learn from the Book of Job.

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### **It's Beautiful!**

Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me." — Mark 14:6

Today's Scripture: Mark 14:3-9

After being away on business, Terry wanted to pick up some small gifts for his children. The clerk at the airport gift shop recommended a number of costly items. "I don't have that much money with me," he said. "I need something less expensive." The clerk tried to make him feel that he was being cheap. But Terry knew his children would be happy with whatever he gave them, because it came from a heart of love. And he was right—they loved the gifts he bought.

During Jesus' last visit to the town of Bethany, Mary wanted to show her love for Him (Mark 14:3-9). So she brought "an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard" and anointed Him (v.3). The disciples asked angrily, "Why this waste?" (Matthew 26:8). Jesus told them to stop troubling her, for "she has done a good work for Me" (Mark 14:6). Another translation reads, "She has done a beautiful thing to Me." Jesus delighted in her gift, for it came from a heart of love. Even anointing Him for burial was beautiful!

What would you like to give to Jesus to show your love? Your time, talent, treasure? It doesn't matter if it's costly or inexpensive, whether others understand or criticize. Whatever is given from a heart of love is beautiful to Him By: Anne Cetas (Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

With thankful hearts give praise to Jesus  
For His blessings without end;  
Let's give to Him our full devotion—  
He's our Savior and our Friend.  
—D. De Haan

A healthy heart beats with love for Jesus.

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And as Mary walked away from the cross,  
The same scent probably still lingered in the now-limp hair  
She used to dry her Savior's feet  
A reminder of the love that spilled  
From His broken alabaster body.  
So pure. So lovely.  
So truly extravagant.

It was a vase He never regretted breaking.  
Nor did she.  
-Ken Gire, Jr.

### **John 12:8 "For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me."**

BGT John 12:7 ε πεν ο ν η σο ς· φε ρ α τ ν, ν α ε ρ τ ν μ ρ αν το ν ταφιασμο μου τη ρ σ α τ·

KJV John 12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

NET John 12:7 So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She has kept it for the day of my burial.

CSB John 12:7 Jesus answered, "Leave her alone; she has kept it for the day of My burial.

ESV John 12:7 Jesus said, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial.

NIV John 12:7 "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. " It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.

NLT John 12:7 Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial.

NRS John 12:7 Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial.

NJB John 12:7 So Jesus said, 'Leave her alone; let her keep it for the day of my burial.

NAB John 12:7 So Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial.

YLT John 12:7 Jesus, therefore, said, 'Suffer her; for the day of my embalming she hath kept it,

MIT John 12:7 Jesus said, "Get off her back. She saved this for the day of my burial.

- **the poor:** De 15:11 Mt 26:11 Mk 14:7
- **but:** Jn 12:35 8:21 13:33 16:5-7 Song 5:6 Ac 1:9-11
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 26:11-13 "For you always have the poor ([ptochos](#)) with you; but you do not always have Me. 12 "For when she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. 13 "Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

**Alexander Maclaren** - "The Evangelist (**ED**: Both Matthew and Mark - Mt 26:13, Mk 14:9) who records that promise (*what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her*) does not mention Mary's name; John, who does mention the name, does not record the promise. It matters little whether our names are remembered, so long as Jesus bears them graven on His heart."

Proverbs 10:7 The memory of the righteous is **blessed** (MARY), But the name of the wicked will **rot** (JUDAS).

Mark 14:7-9+ "For you always have the poor ([ptochos](#)) with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them; but you do not always have Me. "She has done what she could; she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial. 9 "Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

### JESUS IS NOT MAKING A CALLOUS COMMENT

**For** ([gar](#)) is a term of explanation. **FOR** (if it carries the same sense as "because", i.e., if you can substitute the word "because" and the sentence still makes sense) should always prompt the question, what is being explained? In this case Jesus is explaining to the disciples that they needed to have a proper perspective and proper priority. He had told them that He was going to die, so they needed to prioritize time ("redeem the time") with Him as Mary had done. After He was gone, they would have plenty of time to give alms to the poor, because the world would always have poor people!

**You always have the poor** ([ptochos](#)) **with you** - While Jesus does not quote the passage in Dt 15:11+, we see there the same thought, for Moses recorded "For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land.'" And since Jesus kept the Law perfectly clearly He is not saying that the poor should not be helped.

**But you do not always have Me** - Clearly He is speaking prophetically and referring to His impending crucifixion and death. One practical aspect is that in light of His death, resurrection and return to Heaven, the disciples would have only a limited window of time to be taught by Him before He returned to Heaven.

*Spiritual opportunities are passing.*

*We should never delay doing what we can for the Savior.*

-- William MacDonald

**THOUGHT** - While they would not have Him physically with them, in Mt 28:20 Jesus (in some of His last words) promised them "lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Dear disciple, that wonderful promise of His presence (and the power of His indwelling Spirit) is also true for us unto the end of this age or our life, whichever comes first. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in (locative of sphere) the Lord." (1Co 15:58+)

John 7:33 Therefore Jesus said, "For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me.



John 9:4 "We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.

John 12:35 So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

**Robertson** proposes that regarding His imminent death "This is what Mary perceived with her delicate woman's intuition and what the apostles failed to understand though repeatedly and plainly told by Jesus."

**J Vernon McGee** - There is an application for us today. Jesus says that the poor are always with us and that He will not always be with us. He is not contradicting His statement that He is with us always, that He will never leave us nor forsake us. What He is saying here is that we can always be of service to the poor -- but they are always with us -- but that our service should not be a substitute for sitting at His feet. There comes a day when it is too late to absorb all He has for us. I get letters saying, "Dr. McGee, I never had Bible teaching; if only I had had Bible teaching when I was young." My friend, learn about Him now. Do not substitute activity for sitting at His feet. (BORROW [Thru the Bible - John 11-21](#))

**Spurgeon** - It is not every day that you can do something personally and distinctly for Christ himself, and therefore, whenever the occasion serves you be sure to be there to avail yourself of it. True, you can serve him indirectly by aiding his poor saints. Still, something for him — for him himself — should often be devised as Mary devised this service that day.

**Daniel Akin** commenting on the parallel passage in Mk 14:7 says this statement by Jesus "has caused some readers real heartburn. They misread the verse supposing Jesus to be somewhat callous and insensitive toward the poor. The poor are always with us in this fallen and broken world and we can and should do good for them. Jesus believed that. Jesus taught that. The issue is between "always" and "not always." The poor are always there but Jesus would not be. The opportunity to show Him this kind of personal love and affection would soon be gone. Further, and we should not miss this. Jesus is God speaking and the first of the great commandments always trumps the second (cf. Mark 12:30-31). Jesus indeed asserts his priority and preeminence above all others (Col. 1:18). And, this might help. Put these words in the mouth of any other human person and they sound scandalous, self-centered, even narcissistic. Put them in the mouth of the Son of God who "for your sake became poor so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9) and they make all the sense in the world. Care for the poor, but worship the Savior! True love never calculates the cost. Genuine devotion never considers the investment. It simply and spontaneously acts and does all that it can, 8 disappointed only in the fact that it could not do more! This is exactly what we see in Mary. In every generation there will be people in a state of poverty. No socialist society or governmental program will ever be able to win the war on poverty until Christ returns and sets up His own kingdom on earth. Then, with war and crime banned, and with a productive environment restored, universal prosperity will finally be achieved. This should not be understood callously. Christ says, in effect, that there will be other opportunities to do good to the poor, but not another opportunity to do what had just been done to Him.

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**Warren Wiersbe** summarizes this story of Mary's anointing Jesus...

There were three consequences to her act of worship.

**First**, the house was filled with the beautiful fragrance of the ointment (John 12:3; also note 2 Cor. 2:15–16). There is always a "spiritual fragrance" in that home where Jesus Christ is loved and worshiped.

**Second**, the disciples, led by Judas, criticized Mary for wasting her money! It sounded so pious for Judas to talk about the poor, when in reality he wanted the money for himself! (John 12:4–6) Even in the Upper Room, six days later, the disciples still thought Judas was concerned about helping the poor (John 13:21–30). It is interesting that the word translated "waste" in Mark 14:4 is translated "perdition" in John 17:12 and applied to Judas! Judas criticized Mary for "wasting money," but he wasted his entire life!

**Third**, Jesus commended Mary and accepted her gracious gift. He knew the heart of Judas and understood why the other disciples followed his bad example. He also knew Mary's heart and quickly defended her (Rom. 8:33–39). No matter what others may say about our worship and service, the most important thing is that we please the Lord. The fact that others misunderstand and criticize us should not keep us from showing our love to Christ. Our concern should be His approval alone.

When Mary gave her best at the feet of Jesus, she started a "wave of blessing" that has been going on ever since. She was a blessing to Jesus as she shared her love, and she was a blessing to her home as the fragrance spread. Were it not for Mary, her village, Bethany, would probably have been forgotten. The account of her deed was a blessing to the early church that heard about it and, because of the records in three of the Gospels, Mary has been a blessing to the whole world—and still is! The Lord's prediction has certainly been fulfilled.

Mary gave her best in faith and love; Judas gave his worst in unbelief and hatred. He solved the problem of how the Jewish leaders could arrest Jesus without causing a riot during the feast. He sold his Master for the price of a slave (see Ex. 21:32), the basest act of treachery in history. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

[Daniel Akin](#) has chart depicting the striking contrast between **Mary** and **Judas**...

MARY	JUDAS
A woman of no real standing	A man and one of the apostles
Gave what she could to Jesus	Took what he could get for Jesus
Blessed her Lord	Betrayed his Lord
Loved her Lord	Used his Lord
Did a beautiful thing	Did a terrible thing
Served Him as her Savior	Sold Him like He was his slave
Memorialized forever for her devotion	Memorialized forever for his betrayal

**Akin concludes** - Oh, how I want to be like Mary. But oh, how often it is that it is Judas who so readily appears when I look in the mirror. Only the gospel of my Savior is sufficient for my sin, sick soul I strongly suspect that were Mary, the unnamed woman of Mark 14, alive today, and we were to interview her and ask her the question, "What is your favorite Christian hymn?", I strongly suspect she would say, "that's easy. It was written in 1707 by Issac Watts. Why Charles Wesley reportedly said he would give up all his other hymns to have written this one. Mr. Wesley wrote over 6,000 hymns you know! Some say he wrote over 9,000! Now the hymn written by Mr. Watts: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." I love all 4 stanzas, but 1 and 4 are especially meaningful to me!" (Worship as you listen to Kathryn Scott's beautiful version of this timeless hymn)...

#### [When I survey the wondrous cross](#)

On which the Prince of Glory died  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride

Forbid it Lord that I should boast  
Save in the death of Christ my God  
All the vain things that charm me most  
I sacrifice them to His blood

See from His head His hands His feet  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down  
Did ere such love and sorrow meet  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown

Were the whole realm of nature mine  
That were an offering far too small  
Love so amazing so divine  
Demands my soul, my life, my all

**John 12:9** The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead.

BGT John 12:9 γνω ο ν [ ] χλος πολ ς κ τ ν ουδα ων τι κε σπιν κα λθον ο δι τ ν ησο ν μ νον, λλ να κα τ ν Λ ζαρων δωσιν ν γειρεν κ νεκρ ν.

KJV John 12:9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.



NET John 12:9 Now a large crowd of Judeans learned that Jesus was there, and so they came not only because of him but also to see Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead.

CSB John 12:9 Then a large crowd of the Jews learned He was there. They came not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus the one He had raised from the dead.

ESV John 12:9 When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

NIV John 12:9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

NLT John 12:9 When all the people heard of Jesus' arrival, they flocked to see him and also to see Lazarus, the man Jesus had raised from the dead.

NRS John 12:9 When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

NJB John 12:9 Meanwhile a large number of Jews heard that he was there and came not only on account of Jesus but also to see Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead.

NAB John 12:9 (The) large crowd of the Jews found out that he was there and came, not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

YLT John 12:9 A great multitude, therefore, of the Jews knew that he is there, and they came, not because of Jesus only, but that Lazarus also they may see, whom he raised out of the dead;

MIT John 12:9 A large group of the Jews then knew he was there. They came on the scene not on account of Jesus alone, but so they might get a look at Lazarus who was raised from the dead.

- Jn 11:43-45 Ac 3:10,11 Acts 4:14
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 12:17-18 So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him. 18 For this reason also the people went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign.

### JESUS & LAZARUS GET TOP BILLING

**The large crowd of the Jews** ([loudaios](#)) **then learned** ([ginosko](#)) **that He was there** - What is surprising is that it does not say that some in the crowd went to tell the religious leaders of Jesus' location, because in Jn 11:57 "the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him."

**Robertson on the Jews** ([loudaios](#)) - These "**Jews**" are not all hostile to Jesus as in John 5:10; John 6:41, etc., but included some who were friendly (John 12:11).

[Utley](#) on **Jews** - This is an unusual use of the term "Jews" in John. Usually it refers to the religious leaders in opposition to Jesus. However, in John 11:19, John 11:45; John 12:17, it seems to refer to the townspeople of Jerusalem who were friends of Lazarus and had come to his funeral.

**William MacDonald** comments on the spiritual state of the crowd - Doubtless some in the group were true believers, but the general impression is that most of the people had no real heart interest in the Lord. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**And they came, not for Jesus' sake only** - Jesus receives top billing, but they also wanted to see the miracle man whom Jesus had brought back from the dead.

**But that** ([hina](#) - purpose clause) **they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised** ([egeiro](#)) **from the dead** ([nekros](#)) - Their purpose was to see with their own eyes what they had heard, for as the saying goes "[seeing is believing](#)." What is Lazarus doing? In a sense he is "Exhibit A," clear, irrefutable evidence of the miracle producing power of Jesus. In effect one might say he is "witnessing." The fact that he was alive was his witness, but he never speaks a word of verbal testimony.

**THOUGHT** - Are we to imitate Lazarus? Is that the pattern we are to exhibit in witnessing? Yes and no. If we have been raised up by the Spirit of Christ to walk in newness of life, then we should witness to others by our transformed life in Christ. That is a visual aspect of witnessing, but Peter would add "**sanctify** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) Christ as Lord in your hearts (WE ASSUME THAT THIS "SANCTIFICATION" OF CHRIST AS LORD IS BEING DEMONSTRATED BY OUR TRANSFORMED LIFE), always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;" (1Pe 3:15+). Why would others ask us to **make a defense**? Clearly it is because we are manifesting a sanctified life, a "set apart" life, a life which is for the most part going up stream (so to speak), counter to the culture which is flowing downstream toward a "Niagara Falls" terminus (so to speak). So "yes" our "resurrected life" should be a witness to the lost. But also our righteous lips should witness to the lost. Don't misunderstand. There is a saying which is **not true** that says something like "*Preach the Gospel daily with your life and if necessary, use words*" Beloved, this is not the fully truth. While your godly life may open an opportunity for the presentation of the Gospel (1Pe 3:15), the fact is that the Gospel absolutely must be spoken, listened to, received, and believed, if the recipient is to be saved by the Spirit.

**Spurgeon** - Their curiosity was but natural, for few of them could have seen anyone who had been raised from the dead. It is well when a saved soul, who has been spiritually raised from the dead, becomes a center of attraction together with the Lord who has wrought such a miracle of mercy upon him.

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Note that there are five groups of people mentioned in this chapter.

1. a crowd from Jerusalem, John 12:9
2. the people who witnessed Lazarus' revival John 12:17
3. the large crowd of pilgrims coming to the Passover, John 12:12,18, 29, 34
4. Some Greeks (some think they were Hellenistic Jews - Acts 6:1, 9:29), John 12:20
5. Many rulers who believed in Him, John 12:42

**John 12:10 But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also;**

BGT John 12:10 βουλε σαντο ὁ ο ρχιερε ς να κα τ ν Λ ζαρων ποκτη νωσιν,

KJV John 12:10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

NET John 12:10 So the chief priests planned to kill Lazarus too,

CSB John 12:10 Therefore the chief priests decided to kill Lazarus also

ESV John 12:10 So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well,

NIV John 12:10 So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well,

NLT John 12:10 Then the leading priests decided to kill Lazarus, too,

NRS John 12:10 So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well,

NJB John 12:10 Then the chief priests decided to kill Lazarus as well,

NAB John 12:10 And the chief priests plotted to kill Lazarus too,

YLT John 12:10 and the chief priests took counsel, that also Lazarus they may kill,

MIT John 12:10 The executive priests were conspiring to murder Lazarus too

- Jn 11:47-53,57 Ge 4:4-10 Ex 10:3 Job 15:25,26 40:8,9 Ec 9:3 Da 5:21-23 Mt 2:3-8,16 Lu 16:31
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## LAZARUS' LIFE IN JEOPARDY

**But** - Term of contrast. An about face (so to speak). Many came and believed which was in marked contrast to attitude of the religious leaders.

**The chief priests ([archiereus](#)) planned ([bouleuo](#)) to put Lazarus to death ([apokteino](#)) also** - This is simply an "addendum" to what John had recorded in Jn 11:53 noting that "from that day on they planned together to kill" Jesus and now they determined they had to add Lazarus to their hit list. **Planned ([bouleuo](#))** indicates that the leaders thought carefully about what was transpiring and concluded they must snuff out the one whose life was giving powerful testimony to the supernatural power of Jesus. While Lazarus clearly would die a second time in the future, he was in imminent danger of dying twice if the religious leaders had their will and way! However John never gives us any follow-up, but presumably had Lazarus been killed he would have mentioned it (cp, the murder of John the Baptist, Mt 14:10, Mk 6:27-29).

**John MacArthur** makes an interesting observation regarding Lazarus - He was an undeniable testimony to the Lord's messianic claims. Not only that, a resurrected man was also an embarrassment to the Sadducees in another way: they denied the resurrection of the dead (Mt. 22:23), and he was an undeniable refutation of that error. Unable to counter the incontrovertible testimony Lazarus provided by being alive, they sought to destroy the evidence by killing him.

**Leon Morris** points out "It is interesting to reflect that Caiaphas had said, 'it is expedient for you that one man die for the people' ([11:50](#)). But one was not enough. Now it had to be two. Thus does evil grow" (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**Uitley** quips "They wanted to remove the evidence! Their motives were fear (cf. John 11:48) and jealousy (cf. John 11:48; John 12:11). They must have thought Jesus' act of resuscitation was an isolated, rare event. The blindness and bias of these Jewish leaders reflect the darkness of fallen humanity.

**Spurgeon** - They would have committed a double murder if it had been possible, and would have put to death both Jesus and Lazarus, who was a living witness to the wonder-working power of the Christ whom they would not receive as the promised Messiah. When men hate Christ, they also hate those whom he has blessed, and will go to any lengths in seeking to silence their testimony.

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**Planned** (purposed, resolved) ([1011](#)) [bouleuo](#) from **boule** = counsel, will) means to take counsel, to deliberate, to resolve in counsel, think carefully about. It is only found in the middle voice (reflexive) and conveys the meaning of to consult, determine, deliberate with oneself or with one another in counsel.

**Bouleuo - 5x** - onsider(1), planned(1), planned together(1), purpose(2), resolved(1). Lk. 14:31; Jn. 11:53; Jn. 12:10; Acts 27:39; 2 Co. 1:17

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**John 12:11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus.**

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KJV John 12:11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

NET John 12:11 for on account of him many of the Jewish people from Jerusalem were going away and believing in Jesus.

CSB John 12:11 because he was the reason many of the Jews were deserting them and believing in Jesus.

ESV John 12:11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

NIV John 12:11 for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

NLT John 12:11 for it was because of him that many of the people had deserted them and believed in Jesus.

NRS John 12:11 since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

NJB John 12:11 since it was on his account that many of the Jews were leaving them and believing in Jesus.

NAB John 12:11 because many of the Jews were turning away and believing in Jesus because of him.

YLT John 12:11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away, and were believing in Jesus.

MIT John 12:11 because on account of him many Jews were withdrawing from their influence and were believing in Jesus.

- Jn 12:18 Jn 11:45,48 15:18-25 Ac 13:45 Jas 3:14-16
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## REASON LAZARUS' LIFE WAS IN JEOPARDY

**Because** - Term of explanation. Always pause and ask what is the writer explaining. Most often it is relatively easy to discern as in this case.

**On account of him** ("because of him") **many of the Jews** ([loudaios](#)) **were going away** ([hupago](#) - imperfect, began to withdraw) **and were believing** ([pisteuo](#)) **in Jesus** - **The Jews** ([loudaios](#)) in this context refers to the laity, not the evil Jewish leaders. As noted above many Jews came to see the miracle man for "[seeing is believing](#)." In this case, the effect of the resurrected man was profound resulting in not a few but **many** coming to believe in Jesus as Messiah. Notice that their belief was not in a miracle (they had witnessed) but in Jesus Who performed the miracle. **Believing** ([pisteuo](#)) is in the imperfect tense signifying one after another expressed belief in Jesus, and raising the possibility to the leaders that a mass movement might result. John does not give any further description regarding their belief, so we would assume that their faith was genuine, in contrast to the belief of the Jews in Jn 2:23-24+ and Jn 8:31ff+ which was not saving faith.

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**Believing** (4100) [pisteuo](#) from [pistis](#); cf [pistos](#); [the faith](#), [obedience of faith](#)) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust. To accept as true, genuine, or real. [Pisteuo](#) means to be persuaded of, place one's confidence in, to trust, express reliance upon. Belief in the New Testament sense that effects the [new birth](#) denotes more than intellectual assent to a set of facts or truths. The demons believe but they are clearly not saved. Genuine belief does involve an intellectual assent and consent of one's mind, but also includes an act of one's heart and will. Biblical saving faith is not passive assent but an active staking of one's life on the claims of God. The respected Greek lexicon author W E Vine defines belief as consisting of (1) a firm conviction which produces full acknowledgment of God's revelation of Truth, (2) a personal surrender to the Truth (3) a conduct inspired by and consistent with that surrender. Eg, compare Jn 2:23, 24 and then cp Jn 8:31 and the actions of those who believed in Jn 8:44, 45, 59. Now do you see the shades of meaning that "believe" conveys? Not everyone who "believes" truly believes unto salvation. Relationship of believing and obedience: FAITH is of the heart, invisible to men. OBEDIENCE is of the conduct and may be observed. When a man obeys God he gives the only possible evidence that in his heart he believes God.

**Pisteuo in John** - Jn. 1:7; Jn. 1:12; Jn. 1:50; Jn. 2:11; Jn. 2:22; Jn. 2:23; Jn. 2:24; Jn. 3:12; Jn. 3:15; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:18; Jn. 3:36; Jn. 4:21; Jn. 4:39; Jn. 4:41; Jn. 4:42; Jn. 4:48; Jn. 4:50; Jn. 4:53; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:38; Jn. 5:44; Jn. 5:46; Jn. 5:47; Jn. 6:29; Jn. 6:30; Jn. 6:35; Jn. 6:36; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:47; Jn. 6:64; Jn. 6:69; Jn. 7:5; Jn. 7:31; Jn. 7:38; Jn. 7:39; Jn. 7:48; Jn. 8:24; Jn. 8:30; Jn. 8:31; Jn. 8:45; Jn. 8:46; Jn. 9:18; Jn. 9:35; Jn. 9:36; Jn. 9:38; Jn. 10:25; Jn. 10:26; Jn. 10:37; Jn. 10:38; Jn. 10:42; Jn. 11:15; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 11:26; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 11:40; Jn. 11:42; Jn. 11:45; Jn. 11:48; Jn. 12:11; Jn. 12:36; Jn. 12:37; Jn. 12:38; Jn. 12:39; Jn. 12:42; Jn. 12:44; Jn. 12:46; Jn. 13:19; Jn. 14:1; Jn. 14:10; Jn. 14:11; Jn. 14:12; Jn. 14:29; Jn. 16:9; Jn. 16:27; Jn. 16:30; Jn. 16:31; Jn. 17:8; Jn. 17:20; Jn. 17:21; Jn. 19:35; Jn. 20:8; Jn. 20:25; Jn. 20:29; Jn. 20:31

**John 12:12** On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

BGT John 12:12 Τ παριον χλος πολς λθν ες τν ορτην, κοσαντες τι ρχεται ησο ς ες εροσλυμα

KJV John 12:12 On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

NET John 12:12 The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

CSB John 12:12 The next day, when the large crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

ESV John 12:12 The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

NIV John 12:12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

NLT John 12:12 The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A large crowd of Passover visitors

NRS John 12:12 The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to

Jerusalem.

NJB John 12:12 The next day the great crowd of people who had come up for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

NAB John 12:12 On the next day, when the great crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

YLT John 12:12 On the morrow, a great multitude that came to the feast, having heard that Jesus doth come to Jerusalem,

MIT John 12:12 On the next day the large crowd present for the festival heard that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem.

- **large:** Mt 21:8
- **coming:** Jn 11:55,56
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 11:55-56 Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to purify themselves. 56 So they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?"

### CROWD HEARS THE LAMB WAS COMING TO THE PASSOVER

**On the next day** - This was most likely Sunday, which has come to be known as Palm Sunday, but John MacArthur feels this was Monday.

**The large crowd who had come to the** (Passover) **feast** ([heorte](#)) - This of course refers to the Passover **feast**. It was a **large crowd** because it was one of the 3 feasts all Jewish men were to attend each year. (Ex 23:14-17; Ex 34:23; Dt 16:16 = "Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks [Passover] and at the Feast of Booths" > Passover = Lk 2:41, Feast of Unleavened Bread = Lk 22:1, Feast of Tabernacles = Jn 7:2). At these feast times the population of Jerusalem would increase from three to five times normal as pilgrims came from the [Diaspora](#).

**When they heard** ([akouo](#)) **that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem** - **ESV** - "Heard that Jesus was coming to (on his way - NIV) to Jerusalem." Exactly how the crowds got the news that Jesus was coming to town is not clear from the Scriptures. After His three years of public ministry, Jesus' reputation had spread far and wide, so that the pilgrims who had come to the feast were eager to see Jesus, anticipating that He would liberate the nation from Roman rule.

**Gotquestions** adds that "Jesus' purpose in riding into Jerusalem was to make public His claim to be their Messiah and King of Israel in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy."

**John MacArthur** on the prophetic significance of Jesus' entrance - The exact day that the Lord chose to enter Jerusalem fulfilled one of the most remarkable prophecies of the Old Testament, Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks (Da 9:24-26+). Through Daniel, the Lord predicted that the time from Artaxerxes' decree ordering the rebuilding of the temple (in 445 B.C.) until the coming of the Messiah would be "seven weeks and sixty-two weeks" (Dan. 9:25+; cf. Neh. 2:6), that is, 69 weeks total. The literal translation is "seven sevens and sixty-two sevens," seven being a common designation for a week. In the context of the passage, the idea is 69 weeks of years, or 69 times 7 years, which comes to a total of 483 Jewish years (which consisted of 360 days each, as was common in the ancient world). Several different systems of reckoning have endeavored to determine the chronology of the 483 years after Artaxerxes' decree, putting the date at either a.d. 30, 32, or 33, depending on the actual decree date and the complex calculations through those years. Of these explanations, the most detailed are Sir Robert Anderson's [The Coming Prince \(Pdf\)](#) and Harold Hoehner's [Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ \(BORROW\)](#). Based on all of the historical data, it is best to understand the triumphal entry as taking place on 9 Nisan, A.D. 30. But even the other dates offered by these authors (a.d. 32 or 33) leave one thing remaining undeniably clear: whatever may be the precise chronology, Jesus Christ is the only possible fulfillment of Daniel's prophetic timetable.

[Brian Bell](#) - **Bart Starr**, former quarterback of the Green Bay Packers, was describing to a group of businessmen how his coach, **Vince Lombardi**, held absolute power. He stated that, as you entered Vince's office, you noticed a huge mahogany desk with an impressive organization chart behind it on the wall. The chart had a **small block** at the top in which was printed: "Vince

Lombardi, Head Coach and General Manager.” A line came down from it to a **very large block** in which was printed: “Everybody Else!”

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**Feast** (1859) **heorte** has the basic meaning of performance, fulfilment (for the benefit of a deity) and means feast, feast day, festival, holy day. In the NT heorte always denotes Jewish feasts or pilgrimage festivals. Jesus and His disciples celebrated the feasts (Jn 2:23; 5:1; 7:10, 14). More than half of the occurrences of heortē are found in John (Jn 12:12; 13:1), where the beloved disciple demonstrates that the OT feasts find their true significance in Christ (Jn 7:37).

**Heorte - 24v** - Matt. 26:5; Matt. 27:15; Mk. 14:2; Mk. 15:6; Lk. 2:41; Lk. 2:42; Lk. 22:1; Lk. 23:17; Jn. 2:23; Jn. 4:45; Jn. 5:1; Jn. 6:4; Jn. 7:2; Jn. 7:8; Jn. 7:10; Jn. 7:11; Jn. 7:14; Jn. 7:37; Jn. 11:56; Jn. 12:12; Jn. 12:20; Jn. 13:1; Jn. 13:29; Col. 2:16

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#### QUESTION - . [What is Palm Sunday? WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

**ANSWER** - Palm Sunday is the day we celebrate the [triumphal entry](#) of Jesus into Jerusalem, one week before His resurrection (Matthew 21:1–11). As Jesus entered the holy city, He neared the culmination of a long journey toward Golgotha. He had come to save the lost (Luke 19:10), and now was the time—this was the place—to secure that salvation. Palm Sunday marked the start of what is often called “[Passion Week](#),” the final seven days of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Palm Sunday was the “beginning of the end” of Jesus’ work on earth.

Palm Sunday began with Jesus and His disciples traveling over the [Mount of Olives](#). The Lord sent two disciples ahead into the village of Bethphage to find an animal to ride. They found the unbroken colt of a donkey, just as Jesus had said they would (Luke 19:29–30). When they untied the colt, the owners began to question them. The disciples responded with the answer Jesus had provided: “The Lord needs it” (Luke 19:31–34). Amazingly, the owners were satisfied with that answer and let the disciples go. “They brought [the donkey] to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it” (Luke 19:35).

As Jesus ascended toward Jerusalem, a large multitude gathered around Him. This crowd understood that Jesus was the Messiah; what they did not understand was that it wasn’t time to set up the kingdom yet—although Jesus had tried to tell them so (Luke 19:11–12). The crowd’s actions along the road give rise to the name “Palm Sunday”: “A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road” (Matthew 21:8). In strewing their cloaks on the road, the people were giving Jesus the royal treatment—King Jehu was given similar honor at his coronation (2 Kings 9:13). John records the detail that the branches they cut were from palm trees (John 12:13).

On that first Palm Sunday, the people also honored Jesus verbally: “The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ / ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’ / ‘Hosanna in the highest heaven!’” (Matthew 21:9). In their praise of Jesus, the Jewish crowds were quoting Psalm 118:25–26, an acknowledged prophecy of the Christ. The allusion to a Messianic psalm drew resentment from the religious leaders present: “Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples!’” (Luke 19:39). However, Jesus saw no need to rebuke those who told the truth. He replied, “I tell you . . . if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out” (Luke 19:40).

Some 450 to 500 years prior to Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem, the prophet Zechariah had prophesied the event we now call Palm Sunday: “Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! / Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! / See, your king comes to you, / righteous and victorious, / lowly and riding on a donkey, / on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9). The prophecy was fulfilled in every particular, and it was indeed a time of rejoicing, as Jerusalem welcomed their King. Unfortunately, the celebration was not to last. The crowds looked for a Messiah who would rescue them *politically* and free them *nationally*, but Jesus had come to save them *spiritually*. First things first, and mankind’s primary need is spiritual, not political, cultural, or national salvation.

Even as the countless multitudes waved the palm branches and shouted for joy, they missed the true reason for Jesus’ presence. They could neither see nor understand the cross. That’s why, “as [Jesus] approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies . . . will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you’” (Luke 19:41–47). It is a tragic thing to see the Savior but not recognize Him for who He is. The crowds who were crying out “[Hosanna!](#)” on Palm Sunday were crying out “Crucify Him!” later that week (Matthew 27:22–23).

There is coming a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10–11). The worship will be real then. Also, John records a scene in heaven that features the eternal celebration of the risen Lord: “There before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were *holding palm branches in their hands*” (Revelation 7:9, emphasis added). These palm-bearing saints will shout, “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (verse 10), and who



can measure sum of their joy?

### **Palm Sunday Calendar:**

2023 — April 2

2024 — March 24

2025 — April 13 [GotQuestions.org](https://www.gotquestions.org)

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### **Larry Richards - Who's on First? (John 12:12–24)**

Abbott and Costello are credited with the baseball comedy routine, "Who's on First?" (What is on second base, Where plays third, and I think Why is shortstop.) If I'm confused about the players and their positions, well, this report in John shows a somewhat similar confusion existed in first-century Jerusalem as Jesus approached that city for the last time.

John tells us He was met by cheering crowds, who greeted Him as "the King of Israel." The raising of Lazarus had convinced the crowds: Jesus must be the expected Messiah after all. And so they shouted out praises and cried, "Hosanna," which means "Save Now!" At last, they thought, Jesus would get on with the Messiah's real business, throw out the Romans, and make Israel a world power.

A little later some Greeks approached one of Jesus' disciples, and politely expressed their interest in seeing Him. So Philip and Andrew passed on the message. "Some nice Greek folk would like to see You, Lord." Perhaps they were thinking it would be good politics for Jesus to establish relationships with foreigners. Maybe Philip or Andrew would do for a diplomatic posting to a major city, like Corinth or Philippi!

I can understand the crowds, the Greeks, and the disciples. They all had agendas that were important to them. And each had a big role for Jesus in his plans!

There was only one problem. Not one had stopped to ask the truly critical question: "Who's on first?"

Jesus cleared up the confusion, though, just as He clears up ours. After speaking of His death, Jesus said, "Whoever serves Me must follow Me; and where I am, My servant will also be" (v. 26). You see, the mistake made by the cheering crowds, the Greeks, and even the disciples—the mistake still made by us, that causes so much confusion—is that all forgot who's on first. God's blunt and simple answer is, Jesus is on first.

We don't lead, and expect Jesus to follow. We let Jesus go first, and we follow Him.

If you and I keep this order in mind, it will clear most of our confusion about life. We'll seldom become depressed or anxious about why God doesn't do things our way. We won't expect Him to. And we'll seldom wonder why God hasn't blessed our plans, when we've gone to all the trouble of making them and then asking Him to bless. As Jesus' servants we'll have sought His will first—and then done our very best to follow closely where He leads.

So enjoy the Abbott and Costello routine when you hear it. But don't let yourself be confused about who's on first in the Christian life, and who follows.

Personal Application - Don't try to use Jesus. Follow Him. (BORROW [Lawrence O. Richards The 365 Day Devotional Commentary](#))

**John 12:13 took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."**

BGT John 12:13 λαβον τ βα α τ ν φοιν κων κα ξ λθον ε ς π ντησιν α τ κα κ ρα γα ζον· σ ανν · ε λογημ νο ς ρ χ μενο ς ν ν μα π κυ ρ ου, [κα] βα σι λε ς το ς ρα λ.

KJV John 12:13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

NET John 12:13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him. They began to shout, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!"

CSB John 12:13 they took palm branches and went out to meet Him. They kept shouting: " Hosanna! He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One-- the King of Israel!"

ESV John 12:13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna!



Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!"

NIV John 12:13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! " "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"

NLT John 12:13 took palm branches and went down the road to meet him. They shouted, "Praise God! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the LORD! Hail to the King of Israel!"

NRS John 12:13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord-- the King of Israel!"

NJB John 12:13 They took branches of palm and went out to receive him, shouting: 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who is coming in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel.'

NAB John 12:13 they took palm branches and went out to meet him, and cried out: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, (even) the king of Israel."

YLT John 12:13 took the branches of the palms, and went forth to meet him, and were crying, 'Hosanna, blessed is he who is coming in the name of the Lord -- the king of Israel;'

MIT John 12:13 They took fronds from palm trees and went out to meet him, chanting: Hosanna! Blessed is he who arrives in Yahveh's name, The king of Israel!

- **branches:** Lev 23:40 Rev 7:9
- **Hosanna:** Ps 72:17-19 118:25,26 Mt 21:9-11 23:39 Mk 11:8-10 Lu 19:35-38
- **the King:** Jn 12:15 1:49 19:15,19-22 Isa 44:6 Ho 3:5 Zep 3:15 Rev 15:3 19:16
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:** (THIS EVENT IN ALL 4 GOSPELS)

Matthew 21:1-11 When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. 3 "If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: 5 "SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'" 6 The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, 7 and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. 8 Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were **cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road.** 9 The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "**Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!**" 10 When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."

Matthew 21:15 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, "**Hosanna to the Son of David,**" they became indignant 16 and said to Him, "Do You hear what these children are saying?" And Jesus \*said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'OUT OF THE MOUTH OF INFANTS AND NURSING BABIES YOU HAVE PREPARED PRAISE FOR YOURSELF'?"

Mark 11:1-11+ As they \*approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He \*sent two of His disciples, 2 and \*said to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. 3 "If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' you say, 'The Lord has need of it'; and immediately he will send it back here." 4 They went away and found a colt tied at the door, outside in the street; and they \*untied it. 5 Some of the bystanders were saying to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" 6 They spoke to them just as Jesus had told them, and they gave them permission. 7 They \*brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it; and He sat on it. 8 And many spread their coats in the road, and others **spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields.** 9 Those who went in front and those who followed were shouting: "**Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; 10 Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!**" 11 Jesus entered Jerusalem and came into the temple; and after looking around at everything, He left for Bethany with the twelve, since it was already late.

Luke 19:29-38+ When He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples, 30 saying, "Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. 31 "If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Lord has need of it.'" 32 So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" 34 They said, "The Lord has need of it." 35 They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it. 36 As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road. 37 As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, 38 **shouting: "BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"** 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." 40 But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!" 41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. 43 "For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, 44 and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

Revelation 7:9+ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and **palm branches** were in their hands;

John 1:49+ Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, **You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.**"

## **TRIUMPHAL ENTRY AS THE KING ENTERS JERUSALEM**

**Warren Wiersbe** has an interesting note asking "What did this demonstration mean to the Romans? Nothing is recorded about the Roman viewpoint, but it is certain that they kept a close watch that day. During the annual Passover feast, it was not uncommon for some of the Jewish nationalists to try to arouse the people; and perhaps they thought this parade was that kind of an event. I imagine that some of the Roman soldiers must have smiled at the "Triumphal Entry," because it was nothing like their own "[Roman triumph](#)" celebrations in the city of Rome. Whenever a Roman general was victorious on foreign soil, killing at least 5,000 of the enemy, and gaining new territory, he was given a "[Roman triumph](#)" when he returned to the city. It was the Roman equivalent of the American "[ticker-tape parade](#)," only with much more splendor. The victor would be permitted to display the trophies he had won and the enemy leaders he had captured. The parade ended at the arena where some of the captives entertained the people by fighting wild beasts. Compared to a "[Roman triumph](#)," our Lord's entry into Jerusalem was nothing." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Related Video** - [Four versions on one video depicting His entry on youtube.](#)

**Took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him**- ESV = "So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him." The eager Jewish crowd filled with Messianic expectation assumed that this was the day that Jesus would come into Jerusalem and would lead the nation to triumph over the Romans and throw off their oppressive rule. The large crowd "went in front and" (Mk 11:9, Mt 21:9) came behind following Jesus. Take a moment and imagine this incredible scene! Can you imagine what the religious leaders were thinking! They had been trying to find Him so they could arrest Him and kill Him and now Jesus boldly steps forward because He knows His hour has come.

**Palm** (phoenix) is used only here and Rev 7:9+ and apparently refers to the date palm at one time evidently a common tree in Palestine, since it is often depicted on coins; esp. common in Jericho, the "city of palms." **Liddell-Scott** says the palm frond was used "as a badge of victory," which is apropos in the context of Jesus' "triumphal entry" into the holy city to shouts that He was the King. Yes Jesus would triumph but not as the Jews were expecting (that He would throw off Roman rule), for Jesus' triumph would come through His death, which would bring victory, not over physical enemies, but over far more deadly spiritual enemies, even abolishing the last enemy, death (1Co 15:26+)! Can I hear a "Hallelujah?" Mt 21:8 and Mk 11:8 add that some in the crowd "spread their coats in the road" in addition to branches (although not called palm branches in the parallel passages).

Spurgeon - It is significant that John is the only one of the four Evangelists who mentions the palm fronds that were carried by the people in this triumphal procession in honour of Christ, and it was to John that the vision was given of the "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," who "stood before the throne, and before the Lamb,

clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." (Rev 7:9-10+)

**And went out to meet Him** - John uses a rare noun *hupantesis* for **to meet Him**, only found 3 times in the NT. What a contrast with the use in Mk 8:34 when the "whole city went out to meet Him" and "implored Him to leave their region," for He had just cast demons into swine which drowned resulting in financial loss. In Mt 25:1 it is use of the 10 virgins "who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom," which of course speaks of continually be alert for Jesus' Second Coming. There is one sad use of *hupantesis* in the Septuagint in Jdg 11:34+ where Jephthah's daughter came out to meet him so that he would have to fill his vow and potentially sacrifice his daughter (see [discussion](#)).

**Dictionary of Biblical Imagery:** The **palm** tree produces large leaves, or fronds. These fronds found use in the religious ceremonies of ancient Israel. On the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, worshipers celebrated with the fruit of trees, leafy branches, poplars and the frond of the palm, all symbolizing the fertility of harvest. The booths in which the Israelites were to live during the festival were constructed of palm leaves, as well as branches from other trees (Neh 8:15). In the NT Jesus' entry into Jerusalem took on the shape of a religious festival as the crowds waved palm branches in acclamation (Jn 12:13). (See online [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, page 430](#))

**NET NOTE** on **branches** - The Mosaic law stated (Lev 23:40) that branches of palm trees were to be used to celebrate the feast of Tabernacles. Later on they came to be used to celebrate other feasts as well ( 1 Macc. 13:51, 2 Macc. 10:7).

**A T Robertson** adds the word for **branches** (*baion* - only in Jn 12:13) is also "in the papyri and 1 Macc. 13:51 (*"On the twenty-third day of the second month, \* in the one hundred and seventy-first year, the Jews entered the citadel with shouts of praise, the waving of palm branches, the playing of harps and cymbals and lyres, and the singing of hymns and canticles, because a great enemy of Israel had been crushed."*). Here we have "the palm branches of the palm-trees." The use in 1 Macc. 13:51 (cf. 2 Macc. 10:7 = *"ivy-wreathed wands and beautiful branches and also fronds of palm"*) is in the account of [Simon's triumphal entry into Jerusalem](#).

**John MacArthur** - The Old Testament does not associate palm branches with Passover, but rather with the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:40). In the intertestamental period, however, palm branches became a general symbol of victory and celebration. When the Jews, led by Simon the Maccabee, recaptured Jerusalem from the Syrians, they "entered it with praise and palm branches" (1 Macc. 13:51; cf. 2 Macc. 10:7). (See [John Commentary](#))

**And began to shout** - The imperfect tense pictures the crowd beginning to **shout** ([kraugazo](#)) and, kept crying out, continuing to **shout** over and over the following Old Testament passages. The bitter, tragic irony is that here the Jewish crowd is welcoming the long awaited Messiah, but only a few days later the Jewish crowd "**cried out** (same verb - [kraugazo](#)), "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" (Jn. 19:15) The fickle crowds went from CROWN Him to CRUCIFY Him!

**COMMENT - Warren Wiersbe** however does not necessarily agree writing "You sometimes hear it said that the same people who cried "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday ended up crying "Crucify Him!" on Good Friday, but this is not true. The crowd that wanted Him crucified came predominantly from Judea and Jerusalem, whereas the Galilean Jews were sympathetic with Jesus and His ministry." I'm not sure that one can make make this statement dogmatically. I agree with the consensus opinion that the Sunday applause soon turned to Friday cries to crucify. Those same lips that uttered His praises on Sunday were soon saying, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew 27:25).

**Hosanna!** - The only use of **hosanna** in the OT is Ps 118:25, the words the Jewish crowd began to shout as Jesus came riding in on the donkey.

Psalm 118:25-26 "O LORD, **do save** (Hebrew = הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא = *hoshiya na*; Lxx = *sozo* in the [aorist imperative](#)), we beseech You; O LORD, we beseech You, do send prosperity!" 26 Blessed is the **one** (ESV, NIV, YLT = **HE**) who comes in the name of the LORD; We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

[See in depth discussion of Hosanna](#)

The paradox is that the Jewish crowd was shouting **Hosanna** which means save and in fact Jesus to give His life a ransom for many (Mk 10:45), to seek and to save the lost and even His Name "Jehovah saves" (cf Mt 1:21) spoke of His rescue mission, but sadly the Jews did not have eyes to see this life changing truth. As John wrote in his prologue "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him." (Jn 1:11) They received Him ostensibly as a conquering King, but rejected Him as a humble Savior.

**Whitacre** on **Hosanna** - The cry of Hosanna! is a Hebrew word (*hōšî'ah-na*) that had become a greeting or shout of praise but that actually meant "Save!" or "Help!" (an intensive form of imperative). Not surprisingly, forms of this word were used to address the king with a need (cf. 2 Sam 14:4; 2 Kings 6:26). Furthermore, the palm branches the people carry are symbolic of a victorious ruler (cf. 1 Macc 13:51; 2 Macc 10:7; 14:4). Indeed, in an apocalyptic text from the Maccabean era, palms are mentioned in association

with the coming of the messianic salvation on the Mount of Olives (Testament of Naphtali 5). The cry of Hosanna! and the palm branches are in themselves somewhat ambiguous, but their import is made clear as the crowd adds a further line, Blessed is the King of Israel! (v. John 12:13). Clearly they see in Jesus the answer to their nationalistic, messianic hopes. ([Jesus Enters Jerusalem as King of Israel](#))

[A T Robertson](#) on "**BLESSED...**" - Quotation from Psalm 118:25-26, written, some think, for the dedication of the second temple, or, as others think, for the feast of tabernacles after the return (Ezra 3:1-2). It was sung in the processional recitation then as a welcome to the worshippers. Here the words are addressed to the Messiah as is made plain by the addition of the words, "**even the king of Israel**" as Nathanael called him (John 1:49+). Jesus is here hailed by the multitudes as the long-looked for Messiah of Jewish hope and He allows them so to greet Him (Luke 19:38-40+), a thing that He prevented a year before in Galilee (John 6:14-15). It is probable that "in the name of the Lord" should be taken with "blessed" as in Deut. 21:5; 2 Samuel 6:18; 1 Kings 22:16; 2 Kings 2:24. The Messiah was recognized by Martha as the Coming One (John 11:27) and is so described by the Baptist (Matthew 11:3). Mark (Mark 11:10) adds "the coming kingdom" while Luke (Luke 19:38+) has "the king Who comes." "It was this public acclamation of Jesus as King of Israel or King of the Jews which was the foundation of the charge made against him before Pilate (John 18:33)" (Bernard).

**BLESSED** ([eulogeo](#)) **IS HE WHO COMES** ([erchomai](#)) **IN THE NAME** ([onoma](#)) **OF THE LORD, even the King** ([basileus](#)) **of Israel** - This cry by the Jews was with the hope that Jesus was indeed their long expected Messiah. Matthew 21:9, 15 says the crowd added another Messianic title as they shouted "'Hosanna to the [Son of David](#).'" [Son of David](#) was a well-known title for the Messiah. And do not miss the significant shift in Jesus' attitude, for this time He did not refuse their cries to crown Him King in contrast to the situation in John 6:15+ where the Jews "were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king." (cf Lk 19:38, 39, 40+) The shout of the crowd recorded in Luke 19:38+ was slightly different, replacing "**He**" with "**King**" shouting "BLESSED IS THE **KING** WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Unfortunately the crowd was expecting a king who would conquer the Romans, a political and military Deliverer.

**Rodney Whitacre** - The crowd chants a line from a Psalm of Ascent: **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!** (v. John 12:13, from Ps 118:26). This line applies to Jesus in a way it never had to anyone else before. Jesus is the one who makes known the Father and has come in the Father's name (John 5:43), and he desires that the Father's name be made known (John 17:6, John 17:26). So of him it is uniquely true that he comes in the name of the Lord. This expression is one way of summarizing his whole mission.

**All glory, laud and honor to Thee, Redeemer, King,**  
to whom the lips of children make sweet hosannas ring:  
Thou art the King of Israel, Thou David's royal Son,  
who in the Lord's name comest, the King and blessed One!  
The company of angels are praising Thee on high,  
and mortal men and all things created make reply:  
The people of the Hebrews with palms before Thee went;  
our praise and prayer and anthems before Thee we present.  
To Thee, before Thy passion, they sang their hymns of praise;  
to Thee, now high exalted, our melody we raise:  
thou didst accept their praises—accept the praise we bring,  
who in all good delightest, Thou good and gracious King!  
--Theodolph of Orleans, 760–821

**F F Bruce** makes a great point that "One who could summon a dead man back to life would certainly be able to deliver the holy city from the yoke of Caesar."

Note also the irony of the crowd's acclamation that Jesus was the "**He Who comes in the Name of the Lord**" for that is what He had been testifying to over and over! For example in John 8:42 He clearly declared "I proceeded forth ([exerchomai](#)) and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but **He sent** ([apostello](#)) **Me**."

**John's description of Jesus as sent from/by the Father** - 41 times total so this is clearly a key truth - Jn 3:17, 34; Jn 4:34; Jn 5:23, 24, 30, 36, 37, 38; Jn 6:29, 38, 39, 44, 57; Jn 7:16, 18, 28, 29, 33, Jn 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; Jn 9:4, Jn 10:36, Jn 11:42, Jn 12:44, 45, 49, Jn 13:20, Jn 14:24, Jn 15:21, Jn 16:5, Jn 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25; Jn 20:21

[Bob Utley](#) on **even the King** ([basileus](#)) **of Israel** - This phrase was not part of the Psalm, but was added by the crowd. It seems to be a direct reference to Jesus as the Messianic King promised in 2Sa 7:16+ (cf. John 1:49; John 19:19).

**NET NOTE** says that **Hosanna** "probably by this time (New Testament times) a familiar liturgical expression of praise, on the order of "Hail to the king," although both the underlying Aramaic and Hebrew expressions meant "O Lord, save us." In words familiar to every Jew, the author is indicating that at this point every messianic expectation is now at the point of realization. It is clear from the words of the psalm shouted by the crowd that Jesus is being proclaimed as messianic king.

Jesus later prophesied in Matthew 23:39 that the Jews would again cry out Ps 118:26 when He returns in power and glory (Second Coming - on a white horse - a conquering king) for then they would be pierced in their hearts for they will recognize Him for Who He truly is (see Zech 12:10+)...

"For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

Observe that the crowds proclaimed Jesus as the **King of Israel**, (cp Lk 19:38+). The multitude waved palm branches in anticipation of Jesus bringing salvation from their Roman oppression (cp similar "victory parade" described in the apocryphal book 1Macc 13:50, 51). Indeed, here is a victory celebration coming when **palm branches** that will again declare salvation wrought by the King of kings. John records that...

After these things (time phrase) I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and **palm branches** were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."... These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev 7:9, 10, [14+](#))

**Larry Richards:** The raising of Lazarus seems to have convinced the crowd that Jesus truly was the Messiah, the Ruler promised by the prophets (Jn 12:9). They greeted Him with shouts acclaiming Him Israel's King. Even "Hosanna" suggests the thought, for it means "Save Now!" While the Triumphal Entry did fulfill prophecy, it also showed that even the many who had come to "believe" in Jesus accepted on their terms, not His. They believed what they wanted to believe about Him—that He would free them from Rome and set up God's kingdom on earth. It's not unusual for folks today to believe Jesus will act in ways they expect or want Him to. Not unusual, but still a mistake... Don't Try to Use Jesus. Follow Him! (BORROW [The 365 day devotional commentary](#))

**Marvin Vincent** - The ascription of praise here is from Psalms 118:25, 26. This Psalm, according to Perowne, was composed originally for the first celebration of the [Feast of Tabernacles](#) after the completion of the sacred temple. The words of the twenty-fifth verse were sung during that feast, when the altar of burnt-offering was solemnly compassed; that is, once on each of the first six days of the feast, and seven times on the seventh day. This seventh day was called "the Great Hosanna," and not only the prayers for the feast, but even the branches of trees, including the myrtles which were attached to the palm branch, were called "Hosannas."

**Spurgeon:** May this day be to your spirits a day of palms and psalms, of prayers and praises, of Hallelujahs and Hosannas.

**Bob Utley** - During the Passover ritual the recitation of the [Hallel Psalms](#) (Psalm 113-118) occurred while the pilgrims were marching to the Temple. Many of these actions and phrases were repeated every year during the feast of Passover. But this particular year they found their ultimate meaning in Jesus! The crowd sensed this. The Pharisees recognized this. (**Related** - [What are the Hallel Psalms?](#))

Luke records that while most of the Jews were rejoicing Jesus Himself was weeping

When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and **wept** ([klaio](#)) over it, 42 saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. 43 "For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, 44 and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation (**ED**: THE IMPLICATION IS THEY COULD HAVE KNOWN THIS DAY [see commentary on v44]! IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS WHEN IT IS IGNORANCE OF THE HOLY WORD OF GOD!)." (Lk 19:41-44+).

**Warren Wiersbe** - The name Jerusalem means "city of peace" or "foundation of peace"; and the people were hoping that Jesus would bring them the peace that they needed. However, He wept because He saw what lay ahead of the nation—war, suffering, destruction, and a scattered people. At His birth, the angels announced "peace on earth" (Luke 2:13-14+); but in His ministry Jesus announced "war on earth" (Luke 12:51ff+). It is significant that the crowds shouted "peace in heaven" (Luke 19:38+), because that is the only place where there is peace today! ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

HOSANNA to King David's Son  
Who reigns on a superior throne;  
We bless the Prince of heav'nly birth,



Who brings salvation down on earth.

HOSANNA to the Prince of grace;

Zion, behold thy King!

Proclaim the Son of David's race,

And teach the babes to sing.

--Isaac Watts

**Shout** (cry out) (2905) **kraugazo** from **krauge** - outcry from **krazo** = clamor or cry = a word like "croak" ~ suggests a rough and guttural sound = croaking of ravens = croak or cry out with a loud, raucous voice like donkey in Job 6:5, childbirth Is 26:17, war cry in Josh 6:16) means to cry out loud, to clamor, yell loudly, to shout with intensity, to make an outcry, in some contexts to scream or howl (one especially thinks of the demons screaming, croaking and howling! What a scene!) Term was used of a dog's barking, a raven's squawking and even a drunk's bawling.

**Kraugazo** describes the cry of the demons (Lk 4:4), the cry of Jesus for Lazarus to "come forth" (Jn 11:43 - in utter irony for Jesus' cry to give life to Lazarus results in cries for His life!), as Jesus entered Jerusalem on Psalm Sunday the crowds cried out "Hosanna" (Jn 12:13), the Jewish mob crying to Pilate to release Barabbas (Jn 18:40, 19:12), and finally the Jewish mob escalating their cry to "Crucify! Crucify!" (Jn 19:6). Notice all of these are emotion filled, tense moments.

**Kraugazo - 10x/10v - cried(5), cry(1), crying(2), shout(1), shouting(1).** Matt. 12:19; Lk. 4:41; Lk. 18:39; Jn. 11:43; Jn. 12:13; Jn. 18:40; Jn. 19:6; Jn. 19:12; Jn. 19:15; Acts 22:23

**Hosanna** (5164) **Hosanna** is a transliteration (not a translation) of a Hebrew phrase composed of two Hebrew words (**hoshiya** + **na'** - spelling varies depending on resource consulted) used only once in Ps 118:25 - [See note](#)). The meaning of the original Hebrew phrase is something like "*Please save!*," "*Help, I pray,*" "*Save now,*" or "*Save now, I pray!*" (the exact wording depends on source consulted). As **John Piper** explains more fully [here](#), in Jesus' day the word **Hosanna** while originally signifying a cry for help, over time was not only a prayer for help (salvation), but also an invocation of blessing, an exclamation of praise, and/or a shout of celebration. In the context of Jesus' "Triumphal Entry" into Jerusalem, the shouts of **Hosanna** from the crowd seem to have had all three nuances. >**Hosanna** would have been a term familiar to everyone in Israel which accounts for the crowds shouting "Hosanna" at the time of the Triumphal Entry of the Messiah into Jerusalem.

**Hosanna - 5v -** Matt. 21:9; Matt. 21:15; Mk. 11:9; Mk. 11:10; Jn. 12:13

[See in depth discussion of Hosanna](#)

**Blessed** (2127) **eulogeo** from **eu** = good + **lógos** = word; cognates **eulogetos** **eulogia**) means speak good. Speak well of, praise, extol in recognition of divine benefits. When eulogeo is used by men toward men it means to speak well of with praise and thanksgiving (English "[Eulogy](#)" = an address in praise for one deceased ). To say good or positive things. **Eulogeo** can be from men to God, from men to men, and from God to men. When God blesses men He grants them favor and confers happiness upon them.

**Eulogeo - 41x/38v - bless(9), blessed(25), blessing(3), giving a blessing(1), praise(1), praising(1), surely\*(1).** Matt. 14:19; Matt. 21:9; Matt. 23:39; Matt. 25:34; Matt. 26:26; Mk. 6:41; Mk. 8:7; Mk. 11:9; Mk. 11:10; Mk. 14:22; Lk. 1:42; Lk. 1:64; Lk. 2:28; Lk. 2:34; Lk. 6:28; Lk. 9:16; Lk. 13:35; Lk. 19:38; Lk. 24:30; Lk. 24:50; Lk. 24:51; Lk. 24:53; Jn. 12:13; Acts 3:26; Rom. 12:14; 1 Co. 4:12; 1 Co. 10:16; 1 Co. 14:16; Gal. 3:9; Eph. 1:3; Heb. 6:14; Heb. 7:1; Heb. 7:6; Heb. 7:7; Heb. 11:20; Heb. 11:21; Jas. 3:9; 1 Pet. 3:9

#### COMPARISON OF THE ACCLAIM OF THE CROWDS AT JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Matthew 21:9, 15	Mark 11:9, 10+	Luke 19:38+	John 12:13
Multitudes (were) going before Him, and those who followed after (Matthew 21:9)	Those who went before, and those who followed after (Mk 11:9)		

Hosanna (Mt 21:9, 15)	Hosanna (Mk 11:9,10)	Hosanna
Son of David (Mt 21:9,15)		Branches of the palm trees
Blessed is <b>He</b> Who comes in the Name of the Lord (Mt 21:9)	Blessed is <b>He</b> Who comes in the Name of the Lord (Mk 11:9)	Blessed is <b>the King</b> Who comes in the Name of the Lord
		the King
	Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David (Mk 11:9)	the King of Israel
		Peace in heaven
Hosanna in the highest (Mt 21:9)	Hosanna in the highest (Mk 11:10)	Glory in the highest!
Children were crying out in the temple (Mt 21:15)		

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**QUESTION - [What is the significance of the triumphal/triumphant entry? WATCH THE VIDEO](#)**

**ANSWER** - The triumphal entry is that of Jesus coming into Jerusalem on what we know as [Palm Sunday](#), the Sunday before the crucifixion (John 12:1, 12). The story of the triumphal entry is one of the few incidents in the life of Jesus which appears in all four Gospel accounts (Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19).

Putting the four accounts together, it becomes clear that the triumphal entry was a significant event, not only to the people of Jesus' day, but to Christians throughout history. We celebrate Palm Sunday to remember that momentous occasion. On that day, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a borrowed donkey's colt, one that had never been ridden before. The disciples spread their cloaks on the donkey for Jesus to sit on, and the multitudes came out to welcome Him, laying before Him their cloaks and the branches of palm trees. The people hailed and praised Him as the "**King who comes in the name of the Lord**" as He rode to the temple, where He taught the people, healed them, and drove out the money-changers and merchants who had made His Father's house a "den of robbers" (Mark 11:17).

Jesus' purpose in riding into Jerusalem was to make public His claim to be their Messiah and King of Israel in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Matthew says that the King coming on the foal of a donkey was an exact fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Jesus rides into His capital city as a conquering King and is hailed by the people as such, in the manner of the day. The streets of Jerusalem, the royal city, are open to Him, and like a king He ascends to His palace, not a temporal palace but the spiritual palace that is the temple, because His is a spiritual kingdom. He receives the worship and praise of the people because only He deserves it. No longer does He tell His disciples to be quiet about Him (Matthew 12:16, 16:20) but to shout His praises and worship Him openly. The spreading of cloaks was an act of homage for royalty (see 2 Kings 9:13). Jesus was openly declaring to the people that He was their King and the Messiah they had been waiting for.

Unfortunately, the praise the people lavished on Jesus was not because they recognized Him as their Savior from sin. They welcomed Him out of their desire for a messianic deliverer, someone who would lead them in a revolt against Rome. There were many who, though they did not believe in Christ as Savior, nevertheless hoped that perhaps He would be to them a great temporal deliverer. These are the ones who hailed Him as King with their many hosannas, recognizing Him as the Son of David who came in the name of the Lord. But when He failed in their expectations, when He refused to lead them in a massive revolt against the Roman occupiers, the crowds quickly turned on Him. Within just a few days, their [hosannas](#) would change to cries of "Crucify Him!" (Luke



23:20-21). Those who hailed Him as a hero would soon reject and abandon Him.

The story of the triumphal entry is one of contrasts, and those contrasts contain applications to believers. It is the story of the King who came as a lowly servant on a donkey, not a prancing steed, not in royal robes, but on the clothes of the poor and humble. Jesus Christ comes not to conquer by force as earthly kings but by love, grace, mercy, and His own sacrifice for His people. His is not a kingdom of armies and splendor but of lowliness and servanthood. He conquers not nations but hearts and minds. His message is one of peace with God, not of temporal peace. If Jesus has made a triumphal entry into our hearts, He reigns there in peace and love. As His followers, we exhibit those same qualities, and the world sees the true King living and reigning in triumph in us. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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### The One Who Saves

They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" John 12:13

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 12:12–18

He was called "one of the bravest persons alive," but he wasn't what others expected. Desmond was a soldier who declined to carry a gun. As a medic, he single-handedly rescued seventy-five injured soldiers in one battle, including some who once called him a coward and ridiculed him for his faith. Running into heavy gunfire, Desmond prayed continually, "Lord, please help me get one more." He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism.

Scripture tells us that Jesus was greatly misunderstood. On a day foretold by the prophet Zechariah (9:9), Jesus entered Jerusalem and the crowd waved branches, shouting, "Hosanna!" (John 12:13). Quoting Psalm 118:26, they cried: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (John 12:13). But the very next verse in that psalm refers to bringing a sacrifice "with boughs in hand" (Psalm 118:27). While the crowd in John 12 anticipated an earthly king to save them from Rome, Jesus was much more. He was King of Kings and our sacrifice—God in the flesh, willingly embracing the cross to save us from our sins—a purpose prophesied centuries earlier.

"At first his disciples did not understand all this," John writes. Only later "did they realize that these things had been written about him" (John 12:16). Illumined by His Word, God's eternal purposes became clear. Watch Grant Stevenson's devotional video, "Jesus, the Savior," to learn more about the One who saves. By: James Banks (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](http://OurDailyBreadMinistries.com). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

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**"Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"** was written by Jennette Threlfall, an invalid English woman who was known for her cheery disposition as well as her many published poems. This text first appeared in the author's volume *Sunshine and Shadow*, in 1873.

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang;  
thru pillared court and temple the lovely anthem rang;  
to Jesus, who had blessed them close folded to His breast,  
the children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.  
From Olivet they followed 'mid an exultant crowd,  
the victor palm branch waving, and chanting clear and loud;  
the Lord of men and angels rode on in lowly state,  
nor scorned that little children should on His bidding wait.  
"Hosanna in the highest!" That ancient song we sing,  
for Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heav'n our King;  
O may we ever praise Him with heart and life and voice,  
and in His blissful presence eternally rejoice!

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**P G Matthew** - In John 12, we read that Jesus Christ and his disciples set out from Galilee to go to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. But Jesus went as the Passover lamb to be slaughtered, so that he might take away the sin of the world. Jesus knew what would happen to him in Jerusalem during this Passover festival. He was sent by the Father to die on the cross—a necessary, propitiatory, substitutionary, exhaustive, penal death that would accomplish our redemption.

On this particular Sunday, he took a deliberate action designed to provoke the Jewish leaders to pass sentence on him: he chose to come into the city riding on a donkey as the promised Messiah, the Son of David.

In honor of the royal Messiah's arrival in Jerusalem, the people threw their outer garments on the donkey for Christ to sit on. They also cut palm branches, used in celebrating victories, and placed them on the road. These pilgrims cried out to the one riding on the holy donkey, "Hosanna," which means "Save us!" By this they were acknowledging that this One is the Savior.

They also proclaimed, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" Not only is this One the Savior, to whom we cry, "Hosanna," but he is also Christ the Lord, the eternal King, the One who will not be destroyed by death.

On Palm Sunday, we see the pilgrims praying to Jesus and extolling him as their King. Yet, as he himself predicted, the Jewish leaders arrested him on Thursday, crucified him on Friday, and God raised him up on Sunday. Thus he fulfilled the eternal purpose of God in accomplishing our redemption, so that everyone who calls on his name will be delivered from the bondage of sin and death.

Not only should we cry out to Jesus, but we must also acknowledge him as our eternal King by surrendering to him and his sovereign rule. Antinomianism is antithetical to the gospel that speaks about Jesus as Savior and King. If we have surrendered to him, we will obey his rule. Then we will be numbered among the multitude in Revelation 7 who will rejoice forever before the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands.

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### [The Way To Praise Him](#)

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! — Luke 19:38

Today's Scripture: Luke 19:28-38

The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem a few days before His death focused attention on Him as Lord. When Jesus sent His disciples to get the colt He was to ride, He instructed them to tell its owners, "The Lord has need of it" (Luke 19:31). And when the crowds shouted their praise, they quoted Psalm 118:26, saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Luke 19:38).

Jesus is Lord. His name is "above every name" (Philippians 2:9). As part of His title, the word Lord refers to His sovereignty. He is the King, and every believer in Him is a member of His kingdom.

We acknowledge Jesus as Lord of our lives by bowing to His authority as King. This means that we live in obedience to Him. We can't be like the man who claimed to be a Christian and yet chose to use illegal drugs and live in an immoral relationship. When his minister confronted him, he glibly replied, "Don't worry, pastor. It's okay. I'm just a bad Christian."

It's not okay. Not at all! Not for a person who claims to be a follower of Christ (Luke 6:43-49).

Today, make sure you are honoring Him with your deeds as well as with your words. Then you can join with others in proclaiming, "Jesus is Lord!" By: David C. Egnor (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Take me as I am, Lord,  
And make me all Your own;  
Make my heart Your palace  
And Your royal throne.  
—Pope

If you adore Christ as Savior, you can't ignore Christ as Lord.

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### [Who Is This?](#)

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Luke 19:38

Today's Scripture & Insight: Luke 19:28–40

Imagine standing shoulder to shoulder with onlookers by a dirt road. The woman behind you is on her tiptoes, trying to see who is coming. In the distance, you glimpse a man riding a donkey. As He approaches, people toss their coats onto the road. Suddenly, you hear a tree crack behind you. A man is cutting down palm branches, and people are spreading them out ahead of the donkey.

Jesus's followers zealously honored Him as He entered Jerusalem a few days before His crucifixion. The multitude rejoiced and praised God for "all the miracles they had seen" (Luke 19:37). Jesus's devotees surrounded Him, calling out, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" (v. 38). Their enthusiastic honor affected the people of Jerusalem. When Jesus finally arrived, "the whole city was stirred and asked, 'Who is this?'" (Matthew 21:10).

Today, people are still curious about Jesus. Although we can't pave His way with palm branches or shout praises to Him in person, we can still honor Him. We can discuss His remarkable works, assist people in need, patiently bear insults, and love each other deeply. Then we must be ready to answer the onlookers who ask, "Who is Jesus?" By: Jennifer Benson Schuldt (Reprinted by

permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, may my life and my words express what I know about who You are. I want others to see You in me and to know You too.

We honor God's name when we live like His children.

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## [The One Who Saves](#)

They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" John 12:13

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 12:12–18

He was called "one of the bravest persons alive," but he wasn't what others expected. Desmond was a soldier who declined to carry a gun. As a medic, he single-handedly rescued seventy-five injured soldiers in one battle, including some who once called him a coward and ridiculed him for his faith. Running into heavy gunfire, Desmond prayed continually, "Lord, please help me get one more." He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism.

Scripture tells us that Jesus was greatly misunderstood. On a day foretold by the prophet Zechariah (9:9), Jesus entered Jerusalem and the crowd waved branches, shouting, "Hosanna!" (John 12:13). Quoting Psalm 118:26, they cried: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (John 12:13). But the very next verse in that psalm refers to bringing a sacrifice "with boughs in hand" (Psalm 118:27). While the crowd in John 12 anticipated an earthly king to save them from Rome, Jesus was much more. He was King of Kings and our sacrifice—God in the flesh, willingly embracing the cross to save us from our sins—a purpose prophesied centuries earlier.

"At first his disciples did not understand all this," John writes. Only later "did they realize that these things had been written about him" (John 12:16). Illumined by His Word, God's eternal purposes became clear. Watch Grant Stevenson's devotional video, "Jesus, the Savior," to learn more about the One who saves. By: James Banks (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

### **John 12:14 Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written,**

BGT John 12:14 ε ρ ν δ ἡ σο ς ν ριον κ θισεν π α τ , καθ ς σ τιν γεγραμμ νον·

KJV John 12:14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

NET John 12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

CSB John 12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written:

ESV John 12:14 And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

NIV John 12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written,

NLT John 12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and rode on it, fulfilling the prophecy that said:

NRS John 12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

NJB John 12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and mounted it -- as scripture says:

NAB John 12:14 Jesus found an ass and sat upon it, as is written:

YLT John 12:14 and Jesus having found a young ass did sit upon it, according as it is written,

MIT John 12:14 When Jesus found at his disposal a young donkey, he sat upon it, just as it is written:

- **Jesus:** Mt 21:1-7 Mk 11:1-7 Lu 19:29-35
- **as:** Zec 9:9
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **Related Passages:**

Matthew 21:1-7 When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. 3 "If anyone says anything to

you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: 5 "SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'" 6 The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, 7 and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats.

**Jesus, finding ([heurisko](#)) a young donkey, sat on it** - **Jesus, finding** was by sending His disciples on the donkey hunt, details John omits but described in the synoptic gospels (Mt 21:1-7 Mk 11:1-7 Lu 19:29-35). **Young donkey** (onarion - diminutive of onos = donkey) is only used here in the NT and literally means a little donkey or a donkey's colt.

**Bob Utley** - Donkeys were the royal military mount of Israel (cf. 1 Kings 1:33, 1 Kings 1:38, 1 Kings 1:44). Only the king rode on his donkey, therefore, it was very important that Jesus rode on a donkey that had never been ridden before (cf. Mark 11:2). The colt of the donkey speaks not only of Messianic kingship but also of humility. Jesus did not come as the conquering military figure of Jewish expectation, but the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53:0 riding on the colt of a donkey.

**Whitacre** - Jesus responds by finding a *young donkey* to sit on (John 12:14), thereby making a mess of the picture they were creating. He should have found a horse to ride on or made use of some other symbol of power. Instead he paints from a different palette. His action undercuts their nationalism and points in a different direction,

**As it is written** - **Written ([grapho](#))** is in the perfect tense, indicating it was **written** in the past and stands **written** or valid, to this very day when Jesus fulfilled Zechariah's prophecy "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey." (Zechariah 9:9)

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## [A King on a Donkey](#)

See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey. Matthew 21:5

Today's Scripture & Insight: Matthew 21:1–11

It was Sunday—the day we now call Palm Sunday. Without a doubt, this wasn't Jesus' first visit to Jerusalem. As a devout Jew, He would've gone to the city every year for the three great feasts (Luke 2:41–42; John 2:13; 5:1). In the past three years, Christ had also ministered and taught in Jerusalem. But this Sunday His coming into the city was radically different.

By riding a young donkey into Jerusalem at a time when thousands of worshipers were coming into the city, Jesus was the center of attention (Matthew 21:9–11). Why would He take the place of prominence before thousands of people when for the past three years He'd deliberately kept a low profile? Why would He accept the people's proclamation that He was King just five days before His death?

Matthew says that this took place to fulfill a five-hundred-year-old prophecy (Matthew 21:4–5) that God's chosen king would come into Jerusalem "righteous and victorious, [yet] lowly and riding on a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9; see also Genesis 49:10–11).

This was a truly unusual way for a triumphant king to enter a city. Conquering kings normally rode on mighty stallions. But Jesus didn't come riding a warhorse. This reveals what kind of King Jesus is. He came in meekness and lowliness. Jesus came not for war, but for peace, establishing peace between God and us (Acts 10:36; Colossians 1:20). By: K. T. Sim

What kind of king is Jesus to you today? How can you honor Him as your King?

Jesus, thank You for coming into Jerusalem to reveal Your mighty and humble ways. Fill my heart with Your peace.

Learn more about Jesus' life in the area of Judea with this [online course](#).

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## [Wanted!](#)

The Lord has need of him. — Luke 19:34

Today's Scripture: Luke 19:29-40

As Jesus approached Jerusalem for the last time, He sent two disciples into the city to bring Him a donkey. He told them, "If anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it'" (Luke 19:31).

As we approach our sunset years, we may ask ourselves, "Can I still be useful to God? Is there some service I can render that will fill my days with significance? Am I needed?"

Of course you are! God needs you just as He needed the donkey to carry Him through the streets of Jerusalem. He has always needed something or someone to get His work done. He still has useful work for you to do.

Perhaps your work will be one brief task, like the donkey's single act of service. Or it may be some activity that will fully occupy your years until your Master calls you home. It may be an opportunity to share your faith with someone, to intercede for him, or to love him through quiet acts of mercy, friendly visits, or to extend some small courtesy. There will always be something for you to do.

In the meantime, you and I must stand and wait, preparing ourselves through prayer, Bible reading, and quiet listening—ready for the moment that our Lord has need of us.

Will you be ready when He needs you? By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

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### [The Problem Within](#)

Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven! Matthew 21:9

Today's Scripture & Insight: Matthew 21:1–9

A few years ago, a woodpecker began tapping on the siding of our home. We thought the problem was only external. Then one day, my son and I climbed up a ladder into the attic only to have a bird fly past our startled faces. The problem was worse than we'd suspected: it was inside our house.

When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, the crowd was hoping He would be the one to fix their external problem—their oppression by the Romans. They went wild, shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” (Matthew 21:9). This was the moment they'd been waiting for; God's appointed King had come. If God's chosen Deliverer was going to begin reforming things, wouldn't He start with all the wrong out there? But in most gospel accounts, the “triumphal entry” is followed by Jesus driving out exploitative moneychangers . . . from the temple (vv. 12–13). He was cleaning house, and from the inside out.

That's what happens when we welcome Jesus as King; He comes to set things right—and He starts with us. He makes us confront the evil inside. Jesus on the donkey is like the warriors in the Trojan horse. The horse was welcomed as a symbol of peace, but its ultimate aim was unconditional surrender. Jesus our King requires the same from us. By: Glenn Packiam (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

What does it mean for Jesus to be your King? Why is it vital for you to surrender your all to Him?

Dear Jesus, You're the true King. Forgive me for wanting You to only fix the problems in the world around me and not to confront the sin in my heart. Show me where I'm prone to wander and expose the ways I want to run my own life.

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### [The Promise Of A King](#)

Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey. — Matthew 21:5

Today's Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

For all his education, Austrian-born psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud couldn't predict how history was going to unfold. When Communist revolutionaries were laying the foundations of Soviet tyranny on the corpses of their own countrymen, Freud wrote, “At a time when great nations are declaring that they expect to find their salvation solely from a steadfast adherence to Christian piety, the upheaval in Russia . . . seems to promise a better future.” How mistaken that godless man was!

Freud's failure to predict the future stands in stark contrast to the hundreds of fulfilled prophecies of the Bible. People may make educated guesses, but only God knows the future.

None of the Bible's prophecies are more wonderful than those about the Messiah. The Old Testament foretold many details of Christ's life and death, such as His virgin birth (Isa. 7:10-14), sacrificial death (Isa. 53), and even His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Zech. 9:9; Mt. 21:5).

How wonderful that the all-knowing God promises that the King who came on a donkey nearly 2,000 years ago will one day return in glory and power (2 Th. 1:7-10). Until then, the same Divine Promise Keeper will care for those who have asked Christ to reign in their hearts. By: Vernon Grounds (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional

without their permission.)

God kept His promise of the Savior's birth  
That wondrous night when Jesus came to earth;  
And still today the prophets' message rings:  
He'll come again to reign as King of kings.  
—Hess

Christ's second coming is as certain as His first.

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### [The Lord's Donkey](#)

Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey. — Matthew 21:5

Today's Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

People often speak of donkeys in belittling terms. You may have heard the expression, "I'm just someone who has to do all the donkey work." Or "So-and-so is as stubborn as a mule" (a mule is part donkey).

These sayings overlook the contributions of a truly valuable animal. Donkeys have served the human race for thousands of years. They were once prized as symbols of humility, gentleness, and peace.

In Bible days, donkeys that had never been ridden were regarded as especially suitable for religious purposes. So it was most fitting that Jesus sent for a colt to perform the royal task of carrying Him into Jerusalem. How enviable was that donkey's mission! How like our mission as Jesus' followers!

A missionary in China calls herself "the Lord's donkey." She's a humble believer, "carrying" her Lord faithfully into town after town and training others to do likewise. The Lord has need of many such "donkeys" in today's world—humble people who will carry Him into their Jerusalem and make Him known.

The donkey had to be untied before Jesus could use it. We too must be released from worldly attachments if we are to serve Christ. Are we willing to be the Lord's donkey? By: Joanie Yoder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Teach me to do the humble task  
The very best I can,  
And not to look for greater calls  
Which may oppose Thy plan.  
—Bernheisel

Humble work becomes holy work when it's done for God.

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### [DONKEY MENTALITY](#)

Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey. —Matthew 21:5

A minister referred to Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and asked, "What if the donkey on which Jesus was riding had thought all the cheering was for him? What if that small animal had believed that the hosannas and the branches were in his honour?"

The minister then pointed to himself and said, "I'm a donkey. The longer I'm here the more you'll come to realise that. I am only a Christ bearer and not the object of praise."

In recording Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, Matthew referred to the prophecy of Zechariah: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey'" (Matt. 21:5; see Zech. 9:9).

On Palm Sunday the donkey was merely the bearer of Christ, bringing the Son of God into the city where He would give His life for the sins of the world.

If we could develop a healthy 'donkey mentality', what an asset that would be as we travel the road of life. Instead of wondering what people think of us, our concern would be, "Can they see Christ Jesus, the King?" Rather than seeking credit for service rendered, we would be content to lift up the Lord. David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)



## [The Cross And The Crown](#)

Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey. —Zechariah 9:9

Today's Scripture: Mark 11:1-11

On the day we call Palm Sunday the Lord Jesus presented Himself to Israel as their King when He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Had He been astride a spirited horse, He would have looked more kingly. But Zechariah had prophesied He would come in the humble way that He did.

Why? Kings of the East rode donkeys when on errands of peace. The horse was used as a charger in war.

The multitudes thought in terms of earthly prosperity and freedom from Rome. So they cried, "Hosanna in the highest!" (Mark 11:10). Yet a few days later, the shouts of the crowd became: "Crucify Him!" (15:13).

Some who declare themselves admirers of Jesus do not recognize Him as the Savior of sinners. But our deepest need cannot be met until our sin problem is overcome. For this reason Christ rode into Jerusalem on a donkey with His face set toward the cross, knowing full well the shameful and painful death He would suffer there. Now, having paid the price for human sin, He is highly exalted at God's right hand and will come again as King of kings and Lord of lords. His cross had to precede His crown.

If we want to be part of His heavenly kingdom, we must trust Him as our Savior now. By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

If in heaven a crown you'd wear  
And bright palms of victory bear,  
Christ the Savior you must claim;  
Find redemption in His name.  
—Anon.

There would be no crown-wearers in heaven  
had Christ not been the cross-bearer on earth.

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**[A Parade Of One](#)** - Parades have traditionally been celebrations of great achievements. In American history, the greatest parades focused on people such as pilot Charles Lindbergh, the Apollo 11 astronauts, and war heroes. These celebrations were marked by ticker-tape showers and adoring crowds lining the streets of a major city as bands and celebrities passed in review.

But the greatest parade of all time was quite different. It happened in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago. It was a simple one-man donkey ride. Instead of ticker tape, the way was lined with garments and palm branches.

Perhaps the most remarkable element of Jesus' ride into the Holy City was its prophetic significance. In Zechariah 9:9, the prophet described the scene that would unfold more than 500 years later. When Jesus rode that donkey into Jerusalem, fulfilling prophecy as He went, He was giving us one more reason to shout, "**Hosanna!**" He was, and is, the promised Messiah. --J D Branon (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

IF WE BELIEVE IN JESUS' KINGSHIP,  
WE'LL BOW TO HIM IN WORSHIP.

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**HOSANNA (Read Jn 12:12-19, Mt 21:9)** - It's Sunday morning, time for the electronic church in America. Thousands lounge in their living rooms watching television. Almost every channel carries a religious program. Some preachers proclaim a clear-cut gospel message. Others, however, pace before an enraptured audience, telling them that Jesus will heal all their diseases and make them rich. "He wants you well! Poverty is of the devil!" shouts the preacher. And the swelling of applause picks up where he leaves off. People love the "gospel" of prosperity and deliverance from sickness.

Now turn back the calendar to a Sunday morning around 33 A.D. The city is Jerusalem. There's no TV, but there is a preacher who stirs the hopes of an excited crowd. For three years He's been going about Judea and Galilee, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and even raising the dead. Now He rides into Jerusalem on a colt, gladly receiving the acclaim of the crowd. But those who shout "Hosanna!" are accepting Him for what they think He will give them, not for who He is and what He came to do. They want an

earthly Messiah who will provide for their material welfare, not a suffering Messiah whose death on the cross will expose their sin, provide forgiveness, and call for a life commitment.

Jesus didn't promise release from all the suffering in the world. But He did offer forgiveness, peace, eternal life, and a cross. Anything less than taking up that cross in serving Him is shallow allegiance.—D. J. De Haan

The word easy appears only once in the New Testament, and then in connection with yoke.

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#### **Jon Courson** comments on **Hosanna**

Because the word 'Hosanna' means 'Save now,' the crowd was essentially saying,

'Overthrow the Roman yoke politically. Save Now!'

'Help us economically. Save Now!'

'Lead us militarily. Save Now!'

No wonder that, as the week went on and they realized none of that was His intent, they turned against Jesus.

I see the same thing happen today. I listened as a young man sat in my office a few days ago and said, 'Since I became a Christian, my brother contracted a disease. I prayed for him, but nothing happened. My parents have been down on me ever since you baptized me a few summers ago. My friends no longer want to hang out with me. I don't sense God is using me. And so, even though I know Jesus is real, even though I know there's a heaven, I'm choosing not to walk with Him.'

I tried to reason with him, spent time talking with him, and cried for him. I know the Lord is not through with him. But I was reminded once again that the tendency is within the heart of each of us to cash it in when things don't work out. Once we were in church on Sunday singing, 'Hosanna. Bless the Lord, O my soul.' But then something—or a series of things—went wrong, and our songs turned to sighs.

If you are expecting Jesus to be a 'good luck charm' for you, if you expect Him to help you financially or physically, socially or vocationally, you will be disappointed when things don't go the way you thought they should or hoped they would.

We need to realize that Jesus Christ came to die for our sin and to pay the price for our iniquity. If He never does anything else in this life presently, that is more than enough to merit our loyalty, our affection, our devotion. If He never does another thing for me, if He never gives another blessing to me, I owe Him my life because of what He did on Calvary. (A Day's Journey: 365 Daily Meditations from the Word)

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The multitudes ... cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Mt 21:9

I have often wondered how many of those people who enthusiastically cried, "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" a few days later. Some may have been keenly disappointed, even angry, that Christ didn't use His miraculous power to establish an earthly kingdom. Hadn't He created a golden opportunity to rally popular support by parading into Jerusalem and offering Himself as King? Many Jews failed to recognize that before Jesus would openly assert His sovereignty He had to rule in their hearts. Their greatest need was not to be freed from Caesar's rule but to be released from the chains of pride, self-righteousness, and rebellion against God.

The issue is the same today Christ does not offer immunity from life's hardships, a cure for every disease, or the promise of financial success What the King offered then is what He offers today—Himself as the sacrifice for our sins, and a challenge to serve Him. If we accept His offer, we will not be disappointed.—D. J. De Haan

#### **PUTTING CHRIST FIRST BRINGS SATISFACTION THAT LASTS**

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**From Hosanna to Crucify** - (John 12:12-13). Sometimes I wonder how many of those who enthusiastically cried, "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday were shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" a few days later. People must have been disappointed, even resentful, that Christ didn't overthrow the Romans and set up an earthly kingdom. He had had a golden opportunity to rally support as He rode into Jerusalem. In contrast to His earlier actions, He didn't try to dampen this jubilant demonstration. Yet neither did he capitalize on the fervor of the crowd and issue a call to arms. Those who longed only for release from foreign domination were disillusioned. The Messiah had not fulfilled their expectations.

Jesus' contemporaries failed to recognize that before He could assert His outward sovereignty, He had to rule the inner citadel of their hearts. The Jews' greatest need was not freedom from Caesar's legions but release from the chains of their own sin. Jesus would rule in power and glory one day, but first He had to pay sin's penalty on the cross. The key to His kingdom was not revolution but repentance.

Through the centuries the issue has not changed. If we follow Christ only because we think He'll shield us from life's hardships, heal all our sicknesses, and guarantee prosperity, we're headed for disillusionment. But if we renounce sin, take up our cross, and live for Him because He is our God, our Creator, and our Redeemer, we will never be disappointed in Him. —D. J. De Haan

Putting Christ first brings satisfaction that lasts.

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## **Man Of Contrasts**

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! — Matthew 21:9

Today's Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

On that first Palm Sunday, one might have expected Jesus the King to enter Jerusalem on a mighty steed. But He chose instead a lowly donkey. Before He could come as a King to reign, He had to come as a Savior to die. Throughout His life on earth, Jesus was a man of striking contrasts—reflecting both His genuine humanity and His full deity.

Someone once wrote this about Jesus: "He who is the Bread of Life began His ministry hungering. He who is the Water of Life ended His ministry thirsting. Christ hungered as a man, yet fed the hungry as God. He was weary, yet He is our rest. He paid tribute, yet He is the King. He was called a devil, but He cast out demons. He prayed, yet He hears prayer. He wept, and He dries our tears. He was sold for 30 pieces of silver, yet He redeems sinners. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, yet He is the Good Shepherd. He gave His life, and by dying He destroyed death."

We would expect to find such contrasts in the life of One who was fully God and fully man. Jesus, who is the sovereign Lord of the universe, became a man to provide for our redemption. But one day He will return as King of kings.

Jesus, the God-man, deserves all our praise. — Richard DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

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## **The King's Offer**

The multitudes . . . cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" —Matthew 21:9

Today's Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

I have often wondered how many of those people who enthusiastically cried, "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" a few days later. Some may have been keenly disappointed, even angry, that Christ didn't use His miraculous power to establish an earthly kingdom. Hadn't He created a golden opportunity to rally popular support by parading into Jerusalem and offering Himself as King?

Many Jews failed to recognize that before Jesus would openly assert His sovereignty He had to rule in their hearts. Their greatest need was not to be freed from Caesar's rule but to be released from the chains of pride, self-righteousness, and rebellion against God. They wanted the visible kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament with all its material benefits. But the Messiah first had to die for the sins of mankind and rise again to establish the basis for a spiritual rule.

The issue is the same today. Christ does not offer immunity from life's hardships, a cure for every disease, or the promise of financial success. What the King offered then is what He offers today—Himself as the sacrifice for our sins, and a challenge to serve Him. If we accept His offer, we will not be disappointed. By: Dennis J. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

There's no disappointment in Jesus,  
He's all that He promised to be;  
His love and His care comfort me everywhere;  
He is no disappointment to me.

Putting Christ first brings satisfaction that lasts.

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**Matthew 21:16 (READ: Matthew 21:1-17)** - THE religious leaders were wrong about Jesus. They knew a lot about theology, but they knew nothing about Christ.

The children, however, were right. They were the ones in the temple who shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" They believed that the person riding that unbroken colt was the promised Son of David. They fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 8:2 by giving praise to the Lamb who was about to die for the sins of the world. It was the children who responded with wholehearted joy, even though they couldn't fully understand Jesus' mission of human redemption. Children can teach us a vital lesson about faith. Their innocence makes it easy for them to believe and trust in the one who is truth, goodness, and love all in one.

Adults think they know so much. We try to be so mature, so correct, so religious. But I wonder if we would even recognize the Savior if He walked among us. Or would we, like those people long ago, be deceived because He doesn't fit our preconceived ideas of how He should behave and what His agenda should be?—D C Egner

Lord, grant me the faith of children, who are able to believe so easily in Your goodness because they have seen so little of this world's evil. May I not be deceived by Satan's empty promises when he offers me something that looks good, but rather trust You, the author and possessor of all true goodness.

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**ISAIAH 9:6** - When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, the crowds cried out, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" (Mt 21:9). Later that same week, however, a mob called for His crucifixion (Mt 27:22). Few people recognized Him as the one Isaiah described as Wonderful (Isa 9:6).

If there is anyone who deserves that name, it is Jesus. He is wonderful in His deity and in His selfless love that led Him from the shining glories of heaven into the darkness of this sin-cursed world. He is wonderful in His virgin birth, wonderful in His overcoming, sinless life of service, wonderful in His teachings, wonderful in His vicarious death, wonderful in His astounding resurrection, and wonderful in His ascended glory.

Someone has observed, "In Christ we have a love that can never be fathomed, a peace that can never be understood, a rest that can never be disturbed, a joy that can never be diminished, a hope that can never be disappointed, and a spiritual resource that can never be exhausted." —H. G. Bosch

THE VICTIM OF CALVARY  
BECAME THE VICTOR OF EASTER.

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**John 12:15 "FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT."**

BGT John 12:15 μ φοβο , θυγ τηρ Σι ν· δο βασιλε ς σου ρχεται, καθ μενος π π λον νου.

KJV John 12:15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

NET John 12:15 "Do not be afraid, people of Zion; look, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt!"

CSB John 12:15 Fear no more, Daughter Zion. Look, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt.

ESV John 12:15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

NIV John 12:15 "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."

NLT John 12:15 "Don't be afraid, people of Jerusalem. Look, your King is coming, riding on a donkey's colt."

NRS John 12:15 "Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

NJB John 12:15 Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion; look, your king is approaching, riding on the foal of a donkey.

NAB John 12:15 "Fear no more, O daughter Zion; see, your king comes, seated upon an ass's colt."

YLT John 12:15 'Fear not, daughter of Sion, lo, thy king doth come, sitting on an ass' colt.'

MIT John 12:15 Do not be afraid, daughter Zion. Look! Your king is coming seated on a foal of a donkey.

- **Fear:** Isa 35:4-5 Isa 40:9-10 Isa 41:14 Isa 62:11 Mic 4:8 Zep 3:16,17 Zec 2:9-11 Mt 2:2-6
- **seated:** De 17:16 Jdg 5:10 12:14 2Sa 15:1 16:2 1Ki 1:33
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 1:33 The king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon.

Isaiah 35:4-5 Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, **fear not** (Lxx - [present imperative with a negative](#)). Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, But He will save you." 5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

Isaiah 40:9-10 Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift it up, **do not fear** (Lxx - [present imperative with a negative](#)).. Say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" 10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might, With His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him And His recompense before Him.

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! **Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.**

COMMENT: Note the 4 elements associated with the coming Messiah - (1) King (2) Just ([saddiq](#) = righteous) (3) Having salvation or victorious (4) Humble (5) Riding a donkey colt.

### MESSIANIC PROPHECY FULFILLED BY JESUS

It has been estimated that there are some 2500 prophecies in the Bible, almost 2000 of which have been fulfilled to the letter. See [Messianic Prophecies](#)

**FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION** - **Fear not** is a negative with the [present imperative](#), which means stop being fearful or do not begin being fearful. The phrase "**Daughter of Zion**" is a figurative or poetic way of referring to the Jewish people. **Zion** is the easternmost of the two hills of ancient Jerusalem.

The phrase **Daughter of Zion** - 28x/28v - **most in the Old Testament including the Messianic prophecy in Zechariah 9:9** - 2 Ki. 19:21; Ps. 9:14; Isa. 1:8; Isa. 10:32; Isa. 16:1; Isa. 37:22; Isa. 52:2; Isa. 62:11; Jer. 4:31; Jer. 6:2; Jer. 6:23; Lam. 1:6; Lam. 2:1; Lam. 2:4; Lam. 2:8; Lam. 2:10; Lam. 2:13; Lam. 2:18; Lam. 4:22; Mic. 1:13; Mic. 4:8; Mic. 4:10; Mic. 4:13; Zeph. 3:14; Zech. 2:10; Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:5; Jn. 12:15

**BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT** - Jesus did not come riding in on a horse which would signal war, but on a donkey which signaled peace and His humble attitude ([see above](#) Zech 9:9), but clearly this truth was not recognized by the frenzied Jewish crowd who were looking for a King who was a conqueror not a King who was humble. In His Second Coming He will return on a white horse to carry out the final destruction of the enemies of God (Rev 19:11-21+).

HOSANNA to the Son  
Of David, and of God,  
Who *brought* the news of pardon down,  
And *bought* it with His blood.

**J Vernon McGee** - Obviously, Jesus Christ could have had the crown without first going to the Cross. However, if He had gone directly to the crown, if He were the ruler today, you and I would never have been saved. He had to go to the Cross to save you and me. Although this was a brief moment of triumph before His death, it was not His triumphal entry. In the future when He enters as Lord of lords and King of kings, that will be His triumphal entry. My favorite painting of the Crucifixion shows three empty crosses. The bodies of the crucified have been taken down from the crosses and lie in the tombs. In the background is a little donkey eating on a palm frond. What a message! The discarded palm branch and the Cross are the tokens of His so-called triumphal entry. Where is the crowd that cried, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord"? They may be the same crowd that on the next day shouted, "Crucify Him!" Now they are gone, and He is in the tomb. You see, He offered Himself to them publicly as their King, but He was rejected.

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**Greg Laurie** notes that "CHARLES DICKENS created one of literature's most memorable first lines when, in his novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, he wrote, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." He was writing about the French Revolution, but he might as well have been describing the events surrounding Jesus' final visit to Jerusalem (Ed: As the crowd went from the "best" Hosanna to the "worst" Crucify Him). (BORROW [Every day with Jesus: First Steps for New Believers](#))

### **Fickle Followers**

Behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt. —John 12:15

Today's Scripture: John 12:12-19; 19:14-16

How quickly public opinion can change! When Jesus entered Jerusalem for the Passover feast, He was welcomed by crowds cheering to have Him made king (John 12:13). But by the end of the week, the crowds were demanding that He be crucified (19:15).

I recognize myself in those fickle crowds. I love cheering for a team that's winning, but my interest wanes when they start losing. I love being part of a movement that is new and exciting, but when the energy moves to a new part of town, I'm ready to move on. I love following Jesus when He is doing the impossible, but I slink away when He expects me to do something difficult. It's exciting to follow Jesus when I can do it as part of the "in" crowd. It's easy to trust Him when He outsmarts the smart people and outmaneuvers the people in power (see Matt. 12:10; 22:15-46). But when He begins to talk about suffering and sacrifice and death, I hesitate.

I like to think that I would have followed Jesus all the way to the cross—but I have my doubts. After all, if I don't speak up for Him in places where it's safe, what makes me think I would do so in a crowd of His opponents?

How thankful I am that Jesus died for fickle followers so that we can become devoted followers. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

For Further Thought

Read these Bible verses and ponder Jesus' love for you

(Rom. 5:8; Rom. 8:37-39; Heb. 13:5-6,8; 1 John 3:1).

Allow your devotion to Him to grow.

Christ deserves full-time followers.

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### **QUESTION - What does the Bible mean when it refers to a "Daughter of Zion"?**

**ANSWER** - The "daughter of Zion" is mentioned several times in the Old Testament, usually in prophecy and once in poetry. "Zion" meant Jerusalem and, later, Israel as the people of God. "Daughter of Zion," then, does not refer to a specific person. It's a metaphor for Israel and the loving, caring, patient relationship God has with His chosen people.

As a representation of the people of Israel, the daughter of Zion is described in several different situations:

2 Kings 19:21: A people confident in the deliverance of their God. When Assyria threatened Jerusalem, King Hezekiah went to the Lord. In response, God sent Isaiah to reassure Hezekiah that Jerusalem would not fall to Assyria, and God considered the threatening insult to "the virgin daughter of Zion" as a personal affront to Himself.

Isaiah 1:8: A hut, abandoned after judgment came to an evil family. Here, Isaiah compares the rebellion of Judah to a sick body in a devastated land. The daughter of Zion is left as a lone remnant—a shelter hidden in the vineyard or a hut in a cucumber field that barely escaped destruction.

Jeremiah 4:31: A woman in labor, helpless before attackers. The steadfastness of Hezekiah was rare in Judah—most kings encouraged rebellion against God instead of loyalty to God. Jeremiah warns that if the nation does not turn away from evil, God will punish them severely. And the people will be helpless against it—as helpless as a woman in labor.

Isaiah 62:11: A people awaiting salvation. After the punishment of exile, God promises restoration to Israel. He will rejoice over His chosen people again. And in verse 11, He promises the daughter of Zion, "Lo, your salvation comes; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him."

Micah 4:13: A bull that threshes his enemies. In verse 10, God warns that the daughter of Zion will suffer as much as a woman in labor. But in verse 13, He promises vengeance. The weak, powerless woman will become a bull with horns of iron and hoofs of bronze that will crush its enemies.



Zechariah 9:9: A land awaiting its king. This prophecy promises Israel's enemies will be destroyed, but also speaks about a more permanent solution to the problem of sin. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Should in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; he is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Despite the consistent rebellion of the daughter of Zion against her Father, He promises to restore her and present her with a Deliverer-King in the form of Jesus.

Daughter implies that God is a loving father. He cherishes and loves His people, even while they reject Him. By using the metaphor "daughter of Zion," God showed how He felt for the rebellious Israelites: frustrated, angry, but always with an eye to the future when the relationship would be restored, and He could once again return to them and welcome them into His arms (Zechariah 2:10). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**Related Resource:**

- [What is Zion? What is Mount Zion? What is the biblical meaning of Zion? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**John 12:16 These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.**

BGT John 12:16 τατα ο κ γνωσαν α το ο μαθητα τ πρ τον, λλ τε δοξ σθη η σο ς τ τε μν σθησαν τι τα τα ν π α τ γεγραμμ να κα τα τα πο ησαν α τ .

KJV John 12:16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

NET John 12:16 (His disciples did not understand these things when they first happened, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about him and that these things had happened to him.)

CSB John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first. However, when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

ESV John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

NIV John 12:16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

NLT John 12:16 His disciples didn't understand at the time that this was a fulfillment of prophecy. But after Jesus entered into his glory, they remembered what had happened and realized that these things had been written about him.

NRS John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.

NJB John 12:16 At first his disciples did not understand this, but later, after Jesus had been glorified, they remembered that this had been written about him and that this was what had happened to him.

NAB John 12:16 His disciples did not understand this at first, but when Jesus had been glorified they remembered that these things were written about him and that they had done this for him.

YLT John 12:16 And these things his disciples did not know at the first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were having been written about him, and these things they did to him.

MIT John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these allusions at the time, but when Jesus was glorified, they remembered that these things were written about him, and that they had implemented them for him.

- **understand:** Lu 9:45 18:34 24:25,45
- **but when:** Jn 12:23 7:39 13:31,32 17:5 Mk 16:19 Ac 2:33,36 3:13 Heb 8:1 12:2
- **then:** Jn 2:22, Jn 14:26, Jn 16:4 Lu 24:6-8
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

John 12:23 And Jesus \*answered them, saying, "The hour has come for **the Son of Man to be glorified**.

John 13:31 Therefore when he had gone out, Jesus \*said, '**Now is the Son of Man glorified**, and God is glorified in Him;

John 2:22+ So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 16:4 "But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

John 16:13-15 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth**; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for **He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you**. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and **will disclose it to you**.

Luke 24:6-8+ "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, 7 saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." 8 And they remembered His words,

## SLOW LEARNERS WOULD REMEMBER

**These things** - Whenever you see a phrase like "these things" pause and ask "What things?" This will usually force you to examine the previous context and overall will add to your understanding of the passage.

As an aside, in the NAS, the phrase "**these things**" occurs 287x/272v and 45x/41v in the Gospel of John - Jn. 1:28; Jn. 2:16; Jn. 2:18; Jn. 3:9; Jn. 3:10; Jn. 3:22; Jn. 5:1; Jn. 5:16; Jn. 5:19; Jn. 5:34; Jn. 6:1; Jn. 6:59; Jn. 7:1; Jn. 7:4; Jn. 7:9; Jn. 7:32; Jn. 8:28; Jn. 8:30; Jn. 9:40; Jn. 11:43; Jn. 12:16; Jn. 12:36; Jn. 12:41; Jn. 13:17; Jn. 14:25; Jn. 15:11; Jn. 15:21; Jn. 16:1; Jn. 16:3; Jn. 16:4; Jn. 16:6; Jn. 16:25; Jn. 16:33; Jn. 17:1; Jn. 17:13; Jn. 19:25; Jn. 19:36; Jn. 19:38; Jn. 20:18; Jn. 21:1; Jn. 21:24

**His disciples** ([mathetes](#)) (ou = absolutely) **did not understand** ([ginosko](#)) **at the first** ([protos](#)) - (cf. Jn 2:22; Jn 10:6; Jn 16:18; Mk 9:32; Lk 2:50; Lk 9:45; Lk 18:34) Spiritual truth can only be spiritually discerned and the disciples were still a little short on spiritual insights, but that would soon dramatically change! It is ironic that **disciples** ([mathetes](#)) means learners, and clearly the 12 were "slow learners!"

Jesus would soon teach the disciples in the Upper Room Discourse that "the Helper, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will **teach you all things**, and **bring to your remembrance all that I said to you**" (Jn 14:26+).

**Spurgeon** - It is strange that Christ's own disciples did not at once remember this plain prophecy when it was so literally fulfilled, yet, before we condemn them, let us recollect how "slow of heart" we also have been "to believe all that the prophets have spoken.".....I wonder whether, when Christ comes back to earth, in the glory of his Father with the holy angels, we also shall not understand a great many things which are complete mysteries to us now. Peradventure, it will be said of us then, "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him." That first glory of his ascension to heaven shed a flood of light upon the life of Christ, as doubtless the greater glory of his second advent will shed a yet brighter light upon our understanding of the things of Christ which quite surpass our comprehension now.

**But when** - This is an important combination of a term of contrast and a time phrase, marking the time when the "spiritual blinders" came off of the eyes of the disciples. The Spirit opened their eyes to behold wonderful things in the Word (cf Ps 119:18). One is reminded of Jesus words describing timing of the Spirit's ministry in John 7:37-39+

Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, **because Jesus was not yet glorified**.

But when Jesus was glorified ([doxazo](#)) then they remembered ([mimnesko](#)) that these things were written ([grapho](#) in perfect tense = stand written) of Him - What things? Clearly referring to His "triumphal entry" which had been written of Him in Zechariah's prophecy (Zech 9:9). They would begin to "[put two and two together.](#)"

And that they had done these things to Him - The third use of **these things**, here referring to the loud proclamations of "Hosanna" and acclamations of Jesus as "King."

**John 12:17 So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him.**

BGT John 12:17 μαρτυροῦν ὁ ὄχλος ὃς μετὰ τὸ τετελεσμένον ἐκ τοῦ μνημερίου καὶ γείρεν αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν.

KJV John 12:17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

NET John 12:17 So the crowd who had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead were continuing to testify about it.

CSB John 12:17 Meanwhile, the crowd, which had been with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify.

ESV John 12:17 The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness.

NIV John 12:17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.

NLT John 12:17 Many in the crowd had seen Jesus call Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, and they were telling others about it.

NRS John 12:17 So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify.

NJB John 12:17 The crowd who had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead kept bearing witness to it;

NAB John 12:17 So the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from death continued to testify.

YLT John 12:17 The multitude, therefore, who are with him, were testifying that he called Lazarus out of the tomb, and did raise him out of the dead;

MIT John 12:17 The group who had been with him when he called Lazarus from his tomb and raised him from the dead was testifying about him.

- **people:** Jn 12:9 11:31,45,46 Ps 145:6,7
- **continued to testify:** Jn 1:19,32,34 5:35-39 8:13,14 15:26,27 19:35 21:24 Ac 1:22 5:32 1Jn 5:9-12 Rev 1:2
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE "LAZARUS EFFECT"

**So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised**([egeiro](#)) **from the dead** ([nekros](#)) - This is the third mention of raising Lazarus from the dead in John 12 (Jn 12:1, 9, 17), so this is clearly a key thought. These were those who had been present at the tomb when Jesus called Lazarus forth and clearly had left a striking impression on all who witnessed this miracle.

**Continued to testify** ([martureo](#)) **about Him** - **Testify** is the first word in the Greek text which places emphasis on this action by the people. The imperfect tense pictures them testifying again and again that the One riding in on the donkey was the very One Who had called Lazarus to life. They are giving witness about Jesus which was a result of the "Lazarus effect."

**John 12:18 For this reason also the people went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign.**

BGT John 12:18 δι το το [κα] π ντησεν α τ χλος, τι κουσαν το το α τ ν πεποιηκ ναι τ σημειον.

KJV John 12:18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

NET John 12:18 Because they had heard that Jesus had performed this miraculous sign, the crowd went out to meet him.

CSB John 12:18 This is also why the crowd met Him, because they heard He had done this sign.

ESV John 12:18 The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

NIV John 12:18 Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him.

NLT John 12:18 That was the reason so many went out to meet him-- because they had heard about this miraculous sign.

NRS John 12:18 It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him.

NJB John 12:18 this was another reason why the crowd came out to receive him: they had heard that he had given this sign.

NAB John 12:18 This was (also) why the crowd went to meet him, because they heard that he had done this sign.

YLT John 12:18 because of this also did the multitude meet him, because they heard of his having done this sign,

MIT John 12:18 For this reason a crowd that had heard about his doing this miraculous sign met up with him.

- Jn 12:9-11
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE LAZARUS SIGN DRAWS PEOPLE

**For this reason** - This begs the question "What reason?" What had the people with Him doing in the previous verse? They clearly were broadcasting the news that this was the One Who performed the miraculous sign.

**Also the people went and met Him** - These were presumably the pilgrims who had come to the feast and wanted to see the "Miracle Man."

**because they heard that He had performed this sign** ([semeion](#)) - **They heard** refers to the impact of those who continued to testify in v17.

**John 12:19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him."**

BGT John 12:19 ο ο ν Φαρισαοι ε παν πρ ς αυτο ς θεωρε τε τι ο κ φελε τε ο δ ν· δε κ σμος π σω α το π λθεν.

KJV John 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

NET John 12:19 Thus the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you can do nothing. Look, the world has run off after him!"

CSB John 12:19 Then the Pharisees said to one another, "You see? You've accomplished nothing. Look-- the world has gone after Him!"

ESV John 12:19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world

has gone after him."

NIV John 12:19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"

NLT John 12:19 Then the Pharisees said to each other, "There's nothing we can do. Look, everyone has gone after him!"

NRS John 12:19 The Pharisees then said to one another, "You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!"

NJB John 12:19 Then the Pharisees said to one another, 'You see, you are making no progress; look, the whole world has gone after him!'

NAB John 12:19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the whole world has gone after him."

YLT John 12:19 the Pharisees, therefore, said among themselves, 'Ye see that ye do not gain anything, lo, the world did go after him.'

MIT John 12:19 Within the Pharisaic cabal, they said, "You see nothing does any good in stopping him. Take a good look. The world has gone wild over him."

- **You see:** Jn 11:47-50 Mt 21:15 Lu 19:47,48 Ac 4:16,17 5:27,28
- **the world:** Jn 3:26 17:21 Ps 22:27 49:1 Isa 27:6 Ac 17:6 1Jn 2:2
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 11:48+ "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

John 11:51-52+ (CAIAPHAS' "PROPHECY" SIMILAR TO PHARISEES "PROPHECY") Now he (CAIAPHAS) did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, 52 and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

### PHARISEES PERCEIVE THEY COULD NOT STOP JESUS' POPULARITY

**So the Pharisees** ([pharisaios](#)) **said to one another**, "**You see** ([theoreo](#)) **that you are not doing any good** ([opheleo](#)) - NIV = "See, this is getting us nowhere" **NLT** = "We've lost." **ICB** = "You can see that nothing is going right for us." **Not doing any good** ([opheleo](#)) means they began to realize that they were unsuccessful in accomplishing their goal of killing Jesus in view of this groundswell of popularity. As we often here in football games, the momentum had shifted to "Team Jesus!" In short, the religious leaders were "losing it" and beside themselves!

**Look, the world has gone after Him** - This hyperbolic statement by the religious leaders would also prove to be a "prophecy," for both Jews and Gentiles would go after Jesus. In fact in the immediate context, **some Greeks** wanted to **see Jesus** (Jn 12:20-21) indicating that in one sense the "prophecy" by the Pharisees ([see above for "prophecy" by Caiaphas](#)) was in fact beginning to be fulfilled. The greater and more significant fulfillment of their "prophecy" of course would be when the Gospel went to and was received by the Gentiles. (cf [Cornelius](#) in Acts 10:1-34, 35+; Paul's sermon at Pisidian Antioch in Acts 13:46-48+)

**Spurgeon** - When they saw our Lord riding in state through the streets, and the people waving palm branches and shouting in his honour, they said, "The world is gone after him." That was only very partially true, and for a very short time; but the day will come when the whole world shall go after him Christ's divine attractions shall be felt throughout the earth, and all the Pharisees then in the world will not be able to prevent the people from going after him; and- "Come what may To stand in the way That day the world shall see."

**Tasker** - "The Pharisees were of course exaggerating, but the words the world is gone after him (John 12:19), like the words of Caiaphas in John 11:50, were unconsciously prophetic."

**Warren Wiersbe** - How did the Jewish leaders respond to the "Triumphal Entry" of the Lord? As they watched the great crowd gather and honor Jesus, the Pharisees were quite sure that Jesus had won the day. They were anticipating some kind of general

revolt during the Passover season. Perhaps Jesus would perform a great miracle and in that way capture the minds and hearts of the restless people. How little they really understood the mind and heart of the Master! What they did not realize was that Jesus was "forcing their hand" so that the Sanhedrin would act during the feast. The Lamb of God had to give His life when the Passover lambs were being slain.

**Bob Utley** - This is another prophetic foreshadowing. It relates to (1) Jews, John 11:48; John 12:11 and (2) Gentiles, John 12:20-23. It reflects two historical settings: Jesus' life and the early church.

**Spurgeon** - No doubt many of his disciples thought so too, yet how mistaken were both the friends and the foes of Christ, for you recollect, brothers and sisters, that Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem was followed, within less than a week, by a far different scene, when the same crowd that cried "Hosanna!" shouted "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" The world, that was supposed to have gone after him, nailed him to the cross; so short-lived is human popularity. So short-lived also is the admiration of Christ by carnal minds, for they do admire him after a fashion, they cannot help doing so. There have been written lives of Christ, which have been full of admiration of him, yet equally full of opposition to his Deity. We must not always regard it as an encouraging sign when men praise Christ; for very soon, if the root of the matter be not in them, and they do not accept him as their Lord and Master, they will change their note, and instead of "Hosanna!" it will be "Away with him, crucify him!"

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**See** (behold, look, observe, watch) (2334) **theoreo** from **theaomai** = to look at closely or attentively or contemplatively - even with a sense of wonder; cp **theoros** = a spectator) (Gives us English = theater, theorize) usually refers to physical sight but can also refer to perception and understanding. It is used primarily, not of an indifferent spectator, but of one who looks at a thing with interest and for a purpose. It means to gaze, to look with interest and purpose, to carefully examine with emphasis on or attention to details. To behold intensely or attentively. Our English word *scrutinize* conveys this sense, for it means to examine closely and minutely. To be a spectator and thus to understand or perceive. To contemplate (Heb 13:7). **Theoreo** in some contexts can include the idea of to behold with amazement. For example, in Mark 5:15 **theoreo** is not translated merely "see" but "observe" for as **Vincent** explains... (theoreo) was more than simple seeing. The verb means looking steadfastly, as one who has an interest in the object, and with a view to search into and understand it: to look inquiringly and intently. (**Ed Note:** And even with a sense of amazement.) (1) To observe something with sustained attention, be a spectator (2) To come to the understanding of something

**Theoreo** - 51v - beholds(1), look(1), looking(5), observe(3), observed(4), observing(3), perceive(2), saw(8), see(16), seeing(2), seen(1), sees(4), watched(1), watching(2). Matt. 27:55; Matt. 28:1; Mk. 3:11; Mk. 5:15; Mk. 12:41; Mk. 15:40; Mk. 15:47; Mk. 16:4; Lk. 10:18; Lk. 14:29; Lk. 21:6; Lk. 23:35; Lk. 23:48; Lk. 24:37; Lk. 24:39; Jn. 2:23; Jn. 4:19; Jn. 6:19; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:62; Jn. 7:3; Jn. 8:51; Jn. 9:8; Jn. 10:12; Jn. 12:19; Jn. 12:45; Jn. 14:17; Jn. 14:19; Jn. 16:10; Jn. 17:24; Jn. 20:6; Jn. 20:12; Jn. 20:14; Acts 3:16; Acts 4:13; Acts 7:56; Acts 8:13; Acts 9:7; Acts 10:11; Acts 17:16; Acts 17:22; Acts 19:26; Acts 20:38; Acts 21:20; Acts 25:24; Acts 27:10; Acts 28:6; Heb. 7:4; 1 Jn. 3:17; Rev. 11:11; Rev. 11:12

**John 12:20 Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast;**

BGT John 12:20 σαν ὁ ἁλλην ςτινες κ τ ν ναβαιν ντων να προσκυν σωσιν ν τ ορτ ·

KJV John 12:20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

NET John 12:20 Now some Greeks were among those who had gone up to worship at the feast.

CSB John 12:20 Now some Greeks were among those who went up to worship at the festival.

ESV John 12:20 Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks.

NIV John 12:20 Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast.

NLT John 12:20 Some Greeks who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration

NRS John 12:20 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks.

NJB John 12:20 Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks.

NAB John 12:20 Now there were some Greeks among those who had come up to worship at the feast.

YLT John 12:20 And there were certain Greeks out of those coming up that they may worship in the feast,

MIT John 12:20 Some Greeks were among those who went up to worship at the festival.



- **Greeks:** Jn 7:35 Mk 7:26 Ac 14:1 16:1 17:4 20:21 21:28 Ro 1:16 10:12 Ga 2:3 3:28 Col 3:11
- **to worship:** 1Ki 8:41-43 Isa 11:10 60:2-14 66:19-21 Ac 8:27
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## GREEKS AT THE PASSOVER

**Now there were some Greeks ([Hellen](#)) among those who were going up to worship ([proskuneo](#)) at the feast ([heorte](#)) - Going up** - when referring to going to Jerusalem it was always up because of Jerusalem's altitude. Only John notes the presence of the **Greeks ([Hellen](#))**, who are Gentiles (not "Hellenized" Jews like Acts 6:1+ = [Hellenistes](#)), who some favor to be "God fearers" (Acts 10:22, Acts 17:4,17 like Ethiopian eunuch- Acts 8:27) and others favor to be Gentile proselytes ([proselutos](#)). In any event, what a striking contrast these Gentiles present when compared to the religious leaders, for the former sought to see Him, the latter sought to slay Him!

**[Bob Utley](#) on who were going up to worship** - The present tense implies they were in the habit of going to the Feast. They were either (1) God-fearers or (2) proselytes of the Gate. The first were regular worshipers at the synagogue and the second had officially become converts to the Jewish faith.

It is interesting to note that Jesus came into contact with the Gentile world at His birth (Magi) and at His death (these Greeks).

**Henry Alford** (citing Stier) describes the Greeks this way - "These men from the West at the end of the Life of Jesus, set forth the same as the Magi from the East at its beginning: — but they come to the Cross of the King, as those to His cradle."

**F F Bruce** has an interesting thought about why the Greeks are suddenly mentioned - "On this occasion the Greek's curiosity about Jesus may have been stirred simply because everyone was talking about him. But there could have been a more special reason. Between verses 19 and 20 a day or two had elapsed: Jesus was no longer on the road to Jerusalem, but teaching daily in the temple precincts. And in the meantime, according to Mark 11:15-17, he had expelled the traders and money changers from the precincts — that is, more precisely, from the outer court — in order that the place might fulfill its divinely ordained purpose of being 'a house of prayer for all the nations' (Isaiah 56:7). Did these Greeks recognize this action as having been undertaken in the interests of Gentiles like themselves who, when they came up to worship the true God, had to confine themselves to the outer court?"

**NET NOTE** - These **Greeks** who had come up to worship at the feast were probably "God-fearers" rather than proselytes in the strict sense. Had they been true proselytes, they would probably not have been referred to as Greeks any longer. Many came to worship at the major Jewish festivals without being proselytes to Judaism, for example, the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:27, who could not have been a proselyte if he were physically a eunuch.

**Greeks** ([1672](#)) ([Hellen](#)) one who speaks Greek (Ro 1:14), so culturally one like Greeks in language and civilization. In a religious sense, this refers to non-Jews (Acts 11:20, Acts 20:21; 1Co 1:24; Gal 3:28). In the broader sense, **hellen** could refer to all persons who came under the influence of Greek, as distinguished from Israel's, culture. Religiously this could refer to proselytes or God-fearers, those in sympathy with Israel's heritage Ac 17:4.

**Zodhiates** makes an interesting distinction of **Hellen** - Distinction should be made, however, between the **Greeks ([Héllēnes](#))** and the **Grecians ([Hellenistes](#))**. The Greeks were the Greeks by birth (Acts 16:1, 3; 18:17), or else Gentiles as opposed to Jews (Ro 2:9, 10), while the Grecians ([Hellēnistai](#)) were foreign Greek-speaking Jews as distinct from those in Palestine who were called Hebrews (Acts 11:20). The Greeks and Hebrews first met when the Tyrians sold the Jews to the Greeks (Joel 3:6). Greece is noted prophetically in Dan. 8:21 where the history of Alexander and his successors is rapidly sketched. Zech. 9:13 foretells the triumphs of the Maccabees over the Graeco-Syrian Empire, while Isaiah looks forward to the conversion of the Greeks, among other Gentiles, through the instrumentality of Jewish missionaries (Isa. 66:19). After the complete subjection of the Greeks by the Romans, and the absorption into the Roman Empire of the kingdoms which were formed out of the dominions of Alexander, the political connection between the Greeks and the Jews as two independent nations no longer existed. Rom. 1:14 speaks of "the Greeks and the barbarians" through which latter word reference is made to all those who are not Greeks. The implication is that the Greeks were sophisticated or wise while the others were ignorant. In Acts 18:17, the Greek inhabitants of Corinth are mentioned in distinction from the Jews. This distinction was often in the broadest sense referring to all those who used the Gr. language and customs whether in Greece, Asia Minor, or other countries. As Gr. was the prevailing language, the name "Greek" was often used to designate as Gentiles all those who were not Jews (Acts 16:1, 3; 19:10, 17; 20:21; 21:28; Rom. 1:16; 2:9, 10; 3:9; 10:12; 1 Cor. 1:22-24; 10:32; 12:13; Gal. 2:3; 3:28; Col. 3:11). In Acts 11:20 the Textus Receptus has [Hellenistes](#), Greek-speaking Jews. In John 7:35, the dispersion of the [Hellēnōn](#) (Greeks) is the dispersed among the Gentiles (cf. Sept.: Isa. 9:11). Greeks are also spoken of as Gentile converts to Judaism or Greek proselytes (John 12:20; Acts 14:1; 17:4; 18:4). (BORROW [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#))

**Hellen - 26x/25v - Greek(9), Greeks(17).** Jn. 7:35; Jn. 12:20; Acts 11:20; Acts 14:1; Acts 16:1; Acts 16:3; Acts 17:4; Acts 18:4; Acts 19:10; Acts 19:17; Acts 20:21; Acts 21:28; Rom. 1:14; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 2:9; Rom. 2:10; Rom. 3:9; Rom. 10:12; 1 Co. 1:22; 1 Co. 1:24; 1 Co. 10:32; 1 Co. 12:13; Gal. 2:3; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11

**Hellen in Septuagint** - Isa 9:12; Da 8:21; Da 10:20; Da 11:2; Joel 3:6; Zech 9:13;

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#### **James Smith - DEATH, LIFE, AND SERVICE JOHN 12:20–26**

Probably these Greeks who desired to see Jesus came from the same city as Philip and Andrew, and may have been personally known to them. Philip and Andrew did what they could to bring about an interview, but seemingly failed. The closing words in verse 36 are very significant in this connection. "These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them." But while He hid Himself from them, the things which He spake were in themselves a new and fuller revelation of the Christ which He wished them to see. He who would "see Jesus" as God desires Him to be seen, must see Him as "a corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying, and bringing forth much fruit."

I. Death. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." A corn of wheat in the process of dying is here alluded to. As applied to His own preparation for the Cross, the reference is full of solemn suggestion. As a corn of wheat must fall into the ground before it will die, so He had to condescend to come into the place of death before He could reap the fruits of resurrection life. When Christ came into this world He came into the place of death. His coming was the falling of the corn of wheat into the ground, but except it die, it abideth alone. A seed that had lain in the hand of a mummy for 3000 years, remained alone, but when, by another hand, it fell into the ground and did die, then it brought forth fruit. The process of dying is the process of yielding up everything to those forces that are opposed to stationary barrenness. Just as the buried seed slowly surrenders its all, so is its new capacity created for fruitfulness. The life of Jesus Christ, which ended in the shameful death of the Cross, was like the life of the corn-seed in the ground—there was no reserve, no keeping back, the treasures of His marvellous nature were wholly surrendered. "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life." He died for us What was true of the Christ as "a corn of wheat" is also true of the Christian, except he die—to the old self-life—he abideth alone. It is by being "always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. 4:11).

II. Life. "But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The life that is yielded up by the dying seed conditions and prepares the way for another and more fruitful life. Christ died, and therefore did not abide alone. The life that He yielded up has been abundantly fruitful in an ever-increasing harvest of resurrected souls. The possibilities of Jesus Christ as seed-corn dropped, as it were, from the hand of the Heavenly Father into the soil of humanity, are the possibilities of GOD. He shall see His seed, because His soul was made an offering for sin. Christ died, but like a corn of wheat, He was born anew—begotten again in resurrection fruitfulness. In this new life, in Him and in us who have died unto sin, there is the abiding power of eternity. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, but "that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die" (1 Cor. 15:36). If the seed refuses to die, the quickening power refuses to act. The Holy Spirit, the Quickener, can only work this newness of life where there is death. This new Divine life, begotten out of the death of the self-life, is the life that glorifies God in bearing much fruit. He that soweth to the flesh shall out of the flesh, as out of poisoned soil, reap corruption.

III. Service. "If any man serve Me, let Him follow Me." To follow Him is the highest and holiest of all service. To follow Him is to go on continually denying self. We cannot be following Him in His life of perpetual self-denial unless we are prepared daily to lose our own life. He that loveth his (own) life shall lose it, and he that maketh his own life of no account shall keep it unto life eternal (v. 25). Christ loved not His own life, but yielded it, day by day, unto the will of the Father, and so served Him by following Him. Our service must be of the same nature, as we have, through grace, been brought into the same privilege. Now are we the sons of God. In essence, then, this service is self-denial for the sake of Jesus Christ. But think of the blessedness of it. "If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour." The Father honoured the Son for such a service; He will also honour all who so follow His footsteps. They will be honoured with His presence, His peace, and His power, and "where I am, there shall also My servant be." "If any man will come after ME, let him deny himself" (Matt. 16:24). To go after a self-denying Christ is impossible without the denial of self. We must deny our own thoughts, will, power, interests—everything that would hinder His will, power, and interests from being accomplished in us and by us.

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**John 12:21 these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and began to ask him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."**

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BGT John 12:21 ο τοι ο ν προσ λθον Φιλ ππ τ π Βηθσαϊδ τ ς Γαλιλα ς κα ρ των α τ ν λ γοντες κ ριε, θ λομεν τ ν ησο ν δε ν.

KJV John 12:21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

NET John 12:21 So these approached Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and requested, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus."

CSB John 12:21 So they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and requested of him, "Sir, we want to see Jesus."

ESV John 12:21 So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

NIV John 12:21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus."

NLT John 12:21 paid a visit to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee. They said, "Sir, we want to meet Jesus."

NRS John 12:21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

NJB John 12:21 These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, 'Sir, we should like to see Jesus.'

NAB John 12:21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus."

YLT John 12:21 these then came near to Philip, who is from Bethsaida of Galilee, and were asking him, saying, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus;'

MIT John 12:21 These people came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee. They were asking him, "Sir, we want Jesus to be introduced to us."

- **Philip:** Jn 1:43-47 6:5-7 14:8,9
- **we wish:** Jn 1:36-39 6:40 Mt 2:2 8:9-12 12:19-21 15:22-28 Lu 19:2-4 Ro 15:8-12
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## GENTILES SEEK THE SAVIOR

these then came to **Philip**, who was from **Bethsaida of Galilee** ([map](#)), and began to ask him, saying, "**Sir** (**kurios**), we wish to see Jesus." - Why did they come to **Philip**? The text does not say, so anything we say would be conjecture. Some have conjectured because Philip is a Greek name. Some have conjectured because Bethsaida is in vicinity of Gentile territory, but we simply do not know.

**John MacArthur** - Significantly, just days before Jesus' own people would verbalize their final rejection in the cry for His crucifixion, Gentiles sought to know more about Him. Israel's willful rejection would be sealed by divine judgment, as God set the nation aside and turned to the rest of the world (cf. Jn 10:16; Jn 11:52) with the gospel and the commission to be a witnessing people on His behalf....God has temporarily set aside the nation aside in favor of the church, which consists of Gentiles and the believing remnant of Israel (cf. Rom. 9:27; 11:5,17). Thus God's setting aside of the nation as a whole does not preclude individual Jews from being saved (cf. Rom. 10:1). Nor is it a final abandonment of Israel. Paul is clear in affirming the future salvation and restoration of Israel (Ro 11:26-29).

**Rodney Whitacre** on **wish to see Jesus** - Indeed, their request sums up the right attitude of any disciple and the core focus of any ministry. This request, "**Sir, we would see Jesus,**" has been attached to more than one pulpit as a guideline for the preacher.

**THOUGHT** - Dear preacher and teacher of God's Word, this request of the Greeks who wish to see Jesus should resound continually in our heart and mind, with our great objective being to continually preach and teach Jesus! Is that your objective? It should be! It must be! As Paul a preacher and apostle and teacher (2Ti 1:11) rightly said "Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void." (1Co 1:17) "We preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness." (1Co 1:23) "we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.." (2Co 4:5)

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[Lowell Johnson](#) - The Pacific Garden missions is located on State Street in Chicago. It was there that [Billy Sunday](#) was saved and later preached. Billy Sunday was a professional baseball player. As his fame as a baseball player began to grow, he began to drink. Soon he became an alcoholic. One night, as he was going back home from a bar, he passed by the Pacific Garden Mission. He heard singing in the mission and sat on the steps to listen. There God spoke to his heart and there he was saved. Later, He preached at the mission. On the pulpit he placed a plaque which read, “**Sir, we would see Jesus.**” It was a reminder to him every time he would stand to preach, he must preach Jesus, for only Jesus could meet the deepest need of man's heart. Not long after I surrendered to preach, the pastor of my home church had those same words printed on his pulpit. It so spoke to my heart, that I put the words on the pulpit where I was pastoring: “**Sir, we would see Jesus.**”

That is still the cry of our world today. Sadly, in many of our churches, folks see everything but Jesus. They see:

1. Personalities - Sadly, all some churches see is the Pastor or the staff. Sometimes the pastor exalts himself: He is the hero of every story or illustration he uses; he wants you to be impressed with his knowledge or his education; he wants you to call him, “Doctor.” One man said that there are so many doctors in our pulpit, you'd think God was sick!

2. Performances - Music has become nothing more than “flesh on parade” in many churches. It's no longer about praise or worship, but performing. Some churches have 45 minutes of singing and ten minutes of preaching the word. Rather than the music and the preached word being used together to lift up Jesus and point the way to Jesus, there is competition between those singing and those preaching.

3. Programs - Nothing wrong with programs as long as they focus on Jesus.

Why did these Greeks want to see Jesus? No doubt they heard of His teaching, miracles, even Lazarus. ALSO, because they were dissatisfied with what they had given themselves to, which was philosophy; the search for answers to the great questions of the universe.

-I heard a good definition of philosophy: “Philosophy is like a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn't there.”

Let me give you an example: There was a poor old man who had nothing but one beautiful white horse. They said to the old man “You have nothing but that beautiful white horse. But that horse is a good thing. Why don't you sell the horse so you can live well the rest of your life?” The old man said, “Whether the horse is a good thing or a bad thing, I cannot tell. I must wait and see.” The next day the white horse ran away. Then they said to the old man, “Your horse ran away; that's a bad thing.” The old man said, “Whether it is a good thing or a bad thing, I cannot tell. I must wait and see.” The next day the white horse came back and a beautiful black horse followed him home. They said, “Old man, the white horse is back home and brought a black horse with him. That is good.” The old man said, “Whether it's good or bad, I cannot tell. I must wait and see.” The next day the old man's son tried to ride the black horse and it threw him and broke his arm and leg. They said, “Old man, the black horse was a bad thing. It broke your son's arm and leg.” The old man said, “Whether it is a good thing or a bad thing, I cannot tell. I must wait and see.” The next day a war broke out and all the young men had to go to war and all of them were killed. They said, “Old man, it's a good thing your son's arm and leg were broken or he would have been sent to war and he, too, would have been killed.” The old man said, “Whether it's a good thing or not, I cannot tell. I must wait and see.” It was that kind of thing the Greeks were involved in and it didn't meet the needs of their hearts. No wonder they said, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

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**Wish** (Want, Will, desire) ([2309](#)) [thelo](#) cf [thelema](#)) is a very common NT verb (208x) which primarily refers to exercising of one's will with the underlying sense of to be willing, to desire, to want or to wish (in Jn 15:7 in context of prayer). To apply oneself to something (or to will). Thelo “expresses not simply a desire, but a determined and constant exercise of the will.” (W E Vine) In secular Greek use thelo as used by Homer spoke of “readiness,” “inclination,” and “desire,” so that when one was ready for an event or inclined to undertake a course of action, **thelo** was the Greek word used. Plato used thelo of intention or desire.

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## [We Would See Jesus](#)

They came to Philip . . . with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” John 12:21

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 12:20–26

As I looked down at the pulpit where I was sharing prayers at a funeral, I glimpsed a brass plaque bearing words from John 12:21: “Sir, we would see Jesus” (KJV). Yes, I thought, how fitting to consider how we saw Jesus in the woman we were celebrating with tears and smiles. Although she faced challenges and disappointments in her life, she never gave up her faith in Christ. And because God's Spirit lived in her, we could see Jesus.

John's gospel recounts how after Jesus rode into Jerusalem (see John 12:12–16), some Greeks approached Philip, one of the disciples, asking, “Sir, . . . we would like to see Jesus” (v. 21). They were probably curious about Jesus's healings and miracles, but

as they weren't Jewish, they weren't allowed into the inner courts of the temple. When their request was passed along to Jesus, He announced that His hour had come to be glorified (v. 23). And by that, He meant that He would die for the sins of many. He would fulfill His mission to reach not only the Jews but the Gentiles (the "Greeks" in verse 20), and now they would see Jesus.

After Jesus died, He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in His followers (14:16–17). Thus as we love and serve Jesus, we see Him active in our lives. And, amazingly, those around us too can see Jesus! By: Amy Boucher Pye (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord Jesus Christ, I am humbled and amazed that You would come and live in me. Help me to share this amazing gift with those I meet today.

We can see Jesus in the lives of His followers.

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### **C H Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - "We would see Jesus." — John 12:21**

Evermore the worldling's cry is, "Who will show us any good?" He seeks satisfaction in earthly comforts, enjoyments, and riches. But the quickened sinner knows of only one good. "O that I knew where I might find HIM!" When he is truly awakened to feel his guilt, if you could pour the gold of India at his feet, he would say, "Take it away: I want to find HIM." It is a blessed thing for a man, when he has brought his desires into a focus, so that they all centre in one object. When he has fifty different desires, his heart resembles a mere of stagnant water, spread out into a marsh, breeding miasma and pestilence; but when all his desires are brought into one channel, his heart becomes like a river of pure water, running swiftly to fertilize the fields. Happy is he who hath one desire, if that one desire be set on Christ, though it may not yet have been realized. If Jesus be a soul's desire, it is a blessed sign of divine work within. Such a man will never be content with mere ordinances. He will say, "I want Christ; I must have him—mere ordinances are of no use to me; I want himself; do not offer me these; you offer me the empty pitcher, while I am dying of thirst; give me water, or I die. Jesus is my soul's desire. I would see Jesus!"

Is this thy condition, my reader, at this moment? Hast thou but one desire, and is that after Christ? Then thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven. Hast thou but one wish in thy heart, and that one wish that thou mayst be washed from all thy sins in Jesus' blood? Canst thou really say, "I would give all I have to be a Christian; I would give up everything I have and hope for, if I might but feel that I have an interest in Christ?" Then, despite all thy fears, be of good cheer, the Lord loveth thee, and thou shalt come out into daylight soon, and rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ makes men free.

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**P G Matthew** - In John 12, we read about some Greeks who were in Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. They were among the many people, Jews as well as Gentiles, from throughout the Roman Empire who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover festival and worship at the temple.

No doubt they had also heard many reports about Jesus, including the recent news that he had raised Lazarus of Bethany from the dead. Accordingly, they came to one of Jesus' disciples, Philip, with a request: "Sir, we have a great desire to see Jesus."

Though they were not Jews, these God-fearing Greeks wanted to see Jesus. They approached Philip, probably because he was from Bethsaida, which bordered their own Gentile towns, and because Philip was probably bilingual and spoke the Greek language. When Philip heard the request of the Greeks, he went to another apostle, Andrew, and together they took the inquiry of these Gentiles to Jesus.

The apostle John presents Philip as a person like us—of just average intelligence and not much of a problem-solver. It was Philip who would say to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." What was Jesus' response? Jesus mildly rebuked Philip, saying, "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Nevertheless, I am glad that Jesus deliberately chose Philip, for it gives us hope. Philip was certainly a Mr. Ordinary, but the Lord Jesus Christ chose him, Mr. Ordinary, as his apostle. Let me assure you, God delights to do great things through ordinary people. He chooses the nobodies of the world and makes them into somebodies for his own purpose and glory.

What is God's purpose for us? There are Greeks in our time crying out, "We would like to meet with Jesus, the friend of sinners and publicans." They are crying out to us, who are the Philips and Andrews of this world—average, ordinary Christians, disciples of Christ. But though we are ordinary and average, God has given us a profound mission: As the light of the world, we have an obligation to bring these Gentiles to meet their Savior.

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### **QUESTION - [Who was Philip in the Bible?](#)**

**ANSWER** - There are four different men named Philip mentioned in the Bible. Phillip was the name of two of King Herod the Great's

sons by different wives (Luke 3:1 and Matthew 14:3). The other two Philips in the Bible were servants of Christ and instrumental in the early church: Philip the disciple and apostle of Christ, and Philip the evangelist.

The disciple named Philip was, along with Peter and Andrew, from Bethsaida in Galilee (John 1:44; 12:21). Jesus called Philip, who had been a disciple of John the Baptist's (John 1:43), and then Philip went and found Nathanael and told him about Jesus. Nathanael also became Jesus' disciple. The Bible does not contain much biographical detail about Philip or any of the other disciples, but John records several times when Philip spoke to Jesus.

Philip's first recorded act as a disciple of Jesus was to go and tell his friend Nathanael. Later, Philip was approached by some Gentiles, more specifically, Greeks from Bethsaida who asked Philip to introduce them to Jesus (John 12:20–22). Philip was the disciple who calculated the amount of money it would take to feed the 5,000 (John 6:7). After the Last Supper, Philip requested that Jesus show them the Father, leading to Jesus' statement, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:8–9). The last time the Bible mentions the disciple Philip is as one of those gathered in Jerusalem to pray after the Lord's ascension (Acts 1:13). Tradition states that Philip went to Phrygia (in modern-day Turkey) as a missionary and was martyred there in Hierapolis.

The other Philip is usually distinguished from the disciple of the same name by calling him "Philip the evangelist" or "Philip the deacon." It is often assumed that this Philip was one of the seventy-two men whom Jesus sent out in Luke 10:1, although the Bible doesn't make that connection. We do know that Philip was one of the original seven deacons selected to serve in the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:5). Philip had a heart for evangelism, and, when the "great persecution" arose in Acts 8:1, Philip left Jerusalem to become an evangelist in Samaria (Acts 8:5–12). After the church in Samaria was started, Philip was used by the Holy Spirit to bring the gospel to an Ethiopian eunuch, a member of the court of Candace, the Ethiopian queen. Philip found the eunuch sitting in his chariot, reading Isaiah and trying to make sense of the prophet's words. Philip offered to explain, and the eunuch invited him to come up and sit with him. In the end, the eunuch was saved and baptized (Acts 8:26–39). Immediately following the baptism, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away to Azotus, where he continued to preach the gospel in the towns from there to Caesarea (Acts 8:40).

Twenty years later, Philip the evangelist is mentioned again, still in Caesarea (Acts 21:8–9). Paul and Luke and others were traveling to Jerusalem, and they stopped at Philip's home in Caesarea. They stayed with Philip for several days. Philip had four unmarried daughters at that time, all of whom had the gift of prophecy. That is the last time the Bible mentions the evangelist Philip. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**John 12:22 Philip came and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus.**

BGT John 12:22 ρχεται Φ λιππος κα λ γει τ νδρ , ρχεται νδρ ας κα Φ λιππος κα λ γουσιν τ ησο .

KJV John 12:22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

NET John 12:22 Philip went and told Andrew, and they both went and told Jesus.

CSB John 12:22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

ESV John 12:22 Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

NIV John 12:22 Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

NLT John 12:22 Philip told Andrew about it, and they went together to ask Jesus.

NRS John 12:22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

NJB John 12:22 Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus.

NAB John 12:22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

YLT John 12:22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew, and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

MIT John 12:22 Philip conferred with Andrew, and the two of them told Jesus.

- **Andrew:** Jn 1:40-41, Jn 6:8
- **Andrew and:** Mt 10:5 Mk 10:13,14 Lu 9:49,50
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:**



John 1:40-41 One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother.  
41 He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).

John 6:8 One of His disciples, **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him,

## RELAYING THE MESSAGE OF DESIRE TO MEET JESUS

**Philip** came ([erchomai](#)) and told **Andrew**; **Andrew** and **Philip** came ([erchomai](#)) and told Jesus - **Philip** and **Andrew** appear together in Jn 1:45; Jn 6:7, 8. There is no record **Jesus** ever spoke with the Greeks who sought Him, but **William MacDonald** makes an excellent point that "No one who has this sincere desire in his heart is ever turned away unrewarded (cf Jer 29:13)." (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#)) Amen!

**Wiersbe** observes that "whenever you find Andrew in John's Gospel, he is bringing somebody to Jesus: see Jn 1:40–42, Jn 6:8–9, and Jn 12:22. What an example as a soul-winner! (**ED**: YES BUT WE DON'T KNOW IF THESE GREEKS EVER GOT TO MEET JESUS.) (BORROW [Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament](#))

**Spurgeon** - Andrew and Philip appear to have been staunch friends and fellow-labourers; and it is always well when Christian men can work for Christ with congenial companions. My poor perplexed brother, if you cannot get to Jesus Christ by yourself, it will be a good thing for you to say to some Philip, "Sir, I would see Jesus." Perhaps Philip will tell his friend Andrew, and then Philip and Andrew will go together, and tell Jesus, and so you will get to him. It is a great help in prayer, when you are yourself unable to pray, to get someone, whom you know to be a Christian, and who has sympathy with you, to come and pray with you.

**Warren Wiersbe** - We can commend these Greeks for wanting to see Jesus. The Jews would say, "We would see a sign!" (Matt. 12:38; 1 Cor. 1:22) but these men said, "We would see [have an interview with] Jesus." There is no record that Jesus did talk with these men, but the message that He gave in response contains truths that all of us need. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

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### QUESTION - [Who was Andrew in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - Andrew in the Bible was a disciple of Jesus. Andrew was [Simon Peter's](#) brother, and they were called to follow Jesus at the same time (Matthew 4:18). The Bible names Andrew as one of the twelve apostles (Matthew 10:2). Like Peter, Andrew was a fisherman by trade; they made their living on the [Sea of Galilee](#). Peter and Andrew were from the city of Bethsaida (John 1:44) on the northwest coast of Galilee (John 12:21).

The call of Andrew in the Bible is a memorable story. Andrew and John were originally disciples of [John the Baptist](#). They were present when John the Baptist pointed out Jesus as the [Lamb of God](#) (John 1:35–36), and they followed after Jesus (John 1:37). Jesus noticed Andrew and John following and invited them to come spend the day with Him (Jn 1:38–39). After spending the time with Jesus, Andrew became convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, and he took action: "Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus" (verses 40–42). Thus Andrew was one of Jesus' first two followers and the first to bring another person to Him.

Later, Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee when He came across Andrew and Peter, busy casting nets into the lake in search of fish. Jesus called to them: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). The Bible says that Andrew and Peter "immediately" followed Jesus, leaving their nets behind (verse 20). Andrew and Peter already knew who Jesus was, based on their contact with Him in John 1, and now when He officially calls them to be disciples, they respond.

In leaving behind the family business, Andrew sets a good example for all who would follow Christ; we are all called to "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33), and we should not let anything get in the way of following Jesus' call. When Jesus told Andrew and Peter they would be "fishers of men," He promised that He would use them to save men's souls. And that's exactly what the apostles did.

There is at least one instance in Andrew's life, recorded in the Bible, where he was a "[fisher of men](#)." Some Greeks approached Philip, one of Andrew's fellow disciples, wanting to see Jesus (John 12:20–21). Philip told Andrew what the Greeks wanted, and together Andrew and Philip brought the matter to Jesus (verse 22). In bringing Greeks to Jesus, Andrew had faith that Jesus' intention was to save all men, and he was right: Jesus responded by referencing His crucifixion, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified" (John 12:23). His death and resurrection would be the way by which all men, from all races and creeds and families, would be saved. These are the "fish of every kind" from Jesus' [parable of the dragnet](#) (Matthew 13:47–50), and Andrew was one of the first to be involved in an evangelical effort that extended beyond the Jewish people. The incident with the curious

Greeks anticipated the day when God would reveal to Peter, Andrew's brother, that all people are welcome to come to Jesus (Acts 10:1–48). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the [Son of Man](#) to be glorified.**

BGT John 12:23 ὁ ἥσος ποκρνεταί ατο ς λγων· λ λυθεν ρα να δοξασθ υ ς το νθρ που.

KJV John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

NET John 12:23 Jesus replied, "The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

CSB John 12:23 Jesus replied to them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

ESV John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

NIV John 12:23 Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

NLT John 12:23 Jesus replied, "Now the time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory.

NRS John 12:23 Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

NJB John 12:23 Jesus replied to them: Now the hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified.

NAB John 12:23 Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

YLT John 12:23 And Jesus responded to them, saying, 'The hour hath come that the Son of Man may be glorified;

MIT John 12:23 Jesus replied to them, "The time has arrived for the human one to be glorified.

- **The hour:** Jn 13:31-32, Jn 17:1-5,9,10 Isa 49:5,6 Isa 53:10-12 Isa 55:5 Isa 60:9 Mt 25:31 1Pe 2:9,10
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 2:4+ And Jesus \*said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

John 7:6+ So Jesus \*said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune.

John 12:28 "Father, **glorify** Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

John 13:31-32+ Therefore when he (JUDAS ISCARIOT) had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man **glorified**, and God is **glorified** in Him; 32 if God is **glorified** in Him, God will also **glorify** Him in Himself, and will **glorify** Him immediately.

John 17:1 Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; **glorify** Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,

John 17:4 "I **glorified** You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 "Now, Father, **glorify** Me together with Yourself, with the **glory** which I had with You before the world was.

### THE FINAL CONSUMMATION OF CHRIST'S FIRST COMING

**And Jesus answered them** - Who is **them**? This is at least Phillip and Andrew, but there may have been others (cf "the crowd who stood by" in context of Jn 12:29). What had Phillip and Andrew just said? They told Him some Greeks wished to see Him and their request prompts His somewhat puzzling reply. He does not directly address the request of the Greeks to see Him. The request of the Greeks prompts Jesus to state that His **hour** had **come**. Why would the Greek's request prompt this answer?

**Leon Morris** postulates that the coming of the Greeks was viewed by Jesus "as evidence that His mission has reached its climax and that He is now to die for the world, Greeks included." (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**Spurgeon** - Christ's passion and death were getting very near when these Gentiles came to him, and he saw, in that company of

Greeks, the vanguard of that great army that shall yet come to him out of every nation under heaven. In the prospect of that great ingathering, he looked beyond the impending shame and suffering, and spoke even of the hour of his death as the time when he should be glorified.....He knew that the hour was come when he must die. Looking through the dark glass of death, he saw what its result would be, and he called it glory.....They did not expect him to say that. Surely, the coming of a few Greeks to see him was not very much in the way of glorification. But, to him, the coming of these Greeks was a sort of prophecy of the myriads of other Gentiles who would, by-and-by, come to his feet; and, therefore, he looked forward to that death which should be the means of their salvation. Christ came into the world to preach the gospel, but he came on a greater errand than that, namely, to provide a gospel that could be preached; and he knew that the time was approaching when he must provide that gospel by dying upon the cross.

**Merrill Tenney** agrees with Morris writing "In another sense, the action of Jesus is an answer to the Greeks' inquiry, because he announced openly that the great hour of his life had arrived. He felt the pressure of the Gentile world and realized that the time had come to open the way to God for the Gentiles and to fuse Jewish and Gentile believers into one body. To accomplish this objective, he had to sacrifice himself (cf. John 10:16). (BORROW [The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**D A Carson** says "the approach of the Greeks is for Jesus a kind of trigger, a signal that the climactic hour has dawned." (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

To state it another way, this verse marks a turning point for Jesus in this Gospel.

**Grant Osborne** - Jesus' response (Jn 12:23) seems to ignore them, but in the larger picture it provides the core of the salvation they sought. Moreover, Jesus may well have been saying that with them, the procession of the nations to Zion that had been prophesied in Isaiah (e.g., Isa 60) had begun. This may well have been the crucial "signal" to Jesus that his hour had finally arrived (so [Carson](#)). (See [The Gospel of John](#))

While I tend to agree with **Morris** and **Tenney's** explanation of why the coming of the Greeks triggered His answer in this verse, the POSB suggests another interesting consideration - The Greeks had just seen Jesus **glorified** as Messiah by teeming thousands. It was as if the world was going after Him. They wanted to be part of the movement, so they requested an interview with Him. What Jesus did was try to correct the misunderstood idea of the Messiah held by the world (ED: MILITARY CONQUEROR, DELIVERER). He wanted to prepare both the Greeks and those standing around (the whole world) for His death. He wanted to teach that the way to glory is not through triumph and glory, not through domination and subjection. The way to glory is through death to self and through service to God and man. (BORROW [The Preacher's outline & sermon Bible](#))

## **THE DIVINE "ALARM CLOCK" HAD SOUNDED**

**Saying, "The hour has come ([erchomai](#)) for ([hina](#) - for the purpose that) the [Son of Man](#) to be glorified ([doxazo](#))** - John had repeatedly recorded that Jesus' **hour** (time) had not yet come (Jn 2:4+, Jn 7:6+, Jn 7:30+, Jn 8:20+) Jesus did not need to wear a wristwatch, for He kept time perfectly because He was always in perfect harmony with His Father and His Father's timetable (Jn 5:30+, Jn 6:38+, cf Lk 24:42+). From the hour of His birth, His entire life pointed to the hour of His death, the cradle to consummate in the cross. This was the beginning of the final act in the drama of redemption. And in light of what Jesus says in John 12:24, it is clear that the path by which **the Son of Man would be glorified** is through His death, burial, resurrection and exaltation (ascension). Note that **has come** is in the perfect tense indicating past completed action (in this case in this verse) with enduring effect. In other words, the reality of the Cross is upon Him and there is no going back.

*For the Son of Man, suffering was the path to glory;  
in fact, here suffering is glory!*

**Grant Osborne** - That **hour** was the hour of his death, spoken of first as his entering into his glory. John 12:23ff is one of the key Son of Man passages (along with Jn 1:51) associated with heavenly glory and the salvation he would provide. For the Son of Man, suffering was the path to glory; in fact, here suffering is glory! (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**The "hour" is clearly a significant theme in John's Gospel** -Jn 2:4+, Jn 7:6+, Jn 7:30+, Jn 8:20+ Jn 12:23, 27 [2x]; Jn 13:1; Jn 16:32; Jn 17:1

**Colin Kruse** adds "These words (Jn 12:23) contain the fourth of seven references to Jesus' 'hour' (Jn 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1), an important theme in this Gospel. The first three references all say that Jesus' hour had not yet come, while the remaining references, beginning with this fourth reference, all indicate that his hour had come. The trigger for this change was the coming of the Greeks. (BORROW [The Gospel According to John](#))

John alludes to this timing again in John 13:1 "Now before the Feast of the Passover, **Jesus knowing that His hour had come** that

He would depart out of this world to the Father (crucifixion, resurrection, ascension), having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." And Jesus opened His prayer in John 17:1 alluding to the time declaring "Father, **the hour has come**; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You."

**Rodney Whitacre** on **glorified** - It may seem strange to refer to Jesus' death as a glorification. But the death is at the heart of the Son's revelation of the Father, for God is love and love is the laying down of one's life (cf. 1 Jn 4:8; 3:16). So in the cross the heart of God is revealed most clearly. Selflessness and humble self-sacrifice are seen to be divine attributes. ([Jesus' Hour Arrives](#))

[A T Robertson](#) - The Cross must come before Greeks can really come to Jesus with understanding. But this request shows that interest in Jesus now extends beyond the Jewish circles.

**Wiersbe** - the glory of God is an important theme in the remaining chapters of John's Gospel (see John 13:31-32; 14:13; 17:1, 4-5, 22, 24). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Son of Man** is one of Jesus most frequent names He uses for Himself, continually showing His humility and willingness to identify with sinful men! Amazing grace!

[Bob Utley](#) on **the Son of Man**" This is an Aramaic phrase that simply meant "human being" (cf. Psalms 8:4; Ezekiel 2:1). However, it is used in Daniel 7:13 with the added connotation of Deity. This is Jesus' self-designated title that combines His two natures, human and divine (cf. 1 John 4:1-3).

**Son of Man** in the John - Jn. 1:51; Jn. 3:13; Jn. 3:14; Jn. 5:27; Jn. 6:27; Jn. 6:53; Jn. 6:62; Jn. 8:28; Jn. 9:35; Jn. 12:23; Jn. 12:34; Jn. 13:31;

[Lowell Johnson](#) points out that "This was the turning point in Jesus' ministry. These Greeks showing up, wanting to see Jesus was a signal to Jesus. His hour had come. The Jews have rejected Jesus, their messiah. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." (Jn 1:11) Israel and the Jews had rejected Him; Now He must reject them and turn to the Gentiles. Israel's rejection had been foreseen in the OT in Ro 9:25-29. There will be a partial hardening in Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in (Ro. 11:1,5,25-26) What does it mean that "the Son of Man should be glorified?" I used to think that Jesus being glorified meant that Jesus was ascended into heaven, seated at the right side of the Father on His throne, with the light of glory coming from His person. All of that is true, but that is not what Jesus meant when He said that He should be glorified. Jesus being glorified meant His death.

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**Glorified** (1392) [doxazo](#) from [doxa](#) = glory) has a secular meaning of to think, suppose, be of opinion, (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Xenophon, Plato, Thucydides) but generally is not used in this sense in Scripture. **Doxazo** means to praise, honor or magnify (Mt 5:16; 6:2; Lk 5:25f; Ac 11:18; Ro 11:13; 1 Cor 12:26; 1 Pt 4:16) and to clothe in splendor, glorify (John 8:54; 13:31f; 17:1, 4; 21:19; 2 Cor 3:10; 1 Pt 1:8; of life after death John 12:16, 23; Ac 3:13; Ro 8:30) Friberg - (1) as giving or sharing a high status glorify, make great (Ro 8:30); (2) as enhancing the reputation of God or man praise, honor, magnify (Mk 2.12); (3) as putting into a position of power and great honor, especially in the future life glorify (Jn 7.39); (4) passive; (a) of things greatly valued and excellent be wonderful, be glorious (1Pe 1.8); (b) of persons receiving great honor be glorified, be praised (Lk 4.15)

**Doxazo in John** - Jn. 7:39; Jn. 8:54; Jn. 11:4; Jn. 12:16; Jn. 12:23; Jn. 12:28; Jn. 13:31; Jn. 13:32; Jn. 14:13; Jn. 15:8; Jn. 16:14; Jn. 17:1; Jn. 17:4; Jn. 17:5; Jn. 17:10; Jn. 21:19

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#### QUESTION - [What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of Man?](#)

**ANSWER** - Jesus is referred to as the "Son of Man" 82 times in the New Testament (NIV and ESV). In fact, *Son of Man* is the primary title Jesus used when referring to Himself (e.g., Matthew 12:32; 13:37; Luke 12:8; John 1:51). The only use of *Son of Man* in a clear reference to Jesus, spoken by someone other than Jesus, came from the lips of Stephen as he was being martyred (Acts 7:56).

**Son of Man is a title of humanity.** Other titles for Christ, such as [Son of God](#), are overt in their focus on His deity. *Son of Man*, in contrast, focuses on the humanity of Christ. God called the prophet Ezekiel "son of man" 93 times. In this way, God was simply calling Ezekiel a human being. *Son of man* is simply a periphrastic term for "human." Jesus Christ was truly a human being. He came "in the flesh" (1 John 4:2).

**Son of Man is a title of humility.** The Second Person of [the Trinity](#), eternal in nature, left heaven's glory and took on human flesh, becoming the Son of Man, born in a manger and "despised and rejected by mankind" (Isaiah 53:3). The Son of Man had "no place to lay his head" (Luke 9:58). The Son of Man ate and drank with sinners (Matthew 11:19). The Son of Man suffered at the hands of men (Matthew 17:12). This intentional lowering of His status from King of Heaven to Son of Man is the epitome of humility (see Philippians 2:6-8).

**on of Man is a title of deity.** Ezekiel may have been a son of man, but Jesus is *the* Son of Man. As such, Jesus is the supreme example of all that God intended mankind to be, the embodiment of truth and grace (John 1:14). In Him “all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form” (Colossians 2:9). For this reason, the Son of Man was able to forgive sins (Matthew 9:6). The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28). The Son of Man came to save lives (Luke 9:56; Lk 19:10), rise from the dead (Mark 9:9), and execute judgment (John 5:27). At His trial before the high priest, Jesus said, “I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:64). This statement immediately ended the trial, as the court accused the Lord of blasphemy and condemned Him to death (Mt 26:65–66).

**Son of Man is a fulfillment of prophecy.** Jesus’ claim before the high priest to be the Son of Man was a reference to the prophecy of Daniel 7:13–14, “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed” (NKJV). Daniel saw glory, worship, and an everlasting kingdom given to the Messiah—here called the “Son of Man”—and Jesus applied this prophecy to Himself. Jesus also spoke of [His coming kingdom](#) on other occasions (Matthew 13:41; 16:28). The author of Hebrews used a reference to the “son of man” in the Psalms to teach that Jesus, the true Son of Man, will be the ruler of all things (Hebrews 2:5–9; cf. Psalm 8:4–6). The Son of Man, in fulfillment of [Old Testament prophecy](#), will be the King.

Jesus was fully God (John 1:1), but He was also fully human (John 1:14). As the Son of God and the Son of Man, He is deserving of both titles. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [What does it mean to glorify God?](#)

**ANSWER** - To glorify God is to honor Him with praise or [worship](#). God is glorious; that is, He is great and magnificent—He is exceptionally grand in His nature and deeds. “Full of splendor and majesty is his work” (Psalm 111:3, ESV). When we glorify Him, we acknowledge His greatness and splendor and laud Him for it. When we “give Him glory,” as all the world is told to do in Revelation 14:7, we direct our praise, adoration, thanksgiving, and worship to Him who alone is worthy.

Scripture makes our responsibility to glorify God evident from cover to cover. 1Chronicles 16:17–36 presents a model for giving glory to God. As [Asaph](#) is installed as the chief minister before the ark of God, David instructs him in the method of worship:

- give praise to the Lord (1Chr 16:8)
- proclaim the greatness of God’s name (1Chr 16:8)
- tell the whole world what God has done (1Chr 16:8–9, 24)
- sing to the Lord (1Chr 16:9, 23)
- glory, or exult, in His name (1Chr 16:10)
- rejoice in Him (1Chr 16:10)
- seek out the Lord and trust in His power (1Chr 16:11)
- remember all the Lord’s mighty deeds (1Chr 16:12)
- ascribe glory and strength to Him because it is His due (verses 28–29). To ascribe is to think of as belonging, as a quality or characteristic; thus, we regard the Lord as possessing glory and strength.
- bring an offering to God (1Chr 16:29). In Asaph’s time, the offerings were in accordance with the Law of Moses; today, we are “to offer [our] bodies as a [living sacrifice](#), holy and pleasing to God—this is [our] true and proper worship” (Romans 12:1).
- worship the Lord (1Chr 16:29)
- give thanks to God for His goodness and love (1Chr 16:34)
- cry out to God for deliverance (1Chr 16:35)

*El Elyon*, the Most High God, is the possessor of all true majesty and resplendence. Glory is His by virtue of His nature, and He rightfully refuses to share it with others: “I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols” (Isaiah 42:8). By virtue of who God is, we have an obligation to glorify God at all times (1 Corinthians 10:31). Those who refuse to glorify God face severe judgment, as witnessed by the example of [Herod](#) usurping God’s glory in Acts 12:21–23.

We can, of course, glorify God with our words of praise and thanksgiving. We can also glorify God through our works of service for Him. Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Bearing fruit for the kingdom of God also brings glory to Him (John 15:8). Even in our manner of death, we can glorify God (see John 21:19).

To glorify God is to extol His attributes, praise His works, trust His name, and obey His Word. He is holy, faithful, merciful, gracious,

loving, majestic, sovereign, powerful, and omniscient—and that's just for starters. His works are wonderful, wise, marvelous, and fearfully complex. His Word is "perfect . . . trustworthy . . . right . . . radiant . . . pure . . . firm . . . precious" (Psalm 19:7–10). His salvation is astonishing, timely, and near. No matter how loudly or widely we proclaim the glory of God, He is worthy of more.

In the refrain of her 1875 hymn, "To God Be the Glory," [Fanny Crosby](#) exhorts us to do what is right by extolling the Lord for all His work:

"O come to the Father through Jesus the Son  
and give Him the glory, great things he has done!"

[GotQuestions.org](#)

**John 12:24 "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."**

BGT John 12:24 μ ν μ ν λ γ ω μ ν , ν μ κ κ ο ς τ ο σ τ ο υ π ε ς ν ε ς τ ν γ ν π ο θ ν , α τ ς μ ν ο ς μ ν ε ι · ν δ π ο θ ν , π ο λ ν κ α ρ π ν φ ρ ε ι .

KJV John 12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

NET John 12:24 I tell you the solemn truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it produces much grain.

CSB John 12:24 " I assure you: Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces a large crop.

ESV John 12:24 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.

NIV John 12:24 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

NLT John 12:24 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels-- a plentiful harvest of new lives.

NRS John 12:24 Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

NJB John 12:24 In all truth I tell you, unless a wheat grain falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies it yields a rich harvest.

NAB John 12:24 Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.

YLT John 12:24 verily, verily, I say to you, if the grain of the wheat, having fallen to the earth, may not die, itself remaineth alone; and if it may die, it doth bear much fruit;

MIT John 12:24 This is a basic truth I declare to you: Unless a kernel of grain falls into the soil and dies, it remains solitary. But if it dies, it produces much yield.

- **Unless:** Ps 72:16 1Co 15:36-38
- **if:** Jn 12:32,33 Ps 22:15,22-31 Isa 53:10-12 Heb 2:9,10 Rev 7:9-17
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 15:36+ You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies;





Fruiting Heads of Wheat

## THE CROSS BEFORE THE CROWN

**Truly, truly** ([amen](#), amen) - Another double down, giving the tremendous import of what He is about to say using figurative language. **Ryle** says "This is one of those solemn prefaces which are so frequent in John's Gospel, and indicate some very weighty truth coming."

**Truly, truly** - 25x/25v - only used by Jesus and always calls for utmost attention to what follows - Jn. 1:51; Jn. 3:3; Jn. 3:5; Jn. 3:11; Jn. 5:19; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:25; Jn. 6:26; Jn. 6:32; Jn. 6:47; Jn. 6:53; Jn. 8:34; Jn. 8:51; Jn. 8:58; Jn. 10:1; Jn. 10:7; Jn. 12:24; Jn. 13:16; Jn. 13:20; Jn. 13:21; Jn. 13:38; Jn. 14:12; Jn. 16:20; Jn. 16:23; Jn. 21:18

**Spurgeon** - Telling them that the source of his glory would be his death. The reason why the people would hear of him, and come to him, was that he would be hanged on the cross. The grain of wheat, when put into the ground, if it remains as it is, will never increase; it must die if it is to bring forth fruit. What is death? The end of existence? None but thoughtless persons imagine that. Death is the resolution of any living substance into its primary elements. It is the division of the soul from the body; originally, it was the division of the soul from God. In a grain of wheat, death is the separation of the particles of which it is composed, that the life-germ may feed upon that which was provided for it. "If it die," in the true sense of the word, in being separated into its constituent elements, then "it bringeth forth much fruit." Christ's way to glory was through the grave he must go down that he might mount to the throne.....The preservation of the corn is the prevention of its increase; but the putting of it into the ground, the losing of it, the burial of it, is the very means of its multiplication. So our Lord Jesus Christ must not care for himself, and he did not. He surrendered himself to all the ignominy of the death of the cross, he died, and was buried in the heart of the earth, but he sprang up again from the grave, and ever since then myriads have come to him through his death, even as these Greeks came to him in his life. Now, as it was with Christ, so is it to be with us; at least, in our measure.

**I say to you, unless a grain** ([kokkus](#)) **of wheat** ([sitos](#)) **falls into the earth and dies** ([apothnesko](#)), **it remains** ([meno](#)) **alone** - **A grain** refers to a single seed (Him). Jesus points out the paradox that life comes from death! In context it is clear that Jesus is metaphorically speaking of the hour of His glorification, the hour of His crucifixion. Christ the Creator had so ordered His creation that it would be possible for life to come forth from death. This picture of a seed that fall into the ground and seems to die yet which springs to life, is a beautiful metaphor for physical death followed by burial in the ground which in turn is followed by rising up to life.

[A T Robertson](#) points out that "Grains of wheat have been found in Egyptian tombs three or four thousand years old, but they are now dead. They bore no fruit."

**But if it dies** ([apothnesko](#)), **it bears much fruit** ([karpos](#)) - If is third class conditional sentence which depicts potential action (Note that John uses several third class conditional sentences in this section - Jn 12:24, Jn 12:26, Jn 12:32, Jn 12:47). **It dies** refers to the grain of wheat which yields a head of fruit which in turn bears multiple seeds. So too Christ's death and His being springing up (being resurrected) as the first fruits (1Co 15:20, 23+) would make possible much fruit in the form of souls who would attain new life in His life because He died and came to life.

**TECHNICAL NOTE:** If ([1437](#)) ([ean](#)) is a preposition which serves to identify what is referred to in Greek as a third class conditional clause. It means "(If)... *and it may be true or may not be true.*" There is a supposition (something that is supposed) where the reality of the issue is uncertain. A conditional clause in Greek is formed by combining a preposition with a certain verb mood. In this case **ean** is combined with the **subjunctive mood** of DIES ([apothnesko](#)) which is the mood of probability which implies uncertainty.

**Spurgeon** - He knew that he must die, for his living, and preaching, and miracle working would never produce such results as his death would accomplish. He must go down into the ground, out of sight, and there must lie like a buried grain of wheat, that out of him there might spring a great harvest to the glory of God; and these Greeks were like a first handful, a wavesheaf unto God, a promise of the great harvest that would be the result of his death: "If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

[Bob Utley](#) on **bears much fruit** - One seed can produce many seeds (cf. John 15:2, John 15:4, John 15:5, John 15:8, John 15:16; 1

Corinthians 15:36). His death brought many to true life (cf. Mark 10:45).

**Spurgeon** - This was Christ's way to glory, and it must be our way to glory too. The grain of wheat must fall into the ground, and die, or else it cannot bring forth fruit. Just so must it be with you and with me, and in proportion as we learn to die to self we shall live to the glory of God. If you keep yourself to yourself, you will lose yourself. Brethren and sisters in Christ, if we are really to glorify Christ on the earth, we must be willing to lose our reputation, our good name, our comfort, and indeed everything that we have, for Christ's sake. This is the only way truly to live. If, for your own sake, you begin to keep back anything from Christ, that is the way to die. You would then be like the grain of wheat that is laid by, and preserved, and which, therefore, can never grow or multiply. Surrender yourself; be willing to be nothing; be willing to die if only the truth may live. Care nothing about honour and glory for yourself; care only about the honour and glory of your Master. Learn the meaning of the Master's paradox. As you bury yourself, you will multiply yourself. As you are put out of sight, like a grain of wheat that is sown in the ground, you have your only opportunity of growth and increase; heavily-laden ears of corn shall spring up from the grain which has been buried in the earth.

**J C Ryle on if it dies** - The wealth of spiritual truth which this beautiful figure unfolds is very great. The death of Christ was the life of the world. From it, as a most prolific seed, was to spring an enormous harvest of blessing to souls, and of glory to God. His substitution on the cross, His atoning death, were to be the beginning of untold blessings to a lost world. To wish Him not to die, to dislike the idea of His death, (as the disciples evidently did,) was as foolish as to keep seed-corn locked up in the granary, and to refuse to sow it. "I am the corn of wheat," Jesus seems to say. "Unless I die, whatever you in your private opinion may think, my purpose in coming into the world will not be accomplished. But if I die, multitudes of souls will be saved."

**Colin Kruse** "The primary reference was to his own death. Just as a grain of wheat dies when it is planted, but then produces many seeds as it sprouts and the plant grows to maturity, so too Jesus would die, but the effect of his death would be a vast harvest of people who through faith in him would find eternal life. The coming of the Greeks made Jesus think of the great harvest (not only among Jews but also among Gentiles) that would occur following his death. The hour towards which everything was moving, then, was the hour of his death, followed by his resurrection and exaltation. This was when the Son of Man would be glorified. (BORROW [The Gospel According to John](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - Jesus used the image of a seed to illustrate the great spiritual truth that there can be no glory without suffering, no fruitful life without death, no victory without surrender. Of itself, a seed is weak and useless; but when it is planted, it "dies" and becomes fruitful. There is both beauty and bounty when a seed "dies" and fulfills its purpose. If a seed could talk, it would no doubt complain about being put into the cold, dark earth. But the only way it can achieve its goal is by being planted. God's children are like seeds. They are small and insignificant, but they have life in them, God's life. However, that life can never be fulfilled unless we yield ourselves to God and permit Him to "plant us." We must die to self so that we may live unto God (Rom. 6; Gal. 2:20). The only way to have a fruitful life is to follow Jesus Christ in death, burial, and resurrection. In these words, Jesus challenges us today to surrender our lives to Him. Note the contrasts: loneliness or fruitfulness; losing your life or keeping your life; serving self or serving Christ; pleasing self or receiving God's honor. I read about some Christians who visited a remote mission station to see how the ministry was going. As they watched the dedicated missionary team at work, they were impressed with their ministry, but admitted that they missed "civilization." "You certainly have buried yourself out here!" one of the visitors exclaimed. "We haven't buried ourselves," the missionary replied. "We were planted!" ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION** - Someone has calculated that if you plant one wheat seed, take the crop and plant all the seed from that crop, plant all the seed from the next crop, ect., that it would take only fourteen years for the whole land space of the earth to be filled.

Jesus is talking about planting seed; not burying seed. A young man visited an old missionary in the deepest parts of the jungle. He said to the missionary, "You have really buried yourself out here in this mission field." The missionary said, "No, I have not buried myself here, I have planted myself here."

The same is true of us as we follow Christ – John 11:25-26 The only Jesus folks will see is the Jesus in us. People need to see Jesus in our Attitude, Actions, Accomplishments, Aims, Attire, and Appetites. "Sir, we would see Jesus!" Let others see Jesus in you. Then we will hear Him say, "Well Done!"

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## [Shattering Hope](#)

Today's Bible Reading: John 12:23–26

Unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels. -John 12:24

Poppy seeds pop. Apple cores crash to the ground. Corn kernels crack. In nature, the very act of reproduction requires a seed to shed its hull and shatter its container. In her classic book, *The Measure of My Days*, playwright and author Florida Scott-Maxwell observes, "Life does not accommodate you, it shatters you. It's meant to, and it couldn't do it better. Every seed destroys its

container or else there would be no fruition.”

The playwright’s observation reminds me of Jesus’ words as He approached His death in John 12. Sharing that the hour had come “for the Son of Man to enter into his glory” (v. 23), Jesus offered a kind of shattering hope to his listeners. “I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels” (v. 24). His death would bring about life for many. Jesus erases any doubt by prefacing His point with the phrase, “I tell you the truth.”

God offers this shattering hope to us today, nudging us toward growth. Jesus goes on, “Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity” (v. 25). —Elisa Morgan

We all face sufferings, disappointments and losses. How might God bring about new life in us through the daily “deaths” we encounter?

Dear Lord, may I embrace the shattering hope You offer in my days, that I might see You reproduce more of You and Your desires in my life. (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

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**D L Moody** - TAKE a little black flower seed and sow it; after it has been planted some time, dig it up. If it is whole you know that it has no life; but if it has begun to decay, you know that life and fruitfulness will follow. There will be a resurrected life, and out of that little black seed will come a beautiful fragrant flower.

Here is a disgusting grub, crawling along the ground. By and by old age overtakes it, and it begins to spin its own shroud, to make its own sepulchre, and it lies as if in death. Look again, and it has shuffled off its shroud, it has burst its sepulchre open, and it comes forth a beautiful butterfly, with different form and habits.

So with our bodies. They die, but God will give us glorified bodies in their stead. This is the law of the new creation as well as of the old: light after darkness: life after death: fruitfulness and glory after corruption and decay.

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**F B Meyer** - Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone. (r.v.)

The East came to the cradle; the West to the Cross. Sunrise becomes the Orient; sunset the Occident wave. These were not Hellenist Jews, but pure-blooded Greeks, whose life and philosophy were in the present, in as much joy as nature, art, and amusement could yield. It was startling to be met with the grave announcement of death. But how wise to send them to read that earliest divine book of Nature. Hear the parable of the corn of wheat.

**Its loneliness.** — Before sowing, it is by itself alone. It lies on the barn floor, beside myriads more, but there is no vital contact between it and them. They are just so many isolated units: as foreign to each other as the stars, between which millions of dividing miles intervene. So if you save your life, nursing it in selfishness, dreading and avoiding all that savors of self-denial and self-giving, you will be utterly and drearily lonely.

**The falling into the ground to die.** — If we compare ourselves to a corn of wheat, we may say that the seed-germ cannot bury itself; but it can choose burial. It can be willing to be cast forth. It is not a pleasant experience for the little seed. As soon as it finds itself entombed, it is seized upon by chemical agents, which pierce and tear its delicate waterproof sheath, and eat their way to its vitals. Death is no child’s-play.

**The fruit-bearing.** — Presently the rootlet shoots downward, the tiny frond upward, and, almost without knowing it, the stalk begins to blossom and bear fruit, which, with every sowing, reduplicates itself. Such may your life become, if you will let God have his way. Via Crucis, via lucis: the way of the cross is the way of light.

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### Chris Tiegreen - Productive Seeds

“Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.” John 12:24

IN WORD To the eyes of casual onlookers who do not hold kingdom values, the gospel is a waste. They see the life of Jesus as tragically “cut short.” Just think of what He could have done had He lived longer! They believe the talents of many young people have been squandered on “religious service” rather than impressive secular-minded careers. Just think of the achievements that could have bettered mankind if they had focused on something “practical”! The fruit of the kingdom is hardly visible to those outside of it.

David Brainerd, an early missionary to the Indians of the American Northeast, lived among them in a forest while his health deteriorated. He died at twenty-nine, having seen only a handful of converts. But his diary prompted William Carey, Henry Martyn,

and scores of others to go to mission fields. William Borden graduated from Yale before going to Egypt as a twenty-five-year-old missionary. He died of cerebral meningitis within weeks. But thousands have been moved to action by the testimony of his eternal values. And, of course, Jesus spent only three precious years in public ministry before the appointed time of His sacrifice at the hands of a vision-impaired world. But His eternal kingdom is growing mightily.

IN DEED We serve in a kingdom of wheat kernels, mustard seeds, and hidden pearls—small things with huge impact. The world cannot see their value. In our more discouraging moments, neither can we. But history encourages us; the legacies of “wasted” lives have influenced the world in more dramatic ways than any of mankind’s impressive achievements.

Do not be discouraged if your faithful service to God has imperceptible results. They are imperceptible only to the naked eye. They are highly valued in the eternal kingdom, where those who give away their lives find them again. (See [The One Year At His Feet Devotional](#))

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### **Stephen Olford - The Service of Fruitfulness**

“... if it dies, it produces much grain” (12:24).

Our Lord Jesus used this illustration with great care, and the more you study and analyze it, the more you see the wonder of it.

“The fecundity of plants or their capacity for producing seeds,” says a writer, “is remarkable. The common cereals often yield fruit sixty to a hundredfold. One castor oil plant will produce 1,500; one sunflower 4,000; and one thistle 24,000 seeds in a single season. A well-known botanist counted 2,000 grains in a single plant of maize which sprang from one seed; and 32,000 seeds in a single poppy plant.

Pliny tells us that a Roman governor in Africa sent to the Emperor Augustus a single plant of corn with 340 stems, bearing 340 ears; that is to say at least 60,000 grains of corn had been produced from a single seed. In eight years as much corn might spring from one seed as would supply all mankind with bread for a year-and-a-half. How this illustrates our text— “... if it dies, it produces much grain” (12:24). “By this My Father is glorified,” said the Lord Jesus, “that you bear much fruit ...” (John 15:8).

Is your life one of productiveness and fruitfulness? What are you leaving in the wake of your life? One day when you stand before the judgment seat of Christ, will you be able to say “... Here am I and the children whom God has given me” (Heb. 2:13)?

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**D L Moody** - You can never cultivate self into anything but self. Jesus died alone: but three thousand at Pentecost were the harvest of His death.

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**H Smith** - This is the manner of God’s proceedings,—to send good after evil, as He made light after darkness; to turn justice into mercy, as He turned water into wine. For as the beasts must be killed before they could be sacrificed, so men must be killed before they can be sacrificed; that is, the knife of correction must prune and dress them, and lop off their rotten twigs, before they can bring forth fruit. These are the cords which bind the ram unto the altar, lest, when he is brought thither, he should run from thence again; this is the chariot which carrieth our thoughts to heaven, as it did Nebuchadnezzar’s; this is the hammer which squareth the rough stones till they be plain and smooth, and fit for the temple.

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### **James Smith - FRUITFULNESS - BIBLE “EXCEPTS.” No. 9.**

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24).

All nature each Autumn sounds a loud Amen to the declaration of the sweet singer of Israel—“Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness.” The fields, orchards, and gardens are laden with fruit. The Lord’s crown of goodness then lies gloriously heavy on the brow of nature. The fruit, and much fruit, gladden both the heart of God and man. But in the rejoicing of the “harvest home” let us not forget the important “except” of fruitfulness. One of the most familiar facts in nature is that, in plants and seeds, life comes by death. The principal event which renders the seed corn valuable to man is its death. There could not possibly have been fields laden with golden grain had there not previously taken place in secret a great surrender, and a dying to self. This is a great principal in the moral as well as in the natural realm.

“And there were certain Greeks among them.” I wonder if they had been amongst those who had welcomed Jesus as King of Jerusalem? If so, they were not satisfied by admiring the Lord Jesus, but longed to come into a more personal knowledge of Him. Would that all the Lord’s admirers would do likewise! There are so many who imagine that the good opinions they entertain of the King of Glory will prove a sufficient passport to eternal bliss. What a vain hope is this! No, No, nothing can take the place of personal faith and vital contact with the Lord Himself. Let all mere admirers pray, “We would see Jesus.”

Why these Greeks should seek Philip's mediation we know not. We do notice that Philip's name is more purely Greek than any of the other disciples. Does not this indicate that probably he had Greek relatives and connections? "Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus." How blessed it is when Christian brethren unite in bringing others to the Lord Jesus.

Undoubtedly the Lord had Himself in mind when He gave expression to this great fact of nature. Their request was as a narrow window through which Jesus' yearning spirit saw a great expanse, nothing less than the coming to Him of myriads of Gentiles, the "much" fruit of which He speaks. But before that could take place death on the Cross must be His.

There are several words in this verse pregnant with meaning. "It abideth alone." Here we have one reason why the Lord came down to be a man and die—He could not bear to be alone in the glory, alone with the Father and the holy angels. Without the sons of men, He felt He would be alone. And He desired us to share His glory. Oh, verily this is the language of love!

"Except a corn of wheat fall." Ah, that is a familiar word, is it not? Man has fallen, and to lift him up the Corn of Wheat, the Lord Himself, must fall, die and fall into the ground.

"And die." Man died at Eden. The Son of Man must die to give man life. Here is the great fundamental principle of the Gospel. Christ's death was and is the source of spiritual life of the world. He fell to the ground in His incarnation, and seemed buried alive in the world, so much was His glory veiled. He died; this immortal Seed submitted to the laws of mortality. And He lay in the grave like the seed under the clods. But He arose; and from His Cross and Passion sprang up a mighty harvest of benefit to mankind. The first fruits were seen at His resurrection. "Christ died alone; He arose again with many," so wrote the venerable Bede.

But there is an important lesson here for all who have received life through that atoning death. What was true in respect to the Saviour is equally true respecting His own dear children. If we are to be fruitful in life and service we, too, must die to self as well as to sin. One has very forcibly pointed out that the key to the application of the words of the Saviour is the Greek present. "For five centuries the Greeks had marched at the head of humanity. The whole world gathered round the torch of Greek genius. Yet they failed to regenerate society. Why? Their master words were self-culture and self-enjoyment. This was, according to the Greeks, the chief good of human life, the supreme aim. The gods of Olympus were represented as beings who lived only to enjoy themselves. When they came to earth they came only for the sake of pleasant adventure, or selfish amusement, caring nothing for the sorrows and sins of humanity. And the character of the gods was reflected in the worshippers. But Christ calls upon them to substitute self-oblation for self-culture, self-sacrifice, for self-gratification. In other words, He asks them to reverse the whole bent of their thought and conduct." How startled they must have been when they heard this great principle enunciated. They were well aware of its force in nature, but they never dreamt it ought to be applied to their own lives. We now know differently. But do we act up to our knowledge? Remember, if we live for self we live in vain.

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**Streams in the Desert - John 12:24** - GO to the old burying ground of Northampton, Mass., and look upon the early grave of David Brainerd, beside that of the fair Jerusha Edwards, whom he loved but did not live to wed.

What hopes, what expectations for Christ's cause went down to the grave with the wasted form of that young missionary of whose work nothing now remained but the dear memory, and a few score of swarthy Indian converts! But that majestic old Puritan saint, Jonathan Edwards, who had hoped to call him his son, gathered up the memorials of his life in a little book, and the little book took wings and flew beyond the sea, and alighted on the table of a Cambridge student, Henry Martyn.

Poor Martyn! Why should he throw himself away, with all his scholarship, his genius, his opportunities! What had he accomplished when he turned homeward from "India's coral strand," broken in health, and dragged himself northward as far as that dreary khan at Tocat by the Black Sea, where he crouched under the piled-up saddles, to cool his burning fever against the earth, and there died alone?

To what purpose was this waste? Out of that early grave of Brainerd, and the lonely grave of Martyn far away by the splashing of the Euxine Sea, has sprung the noble army of modern missionaries.—Leonard Woolsey Bacon.

"Is there some desert, or some boundless sea,  
Where Thou, great God of angels, wilt send me?  
Some oak for me to rend,  
Some sod for me to break,  
Some handful of Thy corn to take  
And scatter far afield,  
Till it in turn shall yield  
Its hundredfold  
Of grains of gold

To feed the happy children of my God?

“Show me the desert, Father, or the sea;  
Is it Thine enterprise? Great God, send me!  
And though this body lies where ocean rolls,  
Father, count me among all faithful souls.”

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**Broken Things in the Bible** - Five broken things in the Bible and the results achieved by them: (**ED**: I HAVE PLACED THIS ILLUSTRATION HERE BECAUSE THE AUTHOR LEFT ONE "BROKEN" THING OUT! THE BODY OF CHRIST BROKEN FOR YOU AND FOR ME! HALLELUJAH! THANK YOU JESUS. AMEN).

- 1) Broken pitchers ([Judges 7:18, 19](#)) and the light shone out
  - 2) A Broken Box ([Mark 14:3](#)) and the ointment was poured out
  - 3) Broken Bread ([Matt 14:10](#)) and the hungry were fed
  - 4) A Broken Body ([1Cor 11:24](#)) and the world was saved
  - 5) A Broken will ([Ps 51:17](#)) and a life of fulfillment in Christ
- Source unknown

I have been reflecting on the inestimable value of "broken things." Broken pitchers gave ample light for victory (Judges 7:19-21); broken bread was more than enough for all the hungry (Matthew 14:19-21); broken box gave fragrance to all the world (Mark 14:3, 9); and broken body is salvation to all who believe and receive the Savior (Isaiah 53:56, 12; 1 Corinthians 11:24). And what cannot the Broken One do with our broken plans, projects, and hearts? V. RAYMOND EDMAN

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## DEATH AND THE "LAW OF INCREASE"

Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. JOHN 12:24

Take one barren field, bury a handful of seed, add a little water and the care of the farmer, and what do you have?

At first, you still have only a barren field.

But after a few months, the field will produce an abundant harvest.

In John 12 we read how Jesus used the simple illustration of a dying seed to explain to his followers the reason behind his death.

And A. B. Bruce provides this timely explanation of the "law of increase"—a law that Jesus' death portrays.

## WALK WITH A. B. BRUCE

"Jesus' purpose is to make it clear to his disciples that death and increase may go together.

"Such is true in the case of grain; and the law of increase is equally true in his own case.

"He might have explained it this way: 'A grain of wheat, by dying, becomes fruitful; so I must die in order to become, on a large scale, an object of faith and source of life.'

" 'During my lifetime I have had little visible success. Few have believed, many have disbelieved; and they are about to crown their unbelief by putting me to death.'

" 'But my death, far from being—as they fancy—my defeat and destruction, will be but the beginning of my glorification.' "

## WALK CLOSER TO GOD

The good news of the gospel began with the bad news of a tragic, unjust execution. It began with death.

A grain of wheat—dead and buried, lifeless, fruitless ... or so it would seem.

But three days later, all that changed.

From death sprang eternal life. The seemingly fruitless became the firstfruits of a mighty harvest that is still bearing fruit today.

Thank God right now for the harvest the death of his Son has accomplished in your life. (SEE [NIV-Once a Day Walk with Jesus](#))

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## [The Joy Of Spring](#)

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.  
—John 12:24

Today's Scripture: John 12:20-36

During Passover week, Jerusalem was swarming with visitors, including some Greeks who asked Philip if they could see Jesus. In



response, Jesus simply said, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified" (Jn. 12:23). Then, contrary to what His listeners may have anticipated, Jesus compared His life to a seed, which must die in order to live and bear fruit.

As believers in Christ, we shrink from the thought of dying to self. Yet in nature we easily accept that a seed must pass through death to produce new life in the spring season. We know that seeds germinate under the ground's surface, though we don't see it happening.

Years ago my daughter was given a seed-planting kit. The soil in the kit was transparent jelly, which allowed us to observe the buried seed. Many days later we rejoiced as we witnessed the first sign of life emerge from that seed and eventually rise to full bloom.

In today's circumstances, if we die to self and let the Spirit control our sinful desires, we can be confident that spiritual fruit will germinate within us, even though we can't see it yet. We can rejoice over every seed of self that dies, for it's a sign of the coming of spring to our lives. By: Joanie Yoder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Oh, may the life of the Savior flow through us,  
Bearing rich fruit by His Spirit within;  
And may each longing for selfish enjoyment  
Be overcome lest it lead us to sin.  
—DJD

Fruitfulness for Christ begins when we die to self.

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### **Nuts In The Attic**

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.  
—John 12:24

Today's Scripture: John 12:20-33

A Christian who was born and raised in a log house visited his boyhood home after being away for 35 years. As he walked up to the now-deserted cabin, he remembered that as a youngster he had planted some walnuts along a stream that ran through the farm. When he went down to the creek, he discovered a beautiful row of stately walnut trees.

Then he recalled that he had also hidden some nuts in the attic. He was curious to see what had happened to them, so he climbed into the dark attic and poked around in a corner until he found them. What a difference! Those he had stored were nothing but dry and dust-covered nuts, while the ones he had planted had become flourishing green trees! Immediately the words of Jesus came to his mind with new meaning: "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain" (Jn. 12:24).

The Lord had His own death in mind when He spoke those words. But they apply to believers as well. If we refuse to "die" to our own selfish desires, we "remain alone." In Christ's death on the cross for man's sin and in the Christian's death to his own sin, the same principle applies: In dying there is living! By: Richard DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Until a seed is planted  
It cannot multiply;  
And we won't see the Spirit's fruit  
Until to self we die.  
—Bosch

We die if we live for self; we live if we die to self.

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### **The Law Of The Cross**

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.  
—John 12:24

Today's Scripture: John 12:20-26

The couplet "If the laws of the kingdom you faithfully keep, health, riches, and honor you surely will reap" sums up what many today

are teaching. But it's not true! Multitudes of faithful believers are sick or poor or persecuted. Yet they gratefully worship the Lord, serve Him the best they can, and remain joyful. They can do this because they believe the law of the cross—that by dying to self we produce a spiritual harvest that will last forever.

I read about a man who runs an after-school program for inner-city children. He recruits people to teach sewing, remedial reading, and other helpful skills. He also conducts an all-day school for 6 weeks in the summer, and holds a Sunday service in a church building that he cleans by himself. Hundreds benefit from his work, but an average of only eight people show up for church! He continues, however, because he is motivated by his love for God and the law of the cross, which says that if you die to self and serve others, you will reap fruit for eternity.

The principle that Jesus taught in John 12:24 about a grain of wheat dying before it can produce fruit was fully expressed in His own death and resurrection. We too need to live each day by this law of the cross. By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Grains of wheat produce a harvest  
When they're planted in the soil;  
Once we die to self, we'll harvest  
Fruit eternal from our toil.  
—Sper

A buried seed bears fruit; a selfless life reaps an eternal harvest.

**John 12:25 "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal."**

BGT John 12:25 φιλῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ πολλοὶ ἐσθλὰ καὶ μισῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ὅτι κτλ. τοῦ ἐς ζωῆς αἰῶνος φυλάξει αὐτόν.

KJV John 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

NET John 12:25 The one who loves his life destroys it, and the one who hates his life in this world guards it for eternal life.

CSB John 12:25 The one who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

ESV John 12:25 Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

NIV John 12:25 The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

NLT John 12:25 Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity.

NRS John 12:25 Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

NJB John 12:25 Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

NAB John 12:25 Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.

YLT John 12:25 he who is loving his life shall lose it, and he who is hating his life in this world -- to life age-during shall keep it;

MIT John 12:25 "The one who loves his life is ruining it, and the one who disregards his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

- **loves:** Mt 10:39 16:25 19:29 Mk 8:35 Lu 9:23-24 17:33 Ac 20:24 21:13 Heb 11:35 Rev 12:11
- **hates:** Ge 29:30-33 Ec 2:17 Lu 14:26
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

Mark 8:34-37+ And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Luke 9:23-25+ And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?

Luke 14:25-27+ Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. ([What did Jesus mean when He instructed us to hate our father and mother \(Luke 14:26\)? | GotQuestions.org](#))

Luke 17:33 "Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.

Matthew 10:39 "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 16:24-26 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

## THE PARADOX OF LIFE OUT OF DEATH

**He who loves (phileo) his life (psuche) loses (apollumi) it** - This is Jesus' call to radical discipleship (is there any other type?) Jesus' giving His life for the lives of others is the pattern for His disciples (then and now). In short the way to lose your **life** is to love it! **Life (psuche)** is not only physical life but speaks of one's entire being, one's "self." **Loves (phileo)** is in the present tense describing a man's lifestyle, his continual unwavering practice of loving this temporal, passing life, vainly striving after the wind (Eccl 1:14). Love of self is at the heart of all sin. This person is like the man who thinks he is well and does not need a doctor. He thinks his life is the sum and substance of human existence and when he dies he will be shocked to find out it was only the prelude and preparation for an eternal existence. This reality will be realized too late, so that his one chance for eternal life has been lost forever. In thinking that he has won in this life, he forfeits the life to come. Self love will lead to self loss, loss of all that is of true worth in God's eyes. Self love leads to an eternal ruin and a life which is no longer usable for its intended purpose, to glorify and honor its Creator!

**J C Ryle** - The meaning is plain: "He that loves his life, or thinks more of the life that now is than that which is to come, shall lose that which is the best part of his life, his soul. He that hateth his life, or cares little for it compared to the life to come, shall preserve to eternal glory that which is the best part of his life, to wit, his soul."

**Bob Utley** on "**He who loves his life loses it**" - This is a play on the Greek term **psuche**, which refers to the essence of a human's personality or life force (cf Matthew 10:39; Matthew 16:24-25; Mark 8:34-35; Luke 9:23-24). Once someone trusts Christ, he is given new life. This new life is a gift from God for service (**ED**: SEE Jn 12:26), not for personal use. **Believers are stewards** of this new life. We are freed from slavery to sin to become servants of God (cf. Ro 6:1-6). The false shepherds of John 10 tried to "save" their lives by running. But Jesus lays down His life, so too, must believers do the same (cf. 2Co 5:12-15+; Galatians 2:20+).

**Pulpit Commentary** on "**He who loves his life loses it**" - If life be regarded as an end in itself; if it be treated as complete when rounded with its own individuality; if life shrink from sacrifice, if it "love itself," and will at all hazards preserve itself; if the natural and instinctive fear of death, and instinct of self-preservation, become a self-idolatry; — that life will "abide alone."

**John MacArthur** on "**He who loves his life**" - Clearly, the message is that those who focus on self-love, self-esteem, and fulfilling all their desires, dreams, and ambitions in this life, even with a superficial interest in Jesus, will lose their eternal soul (cf. Mt. 7:21-23). (See [Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - His love is ruinous to his true life; but to destroy self-love, to make a sacrifice of ourselves, is the truest way really to preserve ourselves.....To hoard your energies will be really to destroy them, like hoarded wheat which in the end becomes useless;

but to give up your energies, to expend your life-forces, this is to sow the wheat, and this is the way to ensure the harvest.

**Westcott** said it this way "Sacrifice, self-surrender, death, is the condition of the highest life: selfishness is the destruction of life....He who seeks to gather round himself that which is perishable, so far perishes with it: he who divests himself of all that is of this world only, so far prepares himself for the higher life" ([Commentary on the Gospel of John](#))

**Bob Utley** on **loses** (his life) - This is the opposite of "eternal life." If one does not have faith in Christ, this is the only alternative. This destruction is not [annihilation](#), but the loss of a personal relationship with God (which is the essence of Hell).

**Spurgeon** - Live for this world, and you shall lose this world and the next, too; live for the world to come, and you shall in the highest sense gain both worlds.

**Life Application Study Bible** (BORROW) - We must be so committed to living for Christ that we should "care nothing" for our lives by comparison. This does not mean that we long to die or that we are careless or destructive with the life God has given, but that we are willing to die if doing so will glorify Christ. We must disown the tyrannical rule of our own self-centeredness. By laying aside our striving for advantage, security, and pleasure, we can serve God lovingly and freely. Releasing control of our lives and transferring control to Christ bring eternal life and genuine joy.

Jesus' half-brother James gives a similar admonition writing "You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship [philia](#) - related to [phileo](#)) with the world is hostility ([echthra](#)) toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend ([philos](#)) of the world ([kosmos](#)) makes himself an enemy ([echthros](#)) of God.." (James 4:4+)

John also issues a strong warning in his first epistle commanding **Do not love** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the world ([kosmos](#)) nor the things in the world ([kosmos](#)). If anyone loves (present tense - continually) the world ([kosmos](#)), the love of the Father is (ouk - strongest Greek negative = absolutely) not in him." (1 John 2:15+) In other words, such a person habitually "**loves his life**" in this world, with the result that he "**loses**" his life in the next world (eternal punishment)!

**THOUGHT** - What you love is a strong indicator of the "compass" of your heart! Look, we all wrestle with the shiny, glittering trinkets of this fallen world (I just bought a new Iphone!), but that is not what John is talking about. He and Jesus are saying that if these temporary trinkets have continually taken over the throne room (so to speak) of your heart, then you need to check whether you truly have a "new heart," a heart regenerated by the Holy Spirit (cf Ezekiel 36:26, 27+)! We are not speaking about perfection, but about direction.

**And he who hates** (miseo in present tense) **his life** ([psuche](#)) **in this world** ([kosmos](#)) **will keep** ([phulasso](#)) **it to life** ([zoe](#)) **eternal** ([aiionios](#)) - **Hates** (miseo) is in the present tense which speaks of a continual hating one's **life in this world** ([kosmos](#) = ruled by Satan 1Jn 5:19 and hostile to God). And so the prophetic promise of **life eternal** is conditioned on temporal hatred of this present life. Jesus is not speaking of literal hatred but relative hatred, so to speak. As **Kruse** says "The love/hate contrast reflects Semitic idiom, pointing to preference rather than actual hatred." Jesus is not saying that those who continually abandon their self-interests, deny themselves, hate their sinful condition, etc, will earn or merit salvation. Salvation is indisputably solely by faith ([Sola Fide](#))! Only a person who is saved and empowered by the Holy Spirit can continually hate **his life in this world**. One could think of this hatred as one of the evidences of genuine salvation.

Or as **Steven Cole** puts it "Hating your life in this world is not the way to gain eternal life, but rather a characteristic of all who have eternal life....by "hating his life," Jesus is referring to the daily, lifelong process of dying to self as we live for Him. That process is characteristic of all who have truly trusted in Christ for salvation. If you're not engaging in the daily battle of fighting your own selfishness and pride, you may need to ask, "Have I truly repented of my sins and trusted in Christ as my Savior and Lord?" ([Why You Should Hate Your Life](#))

**J C Ryle** - The word "**hate**" here must be taken comparatively. It is a Hebraism, like "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated." "Your appointed feasts my soul hateth." (Ro 9:13; Isa 1:14.)

**Merrill Tenney** - The expression "**who hates his life**" need not be understood to mean a contempt for oneself or a suicidal impulse. Rather, it is a hyperbolic expression that means one is to base his priorities on that which is outside of himself. He is to place others or another above himself. In this instance, it is to make Christ the Master of one's life. (BORROW [The Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

**David Guzik** on **hates his life** - We are called to hate our **life** not in the sense that we disregard it, but in the sense that we freely give it up for God.

**William MacDonald** on **hates his life** - To hate one's life means to love Christ more than one loves his own interests. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Will keep** is more literally will guard, which pictures the one hating his life now as watching over, protecting, preserving his present life with a view to his **life eternal**. The ethical and spiritual qualities of the life which God is, are communicated to the sinner when the latter places his faith in the Lord Jesus as Saviour, and this becomes the new, animating, energizing, motivating principle which transforms the experience of that individual, and the saint thus lives a life which now has an eternal perspective and supernatural power!

**THOUGHT** - If you believe what Jesus has just said and if you believe your best life is yet to come, you will hate (relatively speaking) this present life and will focus on your future life, your life eternal. You will live "other worldly" in the midst of this temporal, worldly world. You will redeem the short time you have left in this life, with an eye on the impact this life will have on your future life (Mt 6:20, 1Ti 4:8, 2Co 5:10). You will seek to live this horizontal life (so to speak) by choosing to daily see with (and behave in light of) vertical vision, fixing your eyes continually on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2+).

*Jesus is to be given top priority in the life of those who claim to be His disciples!*

**Colin Kruse** - In parallel passages in the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus mentions certain important aspects of life in this world which nevertheless must not be given priority over following him. These include desire for riches (Luke 15:12–21), love of father and mother, brothers and sisters, wives, sons and daughters, and even life itself (Mt. 10:37–39; Luke 14:25–27; 17:33). None of these may be given the top priority in the lives of Jesus' disciples. (BORROW [The Gospel According to John](#))

**Steven Cole on hates his life** - To "hate" our lives (John 12:25) is the same thing as denying ourselves and taking up our cross daily to follow Jesus (Luke 9:23+). It means that we must daily repudiate a self-centered life. It means living for God's glory and His purpose by submitting every thought, word, and deed to the lordship of Jesus. It means moment by moment seeking to love God and love others for Jesus' sake by saying no to my inherent selfishness and pride....The need to hate my life or die to self is never finished in this life; it is a daily battle. **A. T. Pierson** said, "Getting rid of the 'self-life' is like peeling an onion: layer upon layer-and a tearful process!" (**ED: BUT REMEMBER "GETTING RID OF THE SELF LIFE" SO TO SPEAK IS [1] A LIFELONG ACTIVITY UNTIL WE ARE GLORIFIED AND [2] IS A COOPERATIVE EFFORT: [a] BELIEVERS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO DAILY MAKE CHOICES REFLECTING SELF-DENIAL AND [b] WE ARE SUPERNATURALLY ENABLED TO MAKE THOSE CHOICES BY RELYING ON THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO GIVES US THE **DESIRE** AND THE **POWER** TO DO SO! IT IS NOT "LET GO, LET GOD," BUT "LET GOD, LET'S GO!"** - SEE ["Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible"](#)) ([Why You Should Hate Your Life](#))

**Bob Utley** on **hates** - This is a Hebrew idiom of comparison. God must be priority (cf. Jacob's wives, Genesis 29:30, Genesis 29:31; Deuteronomy 21:15; Esau and Jacob, Malachi 1:2-3; Romans 10:13; one's family, Luke 14:26).

**John Piper** says **hates his life** "means, at least, that you don't take much thought for your life in this world. In other words, it just doesn't matter much what happens to your life in this world. If men speak well of you, it doesn't matter much. If they hate you, it doesn't matter much. If you have a lot of things, it doesn't matter much....But it's even more radical. There are some choices to be made here, not just passive experiences. Jesus goes on to say, "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me." Where to? He is moving into Gethsemane and toward the cross. Jesus is not just saying: If things go bad, don't fret, since you are dead anyway. He is saying: choose to die with me. Choose to hate your life in this world the way I have chosen the cross."

**Henry Morris** has an interesting observation writing that "The importance of this principle is indicated by the fact that Christ cites it probably more than any other of His teachings. See also Mt 10:39; Mt 16:25; Mk 8:35; Lk 9:24; Lk 17:33. In slightly different form, it is also enunciated frequently by Paul (Ro 12:1-2; 2Co 5:14-15; 2Co 6:9-10; Gal 2:20; Php 2:5-11; 2Ti 2:11-12).

#### **Related Resource:**

- [What did Jesus mean when He instructed us to hate our father and mother \(Luke 14:26\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Loves** (5368) **phileo** from **philos** = loved, dear, friend) means to have a special interest in, to love, to have affection for, to have a devotion based on one's emotions. To be a friend to another, to be fond of (have a liking for) an individual or an object, to have or show affection for. Phileo describes the outward expression of this affection as a kiss. In Jn 12:25 it is as if the person kisses himself/herself in the mirror! [Click here for an in depth 4 PAGE discussion of PHILEO in the New International Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

**Phileo** - kiss(3), love(13), loved(3), loves(6). Matt. 6:5; Matt. 10:37; Matt. 23:6; Matt. 26:48; Mk. 14:44; Lk. 20:46; Lk. 22:47; Jn. 5:20; Jn. 11:3; Jn. 11:36; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 15:19; Jn. 16:27; Jn. 20:2; Jn. 21:15; Jn. 21:16; Jn. 21:17; 1 Co. 16:22; Tit. 3:15; Rev. 3:19; Rev. 22:15

**Life** (5590) **psuche** or **psyche** from **psucho** = to breathe, blow, English = psychology, "study of the soul") is the breath, then that

which breathes, the individual, animated creature. However the discerning reader must understand that psuche is one of those Greek words that can have several meanings, the exact nuance being determined by the context. It follows that one cannot simply select of the three main meanings of psuche and insert it in a given passage for it may not be appropriate to the given context. The meaning of **psuche** is also contingent upon whether one is a dichotomist or trichotomist. Consult Greek lexicons for more lengthy definitions of psuche as this definition is only a brief overview. (Click an excellent article on [Soul](#) in the Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology; see also ISBE article on [Soul](#)) [Click here for an in depth 10 PAGE discussion of PSUCHE/PSYCHE in the New International Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

**Loses** (destroys) (622) **apollumi** from **apo** = away from or wholly + **olethros** = state of utter ruin) means to destroy utterly but not to cause one to cease to exist. **Apollumi** as it relates to men, is not the loss of being per se, but is more the loss of well-being. It means to ruin so that the person (or thing) ruined can no longer serve the use for which he (it) was designed. To render useless. The gospel promises everlasting life for the one who believes. The failure to possess this life will result in utter ruin and eternal uselessness (but not a cessation of existence). **Apollumi** then has the basic meaning of describing that which is ruined and is no longer usable for its intended purpose. [Click here for an in depth 3 PAGE discussion in the New International Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

**Apollumi in John** - Jn. 3:16; Jn. 6:12; Jn. 6:27; Jn. 6:39; Jn. 10:10; Jn. 10:28; Jn. 11:50; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 17:12; Jn. 18:9

**Hates** (3404) **miseo** from **misos** = hatred) means to dislike strongly, to have a strong aversion to or to detest, all of these representing expressions of hostility of one person (or group) toward another (Mt 5:43, Lk 6:27, et al). Specifically the hatred can be directed toward God (Lk 1:71). Good hatred in Heb 1:9 (cf use of miseo in Lxx of Ps 101:3, Ps 119:104, 113, 128, 163, Ps 139:21-22). The majority of the NT uses of miseo convey the literal meaning of animosity towards God, people or particular attitudes. [Click here for an in depth discussion of miseo in the New International Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

**Will keep** (5442) **phulasso** means to watch, to carry out the function as a military guard or sentinel (cp Ac 23:35, 28:16), to keep watch, to have one's eye upon lest one escape, to guard a person that he might remain safe (from violence, from another person or thing, from being snatched away, from being lost). The NT uses phulasso of guarding truth (eg, 1Ti 5:21+, 1Ti 6:20+, 2Ti 1:14+) [Click here for an in depth 3 page discussion of phulasso in the New International Dictionary of the New Testament](#) (and check the preceding article ontereo for more discussion) **Phulasso** is the verb used to describe the shepherds **'keeping watch** (phulasso) over their flock by night (Lk 2:8), which congers up the image of savage wolves seeking to devour the helpless sheep. Elsewhere we read of the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd Who keeps watch over His sheep.

**Phulasso - 31v** - abstain(1), guard(8), guarded(1), guarding(1), guards(1), keep(5), keeping(2), keeps(1), kept(4), kept under guard(1), maintain(1), observe(2), preserved(1), protect(1), watching(1). Matt. 19:20; Mk. 10:20; Lk. 2:8; Lk. 8:29; Lk. 11:21; Lk. 11:28; Lk. 12:15; Lk. 18:21; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 12:47; Jn. 17:12; Acts 7:53; Acts 12:4; Acts 16:4; Acts 21:24; Acts 21:25; Acts 22:20; Acts 23:35; Acts 28:16; Rom. 2:26; Gal. 6:13; 2 Thess. 3:3; 1 Tim. 5:21; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2 Tim. 1:14; 2 Tim. 4:15; 2 Pet. 2:5; 2 Pet. 3:17; 1 Jn. 5:21; Jude 1:24

**Life** (2222) **zoe** in Scripture is used (1) to refer to **physical life** (Ro 8:38+, 1Co 3:22, Php 1:20+, Jas 4:14, etc) but more often to (2) to **supernatural life** in contrast to a life subject to eternal death (Jn 3:36, see all 43 uses of "eternal life" below). This quality of life speaks of fullness of life which alone belongs to God the Giver of life and is available to His children now (Ro 6:4+, Ep 4:18+) as well as in eternity future (Mk 10:30, Titus 1:2+ on Eternal Life). **Zoe** is used consistently in John to refer to (1) spiritual life; (2) eternal life; (3) new age life; and (4) resurrection life. True life is a freedom from the tyranny of "self," which is the essence of the Fall. **Zoe** refers to the absolute fullness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God. **It is used to designate the life which God gives to the believing sinner, a vital, animating, spiritual, ethical dynamic which transforms his inner being and as a result, his behavior.** [Click here for an in depth 8 PAGE discussion of zoe and see preceding discussion of "BIOS" in the New International Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

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**Steven Cole** on this vital love/hate paradox - To follow Jesus, you must not love your life in this world. Note three things about loving your life in this world:

#### 1) Loving your life in this world means living with this life only in view.

That's what Jesus means by **"in this world."** It's to live as if this world is all there is, so get all the gusto you can now. It's to live for "your best life now." That's the stupidest title for a supposedly Christian book that I've ever heard of! Did Jesus enjoy His best life now as He endured the hostility of sinners against Him and went to cross in His early thirties? Did Paul enjoy his best life now as he suffered beatings, imprisonments, a stoning, shipwrecks, and frequent dangers for the sake of the gospel (2 Cor. 11:23-27)? Did any of the martyrs enjoy their best life now as they had their heads cut off or their bodies burned at the stake? If that book is telling you



how to have your best life now by laying it down for the sake of Jesus and the gospel, "Amen!" But if it's telling you how you can have health and wealth and a comfortable lifestyle now, then it's completely opposed to Jesus' teaching!

Jesus told about a man who was enjoying his best life now. He said to his soul (Luke 12:19), "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But God said to him (Luke 12:20), "You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?" Jesus concluded (Luke 12:21), "So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Those in the world live as if this life is all that there is. Their aim in life is to accumulate as much money and stuff as they think will make them happy. Their motto is, "*He who dies with the most toys wins*" But Jesus says, "*He loses*."

## **2) Loving your life in this world means living for the same things people in the world live for.**

What do people without Christ in this world live for? John tells us (read 1 John 2:15-17) If greed and accumulating this world's stuff is a temptation for you (as it is for me), I urge you to memorize those verses and rehearse them often in your mind! The merchants of this world bombard us daily with the message, "*To be happy, you need the stuff that I'm selling. Buy this stuff and you'll be happy!*" I'll be honest: I like a lot of the stuff they're selling. And, some of it does make life more comfortable and easy to navigate. I'm thankful for computers and the Internet, which make preparing my sermons and making them available worldwide much easier. They have many other wonderful features. I'm sure that someday I'll join the rest of the world in getting a smart phone and once I learn how to use it, I'll like the way it makes life easier. The same can be said for many other things in the world. But, I've got to be on guard against loving those things. If I love those things as opposed to doing the will of God, John says, the love of the Father is not in me.

## **3) Loving your life in this world is the sure way to lose it.**

John 12:25a: "He who loves his life loses it..." That's the same thing as Mark 8:35a, "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it," which is the same as, "to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul" (Mark 8:36). Let me put it nicely: People are crazy! A story that I've used many times in funeral messages illustrates why.

**(ILLUSTRATION)** In 1981, a man was flown into the remote Alaskan wilderness to photograph the natural beauty of the tundra. He had photo equipment, 500 rolls of film, several firearms, and 1,400 pounds of provisions. As the months passed, the entries in his diary, which at first detailed the wonder and fascination with the wildlife around him, turned into a pathetic record of a nightmare. In August he wrote, "I think I should have used more foresight about arranging my departure. I'll soon find out." He waited and waited, but no one came to his rescue. In November he died in a nameless valley, by a nameless lake, 225 miles northeast of Fairbanks. An investigation revealed that he had carefully provided for his adventure, but he had made no provision to be flown out of the area.

That was a bit shortsighted, wasn't it? And yet, how many people live their lives without making any plans for their departure to face eternity? The statistics on death are quite impressive! You know for certain that you will be departing. And you know that you won't be taking any of your stuff with you when you go. I read about a rich guy once who was buried in his Cadillac. But he's not driving it now! As they say, you never see a hearse towing a U-Haul....

One writer (Luccock, cited by Ralph Earle, *The Gospel According to Mark* [Zondervan], p. 108) observes that a mummy is the best preserved thing in human history. If you want to make yourself a spiritual mummy, then try to preserve your life. Jesus says, "You'll die alone." But if you die to self for Jesus' sake, you'll bear much fruit. So why should you hate your life in this world? Because you want to follow Jesus and be like Him. You want to serve Him and be with Him forever. Remember the famous words of missionary martyr Jim Elliot: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." ([Why You Should Hate Your Life](#))

Chris Tiegreen - Lovers or Haters?

"The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

John 12:25

"A man's greatest care should be for that place where he dwelleth longest; eternity should be his scope." —Thomas Manton

IN WORD Human nature wants it all. We want to live forever in God's presence, but we're reluctant to sacrifice anything in the meantime. We want heaven on earth as well as heaven in heaven. The fact that this is a spiritual impossibility doesn't faze us. We want it anyway.

Jesus doesn't offer His disciples an impossibility. He speaks in harsh realities. We must make a choice: Invest ourselves in this life—which is passing and subject to decay—or invest in the kingdom of God—which is eternal. There is no "all of the above" in Jesus' gospel presentation. It's either one or the other.

This is hard on us, especially those of us who have been trained to believe only what we see. We see this life; we want to be

comfortable in it. We strive to regain Eden, creating our insulated lifestyles and filling them with conveniences and pleasures. It just isn't within our human nature to forsake all that the world offers us for a kingdom we can't even see. But Jesus never calls us to live according to our human nature; He calls us to die. The One who likens Himself to a grain of wheat that falls into the ground and dies, only to produce more wheat in the long run, tells His disciples to do the same. He is the prototype; we are the followers. Just as He makes His choice between the Cross and this passing world, so must we. There is no middle ground. We have to pick sides.

IN DEED Can you honestly say that you hate your life in this world? Or at least that your hope in eternal life pales your here-and-now plans by comparison? If not, Jesus calls you to radically change your perspective. You cannot hang on to your visible life and your eternal life at the same time. One must be forsaken. Which will it be? (See [The One Year At His Feet Devotional](#))

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**Brian Bell** - Small Potatoes - A pastor/farmer was digging up a mess of potatoes in his garden. But he accidentally dug up a sermon as well. On the **1st hill** of potatoes there was 7 beautiful, large potatoes. But when he plunged his fork under **the next plant** there was only 3 scrawny ones, as small as marbles. He saw the reason. For some reason or another the original *seed potato* had **failed to die!** It looked almost as it did 4 months earlier. It didn't die & there was no fruit. *3 sermons came from these 3 small potatoes:*

1. A lesson about **Jesus** - unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground & dies, it produces much grain. Jesus the grain of wheat that died, only to be resurrected in us as believers as His fruit.
2. A lesson for **Sinners** - Until the sinner dies to his own **works** & to his own **efforts, merit, & righteousness**, he cannot know life & be saved.
3. A lesson for **Believers** - We too have been "planted in the likeness of His death"(Rom.6:5). This established our position & salvation. But, to become fruitful we must **die to self**. We must put to death the **works of the flesh**(our old nature)

The Christian life is a paradox: to keep, we must give; to be great, we must serve; to live, we must die.

And not until we die will we realize the real joy of giving, or the emptiness of keeping.

God sends no one away empty, except those who are full of themselves. DL Moody

**John 12:26 "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."**

BGT John 12:26 ν μο τις διακον , μο κολουθε τω , κα που ε μ γ κε κα δι κονος μ ς σται· ν τις μο διακον τιμ σει α τ ν πατρ ρ.

KJV John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

NET John 12:26 If anyone wants to serve me, he must follow me, and where I am, my servant will be too. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

CSB John 12:26 If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me. Where I am, there My servant also will be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

ESV John 12:26 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.

NIV John 12:26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

NLT John 12:26 Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me.

NRS John 12:26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

NJB John 12:26 Whoever serves me, must follow me, and my servant will be with me wherever I am. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him.

NAB John 12:26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.

YLT John 12:26 if any one may minister to me, let him follow me, and where I am, there also my ministrant shall be; and if any one may minister to me -- honour him will the Father.

MIT John 12:26 If anyone would serve me, let him follow me. Then where I am my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, the father will honor him.

- **serves:** Jn 13:16 14:15 15:20 Lu 6:46 Ro 1:1 14:18 2Co 4:5 Ga 1:10 Col 3:24 4:12 2Pe 1:1 1Jn 5:3 Jude 1:1
- **he must follow:** Jn 10:27 21:22 Nu 14:24 32:11 Mt 16:24 Mk 8:34 Lu 9:23 Eph 5:1,2 Rev 14:4
- **where:** Jn 14:3 17:24 Ps 17:15 Mt 25:21 2Co 5:8 Php 1:23 1Th 4:17,18
- **him:** Jn 14:21-23 1Sa 2:30 Pr 27:18
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A COMMAND TO FOLLOW JESUS

**If** - This "IF" is a third class conditional sentence ([SEE ALSO PRECEDING TECHNICAL NOTE](#)) which means potential action. John uses several third class conditional sentences third class conditional sentence(cf. John 12:24, John 12:26, John 12:32, John 12:47). This verse has application to all who desire to be His disciple.

**Anyone serves** ([diakoneo](#), present tense) **Me, he must follow** ([akoloutho](#)) **Me** - Where is Jesus heading toward by the end of this week? The cross! Do not miss it -- Jesus did not say "may" but "must" follow Him in His steps! Following Jesus as His disciple is not like a "multiple choice question" that has more than one correct answer. There is only one correct answer. We **MUST follow** Jesus! It is not a suggestion but a command in the [present imperative](#) which is a call for a lifestyle response, continually following Jesus. But remember that God's commandments ALWAYS come "prepackaged" with His enablement, in this case the enablement being the Enabler (Helper) Himself (See [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey God's commands](#)).

What Jesus is commanding on one hand is "IM-possible" but on the other hand is "HIM-possible," the Him of course being the indwelling enabling Spirit. And while Jesus commands that we habitually follow Him, He is fully aware we still have sinful tendencies in these mortal frames. Therefore, Jesus is not calling for perfection, but He is calling for direction. If we say we believe in Jesus and have eternal life, there should be some evidence in our lives that we are generally following in the direction of the footsteps of Jesus. If not, then ponder 2 Corinthians 13:5+. Don't fall for the lie that you can make a profession of "I believe in Jesus" and that this assures you when you die you will go to Heaven, even if the rest of your life you live a godless lifestyle (See in depth comments on the false teaching of so-called "carnal Christian"). This false teaching is out there in evangelical circles and it is very dangerous to your spiritual "health" (I speak as a physician) and your eternal destiny!

One other point to note is the association of **serves** and **follow**, which suggests that some people might [ostensibly](#) serve Jesus, but are not actually following Him. Is that possible? Such service may look good, but if it is carried out while not abiding in the Vine, it yields absolutely nothing of eternal value (cf "Father will honor him.") (Jn 15:5). In short, to truly serve Christ, one must follow Christ. As **Charles Stanley** said "Serving the Lord does not happen if we are not walking with Him. And we cannot walk with Him if we are racing ahead of the pace He sets for us."

*So the law of the cross is just this:  
the cross is the gateway to glory,  
the imperative of harvest,  
the path of life and the gauge of all service*

**J C Macaulay** has some interesting thoughts on **on must follow** - Now Jesus is speaking about going to the cross, so what He actually means here is that the only service He recognizes is the Calvary kind. Service that costs nothing counts for nothing; but service that costs will be abundantly compensated, first with the everlasting companionship of the King, then with special honor bestowed by the Father. So the law of the cross is just this: the cross is the gateway to glory, the imperative of harvest, the path of life and the gauge of all service. (BORROW [Expository Commentary on John](#))

**J C Ryle** - If any man desires to serve Christ, and be a Christian, he must be content to follow His Master, walk in His footsteps, share His lot, do as He did, and partake of His Master's inheritance in this world. He must not look for good things here,—for crowns, kingdoms, riches, honours, wealth, and dignity. Like His Master, he must be content with a cross. He must, in a word "take up his cross and follow Me." (Matt. 16:24.) As St. Paul says, "we are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 8:17.)

**Bob Utley** on **must follow** - This is a [present imperative](#) which speaks of an ongoing relationship (cf. John 15:0). This is the neglected biblical issue of perseverance....[Perseverance](#) is evidence that we know Him (cf. Matthew 10:22; Matthew 13:20-

21; Galatians 6:9; 1 John 2:19; Revelation 2:7, Revelation 2:11, Revelation 2:17, Revelation 2:26; Revelation 3:5, Revelation 3:12, Revelation 3:21).

**And where I am, there My servant ([diakonos](#)) will be also** - Some think this invokes the picture of Jesus' promise in Mt 18:20, but I don't think that is an accurate interpretation. Although noted above we need to ask the question **follow** Jesus where? What is the context? Clearly this is the last week of His life. He is walking toward the Cross, to death. So in one sense, to follow Him means to walk toward the cross. If this is a valid interpretation, we can see it parallels Jesus' words in other Gospels "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he **must deny** himself ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)), and **take up** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) his cross and **follow** ([akoloutheo](#)) Me ([present imperative](#) command)." (Mk 8:34+).

**[Rise up, O men of God! Have done with lesser things:](#)**

give heart and mind and soul and strength to serve the King of kings.

Rise up, O men of God! His kingdom tarries long.

Bring in the day of brotherhood and end the night of wrong.

Rise up, O men of God! The Church for you doth wait,  
her strength unequal to her task; rise up, and make her great!

Lift high the cross of Christ! Tread where His feet have trod.

As brothers of the Son of man, rise up, O men of God!

-- William P. Merrill, 1867–1954

**J C Ryle on where I am** - This is the first thing that Christ promises to those who follow Him. They shall be with Christ wherever He is, in paradise, and in His glorious kingdom. He and His servant shall not be parted. Whatever the Master has, the servant shall have also. It is a comfortable thought, that however little we know of the life to come and the state after death, we do know that we shall be "with Christ, which is far better." (Phil. 1:23.)...The clearest conception we can form of heaven is that which is here stated. It is being with Christ, and receiving honour from God. Heaven is generally described by negatives. This is, however, an exceptional positive. It is being "with Christ." (Compare Jn 14:3; Jn 17:24; 1Th 4:17.)

**[Bob Utley](#) on where I am, there shall My servant also be** - This theme is repeated in John 14:3; John 17:24; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:17! Christianity is primarily a personal relationship with God! The goal is relational: His presence, His fellowship! We were created for fellowship with God (cf. Genesis 1:26-27). Salvation is the restoration of the broken fellowship of the Garden of Eden. John emphasizes that this fellowship is restored now!

*The best service you can render to Christ is to imitate him.*

*If you want to do what will please him do as he did.*

-- C H Spurgeon

**Steven Cole on where I am, there shall My servant also be** - Jesus here doesn't say that He will be with us, although that is true (Matt. 28:20). Rather, He says that we will be with Him. In John 14:3, He promises, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that **where I am, there you may be also.**" "Where I am" refers to heaven. To be with Jesus in heaven throughout eternity is more than sufficient reward for all of the trials and persecution that we may go through in this life! And on top of that, Jesus promises that the **Father will honor** us! I'm sure that we can't imagine what that entails, but all the honors that this world can give will pale by comparison to the **honor** that the **Father** will give to those who have faithfully served His Son. ([Why You Should Hate Your Life](#))

**THOUGHT** - Is the price we pay today to serve the Son really worth it? That's rhetorical David writes "How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you." (Ps 31:19NIV)

**Spurgeon** - You cannot expect better lodgings than that; so, as Christ had to live here amid sorrow, and sin, and shame, you must be willing to do the same; but, as Christ was afterwards exalted to indescribable honour, so shall it be with you if you are his true servant....Follow Christ, then, to the cross; follow him to the grave; follow him in his humiliation; and then the Father will honour you even as he honoured his Son.....Do not let him invent some new method of service: "Let him follow me." If you would do Christ a service, it cannot be by will-worship, or by any way of your own devising: "If any man serve me, let him follow me."

**If anyone serves ([diakoneo](#)) Me, the Father will honor ([timaō](#)) him** - If is another third class conditional sentence ([SEE ALSO PRECEDING TECHNICAL NOTE](#)) which means potential action. **Serves** is in the present tense speaking of this service as one's habitual practice. The word for serves speaks of menial duties and was used for waiting on tables. Whatever done in service in this life for Jesus will be rewarded. Surely even now there is reward in this temporal life (just knowing one's service brings glory to Jesus is enough), but ultimately and fully will be rewarded when Christ returns. For example, Peter refers to honoring believers writing of

trials endured "that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in **praise and glory and honor** at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1Pe 1:7). Is this honor bestowed by the Father distinct from the Bema Seat where Jesus sits as Judge? I don't know, but it could be different.

*For such is the Father's love to his Son,  
that he delights to honour all those who become his Son's faithful servants.*  
-- Spurgeon

**Pulpit Commentary** - For the Father to honor a poor child of the dust seems almost more than we can receive. (ED: AND CERTAINLY FAR MORE THAN WE DESERVE!)

**J C Ryle on the Father will honor** - The Father shall give, to those who love Christ, such honour as eye hath not seen nor ear heard. Honour from the men of this world they may not have. Honour from the Father shall make amends for all.

**Stephen Olford** - What greater glory could there be than the honor of the Father upon those who have faithfully followed the Lord Jesus all the way?....Oh, to have the honor of the Father, and to hear Him say, "... Well done, good and faithful servant; ... Enter into the joy of your lord" (Mt 25:21).

**Vance Havner** - There are no trivial assignments in the work of the Lord.

**Henrietta Mears** - Serving God with our little is the way to make it more; and we must never think that wasted with which God is honoured or men are blessed.

Jesus calls us o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea;  
day by day His sweet voice soundeth, saying, "Christian, follow Me."  
Jesus calls us from the worship of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us, saying, "Christian, love Me more."  
In our joys and in our sorrows, days of toil and hours of ease,  
still He calls, in cares and pleasures, "Christian, love Me more than these."  
Jesus calls us: by Thy mercies, Savior, may we hear Thy call,  
give our hearts to Thy obedience, serve and love Thee best of all.  
-- Mrs. Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895

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**Follow** (190) **akoloutheo** from **a** = expresses union with, likeness + **keleuthos** = a road, way) means to walk the same road (Ponder that simple definition dear believer - Am I willing to walk the same road as Jesus?) Literally to follow (like the crowds followed Jesus) and in a figurative sense to follow Jesus as a disciple. To follow (closely) and was used of soldiers, servants and pupils. To go after someone or something (not as a true disciple however as we see with the crowds who physically followed Jesus, following however without a willingness to commit wholly to Him! cf John 6:60-65, 66) Early in the history of the Greek language **akoloutheo** came to mean to imitate or follow someone's example. This dual meaning colored the New Testament use of our word **akoloutheo**. Note that most of the uses of **akoloutheo** are in the Gospels and thus this verb is firmly linked with the life of Jesus, for He is the One to follow. When Jesus issued a call to "**Follow Me**" **akoloutheo** was always in the [present imperative](#) indicating that Jesus is calling for this to be one's lifelong path, ultimately one which can only be successfully trodden by yielding to His Spirit who enables us to obey that command as our lifestyle (not perfection, but general direction).

[Click here for an in depth discussion of akoloutheo in the New International Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

**Akoloutheo** - Jn. 1:37; Jn. 1:38; Jn. 1:40; Jn. 1:43; Jn. 6:2; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 10:4; Jn. 10:5; Jn. 10:27; Jn. 11:31; Jn. 12:26; Jn. 13:36; Jn. 13:37; Jn. 18:15; Jn. 20:6; Jn. 21:19; Jn. 21:20; Jn. 21:22

**Servant** (deacon) (1249) **diakonos** is of uncertain origin. Some say it is from **dia** (through) + **konis** (dust) which denotes one who hurries through the dust to carry out his service. (**Thayer** and others doubt this derivation for technical reasons). This word group (**diakonos**, **diakoneo**, **diakonia**) focuses on the rendering or assistance or help by performing certain duties, often of a humble or menial nature, and including such mundane activities as waiting on tables or caring for household needs, activities that to many would seem to be without dignity (not true of course in God's eyes, Pr 15:3, Rev 22:12+). In summary, the basic idea of this word group is that of humble, submissive, personal service, with less emphasis on a specific office or a particular function.

**Diakonos** - 27v - Matt. 20:26; Matt. 22:13; Matt. 23:11; Mk. 9:35; Mk. 10:43; Jn. 2:5; Jn. 2:9; Jn. 12:26; Rom. 13:4; Rom. 15:8; Rom. 16:1; 1 Co. 3:5; 2 Co. 3:6; 2 Co. 6:4; 2 Co. 11:15; 2 Co. 11:23; Gal. 2:17; Eph. 3:7; Eph. 6:21; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:7; Col. 1:23; Col. 1:25; Col. 4:7; 1 Tim. 3:8; 1 Tim. 3:12; 1 Tim. 4:6

**Honor** (5091) **timao** for **time** = honor, prize) means to show high regard respect for and so to count as valuable, to esteem, to value, to honor or to revere. To show respect to someone is to recognize their worth as a person (and if they are a parent to

recognize the validity of their role and their authority) and implies a considered evaluation or estimation. Therefore, **timao** means to ascribe worth to someone. To hold in awe. To assign value to something, including people considered as property (slaves). It means to fix a value or price upon something and so to prize it. The idea is to treat as precious! To honor is a social action describing how people within a society should evaluate one another. Honor usually results in people being elevated in the eyes of the community. Honoring involves a proper attitude as well as appropriate behavior.

Timao - 16v - Matt. 15:4; Matt. 15:6; Matt. 15:8; Matt. 19:19; Matt. 27:9; Mk. 7:6; Mk. 7:10; Mk. 10:19; Lk. 18:20; Jn. 5:23; Jn. 8:49; Jn. 12:26; Acts 28:10; Eph. 6:2; 1 Tim. 5:3; 1 Pet. 2:17

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This hymn was written for John Bode's 3 children when they were confirmed and relates to John 12:26

**O Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the end;**

be Thou forever near me, my Master and my Friend:

I shall not fear the battle if Thou art by my side,

nor wander from the pathway if Thou wilt be my guide.

O let me feel Thee near me—the world is ever near;

I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear:

My foes are ever near me, around me and within;

but Jesus, draw Thou nearer, and shield my soul from sin.

O Jesus, Thou hast promised to all who follow Thee,

that where Thou art in glory, there shall Thy servant be;

**and, Jesus, I have promised to serve Thee to the end;**

**O give me grace to follow, my Master and my Friend.**

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#### Charles Stanley - FORGING AHEAD - John 12:26

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.

The world is constantly vying for our attention. On the left, on the right—its relentless assault can cause us to lose our way quickly if we are not careful. But clinging to God no matter how good or bad our circumstances are keeps us walking closely with Him.

God is the guiding light in our lives, leading us by the voice of His Holy Spirit to a place of life. However, what we forget in our relationship with Him is that we are followers—He is the one leading us.

Whenever the distractions disorient us, we forget that God is our leader. Instead, we try to coerce Him to follow us, getting out of step with what He wants for our lives. Jesus told His disciples that following Him meant staying with Him (John 12:26). Serving the Lord does not happen if we are not walking with Him. And we cannot walk with Him if we are racing ahead of the pace He sets for us. Sometimes getting ahead of God and forging ahead on our own conveys the message that we do not need His help.

As His beloved children, we know that to serve and honor Him as He deserves, we must listen closely to His guidance for our lives through His Word, His Holy Spirit, and other wise believers around us.

**PRAYER** - Remove all the distractions, Lord. Help me to keep my eyes focused on You so I can keep in step with You (**ED**: SEE Gal 5:25NIV+). (Pathways into His Presence)

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#### Subtle Wisdom

If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. —John 12:26

Today's Scripture: Mark 8:34-38

When I was in college, my co-worker Bud, a fork-truck driver, often enriched my life with his pithy wisdom. We were eating lunch one day, sitting on the back of his fork truck, when I announced that I was transferring to another school.

"Why?" he asked.

"All my friends are transferring," I answered.

Bud chewed his sandwich for a moment and then replied quietly and with subtle irony, "I guess that's one way to pick a school."

His words struck me with rare force. Of course, I thought. But is this the only way to choose a school? Will I follow my friends for the



rest of my days, or will I follow Jesus? Will I seek His face and His will and go where He wants me to go?

Twenty-five times in the New Testament, Jesus said to His disciples, "Follow Me." In Mark 8:34, He said, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." No matter what others do or what direction their lives may take, we must do what He asks us to do.

The words of an old song come to mind: "My Lord knows the way through the wilderness; all I have to do is follow!" By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

As I walk along life's pathway,  
Though the way I cannot see,  
I shall follow in Christ's footsteps,  
For He has a plan for me.  
—Thiesen

To find your way through life, follow Jesus.

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### **JESUS CALLS US Mrs. Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895**

Jesus calls us o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea;  
day by day His sweet voice soundeth, saying, "Christian, follow Me."  
Jesus calls us from the worship of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us, saying, "Christian, love Me more."  
In our joys and in our sorrows, days of toil and hours of ease,  
still He calls, in cares and pleasures, "Christian, love Me more than these."  
Jesus calls us: by Thy mercies, Savior, may we hear Thy call,  
give our hearts to Thy obedience, serve and love Thee best of all.

God's call for discipleship comes to every believer, not just a special few. Whether or not we hear God's call depends on our spiritual sensitivity.

The last Sunday in November is known as St. Andrew's Day. It has traditionally been an important day in the liturgical worship of the Anglican church. It commemorates the calling of Andrew by Jesus as recorded in Matthew 4:18–20 and Mark 1:16–18. "At once they [Simon and his brother Andrew] left their nets and followed Him." Andrew has become the patron saint of Scotland, and the oblique cross on which tradition says he was crucified is part of the Union Jack of the British flag.

This is another of the quality hymn texts written by Cecil Frances Alexander, recognized as one of England's finest women hymn writers. It is one of the few of Mrs. Alexander's hymns not specifically written for children; nearly all of her more than 400 poems and hymn texts were intended for reaching and teaching children with the gospel.

Following her marriage in 1850 to the distinguished churchman, Dr. William Alexander, who later became archbishop for all of Ireland, Mrs. Alexander devoted her literary talents to helping her husband with his ministry, including writing appropriate poems that he could use with his sermons. One fall day, two years after their marriage, Dr. Alexander asked his wife if she could write a poem for a sermon he was planning to preach the following Sunday for his St. Andrew's Day sermon. The pastor closed his sermon that day with the new poem written by his wife. These words have since been widely used in all churches to challenge God's people to hear Christ's call as Andrew did and then to follow, serve, and love Him "best of all." (BORROW [Amazing Grace](#))

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### **A W Tozer - THE HALFWAY CHRISTIAN LIFE** If any man serve me, him will my Father honour. John 12:26

The word mediocre comes from two Latin words and literally means "halfway to the peak." This makes it an apt description of the progress of many Christians. They are halfway up to the peak. They are not halfway to heaven but halfway up to where they ought to be, halfway between the valley and the peak. They are morally above the hardened sinner but they are spiritually beneath the shining saint.

Many have settled down right there, and the tragedy is that years ago some of you said, "I am not going to fail God. I am going to push my way up the mountain until I am at the top of the peak, at the highest possible point of experience with God in this mortal life!"

But you have done nothing about it. If anything, you have lost spiritual ground since that day. You are now a halfway Christian! You are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold. You are halfway up to the peak, halfway to where you could have been if you had pressed on.

Do we really think that this halfway Christian life is the best that Christ offers—the best that we can know? In the face of what Christ

offers us, how can we settle for so little? (BORROW [Mornings with Tozer](#))

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**H A Ironside** - Preferment in the kingdom of Christ depends not on self-seeking, nor is it achieved by worldly methods. He who would be honored of God in the day when His Son will be acknowledged as King of kings and Lord of lords must be willing to follow Him in His lowly path of unrequited service for the blessing of a needy world. Following Jesus is not following Him into His heavenly home. It is following Him out of His Heaven, down into a world of sin and wretchedness, taking the path of humbleness and readiness to be rejected by men. In this way we portray the spirit of Christ to those who do not know Him. It is only in this way that we can represent our Master, the ultimate Servant, correctly. And in order to do this we must first yield ourselves to Him. We cannot live a Christian life until we have a Christian life to live. There is a Life by which we live. And there is a life we are called upon to live. We obtain life only by faith in Him who gave Himself a ransom for all. We reveal that life as we yield ourselves to Him as Lord.

Christ never asks of us such busy labor  
As leaves no time for resting at His feet;  
The waiting attitude of expectation  
He oft-times counts a service most complete.

And yet He does love service, where 'tis given  
By grateful love that clothes itself in deed;  
But work that's done beneath the scourge of duty,  
Be sure, He gives to such but little heed.

Then seek to please Him, whatsoe'er He bids thee,  
Whether to do, to suffer, or lie still;  
'Twill matter little by what path He led us,  
If in it all we sought to do His will.

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**John Courson - John 12:26** - A prince and his servant traveling through a hostile region were taken captive by the enemy. After being beaten and thrown into a dungeon, the prince developed a terrible fever, and it looked as though his days were numbered. Semiconscious as he was, however, he didn't miss the opportunity to alert his servant when their guard fell asleep one day.

'Get his keys and get out of here,' he said. 'I'm too weak; I can't make it. But you go. This is your chance.'

'My prince,' answered the servant, 'where you are, there I will be. If need be, we'll both die here together.'

Two weeks later, the prince's father launched an invasion and freed his imprisoned son in the process.

'Oh, Father,' said the prince immediately upon his return, 'even as my servant stayed with me in my danger, suffered with me in my sickness, stood by me in my imprisonment, honor now him.'

And the servant was honored throughout the kingdom.

So too with you. The Lord knows you could opt to escape, that His way of the Cross and obedience is not always easy. The Lord knows many of you are truly paying a price to follow Him. You've been passed by for promotions at work because you've stood for integrity; or you've stayed in a relationship because you committed yourself maritally.

'Forget it,' the world says. 'Here's a key. Get out. Go on. Be free.'

But you've said, 'No, my Master, my Prince, my Savior has called me to follow Him. And even when it's not easy, I will stay by Him.' I've got good news for you who have taken this stand by the Father's Son, the Prince of Peace. After the invasion, when He brings you safely home to heaven, you will be honored greatly, for the Father honors those who honor His Son.

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## **THE HALFWAY CHRISTIAN LIFE John 12:26**

The word mediocre comes from two Latin words and literally means "halfway to the peak." This makes it an apt description of the progress of many Christians. They are halfway up to the peak. They are not halfway to heaven but halfway up to where they ought to be, halfway between the valley and the peak. They are morally above the hardened sinner but they are spiritually beneath the shining saint.

Many have settled down right there, and the tragedy is that years ago some of you said, "I am not going to fail God. I am going to push my way up the mountain until I am at the top of the peak, at the highest possible point of experience with God in this mortal life!"

But you have done nothing about it. If anything, you have lost spiritual ground since that day. You are now a halfway Christian! You are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold. You are halfway up to the peak, halfway to where you could have been if you had pressed on.

Do we really think that this halfway Christian life is the best that Christ offers—the best that we can know? In the face of what Christ offers us, how can we settle for so little?

Dear Lord, when I meet You at the gate of heaven, I don't want my name to be listed under the column entitled: "Halfway Christians." I want You next to me, encouraging and exhorting me, as we scale the peak together.

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Oswald Chambers - THE SYROPHOENICIAN WOMAN WANTED JESUS Christ. She did not care one iota about the disciples or any of their teaching; she wanted the Lord Jesus Christ.

In John 12, we read that certain Greeks came and said to the disciples, "We want to see Jesus." What did those disciples do? They went to Jesus and told Him so. When anyone says, "We wish to see Jesus," what do you do about their request? Try and persuade them to accept certain teachings first? You never will. Remember what Philip and Andrew did; they went and told Jesus.

Whenever people ask you to help them find Jesus, do not begin with "firstly, secondly, and thirdly." Go to Jesus and say, "Lord, these people want to see you." Rely on the Holy Spirit to help you. Live among the facts of God's Word, and among human facts, so that people will recognize Jesus Christ through you. Remember that the only One who will touch sinners is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!

Christians say that it is so hard to present Jesus Christ to sinners today. Of course it is! So hard that it is impossible, except by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

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#### **C H Spurgeon - DECEMBER 8**

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour."—John 12:26.

THE highest service is imitation. if I would be Christ's servant I must be his follower. To do as Jesus did is the surest way of bringing honour to his name. Let me mind this every day.

If I imitate Jesus I shall have his company: if I am like him I shall be with him. In due time he will take me up to dwell with him above, if, meanwhile, I have striven to follow him here below. After his suffering our Lord came to his throne, and even so, after we have suffered a while with him here below, we also shall arrive in glory. The issue of our Lord's life shall be the issue of ours: if we are with him in his humiliation we shall be with him in his glory. Come, my soul, pluck up courage, and put down thy feet in the blood-marked footprints which thy Lord has left thee.

Let me not fail to note that the Father will honour those who follow his Son. If he sees me true to Jesus he will put marks of favour and honour upon me for his Son's sake. No honour can be like this. Princes and emperors bestow the mere shadows of honour; the substance of glory comes from the Father. Wherefore, my soul, cling thou to thy Lord Jesus more closely than ever.

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**C H Spurgeon** - sermon excerpt from [Christ's servant—his duty, and reward](#) - This is just what Jesus Christ says to us. We are his deacons, his servants. We engaged, in the day when we gave ourselves to Him, that we would take up our cross and follow him; and he points today to some high mountain, saying, 'If you would serve me, follow me.' He asks you not to lead; he himself has gone before; he calls you to no labour which he has not himself already accomplished. Oh! can you say in your heart today—

'Through floods and flames if Jesus leads, I'll follow where he goes;  
'Hinder me not,' shall be my cry, Though earth and hell oppose.'

This is true service, the best that can be rendered, to follow where he leads the way, let the way be never so rough or arduous, to persevere to the end, even though the end be a martyr's death. Come, brethren, and especially those who are beginners, and have but lately enlisted in Christ's cause, let me mark you out Christ's way, and then, if you would serve him, follow him. I know the proud flesh wants to serve Christ, by striking out new paths. Proud man has a desire to preach new doctrine, to set up a new Church, to be an original thinker, to judge, and consider, and do anything but obey. This is no service to Christ. He that would serve Christ must follow him; he must be content to tread only in the old footsteps, and go only where Christ has led the way. There must be nothing about our religion of our own inventing; it is for us to lay thought, and judgment, and opinion at the feet of Christ, and do what he bids us, simply because he gives the command. Look then disciples at your Lord.

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#### **Chris Tiegreen - Believers or Followers?**

“Whoever serves me must follow me.” John 12:26

“You must be willing to follow if you want God to lead.” —Anonymous

IN WORD Much of the emphasis of modern evangelism is to create believers in Jesus. Faith is the overriding concern. Considering the overwhelming emphasis on faith in the Bible, this is an appropriate focus. But what kind of faith do we promote? What kind of faith does Jesus expect?

Jesus makes it clear that faith in Him does not mean simply an intellectual agreement with His claims. No, to believe in Jesus is to serve Him and follow Him. It is absolutely meaningless to claim faith in Jesus and then live contrary to His teachings with no apparent interest in aligning ourselves with them. Faith means hanging the entire balance of our lives on His claims and His commands. It means not only accepting Him as our Savior, but following Him as our Lord. To separate these two roles of Jesus is to make Him into something He is not, and it is to make our beliefs almost meaningless. Whoever believes Him, loves Him, serves Him—that person will follow Him. Whoever does not follow Him does not serve Him, love Him, or really even believe in Him.

So what does it mean to follow Jesus? It means that wherever He is, that’s where we’ll be. Is He at the right hand of the Father? Then we who follow are seated there with Him (Ephesians 2:6). Is He on the Cross? Then we who follow Him are there also (Galatians 2:20). Is He in prisons and slums? Then we will be there too. Wherever God is reconciling this vile world in Christ, that’s where Jesus’ true followers will be.

IN DEED Ask yourself the hard questions about your discipleship. Are you a believer or a follower? In modern English, there’s a difference. But in Jesus’ vocabulary, each of those words implies the other. To believe in Him means to serve Him, as He commanded; and to serve means to follow.

Where are you willing to follow Jesus? Many will follow Him as long as He does not rearrange their lives. But this isn’t true following; it’s self-deception. Jesus will often take us where we are reluctant to go. If we serve Him, we will go anyway. (See [The One Year At His Feet Devotional](#).)

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### **James Butler's Sermon Starters - SERVING CHRIST**

John 12:26 “If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honor” (John 12:26).

Service for Christ is the theme of this text. The text speaks of two important things about service for Christ, namely, the requirement for service and the reward for service. Both will help our service.

#### **FIRST—THE REQUIREMENT FOR SERVING**

“If any man serve me, let him follow me.” The requirement for service is a simple one, for it simply says to follow the Lord. But though it is a simple requirement it involves some difficult conduct. We note three things involved in following the Lord which a person will find difficult to do.

- **Steadfastness.** The word “follow” means persistency, continuation. Therefore to follow Christ you must be faithful. It is not necessary to be flashy or famous to serve Christ, but it is necessary to be faithful. If you can be faithful, God can use you.
- **Separation.** To “follow” the Lord will involve separation. You will have to separate from many things to follow Christ. You will have to separate from people, practices, philosophies, and places in order to follow Him. Separation is both positive and negative. We often think of only the negative. But separation is twofold. It is separation “from” in order to separate “unto.” We have to separate “from” many things in order to be separated “unto” the Lord so we can serve Him.
- **Submission.** To “follow” the Lord means submission. You go where He goes. That may not always be according to your plans. To serve Him you must be near Him so when He gives orders you are present to receive the orders. Hence to serve him, requires that we follow Him. And this will require a good deal of submission.

#### **SECOND—THE REWARD FOR SERVING**

“If any man serve me, him will my Father honor.” This sentence speaks of the reward for serving.

- **The place of the reward.** “If any man serve me, him will my Father honor.” The reward comes after the service, and the promise of the reward comes after the prerequisite for the reward. We like the reward but few are interested in the requirement of service. Furthermore in our culture many want the reward without the requirement, for they think they are entitled to the reward.

- The particulars of the reward. "Him will my father honor." This is the greatest honor man can ever have. It will not disappoint nor defile. But the world's honors often disappoint and defile.
- The popularity of the reward. "Him will my father honor." This reward is not popular with the world, for the world is interested mostly in the honor it can receive from the world. Heaven's honor does not interest very many, but earth's honor does. But all the world's honors pale into insignificance compared to God's honor.

**John 12:27 "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.**

BGT John 12:27 Ν ν ψυχ μου τετ ρακται, κα τ ε πω; πτερ, σ σ ν με κ τ ς ρας τα της; αλ δι το το λθον ε ς τ ν ραν τα την.

KJV John 12:27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

NET John 12:27 "Now my soul is greatly distressed. And what should I say? 'Father, deliver me from this hour'? No, but for this very reason I have come to this hour.

CSB John 12:27 "Now My soul is troubled. What should I say-- Father, save Me from this hour? But that is why I came to this hour.

ESV John 12:27 "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.

NIV John 12:27 "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

NLT John 12:27 "Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, 'Father, save me from this hour'? But this is the very reason I came!

NRS John 12:27 "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say-- 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour.

NJB John 12:27 Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it is for this very reason that I have come to this hour.

NAB John 12:27 "I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour.

YLT John 12:27 'Now hath my soul been troubled, and what? shall I say -- Father, save me from this hour? -- but because of this I came to this hour;

MIT John 12:27 "Now my soul is undergoing deep stress, and what shall I say in response? Father, spare me from this crisis? But for this mission I have come all the way to this hour.

- **Now My soul has become troubled:** Jn 11:33-35 Jn13:21 Ps 69:1-3 88:3 Isa 53:3 Mt 26:38,39,42 Mk 14:33-36 Lu 22:44,53 Heb 5:7
- **what:** Isa 38:15 Lu 12:49-50
- **Father:** Jn 11:41 Mt 26:53-54
- **But for this purpose:** Jn 18:37 Lu 22:53 1Ti 1:15 Heb 2:14 10:5-9
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Hebrews 5:7-10+ In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. 8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. 9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, 10 being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Luke 22:42+ saying, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done."

Luke 12:49-50+ "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 "But I

have a baptism to undergo, and how **distressed** ([sunecho](#)) I am until it is accomplished!

John 13:21+ When Jesus had said this, He **became troubled** ([tarasso](#)) in spirit, and testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me."

John 18:37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. **For this I have been born**, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

## **THE HUMANITY OF JESUS: TROUBLED IN SOUL**

**Brian Bell** - Jesus responded as though the Greeks weren't even present. Jesus is preoccupied with one thing, His death. From vs 23 to vs.50 as His last public teaching, Jesus concentrates on 4 Major Themes: The Cross is Imminent (only 4 days away; vs.23-28); The Pain is Great (vs.27); The Need is Urgent (35,36); The Response will be varied (37; 42,43) The Cross, was His final word/His final answer!

**Now My soul** ([psuche](#)) **has become troubled** ([tarasso](#)); **and what shall I say, 'Father** ([pater](#)), **save** (sozo) **Me from this hour'? - Soul** is synonymous here with spirit (see "troubled [[tarasso](#)] in spirit" in Jn 13:21). When Jesus speaks of His "Soul", He speaks of His inner self, the deep inward seat of His feelings referring to His full humanity. He wants us to know that His **soul** was not at peace. Inwardly, he was disturbed over what was ahead. **My soul** ([psuche](#)) expresses a deep struggle for the sinless Savior. And who caused His soul this angst? You and me, beloved. Our sins! In fact in one sense He became a man so He could be troubled on our behalf! What a Savior! What a Friend! "Because Jesus was troubled for our sins on the cross, we don't need to be troubled on judgment day! He bore all our guilt on the cross so that we can enjoy peace with God! (Ro 5:1+)" (Steven Cole)

**Troubled** is in the perfect tense and passive voice (as is **troubled** in Jn 11:33, 13:21), indicating it has become troubled at some point in past and that state of the sensation of trouble persists. The exact cause of the troubling (passive voice indicates it was brought on by something external) is not stated, but clearly it has something to do with the fact that the sinless Lamb knew He would be made sin (2Co 5:21+) and bear the sins of the world (1Pe 2:24+, Jn 1:29+) and cry "the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" which is translated, "[MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?](#)" (Mk 15:34+)

**Spurgeon** - There was a conflict in the Saviour's heart, — the weakness of his true manhood — striving with the strength of his infinite affection to his people, and also to his Father. We must never forget that He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." If it had been no pain to him to die as the Substitute for sinners, there would have been no atoning sacrifice in his death; and if no dread had overtaken him at the thought of death, it would have proved that he did not die as we do; and, therefore, he would not have been able to take our place as he did. Notice how the Saviour speaks of the struggle that was going on in his soul. "What shall I say?" Do you ever have to ask that question when you are trying to pray? If so, do not be astonished, for even your Lord and Master said the same. "What shall I say?" — as if he paused to consider what form his prayer should take, — "shall I say, Father save me from this hour? No; but I will say, For this cause came I unto this hour.".....Nature suggests the cry, "Father, save me from this hour." Grace comes behind the flesh, being a little slower to speak; but it corrects the errors of the flesh, and says, "For this cause came I unto this hour.".....This seems to be a sort of rehearsal of the dread scene soon to be enacted in Gethsemane. At the sight of these Greeks, our Saviour seems to have been led specially to think, as we have already said, of that death by which they, and multitudes like them were to be redeemed. Thinking of it, he enters so fully into it, by a sort of foretaste, that he feels something of the same shiver and throe of anguish which came upon him in Gethsemane. He seems to say here, "Father, save me from this hour," just as he said there, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Yet he says here, "But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name," — just as he afterwards said in the garden, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

**Robertson** - The language is an echo of that in Psalms 6:4; Psalms 42:7. John does not give the agony in Gethsemane which the Synoptics have (Mark 14:35; Matthew 26:39; Luke 22:42), but it is quite beside the mark to suggest, as Bernard does, that the account here is John's version of the Gethsemane experience (ED: SEE MACAULAY'S NOTE BELOW)....Here as in Gethsemane the soul of Jesus instinctively and naturally shrinks from the Cross, but he instantly surrenders to the will of God in both experiences.

**J C Macaulay** - As our Lord spoke thus (Jn 12:24-26), first of His own cross as the way to His glory, and then of its application to the disciples, the lure of the glory beyond seemed to recede, and the horror of the great darkness fell on Him. Gethsemane, while a climax and a crisis, was not a solitary incident. Mark tells us of the consternation and amazement of the disciples as they noticed the appearance of their Master on their going up to Jerusalem, so that they fell behind, fearing to intrude on the struggle which His countenance betrayed. That the shadow of Calvary was upon Him then is evident from the fact that He immediately called them and began to tell them of the coming tragedy. So here, the coming of the Greeks, and His own declarations, brought the anguish to His



soul. He entered into "little Gethsemane." Bishop Ryle has pointed out the remarkable parallel between the two experiences... (BORROW [Expository Commentary on John](#))

**John MacArthur** on **what shall I say, 'Father, save Me** - Some commentators disconnect the two phrases what shall I say and Father, save Me from this hour, ending the former with a question mark and making the latter a petition to the Father. It seems better, however, to adopt the NASB punctuation and view the two phrases as expressing one hypothetical thought

**NET NOTE** - **Father, deliver me from this hour** ([hora](#)) - It is now clear that Jesus' **hour** has come - the **hour** of His return to the Father through crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension (see Jn 12:23). This will be reiterated in Jn 13:1 and Jn 17:1. Jesus fully Man states (employing words similar to those of Ps 6:4) that his soul is **troubled**. What shall His response to His imminent death be? A prayer to the Father to deliver him from that hour? (**ED**: ALTHOUGH SOME LIKE D A CARSON THINK IT WAS SIMILAR TO Lk 22:42). No, because it is on account of this very hour that Jesus has come. His sacrificial death has always remained the primary purpose of his mission into the world. Now, faced with the completion of that mission, shall he ask the Father to spare him from it? The expected answer is no.

**Muller** - At Jn. 12:27 Jesus' words "my soul is troubled" do not refer simply to an emotional experience. The fear and anxiety experienced by the One who has been sent shows that he has humbled himself to the utmost, in order to take upon himself the lost condition of man, and in this very condition to glorify the Father. ([NIDNTT](#))

**But** - Term of contrast. Not deliverance but death. Not deliverance from death, but deliverance over to death.

**For this purpose I came to this hour** - Jesus was a Man on mission, to accomplish the will of His Father. He was sent to die for the world. In John 17:4 He says "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do." So sure was His fully atoning work on the Cross to be finished (Jn 19:30), that in John 17:4 He speaks of it in the past tense.

**Bob Utley** on **this purpose** - Jesus' life unfolded according to a divine plan (cf. Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; Acts 3:18; Acts 4:28) which Jesus fully understood (cf. Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45).

**Spurgeon** applies this passage - Often, my brethren, should we be checked in prayer if we would be as wise as our Lord. "What shall I say? Shall I ask to be delivered from sickness? Shall I ask that I may not endure the troubles, which are the common lot of men? Shall I pray to be screened from persecution?" You see, I am rendering our Lord's question into our language, bringing it down from the lofty height of his divine thought to the level of our poor humanity. We must often pause before we pray, and say with our Lord, "For this cause came I unto this hour. Have I not been brought here on purpose to suffer? Have I not been led to this place that I may glorify God by submitting to all his will?" Therefore, sometimes let us check ourselves in prayer, lest we should ask what is not for our own good or for God's glory. The next word of the Saviour will give us liberty enough, for he went on to say,-

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**Troubled** (disturbed, stirred up) ([5015](#)) **tarasso** literally means to shake back and forth and therefore to agitate and stir up (like the pool in John 5:4,7, Lxx = Ezek 32:2, 13, Isa 51:15). To shake together, stir up, disturb, unsettle, throw into disorder (Lxx = Ps 46; 2Sa 22:8 = of earth shaking). Most of the NT uses of **tarasso** are figurative and describe the state of one's mind as stirred up, agitated or experiencing inward commotion. The passive voice is always used in the NT with a negative meaning, conveying the sense of emotional disturbance or inner turmoil, so that one is unsettled, thrown into confusion, or disturbed by various emotions, including excitement, perplexity, fear or trepidation. **Tarasso** is a strong word, meaning "to deeply upset," "to deeply disturb," "to perplex," or "to create fear." **Tarasso** also describes the potential effect of false teaching in Galatians 1:7 and Gal 5:10.

It is a strong term used in several ways in the NT. Herod's fear (Matthew 2:3) the disciples' fear (Matthew 14:26) Jesus' unsettled anxiety (John 12:27; John 13:21; also note Matthew 26:38; Mark 14:34) the Church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:24) false teachers' disruption of the churches of Galatia (Galatians 1:7)

**Tarasso** conveys the idea of to disturb mentally or to cause a deep emotional disturbance and thus refers to an unsettled mind, as when Herod heard of the birth of Jesus (Mt 2:3), Zacharias' fear when he saw the angel (Lk 1:12), the terror of the disciples when they witnessed Jesus walking on the water (Mt 14:26), Jesus' reaction to the lack of faith among the people before He raises Lazarus (Jn 11:33), in Jesus' command to not let their hearts be troubled (Jn 14:1) and of disturbing the faith of someone (Gal 5:10). **Tarasso** emphasizes the intensity of the Lord's reaction to His impending death (Jn 12:27) and His response to Judas' imminent betrayal.

**Tarasso** - 18v **disturbed(1), disturbing(2), stirred(3), stirring(1), terrified(2), troubled(9)**. Matt. 2:3; Matt. 14:26; Mk. 6:50; Lk. 1:12; Lk. 24:38; Jn. 5:4; Jn. 5:7; Jn. 11:33; Jn. 12:27; Jn. 13:21; Jn. 14:1; Jn. 14:27; Acts 15:24; Acts 17:8; Acts 17:13; Gal. 1:7; Gal. 5:10; 1 Pet. 3:14

**Hour** ([5610](#))(**hora**) refers to the day generally, daytime (Mt. 14:15; Mk 6:35; 11:11). Hora can refer to a part (division) of the day literally (Mt 24:36, et al) or figuratively referring to a short time (Rev 17:12). Metonymically and generally, an hour meaning a time or

period as spoken of any definite point or space of time. ("at once" Mt 9:22, 15:28, 17:18, Jn 19:27)

**Classic use** - The noun *hora* occurs in Homer and others in the Ionic form *hore*. It denotes a particular division of time, especially an hour. But *hora* can also mean year, day and moment, or designate a season, or also (of human beings) a stage of life, such as youth (cf. Mimnermos in Griechische Lyrik, RK 140—142, 84). In Homer and other poets *hora* marks the customarily appropriate time for certain activities, e.g. the evening meal (Homer, Od. 21, 428), going to sleep (Homer, Od. 11, 330 and 373) or sexual enjoyment (Orpheus, Frag. 5a, Diels-Kranz, I, 8). ([See detailed 4 page discussion of hora in NIDNTT](#))

**Gingrich** - 1. time of day, hour Mt 14:15; 24:36, 50; Mk 6:35; 11:11; Lk 12:39f, 46; Rev 3:3.—2. hour—a. as a (short) space of time Mt 20:12; 26:40; Lk 22:59; Jn 5:35; 11:9; Ac 5:7; 2 Cor 7:8; Gal 2:5; Philemon 15; Rev 9:15; 18:10, 17, 19.—b. as a moment of time named from the hour that has just passed. The period of daylight was divided into twelve 'hours' (more than 60 minutes each in summer, less than 60 minutes in the winter); the 'first hour' was approximately 6 A.M., the second was 7 A.M., and so on. Mt 20:5, 9; Mk 15:25; Lk 23:44; Jn 1:39; 4:6; Acts 3:1; 10:30; 22:13; 23:23; 1 Cor 4:11.—3. the time of an occurrence Mt 8:13; 18:1; Mk 13:11; Lk 1:10; 10:21; Jn 2:4; 7:30; 12:23; 16:21; 19:27; Ac 16:33; Rev 11:13; 14:7, 15. (BORROW [Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**Friberg** - (1) as a limited or measured segment of time hour, the twelfth part of a day (Jn 11.9); (2) as the time set for something hour, appointed time (Lk 14.17); (3) by metonymy, what takes place within an appointed time events of an hour or time, as for childbirth (her) hour, (her) time (Jn 16.21); for Jesus' redemptive acts (my) hour, (my) time (Jn 17.1); for future events (the coming) time, (the last) hour (1Jn 2.18; Rev 3.10); (4) idiomatically, of a comparatively short period of time -- literally in a single hour, i.e. in an amazingly short time (Rev 18.10, 19), for a while, for a season (Jn 5.35); for a moment (Gal 2.5); e arti hora = literally the present hour, i.e. at this very time (1Co 4.11) (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**TDNT** - 1. In the NT we find "set time" in Luke 14:17 (cf. the "hour" of prayer in Acts 3:1). In Rev. 9:15 a specific "hour" is set for an apocalyptic event. The hour may be an "hour of judgment" (14:7), an "hour to reap" (14:15), or an "hour of trial" (3:10). The content of the hour of Jn. 12:27 gives it special significance as "this hour"; "hour" can stand for the content (Mark 14:35). The "hour" of dawn is the time to awake out of sleep and to act with vigilance (Rom. 13:11-12).

2. The expression *hōra tinós* denotes the time for human suffering or action. "Her hour" is the hour when a woman is to bear her child in Jn. 16:21. Similarly Jesus fulfils the requirement of the hour that God has set for him, e.g., when he goes to the cross in 13:1. He knows that "his hour" has not yet come (7:30; 8:20). The thought is that of obedience to the divine will and purpose (cf. 2:4). Negatively the hour may be that of his opponents (16:4; cf. Luke 22:53).

3. With "my time has come" we also find "the time has come," i.e., God's appointed time (Jn. 17:1; Mark 14:41). In Luke 22:14 the reference is to the time for the Passover ("when the hour [of the Passover] came").

4. In Jn. 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28; 16:2, 25 the phrase "the time will come" intimates future events. "And now is" in 4:23 (cf. 16:32) shows that something is just at hand. *eschátē hōra* is the "end time."

5. *hōra* can also denote a fixed time (cf. "from that time" in Matt. 9:22, or "in that moment" in 8:13, of "instantly" in Acts 16:18). God will give the right words "at the time" of trial (Mark 13:11).

6. No one knows the day or hour of the parousia, not even the Son (Mark 13:32). In this context "hour" may be simply a section of the day or night; it is not necessarily a twelfth part of the day. The Son comes unexpectedly; this is the point in Matt. 12:44. We do not know the day or hour of the bridegroom's coming (25:13), nor when the thief comes (24:43). Watchfulness is thus demanded (Mark 13:33ff.).

7. A strict "hour" is the meaning in Jn. 11:9. Except in Matt. 20:3, 5-6 the Synoptic Gospels give specific times only for the events of the passion (Mark 15:25, 33-34; cf. Jn. 19:14). Jn. 1:39 and 4:52-53 give the times for particular reasons. Details of time also occur in Acts 10:3, 30; 23:23. Acts 5:7 and 19:34 mention periods of hours. Luke 22:59 refers to a short time of about an hour. Contrast with "forever" occurs in Phlm. 15, and *mían hōran* means "for a short time" in Rev. 17:12. (BORROW [Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament : abridged in one volume](#))

**Hora** - 106x/98v - hour(84), hours(3), late\*(2), moment(3), once\*(3), short\*(1), time(6), while(4). Matt. 8:13; Matt. 9:22; Matt. 10:19; Matt. 14:15; Matt. 15:28; Matt. 17:18; Matt. 18:1; Matt. 20:3; Matt. 20:5; Matt. 20:9; Matt. 20:12; Matt. 24:36; Matt. 24:44; Matt. 24:50; Matt. 25:13; Matt. 26:40; Matt. 26:45; Matt. 26:55; Matt. 27:45; Matt. 27:46; Mk. 6:35; Mk. 13:11; Mk. 13:32; Mk. 14:35; Mk. 14:37; Mk. 14:41; Mk. 15:25; Mk. 15:33;

Mk. 15:34; Lk. 1:10; Lk. 2:38; Lk. 7:21; Lk. 10:21; Lk. 12:12; Lk. 12:39; Lk. 12:40; Lk. 12:46; Lk. 13:31; Lk. 14:17; Lk. 20:19; Lk. 22:14; Lk. 22:53; Lk. 22:59; Lk. 23:44; Lk. 24:33; Jn. 1:39; Jn. 2:4; Jn. 4:6; Jn. 4:21; Jn. 4:23; Jn. 4:52; Jn. 4:53; Jn. 5:25; Jn. 5:28; Jn. 5:35; Jn. 7:30; Jn. 8:20; Jn. 11:9; Jn. 12:23; Jn. 12:27; Jn. 13:1; Jn. 16:2; Jn. 16:4; Jn. 16:21; Jn. 16:25; Jn. 16:32; Jn. 17:1; Jn. 19:14; Jn. 19:27; Acts 2:15; Acts 3:1; Acts 5:7; Acts 10:3; Acts 10:9; Acts 10:30; Acts 16:18; Acts 16:33; Acts 19:34; Acts 22:13; Acts 23:23; Rom. 13:11; 1 Co. 4:11; 1 Co. 15:30; 2 Co. 7:8; Gal. 2:5; 1 Thess. 2:17; Phlm. 1:15; 1 Jn. 2:18; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 3:10; Rev. 9:15; Rev. 11:13; Rev. 14:7; Rev. 14:15; Rev. 17:12; Rev. 18:10; Rev. 18:17; Rev. 18:19

**Hora in the Septuagint** - Gen. 18:10; Gen. 18:14; Gen. 29:7; Exod. 9:18; Exod. 10:4; Exod. 13:10; Exod. 18:22; Exod. 18:26; Lev. 16:2; Num. 9:2; Deut. 11:14; Deut. 33:13; Deut. 33:14; Deut. 33:16; Jos. 11:6; Ruth 2:14; 1 Sam. 25:6; 2 Sam. 24:15; 1 Ki. 19:2; 1 Ki. 20:6; 2 Ki. 4:16; 2 Ki. 4:17; 2 Ki. 7:1; 2 Ki. 7:18; 2 Ki. 10:6; Neh. 8:3; Est. 10:3; Job 5:26; Job 15:32; Job 15:33; Job 24:1; Job 24:6; Job 36:28; Job 38:23; Isa. 52:7; Dan. 4:17; Dan. 4:19; Dan. 4:26; Dan. 5:5; Dan. 8:17; Dan. 8:19; Dan. 9:21; Dan. 11:6; Dan. 11:35; Dan. 11:40; Dan. 11:45; Dan. 12:1; Dan. 12:13; Hos. 2:9; Zech. 10:1;

**Gilbrant** on Septuagint - About 50 instances of hōra are recorded in the Septuagint. It translates six Hebrew words, but most often it replaces 'ēth, "time." In Israel an hour was often something similar to our own understanding; there were sundials for telling time (2 Kings 20:9; Isaiah 38:8). Without sundials the day was divided simply into "day" and "night" and "morning" and "noon" (Psalm 55:17). However, only in passages with no Hebrew text does hōra mean "hour" (Delling, "hōra," Kittel, 9:677). Three Maccabees 5:14 notes: "Since it was nearly the middle of the tenth hour." In the Septuagint hōra tends to represent a point in time, i.e., "the fixed time," rather than a period of time. Like the word "day," hour can also denote a longer or shorter period of time. When it occurs in an eschatological context it might parallel the expression "the day of the Lord." In Daniel 8:17 we read of "the hour of time" (hōran kairou) and in Daniel 11:40,45 of the "last hour" (hōran sunteleias). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

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### Oswald Chambers - Receiving one's self in the fires of sorrow

What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name. John 12:27–29 (R.V.).

My attitude as a saint to sorrow and difficulty is not to ask that they may be prevented, but to ask that I may preserve the self God created me to be through every fire of sorrow. Our Lord received Himself in the fire of sorrow, He was saved not from the hour, but out of the hour.

We say that there ought to be no sorrow, but there is sorrow, and we have to receive ourselves in its fires. If we try and evade sorrow, refuse to lay our account with it, we are foolish. Sorrow is one of the biggest facts in life; it is no use saying sorrow ought not to be. Sin and sorrow and suffering are, and it is not for us to say that God has made a mistake in allowing them.

Sorrow burns up a great amount of shallowness, but it does not always make a man better. Suffering either gives me my self or it destroys my self. You cannot receive your self in success, you lose your head; you cannot receive your self in monotony, you grieve. The way to find your self is in the fires of sorrow. Why it should be so is another matter, but that it is so is true in the Scriptures and in human experience. You always know the man who has been through the fires of sorrow and received himself, you are certain you can go to him in trouble and find that he has ample leisure for you. If a man has not been through the fires of sorrow, he is apt to be contemptuous, he has no time for you. If you receive yourself in the fires of sorrow, God will make you nourishment for other people.

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### [More Than Giftwrap](#)

For this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name. —John 12:27-28

Today's Scripture: John 12:23-28

Every year at Christmas, James Baxter watches people rip apart his company's product and throw it away. All the hours of creative design and careful manufacturing are gone in a flash. And he has no regrets. As president of the nation's largest maker of Christmas giftwrap, Mr. Baxter says, "What we don't want is our product sitting in somebody's closet."

A product like wrapping paper lends an interesting perspective on the real meaning of Christmas. When God sent His only Son into this world, His purpose was not to give us a pretty package to gaze upon. Jesus willingly left His glory in heaven and came to earth, clothed with our humanity, knowing that His purpose was to die for our sins. When talking about His approaching death on the cross, Jesus said, "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” (Jn. 12:27).

Sacrifice, not self-preservation, was our Savior’s goal. And He accomplished it to the glory of God.

This season, ponder the lesson of the wrapping paper. As you think of how it is torn to reveal a gift, let it remind you of the Savior’s sacrifice on the cross so that you can receive eternal life, the priceless gift of God. By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild—  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
—Wesley

Jesus was born that we might be born again.

**John 12:28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."**

BGT John 12:28 πτερ, ὁ ξασ ν σου τ νομα. λθεν ο ν φων κ το ο ρανο · κα ὁ ξασα κα π λιν δοξ σω.

KJV John 12:28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

NET John 12:28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

CSB John 12:28 Father, glorify Your name!" Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again!"

ESV John 12:28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

NIV John 12:28 Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

NLT John 12:28 Father, bring glory to your name." Then a voice spoke from heaven, saying, "I have already brought glory to my name, and I will do so again."

NRS John 12:28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

NJB John 12:28 Father, glorify your name! A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will again glorify it.'

NAB John 12:28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again."

YLT John 12:28 Father, glorify Thy name.' There came, therefore, a voice out of the heaven, 'I both glorified, and again I will glorify it;'

MIT John 12:28 Father, glorify your name." Then came a voice from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I again will glorify it."

- **Father:** Jn 18:11 Mt 26:42 Mk 14:36
- **Then:** Mt 3:17 Mt 17:5 2Pe 1:17
- **I have:** Jn 9:3 11:4,40-44
- **and will:** Jn 13:31,32 Isa 49:3-7 Eph 2:7 3:10,21 Php 1:6-11 Rev 5:9-14
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 3:17 (AT JESUS' BAPTISM) and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in

whom I am well-pleased.”

Matthew 17:5 (AT JESUS' TRANSFIGURATION) While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!”

## JESUS PRAYER FOR FATHER'S GLORY

**Father** ([pater](#)), **glorify** ([doxazo](#)) **Your name.**" - Instead of praying save Me from this hour, Jesus prayed this prayer. **Glorify** ([doxazo](#)) is in the [aorist imperative](#) adding a note of urgency. **Your name** refers to all that God is, for the **name** stands for the Person of God, the character of God (cf **name** in Jn 1:12, 5:43, 17:11).

**Spurgeon** - That is a grand answer to the Saviour's question, "What shall I say?" And, when you do not know how to pray, you may always present that petition, "Father, glorify thy name." You have some dear one at home very ill; you would be glad if the precious life might be spared, yet you are not sure whether you may ask for it? Well then, say, "Father, glorify thy name." Possibly, you are passing through a great trial, and you would be glad to escape from it; yet you do not know whether it is the divine will that you should do so. Well then, you may, at any rate, put up this prayer, "'Father, glorify thy name.' Whatever is most for thy glory, let that be my will as it is thy will.".....What a prayer! Jesus swallows up his temptation to escape the cup by this all-absorbing petition, "Father, glorify thy name." When we are pleading about that glorious name of Jehovah, we may pray with vehemence and importunity: "Father, whatever I do or suffer, glorify thy name."

**Kruse** says "God was glorified in the hour of Jesus' death because then the grace of God was most clearly seen. The glory of God is his character, full of grace, and he is glorified when his character is revealed (cf. Exod. 34:5–8). (BORROW [The Gospel According to John](#))

*Oh that we would set the promotion of **God's glory** above any thought of **ourselves**!*

- Brian Bell

**Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified([doxazo](#)) it, and will glorify ([doxazo](#)) it again** - This is the only time in John's Gospel the Father spoke **out of heaven** ([see above](#) for Father speaking twice in the synoptic Gospels). Clearly Jesus had **glorified** His **Father's Name** up to this point through His life, His words, His ministry.

**William MacDonald** - The Name of God was glorified during the earthly ministry of Jesus. The thirty silent years in Nazareth, the three years of public ministry, the wonderful words and works of the Savior—all of these greatly glorified the Name of the Father. But still greater glory would be brought to God through the death, burial, resurrection, and Ascension of Christ. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - In the 27th verse, our Saviour asked himself the question, "What shall I say?" here he gives his own answer, "Father, glorify thy name." When you know not what to pray for, you can always safely pray, "Father, glorify thy name." As you stand where the cross-roads meet, and you ask, "Which way shall I choose?" pray, "Father, glorify thy name." This incident seems like a rehearsal of Christ's passion. Here we see that natural fear of death which came across the Saviour's mind because he was so really and truly man. If his pains had not been real pains, but had been pleasant and congenial to him, there would have been no self-sacrifice in his suffering; but the fact that they cast upon his spirit the dark shadow of death only proves to us what sharp pains they were; but instead of asking for a way of escape from them, he surrendered himself to them, gave himself up as a willing victim with this prayer upon his lips, "Father, glorify thy name." And now see what happened.

**Bob Utley** - The rabbis called this a *bath-kol* ("the daughter of a voice") ([SEE WIKIPEDIA DISCUSSION](#)) Since the time of Malachi there had been no prophetic voice in Israel. If God's will was to be confirmed, it would be done by a voice from heaven. The Gospels record that God spoke three times during Jesus' life - at Jesus' baptism, Matthew 3:17, 2. at the transfiguration, Matthew 17:5, here in this verse

**Steven Cole** - When you're struggling with powerful emotions, it is always right to submit your feelings to God's purpose to glorify Himself. Our Lord is our example here in how to deal with our feelings. Jesus had human feelings, but He was free from all sin. Here, He honestly expresses His revulsion at the thought of the cross, but He quickly submits to the will and glory of God. We should do the same. If you're facing a difficult trial and you're overwhelmed with powerful feelings so that you don't even know what to pray, you can always pray, "Father, glorify Your name." Your aim, like Jesus' aim, should be to glorify the Father in all that you do. ([Christ Lifted Up](#))

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**Lowell Johnson** - How did Jesus glorify the Father through His death on the cross?



1. The cross demonstrates the Father's holiness because it shows that sin is contrary to His holy character.
2. The cross demonstrates the Father's justice because it shows the Father's just character demands that sin be paid for.
3. The cross demonstrates the Father's wrath because it pleased the Lord to bruise His Son – Isa. 53:10
4. The cross demonstrates the Father's love because He was willing to give His Son to die on our behalf.
5. The cross demonstrates the Father's mercy because on the cross His son bore our griefs and sorrows so we would not perish.
6. The cross demonstrates the Father's amazing grace because as many as receive Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God.
7. The cross glorifies the Father because it will resound in His eternal praise.

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### **C H Spurgeon - [A Golden Prayer](#)**

'Father, glorify thy name.' John 12:28

Concerning this next year upon which we are entering, I hope it will be a year of happiness to you—I very emphatically wish you all a Happy New Year—but nobody can be confident that it will be a year free from trouble. On the contrary, you may be pretty confident that it will not be so, for 'man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward'. We each have some dear faces in which we rejoice; may they long smile upon us: but each one of these may be an occasion of sorrow during the next year, for we have neither an immortal child, nor an immortal husband, nor an immortal wife, nor an immortal friend, and therefore some of these may die within the year. Moreover the comforts with which we are surrounded may take to themselves wings before another year shall fulfil its months. Earthly joys are as if they were all made of snow; they melt even as the frost and are gone before we conclude our thanksgiving for their coming. It may be you will have a year of drought and shortness of bread; years lean and ill favoured may be your portion. And perhaps during the year which has almost dawned you may have to gather up your feet in the bed and die, to meet your father's God. Well now, concerning this approaching year and its mournful possibilities, shall we grow gloomy and desponding? Shall we wish we had never been born or ask that we may die? By no means. Shall we on the other hand grow frivolous and laugh at all things? No, that is ill-becoming in heirs of God. What shall we do? We will breathe this prayer, 'Father, glorify thy name.' That is to say, if I must lose my property, 'glorify thy name' by my poverty; if I must be bereaved, 'glorify thy name' in my sorrows; if I must die, 'glorify thy name' in my departure. When you pray in that fashion, your conflict is over; no outward fright nor inward fear remains.

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### **Vance Havner - Voice From Heaven**

In the midst of one of His discourses Jesus prays, "Father, glorify Thy name," and a voice from heaven answers, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Then follow three interpretations of the voice by those who heard it. Some said it thundered; others said that an angel spoke to Him; Jesus said that it was God's voice speaking concerning His approaching death.

These three interpretations cover the whole range of our attitude toward supernatural revelation. God has been speaking to men through the ages. Some have heard nothing but thunder and have explained it all away by natural causation. Some have heard the angel: they do believe that there is intelligence and possibly personality back of the universe, and believe that our better impressions are something more than sensations stirred up by a frolic of atoms. There have always been a few who have gone further and believed with Jesus that God really has spoken in a revelation that transcends all ordinary inspiration.

These view-points hold true from any angle of God's manifestations of Himself. God speaks to us through nature. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handy-work." Some see only the workings of natural law; the Grand Canyon is but a cosmic accident; sunsets are purely physical, and nothing more. They hear only thunder! Others find earth crammed with heaven and every common bush afire with God. But the Christian goes even further and sees nature in the light of Christ, torn and groaning and travailing now, but one day to be restored to peace and harmony.

God speaks through the Bible. Some hear only thunder, it is only a book. Others believe it inspired as Shakespeare is inspired, but not a supernatural revelation—just the voice of an angel, not God. Others take Jesus' point of view. To them, the Bible does not merely contain God's Word, it is God's Word. His Word they hide in their hearts that they might not sin against Him.

But in the supreme revelation of all, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." Some hear only thunder in the Christ, He was but a man now encrusted in legend and tradition. Others think He was inspired, perhaps the greatest of men, but still a man. They hear the angel. But others hear more than man, they fill out "man" until it becomes "Immanuel"—God with us.

In the particular incident of John 12:28-32, God not only speaks through Christ, but to Him. Jesus goes on to explain that the voice spoke for the hearer's sake, and then speaks of His death in which the world is judged, Satan cast out and all men drawn to Him through His death. Jesus regarded His death as the centre and heart of God's purpose for Him. Naturalism, hearing only thunder,



places no value on Christ's death. Modernism, hearing only the angel, regards Christ's life and teaching as more important. Both reject Jesus' own interpretation of God's testimony to Him. We have not caught the true and full meaning of God's revelation in Christ until we see that Calvary is the heart of it. Jesus is more than God speaking to men. He is God becoming man in the person of Christ to bear our sins upon the Cross.

Modern Greeks ask to see Jesus as did these referred to in John 12. But for all there is one answer: "It is not as teacher or ideal character that I am truly to be known. The corn of wheat must die. It is as the crucified and risen Saviour that you must know Me if you are to be saved."

God is speaking. Which way do you hear Him, as thunder, as an angel, or as Himself

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### Chris Tiegreen - For His Honor

"Father, glorify your name!" John 12:28

"Man's chief work is the praise of God." —St. Augustine

IN WORD One of the ways we can determine whether we are becoming Christlike is to see how we act in a crisis. When the pressure is on, what will we do? Or, even deeper, when the pressure is on, what motives will direct us?

Jesus came to the hour that He had long predicted. He was clear about His purpose in coming to Jerusalem; He would die there. The disciples couldn't understand it, but He had foretold the Cross and Resurrection numerous times. And now the hour had come.

It wasn't a pleasant hour. Nothing in human flesh—even that of the divine Son of God—enjoys suffering. Jesus does not ask God to save Him from this hour in John 12 (v. 27), but when He gets to the garden of Gethsemane, He wants to know if it's possible for the cup of suffering to pass Him by (Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22). Human nature is often so ambivalent; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is very, very weak. Even God, when clothed in human flesh, wanted the less painful way. But—and here's the measure for us—in the middle of His crisis, one motive still guided Him: He preferred the glory of God's name over His own self-preservation. God's reputation weighed heavier on His heart than His own comfort and life.

IN DEED Are you becoming Christlike? It is God's plan for you to be conformed to the image of His Son. But how can you know if you're growing toward that goal? Examine your motives, especially in the midst of a crisis. What is your agenda? Do you prefer the glory of God to your own escape? When it really comes down to it, what would you sacrifice for His glory?

Jesus sacrificed a huge following, His school of disciples, His comfort and health, His current reputation, and even His life in order that God's name might be honored. Would you? (See [The One Year At His Feet Devotional](#))

**John 12:29 So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him."**

BGT John 12:29 ο ν χλος στ ς κα κο σας λεγεν βροντ ν γεγον ναι, λλοι λεγον· γγγελος α τ λελ ληκεν.

KJV John 12:29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

NET John 12:29 The crowd that stood there and heard the voice said that it had thundered. Others said that an angel had spoken to him.

CSB John 12:29 The crowd standing there heard it and said it was thunder. Others said that an angel had spoken to Him.

ESV John 12:29 The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

NIV John 12:29 The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

NLT John 12:29 When the crowd heard the voice, some thought it was thunder, while others declared an angel had spoken to him.

NRS John 12:29 The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

NJB John 12:29 The crowd standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an angel speaking to him.'

NAB John 12:29 The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

YLT John 12:29 the multitude, therefore, having stood and heard, were saying that there hath been thunder; others said, 'A messenger hath spoken to him.'

MIT John 12:29 The crowd milling around who heard the sound said it had thundered. Others were saying an angel had addressed him.

- **thundered:** Ex 19:16 Ex 20:18 Job 37:2-5 Job 40:9 Eze 10:5 Rev 6:1 8:5 11:19 14:2
- **An angel:** Ac 23:8,9 Rev 18:1,2
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 19:16 So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.

Job 37:2-5 "Listen closely to **the thunder of His voice**, And the **rumbling that goes out from His mouth**. 3 "Under the whole heaven He lets it loose, And His lightning to the ends of the earth. 4 "**After it, a voice roars**; He thunders with His majestic voice, And He does not restrain the lightnings when His voice is heard. 5 "**God thunders with His voice wondrously**, Doing great things which we cannot comprehend.

Job 40:9 "Or do you have an arm like God, And **can you thunder with a voice like His?**

2 Samuel 22:14 "**The LORD thundered from heaven, And the Most High uttered His voice**

Psalms 29:3 **The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; The God of glory thunders**, The LORD is over many waters.

Psalms 18:13 **The LORD also thundered in the heavens, And the Most High uttered His voice**, Hailstones and coals of fire.

Psalms 104:7 At Your rebuke they fled, **At the sound of Your thunder** they hurried away.

Acts 9:7 The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.

Acts 22:9 "And those who were with me saw the light, to be sure, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me.

## TWO INTERPRETATIONS OF SOUND FROM HEAVEN

The response to the Lord's voice from Heaven reminds me of the confusion about Saul's experience in Acts 9:7; Acts 22:9.

**So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered-** See passages above where God's voice was equated with thunder. They are like those liberals and skeptics who are always trying to explain supernatural phenomena by some natural means. They are like [Thomas Jefferson who cut out all the supernatural portions of his Bible](#)! The sound from the Father in Heaven was audible to the people but they did not fully understand. They heard Jesus utter the prayer in Jn 12:28 and then they heard a response from Heaven, but this group arrived at a natural explanation.

*The issue is not that God is silent, but that fallen, sinful people are deaf.*

-- John MacArthur

**Others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him-** Others were closer to the truth (but this is not horseshoes!) thinking this is supernatural, not "natural" like thunder. Both groups failed to put it together with His prayer, and so none said "This is His Father." Both groups were "out of tune" spiritually which would be explained in more detail in Jn 12:37-40. They had rejected Christ and the result was spiritual blindness. Both groups missed the fact that the Father was authenticating Jesus' ministry!

**THOUGHT** Are we ever "out of tune" when He speaks (or tries to speak) to us through His Word and prayer? I

am convicted by my own question!

**William MacDonald** - God's voice can only be heard and understood by those who are helped by the Holy Spirit. People can listen to the gospel over and over, and yet it might be ever so meaningless to them unless the Holy Spirit speaks to them through it. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - We learn, from this narrative, that the voice of God is not understood by everybody. Some of those that stood by said that it thundered, and others said that an angel spake to him. It is necessary that you should be a child of God if you are to know your Father's voice. Though God is speaking, at this moment in the clearest tones, none will recognize his voice, or understand his words, but those who are taught by his Holy Spirit.

**Spurgeon** applies this passage - Ah! they did not understand the voice of God, or the cause of the voice speaking to them. If the men of the world in our Saviour's day did not understand the Father's voice to the Only Begotten, do not expect that the men of the world today will understand the divine voice in your heart. They will reckon that you are in error, and that God has not spoken to you; it has only thundered. They will be ready to invent all kinds of stories of angels, and I know not what, so as to get rid of the voice of God to you. But you know it; if you are God's children, you know his voice, and you also know what he means when he speaks.

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**Lowell Johnson** - This is the third time that the Father honored His Son by speaking audibly concerning His Son-at the beginning of His ministry, in the middle of His ministry, and at the end of His earthly ministry.

A. The Father witnessed concerning the **Purity** of His Son – Matt. 3:16-17

The Father declared publicly, "In Him I am well pleased. He is my beloved, sinless, Pure Son.

B. The Father witnessed concerning the **Preaching** of His Son – Matt 17:5

This is my beloved Son; Hear ye Him...Listen to my Son!  
He spoke of the necessity of being born again  
He declared that keeping the Laws and traditions of men would not commend them to God.  
He warned of eternal judgment for those without Christ

C. The Father witnessed concerning the **Passion** of His Son – John 12:28

Our Lord's death on the cross would glorify the Father and exalt the Son as the supreme head of His redeemed people.

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**John 12:30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.**

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BGT John 12:30 περὶ ἧς καὶ ἐπεν· ὁ δὲ μὴ φωνήσας ἑαυτὸν ἀλλ' ὑμᾶς.

KJV John 12:30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

NET John 12:30 Jesus said, "This voice has not come for my benefit but for yours.

CSB John 12:30 Jesus responded, "This voice came, not for Me, but for you.

ESV John 12:30 Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine.

NIV John 12:30 Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine.

NLT John 12:30 Then Jesus told them, "The voice was for your benefit, not mine.

NRS John 12:30 Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.

NJB John 12:30 Jesus answered, 'It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours.

NAB John 12:30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours.

YLT John 12:30 Jesus answered and said, 'Not because of me hath this voice come, but because of you;

MIT John 12:30 Jesus responded to them, "Not on my account did the voice come, but for your sake.

- **but:** Jn 5:34 Jn 11:15,42 2Co 8:9
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passage:

John 11:42+ "I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."

Matthew 13:13+ "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."

1 Corinthians 2:14+ But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

## FATHER'S VOICE FOR PEOPLE'S SAKE

**Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes-** Jesus knew He always had His Father's approval. The Father's words were His "seal of approval," on His Son, but the crowds missed it! Their problem was that they did not have spiritual ears to hear supernatural words (Mt 11:15, cf Jn 12:40). It is interesting that John does not say the disciples understood the words. Some writers (R C H Lenski, John MacArthur) state the sound was understood by the disciples and came to encourage them, but while that is possible, the text does not definitely make that statement.

**Spurgeon** - See how the eye of faith reads things differently from the eye of sense. You and I would have said, "Now is Christ coming to his lowest point. Now is his name to be cast out from among men, and his cause to be crushed as the result of his death." But Christ reads the signs of the times very differently. "Now," saith he, "in the hour of my shame, and suffering, and death, is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." It was only by Christ being apparently conquered that Satan could be really vanquished, and there is often no way of victory for a saint except through defeat. When self is slain, then do we truly live.

**Bob Utley** points out that "This phrase is a Semitic comparison. This means it was not solely for them but primarily for them (cf. John 11:42).

**Steven Cole** - But it's no different today: God has spoken clearly through His Word, giving testimony to Jesus as the only Savior. Yet some explain Christianity in completely naturalistic terms, like those who said that it thundered, while others launch off into mystical spirituality, like those who said that an angel had spoken to Jesus. But both sides miss God's testimony to His Son. They don't have spiritual ears to hear spiritual truth, even when God speaks clearly. ([Christ Lifted Up](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - The people heard a sound but did not know the message that had been conveyed. Yet if the voice was for their sakes and they could not understand it, what good was it? In that the voice assured Jesus, who was to die for their sakes, the voice was for their good. They heard Him pray and they heard a sound from heaven in response to that prayer. That should have convinced them that Jesus was in touch with the Father. We might translate John 12:30, "That voice came more for your sake than for Mine." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**John 12:31 "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.**

BGT John 12:31 ν ν κρ σις στ ν το κ σμου το του, ν ν ρχων το κ σμου το του κβληθ σεται ξω·

KJV John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

NET John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.

CSB John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

ESV John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

NIV John 12:31 Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.

NLT John 12:31 The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out.

NRS John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.

NJB John 12:31 'Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be driven out.

NAB John 12:31 Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.

YLT John 12:31 now is a judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast forth;

MIT John 12:31 Judgment of this world is scheduled momentarily. The leader of this world will be deposed right away.

- **Now judgment is upon this world:** Jn 5:22-27 16:8-10
- **now the ruler of this world:** Jn 14:30 16:11 Ge 3:15 Isa 49:24 Mt 12:28 Lu 10:17-19 Ac 26:18 2Co 4:4 Eph 2:1,2 Eph 6:12 Col 2:15 Heb 2:14 1Jn 3:8 Rev 12:9-11 Rev 20:2,3
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 10:17-19+ The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18 And He said to them, **"I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.** 19 "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.

Colossians 2:15+ When **He had disarmed the rulers and authorities**, He made a public display of them, **having triumphed over them through Him.**

1 John 3:8+ the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, **to destroy the works of the devil**

### A WORLD "CRISIS"

**Now judgment ([krisis](#)) is upon this world ([kosmos](#))** - This first of two "now's" announces a "world[krisis](#)" where the "**now**" alludes to His coming crucifixion. The **judgment** is so sure Jesus speaks of it as occurring **now**. The word **judgment** speaks of a separating and then a decision, in this case to a decision on whether the world is innocent or guilty of rebellion against God. How can we understand this **judgment**? Jesus is speaking about His crucifixion so the **judgment** must relate to this event.

**J Vernon McGee** has a simple but excellent explanation - He came to die a judgment death for the sins of the world. If the world will not accept this, the world is judged.

**Grant Osborne** explains Jesus as bringing **judgment upon this world** because "as the living revealer (the "Word") of God, he encounters every person at the deepest part of their being and forces them to a decision. That decision determines their destiny. For those who believe, he becomes Savior (Jn 4:42), but for those who reject him, he becomes judge. The world is characterized by rejection and rebellion (Jn 1:10), and so it is judged. This is the great irony: at the Cross, Jew and Gentile united in judging Jesus, while in reality they were being judged by Jesus!" (See [The Gospel of John](#))

**Steven Cole** explains it this way "I understand this to mean that now that Jesus has come, He is the absolute standard of **judgment**. He is the Light to which people either come for salvation or run from because they love their sin (John 3:19-21; 12:35-36). The purpose of the light is not to cast shadows, but light inevitably does cast shadows. Jesus' purpose for coming was not to judge the world, but to save it (John 3:17). But His coming drew a line that divides all people. What people do with Jesus determines their eternal destiny. As John 3:18 states, "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." The Jewish leaders thought that they were judging Jesus by crucifying Him, but by rejecting Jesus they pronounced judgment on themselves. Even so today, people judge themselves by how they judge Jesus. If they trust in Him as Savior and Lord, they will be saved. But if they ignore Him or demote Him to being just a great religious teacher, they do so to their own condemnation. ([Christ Lifted Up](#))

**D A Carson** on **judgment...upon the world** - Jesus' passion/glorification draws people to himself (Jn 12:32), but also constitutes **judgment** on this **world**, all of human society in rebellion against its Creator. The world thought it was passing **judgment** on Jesus, not only as it perpetually debated who he was (e.g. John 6:14, 42, 60; 7:15; 8:48, 52-53; 9:29; 10:19; 11:37), but climactically in the cross. In reality, the cross was passing **judgment** on them. Since Jesus was sent as his Father's representative, His agent and the supreme divine revelation, rejection of the Son is rejection of God Himself (Jn 5:23). In the callous murder of the Son of God, sin displays itself in its most virulently evil form. But in that death, God was also giving his Son as a sacrifice, the Lamb of God; in that death, Jesus was securing the life of the 'many seeds' (Jn 12:24). Thus Jesus' passion/glorification signifies **judgment** both positively and negatively. As far as '**the world**' is concerned, however, it can only be negative. There can be no further reprieve, for there can be no hope for those who reject the one person whose death/exaltation is the epiphany of God's gracious, saving self-disclosure. (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**John MacArthur** on **judgment upon this world** - The world's apparent victory over Christ at the cross was in reality its own death knell; the doom of the unbelieving world was sealed by its rejection of Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 17:31). Though Jesus came to save, not to judge (v. 47; 3:17; cf. Luke 19:10), those who reject Him through all of history since then condemn themselves to the eternal judgment of hell (3:18, 36; 9:39; 12:48).

**Spurgeon** - This is a wonderful sentence, — as if, in Christ's death, the world was judged, and condemned; and so it was; nothing ever so convicted the world of high treason against God as when men said of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's well-beloved Son, "This is the Heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." The shedding of the blood of Christ upon the cross is the crimson evidence of the deep transgression of human nature: "Now is the judgment of this world." There is another rendering of this text, retaining the Greek word, "Now is the crisis of this world"

And for us who have believed, we have a new relation to the world. **Paul** wrote "may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world (*kosmos*) has been crucified to me, and I to the world (*kosmos*)."  
(Gal 6:14+) In the soon to come [Upper Room Discourse](#), Jesus would give His last pre-cross teaching summarizing His disciple's (and our) relationship to the world in Jn 16:33 declaring "These things (John 13-16) I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world (*kosmos*) you have tribulation, but **take courage** (*present imperative* see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) I have overcome (*nikao* - perfect tense - attained the victory at the cross with enduring effect) the world."

## CHRIST'S VICTORY OVER SATAN

**Now the ruler** (*archon*) **of this world** (*kosmos*) - So does only does the Cross bring judgment upon the world but bring about an action against Satan. The **ruler of this world** is Satan (Jn 14:30, Jn 16:11). This is Jesus' proclamation of victory over Satan. Satan's apparent victory over Jesus at the Cross marked his sure defeat, his inevitable doom. Yes, **now** Satan is the titular, temporary head of the fallen world system, as shown by his offer to Jesus in Luke 4:6+ "I will give You all this domain (*exousia*) and its glory; **for it has been handed over to me**, and I give it to whomever I wish." Note that Jesus did not dispute Satan's claim control over "all this domain." And in his epistle, John writes "We know that we are of God, and that the whole (holos) world lies (present tense - continually) *in the power* of the evil one." (1Jn 5:19+).

**John Phillips** comments "The cross of Christ was God's chosen instrument to sound the eternal death knell of Satan, his kingdom, and his power. By instigating the Jews to pass sentence on Christ, he set in motion the flow of events that would guarantee his own destruction. (BORROW [Exploring the Gospels. John](#))

(He) **will be cast out** (*ekballō*) - The great paradox of the Cross was that it seemed to be a victory for Satan and evil men, but in truth it marked the defeat of Satan, for in His "defeat," at the moment of death, Christ triumphed over sin and Satan and death. Clearly Satan is still active and powerful today in the world (1Pe 5:8-10+, Eph 6:10-20+) so that the words he **will be cast out** is a prophecy to be fulfilled in the future. It reminds me of the term "prophetic aorist" (although I realize cast out is future tense in this verse), which describes a future, unfulfilled event in the past tense, because it is so sure to be fulfilled. By analogy, the future casting out of Satan is as we sometimes say "a done deal!" Why? Because at the cross Jesus defeated the **ruler** and sealed his future doom forever. Satan now operates as a defeated foe with a finite amount of time left to operate.

*When heaven bleeds on the cross, hell is defeated by its own schemes.*

-- Brian Bell

**NET NOTE** on **be cast** (driven) **out** - The phrase driven out must refer to Satan's loss of authority over this world. This must be in principle rather than in immediate fact, since 1 John 5:19 (**ED: WHICH WAS WRITTEN AFTER THE GOSPEL**) states that the whole world (still) lies in the power of the evil one (a reference to Satan). In an absolute sense the reference is proleptic (**ED: PREDICTIVE OF WHAT WOULD DEFINITELY TRANSPIRE IN THE FUTURE - SEE [FOUR "STAGES"](#)**). The coming of Jesus' hour (his crucifixion, death, resurrection, and exaltation to the Father) marks the end of Satan's domain and brings about his defeat, even though that defeat has not been ultimately worked out in history yet and awaits the consummation of the age.

**MacArthur** on **cast out** agrees with the NET Note - "Here he is cast out in the sense that he loses his authority and influence."

**THOUGHT** - I would qualify MacArthur's statement by saying Satan is still the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2+), he is still the father of the lost (Jn 8:44+), and when one walks in darkness, they are walking in his kingdom, over which he still exerts authority and influence. Satan's major point of loss in the present world is the loss of authority and influence over believers because we have been delivered from his domain (*exousia* - right and might) of darkness (Col 1:13+).

**Spurgeon** - Thank God for that! His throne was shaken to its fall when Christ died on Calvary. All the powers of darkness suffered



eternal defeat in the hour that men and devils fancied they had gained the victory....“Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.” The overthrow of the usurper began from that time, and that overthrow of the devil is still going on; and, blessed be God, it will reach its completion one of these days, and we shall yet rejoice in a new heaven, and a new earth, on which the trail of the serpent shall never be traced.

The writer of Hebrews says "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death **He might render powerless him who had the power of death**, that is, the devil, 15 and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives." (Heb 2:14-15+).

Now because of Satan's defeat at Calvary believers can resist Satan, James writing "**Submit** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) therefore to God. **Resist** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the devil and he will flee from you." (James 4:7+)

Every time a sinner is saved by grace through faith Satan's kingdom suffers a "defeat" made possible by the Cross, Paul explaining that God "rescued us from the **domain** ([exousia](#) = right and might) of **darkness** (SATAN'S KINGDOM), and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son." (Col 1:13+, cf Acts 26:18+).

Jesus alludes to the fate of **the ruler** ([archon](#)) **of this world** ([kosmos](#)) in his [Upper Room Discourse](#)

John 14:30 "I will not speak much more with you, for **the ruler** (Satan) **of the world** is coming, and he has nothing in Me;

John 16:11 and concerning judgment, because **the ruler** (Satan) **of this world has been judged** (AT THE CROSS).

And not only will he be **cast out** of this world, one day (soon) he will be **cast out** of heaven, John writing "And the great dragon was **thrown down**, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was **thrown down** to the earth, and his angels were **thrown down** with him." (Rev 12:9+)

Satan's final "casting out" will be a "casting in" described in Revelation 20:10 after being bound for 1000 years "And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

[Gotquestions](#) - Satan's downfall began the moment he, as the angel Lucifer, challenged God and tried to redirect heaven's worship to himself (Isaiah 14:13–14). From the moment of his rebellion, Satan's doom was sure. God cast him from heaven to earth (Luke 10:18) where he gained dominion when Adam followed his example and rebelled against God (Genesis 3:6-7, 17–19; Romans 5:12). Satan is now called "the prince of the power of the air" (John 12:31; Ephesians 2:2), "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4), "the accuser" of Christians (Revelation 12:10), and "the deceiver of the whole world" (Revelation 12:9). God prepared hell as a place of punishment for Satan (Matthew 25:41).

**Henry Morris on ruler** ("prince") - The "prince of this world" (John 14:30; 16:11) is Satan (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:18; Ephesians 2:2). The "now" of which Christ speaks refers to the assurance of ultimate victory over Satan that would be won at the cross (Colossians 2:14,15) and empty tomb (Revelation 1:18; Matthew 16:18).

**Lowell Johnson** - Satan will be defeated and "cast out." It will be in four stages:

**Stage 1:** At the cross of Calvary, Satan's grip on the world was finally broken –

When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. Col. 2:15

**COMMENT:** There is actually one "stage" prior to this one and that is when Satan rebelled and was cast out of God's presence (this casting out is to be distinguished from his future, final casting out in Revelation 12 - Stage 2 below). Isaiah 14:12-21 is considered by most conservative writers to describe Satan, verse 12 declaring "How you have fallen from heaven, O star (KJV = "LUCIFER") of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations!" In a clear reference to Satan, Jesus uses some similar wording in Luke 10:18+: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

**Stage 2:** Satan will be cast out of Heaven. This hasn't happened yet. Satan still has access to Heaven to accuse the brethren.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "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 brethren has been thrown down, he

who accuses them before our God day and night. Rev. 12:10+

**Stage 3:** Satan will be cast into a bottomless pit for 1,000 years while Christ rules and reigns on this planet during His Millennial Kingdom –

And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. Rev. 20:2-3+

**Stage 4:** Satan will be cast into the Lake of Fire forever and that will be the end of him. Glory!

And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Rev. 20:10+

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**Judgment** (justice, court, sentence) ([2920](#)) **krisis** from **krino** = to judge, decide) means a decision or judgment, verdict, justice, court (tribunal). The first use is by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount declaring "Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the **court**." ("in danger of judgment") (Mt 5:21, cp also Mt 5:22) Mt 10:15, 11:22, 24 all describe Jesus' sobering warning to the Jews of a specific future and frightening "day of **judgment**." (cp "**sentence** of hell" Mt 23:33, see also 2 Peter 2:9, 11, 3:7, 1 John 4:17) In Jn 5:24 Jesus gives sinners the way of escape, the way to miss the horrible day of **judgment** (Heb 10:27)! In Mt 12:18 God's **judgment** is equated with **justice**, for He is the righteous and just Judge (cp Mt 12:20, 23:23, Rev 16:7). Note the striking contrast in Jn 5:29 "those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of **judgment**." There is no such thing as reincarnation but only one life, one death, one **judgment** (Heb 9:27)

**Krisis** - 47x/46v (11x in John) - **court**(2), **judgment**(38), **judgments**(2), **justice**(4), **sentence**(1). Matt. 5:21; Matt. 5:22; Matt. 10:15; Matt. 11:22; Matt. 11:24; Matt. 12:18; Matt. 12:20; Matt. 12:36; Matt. 12:41; Matt. 12:42; Matt. 23:23; Matt. 23:33; Lk. 10:14; Lk. 11:31; Lk. 11:32; Lk. 11:42; Jn. 3:19; Jn. 5:22; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:27; Jn. 5:29; Jn. 5:30; Jn. 7:24; Jn. 8:16; Jn. 12:31; Jn. 16:8; Jn. 16:11; Acts 8:33; 2 Thess. 1:5; 1 Tim. 5:24; Heb. 9:27; Heb. 10:27; Jas. 2:13; Jas. 5:12; 2 Pet. 2:4; 2 Pet. 2:9; 2 Pet. 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:7; 1 Jn. 4:17; Jude 1:6; Jude 1:9; Jude 1:15; Rev. 14:7; Rev. 16:7; Rev. 18:10; Rev. 19:2

**World** ([2889](#)) **kosmos** related to the verb **kosmeo** = to order or adorn, to put in order [Mt 25:7 = "trimmed"], to adorn literally [1Ti 2:9], to adorn figuratively [Titus 2:9+] means essentially something that is well-arranged, that which has order or something arranged harmoniously. **Kosmos** refers to an ordered system or a system where order prevails. Kosmos figuratively refers to this present evil man-centered (humanistic) world-system ruled and directed by Satan [1Jn 5:19] and in general the world apart from God and opposed to Him. In this sense **kosmos** is much like the Greek word for **flesh** (**sarx**), which can be a neutral word, but which many times in the NT takes on an evil connotation.

- [An Out-of-this-World Experience A Look at Kosmos in the Johannine Literature](#)- W Hall Harris III
- [See 6 page article in New International Dictionary of NT Theology](#)

**Kosmos in John and First John** - Jn. 1:9; Jn. 1:10; Jn. 1:29; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:17; Jn. 3:19; Jn. 4:42; Jn. 6:14; Jn. 6:33; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 7:4; Jn. 7:7; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 8:23; Jn. 8:26; Jn. 9:5; Jn. 9:39; Jn. 10:36; Jn. 11:9; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 12:19; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 12:31; Jn. 12:46; Jn. 12:47; Jn. 13:1; Jn. 14:17; Jn. 14:19; Jn. 14:22; Jn. 14:27; Jn. 14:30; Jn. 14:31; Jn. 15:18; Jn. 15:19; Jn. 16:8; Jn. 16:11; Jn. 16:20; Jn. 16:21; Jn. 16:28; Jn. 16:33; Jn. 17:5; Jn. 17:6; Jn. 17:9; Jn. 17:11; Jn. 17:13; Jn. 17:14; Jn. 17:15; Jn. 17:16; Jn. 17:18; Jn. 17:21; Jn. 17:23; Jn. 17:24; Jn. 17:25; Jn. 18:20; Jn. 18:36; Jn. 18:37; Jn. 21:25; 1 Jn. 2:2; 1 Jn. 2:15; 1 Jn. 2:16; 1 Jn. 2:17; 1 Jn. 3:1; 1 Jn. 3:13; 1 Jn. 3:17; 1 Jn. 4:1; 1 Jn. 4:3; 1 Jn. 4:4; 1 Jn. 4:5; 1 Jn. 4:9; 1 Jn. 4:14; 1 Jn. 4:17; 1 Jn. 5:4; 1 Jn. 5:5; 1 Jn. 5:19; 2 Jn. 1:7; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 13:8; Rev. 17:8

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**ILLUSTRATION** - [Lowell Johnson](#) - Because of Jesus Christ, Satan is a dead spirit walking – 1John 3:8

Research was done a few years ago concerning people who had been bitten by dead snakes. The reason for the research came after admitting a patient who was bitten by a snake while gardening. The man had cut off a rattlesnake's head with his shovel. When he bent down to pick up the snake's head, it bit him. Research showed that 15 percent of those being admitted for snake bites were bitten by a dead snake. That was a surprise because most people did know dead snakes still bite. Snakes have a reflex action that continues even after being killed. For this reason, a decapitated rattlesnake can still bite up to an hour after death. That information can help protect us from venomous snakes. There is a spiritual application as well. **The Bible calls Satan a serpent. He is still dangerous even though Christ has delivered a fatal blow.**

BGT John 12:32 κ γ ν ψωθ κ τ ς γ ς, π ν τ α ς λ κ σ ω π ρ ς μ α υ τ ν.

KJV John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

NET John 12:32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

CSB John 12:32 As for Me, if I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to Myself."

ESV John 12:32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

NIV John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."

NLT John 12:32 And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself."

NRS John 12:32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

NJB John 12:32 And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself.'

NAB John 12:32 And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself."

YLT John 12:32 and I, if I may be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.'

MIT John 12:32 As for me: If I am lifted up from the earth, I will attract all people to myself."

- **And I, if I am lifted up from the earth:** Jn 3:14 Jn 8:28 Jn 19:17 De 21:22,23 2Sa 18:9 Ps 22:16-18 Ga 3:13 1Pe 2:24 3:18
- **will:** Jn 6:44 Song 1:4 Ho 11:4
- **all men:** Jn 1:7 Isa 49:6 Ro 5:17-19 1Ti 2:6 Heb 2:9 1Jn 2:2 Rev 5:9
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 3:14+ "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must **the Son of Man be lifted up**;

John 8:28+ So Jesus said, "**When you lift up the Son of Man**, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

### THE SPIRITUAL ATTRACTION OF THE CROSS

**And I, if I am lifted up** ([hupsoo](#)) **from the earth** - **IF** is a third class conditional sentence ([SEE ALSO PRECEDING TECHNICAL NOTE](#)) which speaks of potential action, in this case an action that will soon be realized! **Lifted up** conveys a double meaning of **lifted up** on the Cross (crucifixion - the primary meaning as shown by Jn 12:33) and **lifted up** in sense of being exalted (glorification).

**Spurgeon** - Christ on the cross draws all men up to himself. I have heard this text quoted as if it referred to Christ being extolled (LIFTED UP) in preaching. Well, it is true that, when Christ is lifted up in the ministry, there is an attractive power; but **that is not the first meaning of the text**. There is no magnet like the death of Christ. He is able still to draw men unto him because of the attractive force of his atoning sacrifice (**ED**: Is this not why Paul said "I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." 1Co 2:2 and "may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Gal 6:14)

**Brian Bell** - In Jn 12:24 we saw the Necessity of the cross; In Jn 12:27 we see the Anguish of the cross; In Jn 12:28 the Master Principle of the cross; here in Jn 12:32 we see the Triumph of the cross. The cross is the divine magnet! And our attitude toward it shows what we are... either steel shavings drawn to it, or ashes that feel no magnetic draw. His crucifixion became His coronation! Sin is not just a breaking of His law, but a wounding of His heart! And that is why He was there at Calvary, as that broken-hearted sufferer. Jesus took our place. {Loves transfigures Calvary; then Calvary transfigures everything else.

Jesus has already used this same word picture of being **'lifted up'** with [Nicodemus](#) in John 3:14+ Jesus explaining to him "As Moses **lifted up** ([hupsoo](#)) the serpent in the wilderness (Nu 21:7-9+), even so must the Son of Man be lifted up ([hupsoo](#)). And again speaking to the Jews in John 8:28+ Jesus said, "When you **lift up** ([hupsoo](#)) the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me."

**Spurgeon** - The Pharisees said, "The world is gone after him;" but Jesus says, "No not while I am riding in state through the streets

of Jerusalem; but when I am lifted up, and hung upon the cross, then shall it indeed be true, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.'" The crucified Christ of Calvary is the mighty magnet that is to attract multitudes of trembling, doubting, ruined sinners, who by grace shall be drawn unto him, and find eternal life in him.

**Steven Cole** - Sometimes preachers use Jesus' words in verse 32 to mean that if we exalt Jesus ("lift Him up"), He will draw people to Himself. That is true, and as I explained, John probably intended a double meaning. But in verse 33, John makes it clear that by "lifted up," Jesus primarily was referring to being lifted up on the cross. His death on the cross would draw all men to Himself. ([Christ Lifted Up](#))

*Wherever the Lord Jesus is, there is drawing power.*

-- Stephen Olford

**Will draw ([helko](#)) all men to Myself** - **Will draw ([helko](#))** means that there will be a supernatural pull in the mental or moral life of men and women to come to Jesus, to believe in Jesus. As Paul said in Romans 3:11 "THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD." Spiritually dead men do not seek God! The Spirit must empower them giving them the desire and the power to seek God. As Jesus made clear in John 6:44+ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws ([helko](#)) him; and I will raise him up on the last day." Jesus explains this drawing in Jn 6:65+ "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father."

**D A Carson** writes that in John 6:44 "the one who draws is the Father; here, it is the Son, but nothing much should be made of this (Jn 5:19). But the scope and efficacy of the drawing in the two places are quite different. There, the focus is on those individuals whom the Father gives to the Son, whom the Son infallibly preserves and raises up at the last day. Here, 'all men' reminds the reader of what triggered these statements, viz. the arrival of the Greeks, and means 'all people without distinction, Jews and Gentiles alike', not all individuals without exception, since the surrounding context has just established judgment as a major theme (Jn 12:31), a time for distinguishing between those who love their lives (and therefore lose them) and those who hate their lives (and therefore keep them for eternal life, Jn 12:25). The critical event in Jesus' ministry that sanctions his drawing of all people without distinction, and not Jews only (cf. 10:16; 11:52), 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." (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**Spurgeon** - This is the sermon, which has the Greeks for a text. They are already coming, being drawn to Christ: but when he dies, when he is lifted up upon the cross, instead of losing his attractive power, he will have greater drawing force than ever: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Note that by saying **all men to Myself** Jesus is not referring to the false doctrine of [universalism](#). He is referring to **all** in the sense of His crucifixion would make salvation available to the whole world as in John 3:16+ "For God so loved the world (**ALL THE WORLD**), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." John uses the word **ALL** again in John 1:7 in a similar context, writing " He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that **ALL** might believe through him." Paul writes that Jesus "gave Himself as a ransom for **ALL**, the testimony given at the proper time."

*Jesus does not mean all without exception, but all without distinction*

**Steven Cole** asks did Jesus mean by **ALL men**? - The context helps us interpret this point. The Greeks have just come to Philip asking to see Jesus. At this point, Jesus announces that the hour has come for Him to be glorified. Part of His glory (as I explained in the last message) is that after the cross, the gospel would now go out to the whole world. So by "all men," Jesus does not mean all without exception, but all without distinction. As Paul put it (Rom. 1:16), "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." ([Christ Lifted Up](#))

*"That which showed how much He was **hated**,  
is that for which He is now most **loved**!"*

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**Lifted up** (exalted) ([5312](#)) **hupsos** from **hupsos** = height, elevation) means to lift up spatially, to raise high. Figuratively, it can describe lifting one up to a place of honor, fame, power, or position (to exalt). **Hupsos** is used as a reference to the **crucifixion** in Jn 3:14, 8:28, 12:32, 34 (cp use in Lxx of Ps 9:13 where "affliction" in the Lxx = tapeinosis = low estate, humiliation, which again links "exaltation" [lift me up] with "humiliation"). **Hupsos** in other contexts clearly alludes to Jesus' **ascension** to the right hand of His Father's throne (Acts 2:33, 5:31).

Hupsos - 16v -exalt(2), exalted(9), exalts(3), lift(1), lifted(4), made...great(1). Matt. 11:23; Matt. 23:12; Lk. 1:52; Lk. 10:15; Lk. 14:11; Lk. 18:14; Jn. 3:14; Jn. 8:28; Jn. 12:32; Jn. 12:34; Acts 2:33; Acts 5:31; Acts 13:17; 2 Co. 11:7; Jas. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6

**Draw** (1670) **helko** means literally; (1) of a sword draw, unsheath (Jn 18:10) (2) of a person, forcibly led drag (Acts 16:19; Acts 21:30); (3) of a net haul, drag (Jn 21:6 = "Simon Peter went up and **drew** the net to land, full of large fish"); (4) as a legal technical term meaning to lead by force, drag into court (Jas 2:6) and **figuratively, of a strong pull in the mental or moral life to draw by exertion of an inward power.** (Jn 6:44, 12:32).

Jn. 6:44; Jn. 12:32; Jn. 18:10; Jn. 21:6; Jn. 21:11; Acts 16:19; Acts 21:30; Jas. 2:6

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**Brian Bell** - Loves transfigures Calvary; then Calvary transfigures everything else. Can you see your **ultimate triumph** beyond your **present tragedy**?

**Illustration:** A young Christian student offered his life for **overseas missionary service** & labors hard at study to become a qualified **doctor**, is suddenly afflicted with an illness the very year he qualifies, & is informed that he can *never* go out as a missionary. Is God mocking him? These life enigmas make our baffled minds & our frustrated longings scream, *WHY?* (*Ibid pg; 94*) William Cowper (famous Hymn writer), who had a strange enigma in his own life wrote, *Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust Him for His grace; Behind a frowning providence, God hides a smiling face.* That young medical graduate, who could not go out as a missionary learned to find his **ultimate triumph** beyond his **present tragedy**. **For he was used to influence & train hundreds for the overseas fields;** & today there is a large missionary memorial hospital erected in his venerated memory.

*Puzzled, frustrated, disappointed* Christian? there is a **golden lining** to the cloud & a **hidden good purpose** in that which seems cruel. See your **ultimate triumph** beyond your **present tragedy**?

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### Stephen Olford - "I must preach." – Luke 4:43

These were the words of the perfect preacher, the Lord Jesus Christ. His very heart burned with a holy passion for souls. "I must preach," it was imperative. His great love compelled Him. His holy ministry was characterized by His devotedness to His ministry. He was to seek and to save. Therefore:

- He **must** be about His Father's business (Luke 2:49).
- He **must** preach (Luke 4:43).
- He **must** go through Samaria (John 4:4).
- He **must** be lifted up (John 12:32).

The apostle Paul burned with the same spiritual zeal. He therefore could say, "Necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16). And, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1).

**Create this passion within my soul, O Lord.**

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### Chris Tiegreen - High and Lifted Up

"I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." John 12:32

"The Cross is the ladder to heaven." —Thomas Drake

IN WORD How is Jesus lifted up?

- On the cross. John's commentary in verse 33 is clear: Jesus is indicating the means by which He would die.
- Like the serpent. In Numbers 21, God sent venomous snakes as a result of Israel's sin. Moses was told to put a serpent on his staff and lift it up. Whoever looked at the icon of the curse was spared from the result of the curse. Jesus became the curse for us; if we gaze at the curse on Him, we are spared from the curse on us (see John 3:14-15).
- As an example. Jesus asked the Father to glorify the Son, that the Son might glorify the Father (John 17:1). In His death, He was lifted up both literally and figuratively.
- By the Resurrection. From death to life, from the stench of the grave to the aroma of sacrifice, from a dark tomb to an eternal light—Jesus was lifted up above the archenemy of the human race: death.
- In the Ascension. He was taken up into heaven, lifted above all creation in glory.
- Through our praise. The most glorious scenes in the book of Revelation are of those who worship around His throne: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:12).

IN DEED Our Savior is the apex of all that is. There is nothing higher, no one greater. In the great condescension, He came down, clothed Himself in human flesh, and lived among us, only to be lifted up in as shameful a way as man can conceive. But that lifting up—the most evil thing humanity could have done—was the very thing that God uses to draw us to Himself. Our murder of the

divine is the very act that God tells us to gaze at to see His judgment of our sin and His plan to redeem us. Never let yourself cease to be drawn to Him. (See [The One Year At His Feet Devotional](#))

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### **Drawn By The Cross**

I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself. —John 12:32

Today's Scripture: John 12:23-36

Towering above New York Harbor is the Statue of Liberty. That stately lady, with freedom's torch held high, has beckoned millions of people who were choking from the stifling air of tyranny or oppression. They've been drawn to what that monument symbolizes—freedom.

Inscribed on Lady Liberty's pedestal are these words by Emma Lazarus from her poem "The New Colossus":

Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses  
yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse  
of your teeming shore;  
Send these, the homeless,  
tempest-tossed, to me:  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

A different monument towers over history, offering spiritual freedom to enslaved peoples everywhere. It's the cross where Jesus hung 2,000 years ago. At first the scene repels us. Then we see the sinless Son of God dying in our place for our sins. From the cross we hear the words "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34) and "It is finished!" (John 19:30). As we trust in Christ as our Savior, the heavy burden of guilt rolls from our sin-weary souls. We are free for all eternity.

Have you heard and responded to the invitation of the cross? By: Dennis J. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord Jesus, I know I'm a sinner and cannot save myself. I need You as my Savior. Thank You for dying in my place and rising again. I believe in You. Please set me free from my sin. I want to live with You in heaven someday. Amen.

Our greatest freedom is freedom from sin.

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**C H Spurgeon** - COME, ye workers, be encouraged. You fear that you cannot draw a congregation. Try the preaching of a crucified, risen, and ascended Saviour; for this is the greatest "draw" that was ever yet manifested among men. What drew you to Christ but Christ? What draws you to him now but his own blessed self? If you have been drawn to religion by anything else, you will soon be drawn away from it; but Jesus has held you, and will hold you even to the end. Why, then, doubt his power to draw others? Go with the name of Jesus to those who have hitherto been stubborn, and see if it does not draw them.

No sort of man is beyond this drawing power. Old and young, rich and poor, ignorant and learned, depraved or amiable—all men shall feel the attractive force. Jesus is the one magnet. Let us not think of any other. Music will not draw to Jesus, neither will eloquence, logic, ceremonial, or noise. Jesus himself must draw men to himself; and Jesus is quite equal to the work in every case. Be not tempted by the quackeries of the day; but as workers for the Lord work in his own way, and draw with the Lord's own cords. Draw to Christ, and draw by Christ, for then Christ will draw by you.

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### **C H Spurgeon - [The Marvellous Magnet](#)**

'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.'  
John 12:32–33

I dare say that you have heard the oft-recounted story of the missionaries among the Greenlanders. Our Moravian brethren, full of fire and zeal and self-denial, went right away among the ignorant folk of Greenland, as those people then were, longing to convert them. Using large prudence, they thought, 'These people are so benighted that it cannot be of any use to preach Jesus Christ to them at first. They do not even know that there is a God, so let us begin by teaching them the nature of the Deity, showing them right and wrong, proving to them the need of atonement for sin, and setting before them the rewards of the righteous and the penalties of the wicked.' This was judged to be most fit preparatory work. Watch for the result! They went on for years, but had no converts. What was there in all that fine preparatory teaching that could convert anybody? Jesus was being locked out of the



Greenlanders' hearts by those who wanted him to enter. But one day one of the missionaries happened to read to a poor Greenlander the story of Jesus bleeding on the cross, and how God had sent his Son to die, 'that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life', and the Greenlander said, 'Would you read me that again? What wonderful words! Did the Son of God die for us poor Greenlanders that we may live?' The missionary answered that it was even so; and, clapping his hands, the simple native cried, 'Why did you not tell us that before?' Ah, just so! Why not tell them this at once, and leave it to clear its own path? That is the point to begin with. Let us start with 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' To my mind that is the point to begin with and the point to go on with; yes, that is the truth to conclude with.

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### **James Butler's Sermon Starters - TRUTHS ABOUT CALVARY**

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

Christ spoke these words about Calvary a few days before His crucifixion. They teach some important truths about the crucifixion. We note three of them.

#### **FIRST—THE REQUIREMENT OF CALVARY**

"If I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

The "lifting up" refers to the cross. Was Calvary necessary? Some seem to think it was not. But our text says otherwise. It says that Calvary was absolutely necessary if there was to be any drawing of men to Christ. Some talk of the saving life of Christ. While Christ lived an impeccable life, it alone could not provide salvation for the sinner. It is the death of Christ on the cross that makes it possible for the sinner to be saved. Had Christ not died on the cross, there would be no Gospel, no soul salvation. If salvation was dependent only on the life of Christ, then Calvary was unnecessary and a mistake. Then the crucifixion of Christ was not planned by God but was a time when God lost control and man and evil took over. But that is not the message of our text. Our text fits with those that tell us that Calvary was planned before the creation of the world (1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8). Without Calvary, Christ could not be our Savior. It is absolutely required to give the sinner a Gospel message.

#### **SECOND—THE REPROACH OF CALVARY**

"If I be lifted up from the earth."

Christ was here speaking of a particular form of death, namely, crucifixion. The Jews stoned to bring death to people, the Romans put people on a cross to slay them. Christ would meet death via the Roman method of punishment. He would not be stoned to death, but would die on the cross. The crucifixion on the cross was a very ignominious way of death. It was humbling, for Paul said, Christ humbled himself to "even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8) and said of the cross, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13; cp. Deuteronomy 21:23). The cross made the death of Christ a real reproach for our Lord. Christ suffered much for us on the cross, and that suffering included much reproach.

#### **THIRD—THE REBUKE OF CALVARY**

"Will draw all men unto me."

Our text says Calvary is a real rebuke to man. It says that men have gone away from God (otherwise they would not need to be drawn to God). God did not move, man moved. As soon as man sinned they tried to leave the presence of God (Genesis 3:8 and 4:16). Isaiah 53:6 calls this moving "gone astray." But God in grace would draw man back to Him. But it takes Calvary to draw men to God. Nothing else will do it. This is the only plan of salvation that will accomplish the need of man. Man has tried a number of other remedies, but nothing brings man back to God except Calvary. As the hymn writer said, "The way of the cross leads home."

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### **C H Spurgeon - Christ lifted up**

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12:32

Christ preached his own truth, and the common people heard him gladly, and the multitude flocked to listen to him. My good ministering brother, have you got an empty church? Do you want to fill it? I will give you a good recipe, and if you will follow it, you will, in all probability, have your chapel full to the doors. Burn all your manuscripts, that is number one. Give up your notes, that is number two. Read your Bible and preach it as you find it in the simplicity of its language. And give up all your latinized English. Begin to tell the people what you have felt in your own heart, and beseech the Holy Spirit to make your heart as hot as a furnace for

zeal. Then go out and talk to the people. Speak to them like their brother. Be a man amongst men. Tell them what you have felt and what you know, and tell them heartily with a good, bold face; and, my dear friend, I do not care who you are, you will get a congregation. But if you say, "Now, to get a congregation, I must buy an organ." That will not serve you a bit. "But we must have a good choir." I would not care to have a congregation that comes through a good choir. "No," says another, "but really I must alter my style of preaching a little." My dear friend, it is not the style of preaching, it is the style of feeling. People sometimes begin to mimic other preachers, because they are successful. Why, the worst preachers are those who mimic others, whom they look upon as standards. Preach naturally. Preach out of your hearts just what you feel to be true, and the old soul-stirring words of the gospel will soon draw a congregation.

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### **Oswald Chambers - The right lines of work**

I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. John 12:32.

Very few of us have any understanding of the reason why Jesus Christ died. If sympathy is all that human beings need, then the Cross of Christ is a farce, there was no need for it. What the world needs is not 'a little bit of love,' but a surgical operation.

When you are face to face with a soul in difficulty spiritually, remind yourself of Jesus Christ on the Cross. If that soul can get to God on any other line, then the Cross of Jesus Christ is unnecessary. If you can help others by your sympathy or understanding, you are a traitor to Jesus Christ. You have to keep your soul rightly related to God and pour out for others on His line, not pour out on the human line and ignore God. The great note to-day is amiable religiosity.

The one thing we have to do is to exhibit Jesus Christ crucified, to lift Him up all the time. Every doctrine that is not imbedded in the Cross of Jesus will lead astray. If the worker himself believes in Jesus Christ and is banking on the Reality of Redemption, the people he talks to must be concerned. The thing that remains and deepens is the worker's simple relationship to Jesus Christ; his usefulness to God depends on that and that alone.

The calling of a New Testament worker is to uncover sin and to reveal Jesus Christ as Saviour, consequently he cannot be poetical, he must be sternly surgical. We are sent by God to lift up Jesus Christ, not to give wonderfully beautiful discourses. We have to probe straight down as deeply as God has probed us, to be keen in sensing the Scriptures which bring the truth straight home and to apply them fearlessly.

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**Talmage** - Archimedes wanted a fulcrum on which to place his lever, and then he said he could move the world. Calvary is the fulcrum, and the Cross of Christ is the lever; by that power all nations shall yet be lifted.

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### **C H Spurgeon - [The Great Attraction](#)**

'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' John 12:32

Believers working for Christ, learn from the text that if you would win souls, you must draw them rather than drive them. Very few people are bullied into heaven. The way to bring men to Jesus Christ is not by rough words, black looks and continually warning them, but rather by gentle invitations. Tenderly as a nurse with her child must we seek to win souls. In the second place, if we would win souls, Jesus Christ must be our great attraction. In the Sunday-school class, visiting from house to house, or elsewhere, we must keep close to the text and the text must be the cross. I must confess there is a very great sweetness to my soul in preaching about Christ. I hope it is never a weariness to preach any part of divine truth, but it is delight itself to preach up the Master: then we have to deal with the heart of the matter. When we preach Jesus Christ, we are not putting out the plates, knives and forks for the feast, but we are handing out the bread itself. Now we are not, as it were, working in the field at the hedging, the ditching and the sowing, but we are gathering the golden sheaves and bringing the harvest home. If we want a hundredfold harvest, we must sow seed which was steeped in the blood of Calvary; and, dear friends, if you want to be drawn nearer to Christ yourselves, do not go to Moses to help you, but get to Christ. Go to Christ to get to Christ. 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men'—where?—'unto me.' Jesus draws to himself. Recollect you have never experienced the fulness of the drawings unless you are drawn to Christ. If you are only drawn to holiness, or to the church, or to good experiences, you have not obtained the fulness and soul of the matter. You must be drawn to Christ.

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**J C Philpot** - Wherever Jesus is graciously and experimentally manifested to the soul, and made known by any sweet revelation of His glorious Person, atoning blood, and finished work, a secret yet sacred power is put forth, whereby we are drawn unto Him, and every grace of the Spirit flows toward Him as towards its attractive centre. Thus Jeremiah speaks of the saints of God as coming and singing in the height of Zion, and flowing together to the goodness of the Lord. And thus Isaiah speaks to the church of God, "Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear [or as the word rather means, shall 'palpitate' with love and joy],

and be enlarged.” This view of Christ by faith is what the apostle speaks of to the Galatians, as Jesus evidently set forth before their eyes. As thus set before our eyes, He becomes the object of our faith to look at, (“Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth”); “the altogether lovely,” to whom love flows; and the Intercessor within the veil in whom hope effectually anchors. As, then, the blessed Lord is revealed to the soul by the power of God, His glorious Person held up before the eyes of the spiritual understanding, His blood and righteousness discovered to the conscience, and His suitability to all our wants and woes experimentally manifested, the blessed Spirit raises up a living faith whereby He is looked unto and laid hold of, and thus He becomes precious to all that believe in His name.

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### The Cross Of Liberty

I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself. —John 12:32

Today's Scripture: John 12:23-36

Towering above New York Harbor is the Statue of Liberty. For more than 100 years, that stately lady, with freedom's torch held high, has beckoned millions of people who are choking from the stifling air of tyranny and oppression. They've been drawn to what that monument symbolizes—freedom.

Inscribed on Lady Liberty's pedestal are the deeply moving words by Emma Lazarus: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

A different monument towers over history, offering spiritual freedom to enslaved people throughout the world. It's the Roman cross where Jesus Christ hung 2,000 years ago. At first the scene repels. Then we see the sinless Son of God dying in our place to pay the penalty for our sins. From the cross we hear the words “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34) and “It is finished!” (John 19:30). As we trust in Christ as our Savior, the heavy burden of guilt rolls from our sin-weary souls. We are free for all eternity.

Have you heard and responded to the invitation of the cross? By: Dennis J. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

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### **J J Knap - Draw All Men Unto Me John 12:32**

Jesus spoke this word in reference to the question of some Greek who wished to see Him. In those Greek He met some of the most honourable representatives of the heathen world. During His earthly life, however, He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, so that the moment had not come yet to bring the message of salvation to the people that lived still in darkness. Once Christ would be lifted up from the earth upon the cross,—then the hour would have come when He would draw all men, not only the Jews any more, but Jews and Heathen together, unto Himself, to prove in this manner that He was not only the Saviour of one nation, but in the full truth of the word, the Saviour of the world.

This is a rich promise that the sinner's heart requires. When we have to open our heart before the Lord, we have to confess in shame, that by nature we live far from God and Christ. We are drawn and captivated by something else; we all experience the seducing power of the sinful world and of her captain, as Jesus called the Evil One. A magnet lies hidden in sin, and our heart is the steel that is pulled towards it and cleaves to it, while the holiness and the righteousness of the Kingdom of God does not allure or captivate our fleshly heart. However, thanks be unto God, high upon the cross, high upon the throne, is One who draws us unto Him and binds us to Him.

It is a drawing with power. Even the strongest bonds of sin and world, yea, even of the prince of darkness, shall break like threads of linen and we are released inwardly from bondmen to reconciled children of God.

It is a drawing in grace. It breaks our unwillingness, it conquers our sluggishness, and it takes away our reluctance and our mistrust.

It is a drawing in faithfulness. Once the Saviour has begun a good work, He shall never allow it to fail, but He leads us from light to light, from strength to strength, from glory to glory.

Finally, it is a drawing in all-bearing, all-covering, all-forgiving love. No matter how often resisted, He returns again and again. However many times grieved, He does not reject us. However often treated like the least worthy of men, He does not get tired of drawing, as long as it is the time of grace. He also graciously keeps them whom He has drawn once. Our soul is kept safely with Him till in and beyond death. When our hour of death has struck, our spirit escapes from us, and our eyes break in mists, the text of today shall be fulfilled completely: He shall draw us through death and grave to the place of elevation,—where He is, His servant shall also be.

## John 12:33 But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.

BGT John 12:33 το το ὃ λέγειν σημαίων πο θαντ μελλεν ποθν σκειν.

KJV John 12:33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

NET John 12:33 (Now he said this to indicate clearly what kind of death he was going to die.)

CSB John 12:33 He said this to signify what kind of death He was about to die.

ESV John 12:33 He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

NIV John 12:33 He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

NLT John 12:33 He said this to indicate how he was going to die.

NRS John 12:33 He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

NJB John 12:33 By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

NAB John 12:33 He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

YLT John 12:33 And this he said signifying by what death he was about to die;

MIT John 12:33 He said this indicating what kind of death he was about to experience.

- **He was saying this to indicate** Jn 18:32 21:19
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

Deuteronomy 21:22-23 "If a man has committed a sin worthy of death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance.

John 18:32 to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, **signifying** ([semaino](#)) **by what kind of death He was about to die.**

John 21:19 Now this He said, **signifying** ([semaino](#)) by what kind of death he (PETER) would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He \*said to him, "Follow Me!"

## JESUS EXPLAINS WHAT LIFTED UP MEANT

**But** (Now is better than "but") **He was saying this to indicate** ([semaino](#)) **the kind of death** ([thanatos](#)) **by which He was** ([mello](#) - about) **to die** ([apothnesko](#)) - John now gives a parenthetical (or "editorial") explanation (remember he wrote after all these events and many things that were unclear became very clear). John explains that the meaning of lifted up in Jn 12:32 is a reference to Jesus' death on the Cross. Thus He would fulfill the Scripture that said Lord had to die by hanging on a tree (Dt 21:23; Gal 3:13) and not by the usual Jewish method of stoning.

**William MacDonald** - Here again we have evidence of the all-knowledge of the Lord. He knew in advance that He would not die in bed or by accident, but that He would be nailed to a cross. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - He alluded to his crucifixion, which is the great attractive center of mankind.

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**Indicate** (made clear) ([4591](#)) ([semaino](#) from **semma** = a mark or sign) has a basic meaning of give a sign, to signify especially with the purpose of revealing, explaining or interpreting something (See Rev 1:1). It means to intentionally produce an impression and thus to signal or signify something, to make known, to report, to communicate (Acts 25:27 = "indicate the charges", Rev 1:1 = served to communicate and give a prophecy). John uses [semaino](#) three times in describing how Jesus would die (Jn 12:33, 18:32) and how Peter would die (John 21:19). In the context of making known before it means to prophetically foretell (Jn 12:33 - Jesus predicting His death). In the Lxx of Nu 10:9 the idea is to give a public sign or signal. In the Lxx uses in Ezekiel the idea was to sound an alarm, blow a trumpet (Ezek 33:3, 33:6, cf Jer 4:5).

**John 12:34 The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"**

BGT John 12:34 περὶ οὗ αὐτοῦ χλός· μερὶ κοσάμεν κ τοῦ μου τι χριστὸς μνείεσται νῦν, καὶ πρὸς λαοὺς σὺ τι δεῖ ψωθῆναι τὸν υἱοῦ τοῦ θρόνου; τὸ σπινότος υἱὸς τοῦ θρόνου;

KJV John 12:34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

NET John 12:34 Then the crowd responded, "We have heard from the law that the Christ will remain forever. How can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

CSB John 12:34 Then the crowd replied to Him, "We have heard from the scripture that the Messiah will remain forever. So how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

ESV John 12:34 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?"

NIV John 12:34 The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?"

NLT John 12:34 The crowd responded, "We understood from Scripture that the Messiah would live forever. How can you say the Son of Man will die? Just who is this Son of Man, anyway?"

NRS John 12:34 The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"

NJB John 12:34 The crowd answered, 'The Law has taught us that the Christ will remain for ever. So how can you say, "The Son of man must be lifted up"? Who is this Son of man?'

NAB John 12:34 So the crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. Then how can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"

YLT John 12:34 the multitude answered him, 'We heard out of the law that the Christ doth remain -- to the age; and how dost thou say, That it behoveth the Son of Man to be lifted up? who is this -- the Son of Man?'

MIT John 12:34 The crowd replied to him, "We heard from the law that the messiah remains forever. How do you say it is imperative that the human one is to be lifted up? Who is this human one?"

- **We have heard out of the Law:** Jn 10:34 Jn 15:25 Ro 3:19 5:18
- **Christ:** 2Sa 7:13 Ps 72:7,17-19 Ps 89:36,37 Ps 110:4 Isa 9:7 53:8 Eze 37:24,25 Da 2:44 7:14,27 Mic 4:7
- **who:** Jn 3:14-16 5:25-27 8:53-58 Mt 16:13 21:10 22:42-45
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:**

2 Samuel 7:13 "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Psalms 72:7; 17-19 In his days may the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace till the moon is no more.

Psalms 72:17-19 17 May his name endure forever; May his name increase as long as the sun shines; And let men bless themselves by him; Let all nations call him blessed. 18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who alone works wonders. 19 And blessed be His glorious name forever; And may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen.

Psalms 89:4 I will establish your seed forever And build up your throne to all generations." Selah.

Psalms 89:29 "So I will establish his descendants forever And his throne as the days of heaven.

Psalms 89:36-37 "His descendants shall endure forever And his throne as the sun before Me. 37 "It shall be established forever like the moon, And the witness in the sky is faithful." Selah.

Psalms 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

Isaiah 9:7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and

over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

## THE CROWD'S CONFUSION

**The crowd then answered Him** - Steven Cole sees this not as a sincere question, but a defiant challenge. (Their “**we**” and “**You**” are emphatic in the Greek text, pitting them against Jesus.)

**Spurgeon** - As they were always doing, capaciously answering; not answering to him with sentiments that responded to his, but replying against him with their caviling (making petty or unnecessary objections).

**We have heard out of the Law that the Christ** (the Messiah) **is to remain** ([meno](#)) **forever** ([aion](#) - unto the age) - They are alluding to Messianic prophecy (so apparently they were somewhat Biblically literate) and while they say **Law**, it is likely they were not specifically or solely referring to the [Pentateuch](#). In light of the fact that they have understood He was referring to death, they are confused (and confrontational) because they thought the Messiah would **remain** and reign **forever**. They understood only one coming of the Messiah, not two.

**Robertson** explains that Law is not referring to the first 5 books of the Bible, but has the sense of "out of the Scriptures" (John 10:34; John 15:25).

**NET NOTE** on what they had heard **out of the Law** - Probably an allusion to Ps 89:35–37. It is difficult to pinpoint the passage in the **Mosaic law** to which the crowd refers. The ones most often suggested are Ps 89:36–37, Ps 110:4, Isa 9:7, Ezek 37:25, and Dan 7:14. None of these passages are in the Pentateuch per se, but "**law**" could in common usage refer to the entire OT (compare Jesus' use in John 10:34). Of the passages mentioned, Ps 89:36–37 is the most likely candidate. This verse speaks of David's "seed" remaining forever. Later in the same psalm, v. 51 speaks of the "anointed" (Messiah), and the psalm was interpreted messianically in both the NT ( Acts 13:22, Rev 1:5, 3:14) and in the rabbinic literature (Genesis Rabbah 97).

**Henry Morris** on **remain forever** - Indeed He shall, for "His name shall endure for ever" (Psalm 72:17). His kingdom shall endure "with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isaiah 9:7). But first, He must be "lifted up" and then "the Son of man should be glorified" (John 12:23) through His sacrificial death and victory over death.

**And how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up' ([hupsou](#))?** - Clearly the crowd understood Son of Man as a Messianic title and His words **lifted up** ([hupsou](#)) referring to His crucifixion and His death. So they also use this same designation Jesus Himself used ([Son of Man](#)). But being ignorant of the prophecies that the Messiah must first die and then return and reign, they thought that if He were **lifted up** (killed) clearly He could not reign **forever**. This is what happens when you misinterpret (or even fail to read) God's Word! You can't think clearly about eternal matters.

**Who is this Son of Man?"** - This is the only time in the Gospels where **Son of Man** is used by someone other than Jesus. Jesus had first used [Son of Man](#) in Jn 12:23 explaining He would be glorified. But then they asked this most amazing question! It is as if they did not use their eyes and ears to see Him standing in front of them. And of course the answer is that they were spiritually blind and deaf and their hearts were hard, which would be further explained in John 12:38ff.

**Spurgeon** - As if it could not be true that Christ, in his divine nature, abides for ever, and yet, as Man, could be lifted up to die. It was a sneering question, "Who is this Son of man?" Our Lord did not answer it, thus teaching us that some people are not worth answering. Instead of replying to their question, Jesus gave them a practical admonition.

**John 12:35 So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.**

BGT John 12:35 ε πεν ο ν α το ς η σο ς· τι μικρ ν χρ von τ φ ς ν μ ν σtiv. περιπατε τε ς τ φ ς χετε, να μ σκοτ α μ ς καταλ β · κα περιπατ ν ν τ σκοτ ο κ ο δεν πο π γει.

KJV John 12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

NET John 12:35 Jesus replied, "The light is with you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.

CSB John 12:35 Jesus answered, "The light will be with you only a little longer. Walk while you have the light



so that darkness doesn't overtake you. The one who walks in darkness doesn't know where he's going.

ESV John 12:35 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.

NIV John 12:35 Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.

NLT John 12:35 Jesus replied, "My light will shine for you just a little longer. Walk in the light while you can, so the darkness will not overtake you. Those who walk in the darkness cannot see where they are going.

NRS John 12:35 Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going.

NJB John 12:35 Jesus then said: The light will be with you only a little longer now. Go on your way while you have the light, or darkness will overtake you, and nobody who walks in the dark knows where he is going.

NAB John 12:35 Jesus said to them, "The light will be among you only a little while. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness may not overcome you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where he is going.

YLT John 12:35 Jesus, therefore, said to them, 'Yet a little time is the light with you; walk while ye have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; and he who is walking in the darkness hath not known where he goeth;

MIT John 12:35 Jesus said to them, "For only a little longer will the light be among you. Walk in the light while you have it, lest darkness overtake you. One who moves about in darkness does not know where he is going.

- **For a little while longer the Light is among you** Jn 7:33 Jn 9:4 16:16 Heb 3:7,8
- **Walk while you have the Light:** Jn 12:36,46, Jn 1:5-9, Jn 8:12, Jn 9:5 Isa 2:5 Isa 42:6,7 Ro 13:12-14 Eph 5:8,14,15 1Th 5:5-8 1Jn 1:6,7
- **so that darkness will not overtake you:** Jn 12:39,40 Ps 69:22-28 Jer 13:16,17 Ro 11:7-10 2Co 3:14
- **he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes** Jn 11:10 Pr 4:19 1Jn 2:8-11
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 1:5-9 The **Light** ([phos](#)) shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. 6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to testify about the **Light**, so that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the **Light**, but he came to testify about the **Light**. 9 There was the true **Light** ([phos](#)) which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

John 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the **Light** ([phos](#)) of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the **Light** ([phos](#)) of life."

John 9:5 "While I am in the world, I am the **Light** ([phos](#)) of the world."

1 John 2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the **darkness** ([skotia](#)) and walks in the **darkness** ([skotia](#)), and does not know where he is going because the **darkness** ([skotia](#)) has blinded his eyes.

### A NARROW WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY TO WALK IN THE LIGHT

**So** ([oun](#)) - Term of conclusion. Jesus responds to the crowd but does not directly answer their question.

Note that John 12:35-36 and Jn 12:44-50 represent the last public teaching in John's Gospel. Luke records that He did teach in the Temple in the days preceding the Cross (Lk 21:37-38).

**Spurgeon** - At first sight, this may not seem to have been an answer to their question, **Who is this Son of man?** Yet it was a very direct answer, for he was "the Light of the world;" and as the light was soon to be withdrawn from them, there was all the greater need of Christ's injunctions, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."

**Steven Cole** explains Jesus' answer to their question in Jn 12:34 - Jesus realized that answering their question would not get to their root problem. If their problem had been theological, Jesus could have replied, "Haven't you read Isaiah 53, about Messiah dying

for His people's sins? Haven't you read Psalm 22 about Messiah's death or Daniel 9:26, which says that Messiah will be cut off?" But the Jews' problem was not theological, but moral. They were walking in spiritual and moral darkness. So Jesus replied with John 12:35-36a. ([Christ Lifted Up](#))

[Robertson](#) adds "Jesus does not argue the point of theology with the crowd who would not understand. He turns to the metaphor used before when he claimed to be the light of the world (John 8:12) and urges that they take advantage of their privilege "while ye have the light"

**Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the Light ([phos](#)) is among you - For a little while longer** in context refers to just a few days before He is to be crucified as the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29). The crowd had asked "Who is the Son of Man?" He does not say flatly "I am." Instead He returns to the metaphor of **Light**. Translated He is saying "I will be crucified in just a few days on Passover." Clearly the keyword in John 12:35-36 is **Light ([phos](#))** which is used 5 times (and once more in Jn 12:46). Those who failed to appropriate the **Light** would lose their opportunity. And they only had a **little while longer!**

One is reminded of Paul's words in 2Co 6:2+ "for He says, "AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU." Behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION"

**Little while** is a repeated phrase in John - Jn. 7:33; Jn. 12:35; Jn. 13:33; Jn. 14:19; Jn. 16:16-19 = this "little while" was the time between His death and resurrection and related only to His disciples.

**Walk ([peripateo](#) in [present imperative](#)) while you have the Light ([phos](#)), so that ([hina](#) - purpose clause) darkness ([skotia](#)) will not overtake ([katalambano](#)) you** - Of course the greatest **darkness to overtake** any human being is the darkness of eternal punishment which is reserved for all who reject the Light of the world. Clearly in context Jesus' command to **walk** is a call to believe in Him as the Light.

Paul issues a command to the Ephesian believers to **walk** using the light/darkness metaphor explaining that "you were formerly **darkness ([skotos](#))**(NOT JUST "IN" DARKNESS, BUT THE ESSENCE OF DARKNESS!), but now you are Light in the Lord; **walk ([peripateo](#) in [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) as children of Light** (COMPARE "SONS OF LIGHT" in Jn 12:36) (Eph 5:8+)

*Jesus warns us not to waste our opportunity to be saved.*

**NET NOTE** - The warning **Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake** you operates on at least two different levels: (1) To the Jewish people in Jerusalem to whom Jesus spoke, the warning was a reminder that there was only a little time left for them to accept him as their Messiah. (2) To those later individuals to whom the Fourth Gospel was written, and to every person since, the words of Jesus are also a warning: There is a finite, limited time in which each individual has opportunity to respond to the Light of the world (i.e., Jesus); after that comes darkness. One's response to the Light decisively determines one's judgment for eternity.

**Spurgeon** applies this truth - It is always well to use the light that we already have. If any man will use the light he already has, God will be sure to give him more. That is a good saying of an old Puritan, "If thou hast starlight, thank God for it, and he will give thee moonlight; and when thou hast moonlight, give thanks to God for it, and he will give thee sunlight." And so it shall be. Nothing is worse than sinning against light. If it is only the light of conscience, even if you know it is not perfect, yet, nevertheless, never sin against it; for, if you do-you will quench it, and to quench the light you have, is the way to effectually prevent your having any more: "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."

**John MacArthur** - The sobering truth is that when sinners persistently reject Him, God may ultimately remove His grace and judge them (ED: **darkness will...overtake** them). (See [John Commentary](#))

**He who walks ([peripateo](#)) in the darkness ([skotia](#)) does not know ([eido](#)) where he goes - Walks ([peripateo](#))** is in the present tense describing one who continually walks in spiritual **darkness**, one who is dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1-2+). This is one who is spiritually blind and cannot even **know** where he is going, which (unless the Light "goes off!") ultimately will be to hell.

*He lacks divine guidance, and stumbles through life.*

-- William MacDonald

**A T Robertson** - The ancients did not have our electric street lights. The dark streets were a terror to travellers.

**Spurgeon** - What a sad condition to be in, not to know where you are going! Are there not some of you, whom I am now addressing, who do not know where you are going? Yet, if you would but take the trouble to look, you might easily know that, so long as you continue in the paths of sin, you are going down to the chambers of death. Oh, that God's Holy Spirit would give you sufficient light to enable you to see where you are going! You surely do not want to take "a leap in the dark." Oh, that you may have the grace to

turn from the downward way, and to seek the heavenward road!

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**Darkness** (4653) [skotia](#) from **skotos** = darkness) means literal darkness in some NT uses (Jn 6:17, 20:1), but more often (14/16x) is used figuratively to refer to **spiritual darkness**. In every NT figurative use, **darkness** is contrasted with light in all but one passage (1Jn 2:11). As noted below "Darkness has no existence by itself, being definable simply as an absence of light." In the spiritual sense **darkness** describes both the state and works of a person. It symbolizes evil and sin, everything that life should not **be** and everything that a person should not **do**!

**Skotia - 13v - dark(3), darkness(14).** Matt. 4:16; Matt. 10:27; Lk. 12:3; Jn. 1:5; Jn. 6:17; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 12:35; Jn. 12:46; Jn. 20:1; 1 Jn. 1:5; 1 Jn. 2:8; 1 Jn. 2:9; 1 Jn. 2:11

**The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery** has a helpful summary of **darkness** in Scripture...**Darkness** has no existence by itself, being definable simply as an absence of light. It is a physical and spiritual reality as well as an apt symbol for some of the profoundest human experiences. With approximately two hundred references, darkness is a major actor in the biblical drama... Darkness stands out from virtually all other literary images, which are finally ambivalent (having both good and bad manifestations), because it is uniformly negative in its import... **Throughout the Bible, darkness is an implied contrast to light, regardless of whether the darkness is physical or symbolic.** In fact, sixty verses present light and darkness as a contrasting pair, and being brought out of darkness into light is a major biblical image of redemption... If light symbolizes understanding, darkness represents ignorance (Ps 82:5), folly (Eccles 2:13–14), a silencing of prophetic revelation (Mic 3:6), the state of the human mind unilluminated by God's revelation (2Pet 1:19), falsehood (1 Jn 1:6) and the loss of walking in God's truth "because the darkness has brought on blindness" (1 Jn 2:11NRSV). If light symbolizes good, darkness is the corresponding image for evil people "who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness" (Pr 2:13NRSV; cf. Pr 4:19). In Jesus' mysterious picture of the eye as "the lamp of the body," physical blindness becomes a metaphor for the lost state (Mt 6:22–23; Lk 11:34–36). (Ryken, Leland; et al, Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, InterVarsity Press)

**Overtake** (seize, attain, lay hold) (2638) [katalambano](#) from **katá** = adds intensity [or surprise as in 1Th 5:4] to the meaning of the verb + **lambáno** = take) means to take eagerly, grasp with force, lay hold of, seize with hostile intent (this literal meaning vividly depicted by the demon who seizes the son and dashed him to the ground in Mark 9:18). **Katalambano** was used in the sense of laying hold of so as to gain control of. In a secular Greek use we read "they were pursued and overtaken." Figuratively **katalambano** is used in the [middle voice](#) meaning to "seize" or lay hold of with one's mind and thus to comprehend (Jn 1:5, Ep 3:18) or understand (Ac 4:13, 10:34).

**Katalambano - 14v - Mk. 9:18; Jn. 1:5; Jn. 8:3; Jn. 8:4; Jn. 12:35; Acts 4:13; Acts 10:34; Acts 25:25; Rom. 9:30; 1 Co. 9:24; Eph. 3:18; Phil. 3:12; Phil. 3:13; 1 Thess. 5:4 "overtake you like a thief"**

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### Oswald Chambers - Theology alive

Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you. John 12:35.

Beware of not acting upon what you see in your moments on the mount with God. If you do not obey the light, it will turn into darkness. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" The second you waive the question of sanctification or any other thing upon which God gave you light, you begin to get dry rot in your spiritual life. Continually bring the truth out into actuality; work it out in every domain, or the very light you have will prove a curse.

The most difficult person to deal with is the one who has the smug satisfaction of an experience to which he can refer back, but who is not working it out in practical life. If you say you are sanctified, show it. The experience must be so genuine that it is shown in the life. Beware of any belief that makes you self-indulgent; it came from the pit, no matter how beautiful it sounds.

Theology must work itself out in the most practical relationships. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ..." said Our Lord, i.e., you must be more moral than the most moral being you know. You may know all about the doctrine of sanctification, but are you running it out into the practical issues of your life? Every bit of our life, physical, moral and spiritual, is to be judged by the standard of the Atonement.

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### James Smith - LIGHT FROM GOD John 12:35, 36

1. The Nature of this Light. Christ Himself. "I am come a Light into the world" (v. 46).
2. The Evidence of being Without the Light. "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."
3. How this Light is to be Enjoyed. "Believe in the Light." Believe Him.

#### 4. The Possibility of Losing this Light. "While ye have light, believe in it."

**John 12:36 "While you have the Light, **believe** in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.**

BGT John 12:36 ς τ φ ς χετε, πιστε ετε ε ς τ φ ς, να υ ο φωτ ς γ νησθε. τα τα λ λησεν ησο ς, κα πελθ ν κρ βη π α τ ν.

KJV John 12:36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

NET John 12:36 While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become sons of light." When Jesus had said these things, he went away and hid himself from them.

CSB John 12:36 While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become sons of light." Jesus said this, then went away and hid from them.

ESV John 12:36 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.

NIV John 12:36 Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

NLT John 12:36 Put your trust in the light while there is still time; then you will become children of the light." After saying these things, Jesus went away and was hidden from them.

NRS John 12:36 While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light." After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them.

NJB John 12:36 While you still have the light, believe in the light so that you may become children of light. Having said this, Jesus left them and was hidden from their sight.

NAB John 12:36 While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of the light." After he had said this, Jesus left and hid from them.

YLT John 12:36 while ye have the light, believe in the light, that sons of light ye may become.' These things spake Jesus, and having gone away, he was hid from them,

MIT John 12:36 While you have light, believe in the light, so that you might be enlightened." Once he had said these things, Jesus went out and was concealed from them.

- **believe:** Jn 1:7 Jn 3:21 Isa 60:1 Ac 13:47,48
- **sons of Light:** Lu 16:8 Eph 5:8 1Th 5:5,8 1Jn 2:9-11
- **He went away and hid Himself from them.:** Jn 8:59 10:39,40 11:54 Mt 21:17
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 3:21 "But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

1 Thessalonians 5:5 for you are all **sons of light** and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;

1 Thessalonians 5:8 But **since we are of the day**, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

1 John 2:9-11 The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. 10 The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

**JESUS AGAIN CALLS  
FOR BELIEF IN HIMSELF**

**While you have the Light** ([phos](#)) - **While** is a time sensitive word meaning a period of time. There was still a period of time to believe.

**Believe** ([pisteuo](#)) **in the Light** ([phos](#)) - **Believe** ([pisteuo](#)) is a command in the [present imperative](#). Jesus has told them He is the Light, so He could not have stated it much clearer! Of course the only way they could obey this command was by relying wholly on [the Holy Spirit to obey](#). He would not force them, but to those who were willing (and were drawn - Jn 6:44), He would enable them to believe.

**Jesus as the Light of the world** - John 1:4, John 1:5, John 1:7, John 1:8, John 1:9; John 3:19, John 3:20, John 3:21; John 5:35; John 8:12; John 9:5; John 11:9, John 11:10; John 12:35, John 12:36, John 12:46

*Seek the LORD while He may be found;*

*Call upon Him while He is near.*

-- Isaiah 55:6

**So that** ([hina](#) - purpose clause) - Expresses the purpose of belief.

**You may become sons of Light** ([phos](#)) - **Become** is ginomai meaning to come into being or come into existence. In this case the "existence" they would enter into upon believing the Son of God, would be the new birth, born into the family of God by the Spirit of God to be His **sons**. **Sons of Light** is a Hebraism, meaning they are in the family of God, the family of God's Son. They are those who are "spiritually enlightened."

## THE TWO SADDEST VERBS WENT AWAY & HID

**These things Jesus spoke, and He went away** ([aperchomai](#)) **and hid** ([krupto](#)) **Himself from them** - Jesus departing and hiding were in effect a final judgment on the persistent unbelief of the Jews. This verse is tragic, like the final curtain in a Greek tragedy, like the denouement, that final part of the play in which the strands of the plot are drawn together and matters are explained or resolved. Sadly, in this context they would remain unresolved for most of the hearers, as indicated by the following verse.

[Macauley](#) says in departing and hiding - In that act our Lord abandoned them to their unbelief, to reap the awful and long harvest of it. It is a sad thing to see man departing from God and trying to hide himself from God, as Adam did in the garden. It is infinitely sadder when God departs from a man, and hides Himself from him! It is true that "*While the candle holds to burn! The vilest sinner many return,*" but let that sinner disdain God's mercy, and he may find God very far away when he needs Him night, hiding His face when he would fain find Him. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." (Gal 6:7).

**D A Carson** says "by his withdrawal, his self-conscious hiding from the people, [Jesus] is acting out the judicial warning he has just pronounced" (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**Spurgeon** - There is such a thing as judicial blindness. If men can see, and yet will not see, God is at last so provoked by their wickedness that he takes away the light altogether, and removes from them the very faculty of sight. It is not surprising that it should be so, for it was so with the generation in which Christ lived. They had so long rejected the true prophet, — so long refused to listen to the voice of God, that, at last, he abandoned them to their own ways; and nothing worse can happen to a man than to be abandoned of God. If God casts thee off, thou art lost indeed.

**Steven Cole** - But then, realizing their determination to reject and kill Him, Jesus went away and hid Himself from them. We don't know where He went, but perhaps it was Bethany to stay with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. But His departure symbolized the judicial judgment that was about to fall on Israel. It was a prophetic drama acted out to say to Israel, "If you reject Me, I will withdraw and you will not have the Light among you." Hiding Himself also reflects the truth that John has repeatedly shown, that Jesus would die in accord with the Father's timetable, not whenever the Jews wanted to kill Him. His death would be at the Passover, because He is the Lamb of God (John 1:29). ([Why People Don't Believe in Jesus](#))

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**Lowell Johnson** - A magazine shared the story of God's guidance and protection of Major Michael Halt. Halt's battalion had been ordered to cross the Kuwaiti border as part of Operation Desert Storm. The Major was second in command of 130 Marines. The unit had already been under heavy artillery fire and now faced the possibility of oil fires and land mines. Thousands of Iraqi troops waited just beyond the Kuwaiti border. The Major prayed, "Dear God, help me to lead my troops wisely. Watch over us and keep us safe." As the Marines prepared to cross the next morning, they wrote letters to loved ones in case they were killed in battle. The next morning before dawn, the order was given to move out. The skies were clear and the men began to advance toward the border. As they advanced, it began to sprinkle and then it began to rain cats and dogs. The rain came down so hard and fast that the men could not make out the desert landscape ahead of them, hindering the advance. This went on for days. The men were not only concerned

about the enemy ahead, but now the weather seemed to be against them. Major Halt prayed, "Father, please make this rain stop and protect us." The rain continued to pound the unit until they finally neared the border of Kuwait. At the border, the battalion halted while the enemy waited on the other side. On the day of the invasion, the men awoke to clear skies and sunshine. As they closed in on the border, they couldn't believe the sight before them. The torrential rains had washed away the sand to reveal metal disks planted all across their path. It was an Iraqi minefield. God protected these men and gave them direction by using the storms. By the way, He may use your storms and trials to give you direction too. Trust His leading day by day, especially in the times of trouble.

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### John MacArthur - AVOID THE CAVE

Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. JOHN 12:35

When a Christian sins and engages in the deeds of darkness, it's as if he has had a relapse.

Imagine yourself lost in a cave. As you attempt to find your way out, you only proceed deeper and deeper into the network of tunnels. Soon you're in the belly of the earth. You're scared. Your heart is pounding. Your eyes are wide open, but all you can see is an oppressive blackness. You grope for hours, and the hours become a day, and then another day. All hope seems lost. Suddenly, off in the distance, there is a pinpoint of light. You move toward it, groping lest you fall into a deeper pit. Finally the light begins to widen and you find yourself at an opening in the cave! With your remaining strength you charge out into the daylight. You then know a freedom like nothing you had ever conceived was possible. However, not long after your escape you decide there were several things you enjoyed in the cave. So you go back in. How foolish! Yet that is essentially what a Christian does when he follows after deeds of darkness. (BORROW [Truth for today : a daily touch of God's grace](#))

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### Trust the Light

Believe in the light . . . so that you may become children of light. John 12:36

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 12:25–33, 35–36

The weather forecast said bomb cyclone. That's what happens when a winter storm rapidly intensifies as the atmospheric pressure drops. By the time night fell, the blizzard conditions made the highway to the Denver airport almost impossible to see. Almost. But when it's your daughter who's flying home to visit, you do what you have to do. You pack extra clothes and water (just in case you get stranded on the highway), drive very slowly, pray without ceasing, and last but not least, trust your headlights. And sometimes you can achieve the almost impossible.

Jesus foretold of a storm on the horizon, one that would involve His death (John 12:31–33), and one that would challenge His followers to stay faithful and serve (v. 26). It was going to get dark and be almost impossible to see. Almost. So what did Jesus tell them to do? Believe, or trust, the Light (v. 36). That was the only way they could keep going forward and stay faithful.

Jesus would only be with them a little while longer. But believers have His Spirit as our constant guide to light the way. We too will face dark times when it's almost impossible to see the way ahead. Almost. But by believing, or trusting in the Light, we can press on. By: John Blase (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

What dark season have you been through lately? How did Jesus, the Light, help you keep going?

Jesus, thank You for being the light in my darkness. Help me to trust and keep going.

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**John 12:37 But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.**

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BGT John 12:37 Τοσαυτα ὁ αὐτοῦ σημεῖα πεποίηκεν μπροσθεν αὐτῶν, οὐκ ἐπιστευσον ἐς αὐτόν,

KJV John 12:37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

NET John 12:37 Although Jesus had performed so many miraculous signs before them, they still refused to believe in him,

CSB John 12:37 Even though He had performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in Him.

ESV John 12:37 Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him,



NIV John 12:37 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.

NLT John 12:37 But despite all the miraculous signs Jesus had done, most of the people still did not believe in him.

NRS John 12:37 Although he had performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in him.

NJB John 12:37 Though they had been present when he gave so many signs, they did not believe in him;

NAB John 12:37 Although he had performed so many signs in their presence they did not believe in him,

YLT John 12:37 yet he having done so many signs before them, they were not believing in him,

MIT John 12:37 Although he had done so many miraculous signs in their presence, they were not trusting in him.

- Jn 1:11 11:42 15:24 Mt 11:20 Lu 16:31
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES!

**But though** (although, even though) - despite the fact that. In His words and works, Jesus showed Israel the light, but they chose to walk in darkness.

**MacArthur** on John 12:37-40 says "In these verses, John gave the scriptural explanation for such large-scale, catastrophic unbelief on the part of the Jewish nation. The explanation was that the unbelief was not only foreseen in Scripture but necessitated by it. (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**He had performed** ([poieo](#)) **so many** (miraculous) **signs** ([semeion](#)) **before** ([emprosthen](#)) **them** - These **signs** were miracles that had been seen by the Jews. And they were not a few but **many** (cf "many other signs" Jn 20:30). And He performed them "in plain sight," the word [emprosthen](#) signifying in front of, in the sight of. These were not hidden riddles but clear **signs**, their purpose being to point to a destination, in this case belief in Messiah. The old saying is "seeing is believing," but it would not prove true for these Jews who had so many supernatural signs.

**THOUGHT** - Dear skeptic, Dear seeker, Dear agnostic, etc, etc. Do not say that you will believe in Jesus if you see a sign. They had MANY signs and yet did not believe. Similarly you will not believe! In fact you do not need a sign today, for you have His Word which is far better than a sign. Here is His Word - **Believe** ([pisteuo](#) - [aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. (Acts 16:31+).

**Yet they were not** (ouk = absolutely not) **believing** ([pisteuo](#)) **in Him** - **NET** = "They still refused to believe in Him." This concluding passage brings tears to my eyes. It also in essence brings fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9-10 which is quoted in the following verses. Now their hearts would be rendered dull! How this must have grieved our dear Lord's heart (cf Lk 13:24+). What more could He have done?! Nothing. And sadly, their eternal punishment would be much greater for having refused the direct personal Light of the world (Mt 11:21-24+). While this is not the classic [unpardonable sin](#), their blatant, overt rejection of Jesus was certainly comparable.

**Robertson** on **not believing** - Negative imperfect active of [pisteuo](#) "they kept on not believing on him," stubborn refusal in face of the light (verse John 12:35).

**John MacArthur** makes an interesting statement - The fact of unbelief in the face of such irrefutable and powerful evidence makes clear the limitations of [apologetics](#). While evidences can be given for gospel truth, the response of the sinner is not limited to the mind and human reason—salvation requires a [regenerated heart](#), the work of the Holy Spirit (Ezek 36:26-27+)....John lists two causes for Israel's unbelief, one divine and the other human. Taken together, they illustrate the interface between divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

John had earlier explained why the Jews would not believe in Jesus the Light of the world writing "This is the judgment, that the **Light** has come into the world, and **men loved the darkness rather than the Light**, for (EXPLAINS THE FRUIT OF THEIR "LOVE") their deeds were evil. "For (EXPLAINS THE LOVE OF DARKNESS AND THE EFFECT) everyone who does evil hates the **Light**, and does not come to the **Light** for fear that his deeds will be exposed. (Jn 3:19-20+). In a word, they loved their sin more than Jesus!

**THOUGHT** - Are you obeying the light that God has given you or are you suppressing the truth because you love your sins? This question is for believers and non-believers!

**Steven Cole** quips "I will often ask a skeptic, "Are you saying that if I can give you a reasonable answer to this question (ED: COMPARE [apologetics](#)), you will put your trust in Jesus as your Savior?" The one who is suppressing the truth will invariably reply, "I have a lot of other questions, too!" He's not looking for answers; he is rejecting the light that God has given (Jn 3:19-20+)." ([Why People Don't Believe in Jesus](#))

Jesus had warned that greater light rejected would bring greater punishment wrought...

"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 **"But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment, than for you."** 15 "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades! (Lk 10:13-15+)

**Henry Morris** - Some believed, of course (John 12:11), but most did not, especially the Jewish leaders. Not even such mighty miracles of creation as described in John's Gospel will persuade those who prefer not to believe (Luke 16:31). Even Christ's own bodily resurrection will not convince those who do not want to submit to Him.

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**Signs** ([4592](#)) [semeion](#) from **sema** = sign) a sign is something that serves as a pointer to aid perception or insight. In the NT a sign speaks of a token which has behind it a particular message to be conveyed. In other words, in John's Gospel (where semeion is most concentrated) the apostle recorded certain miracles not for the wonder (cf "wonders") they produced, but because of the message they taught (Jn 20:31). A sign directs attention away from its unusual nature to the meaning and the significance it points to. It speaks of outward compelling proof of divine authority. In John a sign is generally a "miraculous sign" that points to some deeper spiritual significance in connection with the event (Jn 2:11, 18). Semeion describes a miracle whose purpose is that of attesting the claims of the one performing the miracle to be true. Most of the 77 occurrences are found in the Gospels (68/77 with 17 in John's Gospel), Acts and Revelation.

**Wayne Detzler** on **semeion** - Early in its use this word meant a visible sign which someone saw. For instance, when Constantine was embroiled in battle he saw the sign of a cross and the words, "In this sign conquer." This turned him to Christianity, and he granted toleration to the Christians in 313. So first of all semeion meant a real or imagined visible sign. Later it came to mean the intervention of the deities in our world. This is the meaning which the Bible attaches to miracles, when God breaks into the natural world to accomplish some special feat. ([New Testament words in today's language](#)).

**Semeion in the Gospels** - Matt. 12:38; Matt. 12:39; Matt. 16:1; Matt. 16:3; Matt. 16:4; Matt. 24:3; Matt. 24:24; Matt. 24:30; Matt. 26:48; Mk. 8:11; Mk. 8:12; Mk. 13:4; Mk. 13:22; Mk. 16:17; Mk. 16:20; Lk. 2:12; Lk. 2:34; Lk. 11:16; Lk. 11:29; Lk. 11:30; Lk. 21:7; Lk. 21:11; Lk. 21:25; Lk. 23:8; Jn. 2:11; Jn. 2:18; Jn. 2:23; Jn. 3:2; Jn. 4:48; Jn. 4:54; Jn. 6:2; Jn. 6:14; Jn. 6:26; Jn. 6:30; Jn. 7:31; Jn. 9:16; Jn. 10:41; Jn. 11:47; Jn. 12:18; Jn. 12:37; Jn. 20:30

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### Henry Blackaby - Unbelief

Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.  
John 12:37

Do you ever think, If I could just see Jesus in the flesh, hear his voice, and watch him perform miracles, it would be much easier to have faith in him? In Jesus' day, people were able to walk with him and observe him firsthand. They were eyewitnesses when he touched a blind man and gave him sight, or healed the rotting flesh of a person with leprosy. They saw him take a young boy's lunch and feed five thousand men with it. Most astonishing, they were there when Lazarus walked out from the tomb, very much alive, four days after his death! These were astounding signs of miraculous power! But the most incredible thing of all was this: even after what they saw and what they heard, some people still refused to believe in Jesus.

Others trusted Jesus so readily it compelled him to remark on the depth of their faith (Matthew 15:28). What was the difference? The difference was the condition of their hearts. People see what they want to see. Those whose hearts are closed to Christ will not trust him even if people come back from the grave in order to convince them (Luke 16:27-31). But those whose hearts are sensitive to God will not need to see miracles in order to believe in Christ and follow him.

Look around you. There are signs of God's power everywhere if you have the eyes to see them. If you are waiting for God to perform miracles so that your faith is increased, you may wait a long time. If, however, you are putting your faith in God, regardless

of what happens, you may be surprised at how many miracles occur around you. (BORROW [The experience : a devotional and journal : day by day with God](#))

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#### C H Spurgeon - [Israel and Britain. A note of warning](#)

'But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?' John 12:37-38

I am growingly fearful lest our own country should furnish a parallel to all this. Read the story of England, beginning where you will, and see how gracious God has been to us. Note well our great deliverances, from the destruction of the Spanish Armada to the overthrow of Napoleon. Do not forget how often this little country has been made victorious in wars against great peoples, who thought to swallow her up. Then reflect how God sent the light to us, how the gospel spread all over England and how it has in many ways been rejected. How often since the days of Cromwell Rome has been allowed to dim the light of our Protestantism and how it labours to do so still! See how this people have received the truth of heaven, but again and again have proved false to it, turning at one time to superstition and at another time to infidelity. At this moment we are rich and, despite depression in business, we are less tried by it than any other nation. What comes of all this mercy but increased sin? At this moment we have sin rampant among us almost beyond precedent. Think how the poor are oppressed and ground down with awful poverty in many parts of this great city. Shall not God avenge the cry of starving women? Worse still, those who dare walk our streets after sundown tell us that Sodom, in its most putrid days, could scarce exceed this metropolis for open vice. To our infinite disgust and horror, the names of certain of the greatest in the land are openly mentioned in connection with the filthiest debauchery. It is a hideous evil that the dregs of vice should be the chosen luxury of certain of our hereditary legislators and rulers. Woe unto thee, O land!

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**Matt Carter - What is Unbelief - ILLUSTRATION** - God used George Whitefield in a way seldom seen in this world. He was the main instrument in the spiritual revival known as the Great Awakening, which swept across the United States in the mid-1700s. Whitefield was also good friends with Benjamin Franklin. Their friendship began when Whitefield came to Philadelphia in 1739 and lasted until his death in 1770. During the course of this thirty-one-year friendship, Franklin was the primary publisher of all of Whitefield's sermons and journals. Forty-five times Whitefield's sermons were reprinted in Franklin's newspaper, The Pennsylvania Gazette, and eight times the sermon filled the entire front page. Franklin published ten editions of Whitefield's journals and sold thousands of reprints of Whitefield's sermons.

Their relationship extended beyond a business relationship. On more than one occasion when Whitefield came to Philadelphia, he stayed with Franklin in his home. When some of the religious elite criticized Whitefield in another local paper, Franklin wrote a rebuttal. His support for Whitefield, along with a regular correspondence between the two, continued for the next thirty years. Despite their friendship and Whitefield's continued presentation of the gospel, Franklin never responded in faith. In his autobiography Franklin wrote about Whitefield: "He used sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard" (quoted in Isaacson, Benjamin Franklin, 113). How do we explain Franklin's rejection of the gospel? He heard and read hundreds of the sermons of America's greatest evangelist. He spent hours with him discussing the gospel. He received dozens of letters over the span of thirty years, yet he was unmoved. Why didn't Benjamin Franklin believe? Why does anyone reject the gospel of Jesus Christ? (See [Exalting Jesus in John](#).)

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**John 12:38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?"**

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BGT John 12:38 να ἄγος σου το προφ του πληρωθῇ ἐπεὶ κριε, τς πιστευεν τ κο μν; κα βραχων κυρου τνι πεκαλ φθη;

KJV John 12:38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

NET John 12:38 **so that** the word of Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled. He said, "Lord, who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

CSB John 12:38 But this was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet, who said: Lord, who has believed our message? And who has the arm of the Lord been revealed to?

ESV John 12:38 **so that** the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

NIV John 12:38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

NLT John 12:38 This is exactly what Isaiah the prophet had predicted: "LORD, who has believed our message? To whom has the LORD revealed his powerful arm?"

NRS John 12:38 This was to fulfill the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "Lord, who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

NJB John 12:38 this was to fulfil the words of the prophet Isaiah: Lord, who has given credence to what they have heard from us, and who has seen in it a revelation of the Lord's arm?

NAB John 12:38 **in order that** the word which Isaiah the prophet spoke might be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed our preaching, to whom has the might of the Lord been revealed?"

YLT John 12:38 **that** the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he said, 'Lord, who gave credence to our report? and the arm of the Lord -- to whom was it revealed?'

MIT John 12:38 This correlated with the fulfillment of the utterance of the prophet Isaiah, who said: Yahveh, who believed our report? To whom was Yahveh's arm revealed?

- **This was to fulfill:** Jn 15:25 17:12 19:24,36,37 Mt 27:35 Ac 13:27-29
- **Isaiah:** 2Ch 32:20, Isaiah, Mt 15:7 Ac 8:28-30 Ro 10:20
- **who:** Isa 53:1 Ro 10:16
- **the arm:** Ps 44:3 Isa 40:10,11 Isaiah 51:5,9 1Co 1:24
- **revealed:** Mt 16:17 2Co 3:14-18 4:3-6 Ga 1:16 Eph 1:17-20
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 1:9-11 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

Isaiah 40:10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might, **With His arm ruling for Him.** Behold, His reward is with Him And His recompense before Him.

Isaiah 51:9 Awake, awake, put on strength, **O arm of the LORD;** Awake as in the days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not You who cut Rahab in pieces, Who pierced the dragon?

Isaiah 62:8 The LORD has sworn by His right hand and **by His strong arm,** "I will never again give your grain as food for your enemies; Nor will foreigners drink your new wine for which you have labored."

### ISAIAH 53 PROPHECY FULFILLED

**D A Carson** has an interesting comment to this last section which he calls the "Theology of Unbelief" (Jn 12:37-50)- Some explanation must be given for such large-scale, catastrophic unbelief. There is ample evidence that the substantial unbelief of the Jewish people before the resurrection was a major hindrance to the conversion of Jews after the resurrection. Surely (it was argued) we may call into question the messianic claims of one so thoroughly rejected by the Jewish people by whom and for whom the prophetic Scriptures were written! The Christian answer, as clearly articulated in Paul (esp. Rom. 9–11) as here, is that this unbelief was not only foreseen by Scripture but on that very account necessitated by Scripture." (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**This was to fulfill (pleroo) the word (logos) of Isaiah the prophet (prophetes) which he spoke** - What is **"this?"** In context **this** is the unbelief of the Jews in the face of incredible spiritual light. The Greek sentence actually begins with [hina](#) which introduces a purpose clause, which is missed in the NAS rendering but is accurately translated in the NET and ESV. In other words, the "purpose" of their rejection was to fulfill prophecy! Do you feel any "tension" in that statement? Of course you do, it is that ever present mysterious tension between God's sovereignty and man's responsibility.

**Paul** also quotes Isaiah writing "However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" (Ro 10:16).

**MacArthur** comments that "In Jn 12:38, John quotes Isa 53:1 and in Jn 12:40 he quotes Isa 6:10 (see Ro 10:16+), both of which

stress the sovereign plan of God in His judicial hardening of Israel (cf. Paul's argument in Ro 9-11+). Although God predestined such judgment, it was not apart from human responsibility and culpability (see Jn 8:24+). (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**LORD ([kurios](#)), WHO HAS BELIEVED ([pisteuo](#)) OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD ([kurios](#)) BEEN REVEALED ([apokalupto](#))?**- What's the answer? NOT MANY! He is quoting Isaiah 53:1 and the answer to the question is very few Jews believed. The question implied that, in spite of these and other prophecies (AND NOW COUNTLESS SIGNS), only a few Jews would recognize the Servant when He appeared. The **arm of the Lord** speaks of the power of God in action, in context surely a reference to the countless miraculous signs Jesus had performed before the Jews!

**Steven Cole** "By citing these verses from Isaiah 53:1 and Isaiah 6:10, John makes two startling claims: (1) The Jews' rejection of Jesus was in order to fulfill prophecy; (2) The Jews were incapable of believing because God had blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts....Jesus cited the same text (Isa. 6:9-10) to explain why He spoke to the multitudes in parables (Matt. 13:14-15). And Paul quoted the same verses to the unbelieving Jews who visited him in Rome to justify why he had turned to the Gentiles (Acts 28:25-27+). ([Why People Don't Believe in Jesus](#))

Verses from Isaiah 53 are quoted at least six times in the New Testament, always indicating prophetic fulfillment in Christ more than 700 years later. Polycarp called this prophecy the "Golden Passional of the Old Testament" and Augustine said, "Methinks Isaiah writes not a prophecy but a gospel."

**Brian Bell** - Quick Infomercial on Isaiah: 1. Isaiah is quoted far more in the NT, than any other prophet. 2. He is mentioned 21 x's by name. 3. Ch.53 is quoted, or alluded to, at least 85 x's in the NT! Q. Isaiah known as the Mini-Bible! - 66 chapters/66 books. 1. The 1st 39 chapters are like the OT's 39 books. 2. The next 27 chapters are like the NT. a) Ch.1-39 = a message of Judgment (on immorality & Idolatry) regarding: Judah; surrounding nations; & whole earth. b) Ch.40-66 = A message of Hope (Messiah is coming as Savior & Sovereign) To bear a cross, & to wear a crown) Isaiah = "Yahweh is Salvation" (excellent summary of the book!) 1. **Deutero-Isaiah**, or 2nd Isaiah theory (Deuteronomy=2nd Law; early & later Isaiah) is **destroyed here, with Jesus quoting from both "sides" of Isaiah** (Isaiah 6 and Isaiah 53). a) John said it & he's a pretty good bible teacher & contributed a few books to the NT b) Jesus quoted from Isaiah 8 x's from the early section & 8 x's from the later section & each time Jesus uses Isaiah's name.

**John 12:39 For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,**

BGT John 12:39 διὰ τοῦτο οἱ κῆρυξες οὐκ ἔκλονον πιστεῖν, ὅτι πάλιν εἶπεν ἰσαΐας·

KJV John 12:39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

NET John 12:39 For this reason they could not believe, because again Isaiah said,

CSB John 12:39 This is why they were unable to believe, because Isaiah also said:

ESV John 12:39 Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said,

NIV John 12:39 For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere:

NLT John 12:39 But the people couldn't believe, for as Isaiah also said,

NRS John 12:39 And so they could not believe, because Isaiah also said,

NJB John 12:39 Indeed, they were unable to believe because, as Isaiah says again:

NAB John 12:39 For this reason they could not believe, because again Isaiah said:

YLT John 12:39 Because of this they were not able to believe, that again Isaiah said,

MIT John 12:39 For this reason they could not believe, because again Isaiah said:

- **they:** Jn 5:44 6:44 10:38 Isa 44:18-20 2Pe 2:14
- **because:** Isa 6:9-10
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Isaiah 6:9-10 He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.' 10 "Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Otherwise they might see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be

healed."

## THEY WOULD NOT SO THEY COULD NOT

**For this reason** - What reason? John 12:37 says because they "were not believing in Him."

**They could not** (ouk = absolutely not) **believe** ([pisteuo](#)) - They in context refers to the Jews (the majority of the nation of Israel). Because the Jews **would not** believe, God judicially blinded them (described in the quote from Isaiah 6:9-10 in Jn 12:40) so that they **could not** believe.

*The more men reject the Gospel, the harder it becomes for them to receive it.*

Temple aptly puts it: 'God does not cause sin, but He does cause its appropriate consequence to result from it by the law of the order of creation.'

[Brian Bell](#) - They could not believe - not because their freedom of choice had been removed from them, but because they had purposely rejected God & chosen evil. Thus God turned them over to their own choices.

This dynamic of would not/could not believe reminds me of the description of the world in the last days in 2 Th 2:8-12

Then that lawless one (ANTICHRIST) will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming (Rev 19:15, 20+); 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan (Rev 13:3-8+), with all power and signs and false wonders (cf Rev 13:13-15+), 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because (TERM OF EXPLANATION - EXPLAINS WHY THEY PERISH) they **did not receive** ([dechomai](#) - plural, aorist middle [reflexive~they themselves - conscious choice/decision of their will to reject Truth] indicative) **the love of the truth so as to be saved**. 11 For this reason (WHAT REASON? CLEARLY THEIR REFUSAL TO BELIEVE) God will send upon them a deluding influence (RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE!) so that (PURPOSE CLAUSE) they will believe what is false (THEY "WOULD" NOT BELIEVE, THEN THEY "COULD" NOT BELIEVE!), 12 in order that ([hina](#) - ANOTHER PURPOSE CLAUSE) they all may be judged **who did not believe the truth** (THE ROOT PROBLEM), but took pleasure in wickedness (cf Jn 3:19+).

**For Isaiah said again** - "For" (dia touto = "for this reason") introduces the explanation. **Again** is used because Isaiah had just been quoted in Jn 12:38. What John is going to explain is that when men ignore, deny, refuse and reject the Light, God will make it more difficult for them to see the Light.

**John 12:40 "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM."**

BGT John 12:40 τετ φλωκεν α τ ν το ς φθαλμο ς κα π ρωσεν α τ ν τ ν καρδ αν, να μ δωσιν το ς φθαλμο ς κα νο σωσιν τ καρδ κα στραφ σιν, κα σομαι α το ς.

KJV John 12:40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

NET John 12:40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they would not see with their eyes and understand with their heart, and turn to me, and I would heal them."

CSB John 12:40 He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, so that they would not see with their eyes or understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I would heal them.

ESV John 12:40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them."

NIV John 12:40 "He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn--and I would heal them."

NLT John 12:40 "The Lord has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts-- so that their eyes cannot see, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and have me heal them."

NRS John 12:40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they might not look with their



eyes, and understand with their heart and turn-- and I would heal them."

NJB John 12:40 He has blinded their eyes, he has hardened their heart, to prevent them from using their eyes to see, using their heart to understand, changing their ways and being healed by me.

NAB John 12:40 "He blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they might not see with their eyes and understand with their heart and be converted, and I would heal them."

YLT John 12:40 'He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they might not see with the eyes, and understand with the heart, and turn back, and I might heal them;'

MIT John 12:40 He blinded their eyes. And he made their heart a callous, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn around, that I might heal them.

- **has:** Jn 9:39 1Ki 22:20 Isa 29:10 Eze 14:9 Mt 13:13-15 15:14 Mk 4:12 Lu 8:10 Ac 28:26 Ro 11:8-11
- **hardened:** Ex 4:21 Ex 7:3,13 Ex 14:4,8,17 Jos 11:20 Ro 9:18 Ro 11:7
- **that they:** De 29:4 Ps 135:10-18 Isa 26:11 Isa 42:19-20 Jer 5:21 Eze 12:2 Mk 8:17-18
- **and be:** Ac 3:19 15:3 Jas 5:19,20
- **heal:** Ps 6:2 41:4 147:3 Isa 53:5 57:18,19 Jer 3:22 Ho 6:1 14:4 Lu 4:18
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 29:1-4+ These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb. 2 And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land; 3 the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders. 4 "Yet to this day **the LORD has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.**

Ezekiel 12:2+ "Son of man, you live in the midst of the rebellious house, who have eyes to see but do not see, ears to hear but do not hear; for they are a rebellious house.

Exodus 4:21+ The LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but **I will harden his heart** so that he will not let the people go. ([Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart? | GotQuestions.org](#))

John 9:39+ And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind (JUDICIAL BLINDNESS FOR REFUSING TO SEE - THEY WOULD NOT AND THEN COULD NOT!)."

Romans 9:18+ So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He **hardens** ([skleruno](#)) whom He desires.

Romans 11:7+ What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen ([THE ELECT](#)) obtained (were successful in achieving or gaining what they sought - SALVATION) it, and the rest **were hardened** ([poroo](#));

Psalms 81:12 "So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their heart, To walk in their own devices.

Romans 1:28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer (MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY), God gave them over to a depraved mind (GOD'S JUDICIAL ACTION), to do those things which are not proper,

## THE HEART OF THEIR PROBLEM IS THE PROBLEM OF THEIR HEART!

Now in light of the fact (pun intended) that the Jews would not believe a veritable avalanche of evidence (Light), they would receive the just retribution from God. Retribution in English means punishment inflicted on someone as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act. Their wrong was unbelief! Refusing to see would result in judicial blindness!

**HE HAS BLINDED** ([tuphloo](#)) **THEIR EYES** **AND HE HARDENED** ([poroo](#)) **THEIR HEART** ([kardia](#)) - **Blinded** is in the perfect tense signifying past completed action (judgment) with enduring effect (impact). **Blinded** is not literal blindness but far more deadly [spiritual blindness](#), inability to see and recognize the truth that can save one's soul from hell! Do not blame God here. They first closed their eyes and hardened their hearts, and then He blinded and hardened them.

**Brian Bell** - Blinded - What is the only reason you can now see? Because the veil has been lifted! 2 Cor 4:3-4. "Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age (SATAN) has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that (PURPOSE CLAUSE) they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." This verse is found 7x's in the Bible, and each time it speaks of judgment. It is a repeated warning that reminds the unsaved not to take their spiritual opportunities lightly. While you have the light, believe in the light (Jn 12:36). This doesn't mean much to us who can "make light" (electricity in every home, street lights everywhere, flashlights, back up lights, candles, cell phone lights, etc) **Hardened** - formation of a callous. **Habits** are formed by the result of our **choices**. Our day by day choices gradually turn into habits. Example: Trail through a forest! - A pioneer can barely see the trail; but when followed by another, then another, years later it becomes a highway. This works for both good & bad habits. They did not believe (Jn 12:37) [though they had seen the evidence for His divine Sonship] They could not believe (Jn 12:39) [because their hearts had become hard & their eyes blind] They should not believe (Jn 12:39) [because they had spurned His grace]

**Spurgeon** - It is an awful thing to resist the Spirit of God, for if his softening influences are withdrawn, the heart grows hard; if his enlightening influences are taken away, the eyes of the understanding are darkened. I do believe there are many who have so long trifled with conscience and violated the best instincts of their nature that they are given up as those who are past hope. I pray God that it may not be so with any here; but it was so with many in the generation amongst which Christ laboured.

John's description reminds me of Stephen's first and last sermon to the antagonistic Jews in Jerusalem, in which he declared "You men who are **stiff-necked** and **uncircumcised in heart** and **ears** are **always resisting the Holy Spirit**, you are doing just as your fathers did." (Acts 7:51+)

**SO THAT** ([hina](#)) - The divine purpose. This is a retributive judgment, where retributive means relating to, or intended to be, deserved and severe punishment.

**MacArthur** writes "Israel's rejection of Christ was not merely foreseen, it was by God's sovereign design (cf. Rom. 9–11); **it was a judgment act on His part**. In His sovereign grace, God has brought good out of that rejection. As Paul wrote in Romans 11:11, it was "by [Israel's] transgression [that] salvation has come to the Gentiles." God's plans cannot be thwarted by anything sinful people can do (Gen. 50:20 [cf. Ge 45:5]; Ps. 76:10). (See [John Commentary](#))

*they could not because they would not!*

**THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES** - They were spiritually blinded by God, because they refused to believe the many miraculous signs performed in plain sight! Now they *could not* because they *would not*! And as noted above the verb **blinded** is in the perfect tense signifying spiritual blindness was now their fixed state!

**THOUGHT**- Dear unbeliever, beware of refusing the Light of the Gospel. One day you may refuse it and God's judgment of spiritual blinding falls on you!

**Spurgeon** - Isaiah was sent upon a painful errand, to tell the people that they should hear, but they should not understand; that they should see, but they should not perceive; and so it happened to Israel as a nation, and to this day Israel rejects the true Messiah. **Oh, that none of us may imitate their evil example by negligence and contempt of the revelation of God**, lest after playing with Scripture, and trifling with the Christ of God, the Lord should at last in anger declare that we should see, but should not perceive, that we should hear, but should not understand.....This passage is very frequently quoted in the Old Testament: it was so exceedingly apropos to the condition of the unbelieving Jews. They were wilfully blinded. They could see it; they were forced to hear it; there was much that even touched their hearts; but they hardened their heart against it, and to this day they remain the same.

**AND PERCEIVE** ([noeo](#)) **WITH THEIR HEART** ([kardia](#)) **AND BE CONVERTED** ([strepheo](#)) **AND I HEAL** ([iaomai](#)) **THEM** - **Be converted** means to be turned. The only One who could "turn" them is the Spirit. But they resisted the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51). And sadly as the saying goes "turn or burn!"

*It is a sobering reality that those who persistently harden their hearts against God may find themselves hardened by Him*

**John MacArthur** sums up this disconcerting passage writing "Israel's rejection of Jesus Christ was the culmination of years of rebellion, misused privileges, and forsaking of divine truth. The terrible result was that when the truth came in the person of Jesus Christ, many could not believe. Thinking they could see, they were in reality spiritually blind (cf. Matt. 15:14; 23:16, 17, 19, 24, 26; John 9:40–41). (**ED**: HERE IS WHERE THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND MANS' RESPONSIBILITY COMES IN) But God's sovereign, judicial hardening of Israel did not negate the culpability of those who refused to believe in Christ. As **Leon Morris** notes, "When John quotes 'he hath blinded their eyes ...' he does not mean that the blinding takes place without the will, or against the will of these people....These men chose evil. It was their own deliberate choice, their own fault. Make no mistake about that" (BORROW [The Gospel according to John - NICNT - page 604](#)). **D. A. Carson** adds, "God's judicial hardening is not presented as

the capricious manipulation of an arbitrary potentate cursing morally neutral or even morally pure beings, but as a holy condemnation of a guilty people who are condemned to do and be what they themselves have chosen" (BORROW [The Gospel according to John - page 448](#)). It is a sobering reality that those who persistently harden their hearts against God may find themselves hardened by Him. The historical record of God's dealings with Pharaoh illustrates that principle, noting ten times that he hardened his own heart (Ex. 7:13, 14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34, 35; 13:15) and ten times that God hardened his heart (Ex. 4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17). Isaiah, in one of the clearest evangelistic texts in the Old Testament, cried out, "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near" (Isa. 55:6; emphasis added.). God hardened the hearts of those who refused to believe in Jesus (Jn 12:40) so that they could not believe (Jn 12:39).

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**Spiritual Blindness** in [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#) - Figuratively, blindness refers to an inability to recognize the truth, usually a culpable condition. As such, it describes judges whose judgment is perverted because of bribes (Ex 23:8; Deut 16:19; Job 9:24), idolaters whose worship is illogical as well as wrong (Is 44:9–10) and people who simply do not want to know (Is 43:8). Such blindness to the truth and mental confusion could actually be the result of God's judgment on those who did not want to admit the truth and who therefore forfeit the ability to perceive it at their cost (Deut 28:28–29; Is 6:9–10; 29:9–10). This is true of the Israelites, both leaders (Is 56:10) and followers (Is 42:18–19). Only God in his mercy can reverse this condition (Is 29:18; 35:5; 42:16). Paul describes gradual blindness when he writes of those whose "foolish hearts were darkened" (Rom 1:21). In another vein he talks of seeing poorly now in contrast to seeing perfectly in the life to come (1 Cor 13:12). The imagery of sight and blindness is especially prominent in the account of Jesus' earthly ministry. The high incidence of physical blindness in the world of the Gospels is attested by the frequency with which Jesus performed miracles of giving sight to the blind. It is, in fact, one of the most vivid signs of Jesus' supernatural power. Spiritual blindness is no less prominent in the Gospels. Jesus described the religious leaders and teachers of his own generation in terms of blindness (Mt 15:14; 23:16–17, 19, 24, 26). The irony of their situation is that in their spiritual ignorance they assumed that they understand perfectly. Jesus remedied spiritual as well as physical blindness (Mt 13:17; Jn 9:39). Those who rejected Jesus' words came under a judgment similar to that of Israel—a state of permanent blindness (Jn 12:40; cf. Rom 11:7–10). Although metaphorically blindness may describe mere ignorance (Rom 2:19), it usually carries the overtones of an unwillingness to face up to the truth (Jas 1:23–24); and in the case of those who do not believe in Christ, this is the work of Satan (2 Cor 4:4). As such it requires a miracle in order to become aware of the significance of Christ. Similarly, Christian believers who revert to their pre-Christian ways are described as blind, not perceiving the contradiction expressed in their behavior (2 Pet 1:9; 1 Jn 2:11). Blindness describes the fact that they are unaware of the gravity of their condition (Rev 3:17). (See page 372 [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#))

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**E P Meadors** discusses **hardness of heart** - The "hardening of the heart" is a Hebrew idiom that describes spiritual obstinacy before God. The NT condition finds its origin in the OT, where hardening occurs as a covenant curse symptomatic of idolatry. Jesus and the Gospel writers adopted the Semitic concept to describe inner faithlessness and sin. The hardening of the heart implements God's punitive design for sinners; as sinners distance themselves further and further from God, their hearts grow more and more obstinate. Hardening is an inevitable consequence of alienation from the Creator. The concept of the heart (*kardia*) in the Gospels carries over from the OT term (*lēb, lēbab*), which refers to "all aspects of a person: vital, emotive, noetic, and volutative" (Fabry, 401). Positively, the heart is the place of rejoicing (Jn 16:22), purity (Mt 5:8), \*worship (Mt 15:8), forgiveness (Mt 18:35), the love of God (Mt 22:37), \*repentance (Lk 1:17) and spiritual awakening upon encountering the risen Christ (Lk 24:32). Negatively, the heart is the seat of lust (Mt 5:28), disobedience (Mt 24:48), obtuseness (Mk 8:17), doubt (Mk 11:23; Lk 24:38), malicious plans (Lk 12:45), fear (Jn 14:1), drunkenness and anxiety (Lk 21:34), Satanic attack (Mt 13:19; Jn 13:2), evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts and defiling words (Mt 15:18–19; Mk 7:21). In sum, the heart represents the human will, where inner thoughts conceive (Mt 9:4; Lk 1:51; 2:35; 9:47), faith flourishes or dies (Lk 8:12), and people treasure up objects of worship (Mt 6:21; Lk 12:34).....**The Gospel of John** - John 12:37–41 attributes the disbelief of Jesus' contemporaries to the fulfillment of Isaiah 6:10. In keeping with the prophetic theme, Jesus' contemporaries, like Isaiah's, were so fixated on external religious ritual that they were blind to fulfilled prophecy even when it occurred in their presence. Already callous, Jesus' audience was predisposed toward cynical rejection of Jesus' signs. Throughout John's Gospel this predisposition reflects the world's preference of darkness to \*light: "And this is judgment, that the light has come into the \*world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil" (Jn 3:19). The preference for darkness over light is a metaphorical diagnosis of idolatry that comports with a hardening outcome. The motif of hardening complements John's broader "misunderstanding" theme by exposing the human inability to perceive Jesus' true identity prior to the cross and resurrection (Jn 6:60; 8:27; 10:6, 19–21, 24; 11:13; 12:16; 13:28; 14:5; 16:17–18; 20:9). John's message is that those who reject Jesus because of a preexisting love for evil (Jn 3:19) inevitably will exude a hardened countenance as the consequence of their separation from "the true light, which, coming into the world, enlightens everyone" (Jn 1:9). (Excerpt from [Dictionary of Jesus](#)) (See HARD, HARDEN, HARDNESS in [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery page 1246](#))

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**Steven Cole** - Dr. Carson (p. 448) acknowledges that a superficial reading of John 12:38-40 may find it "harsh, manipulative, [and] even robotic." He offers (BORROW [The Gospel according to John - page 448](#)) four things to keep in mind (which I'm paraphrasing and supplementing here):

(1) "God's sovereignty in these matters is *never* pitted against human responsibility." The Bible often puts God's sovereignty and human responsibility side by side (Acts 4:27-28): "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur." God predestined the cross; but those who killed Jesus were responsible for their sin (see, also, Acts 2:23). In a way that we cannot understand, God is sovereign over evil and yet never responsible for it.

(2) God's judicial hardening is not the capricious manipulation of an arbitrary Sovereign toward morally neutral or good people, but rather His holy condemnation of guilty people who are condemned to the judgment that **they themselves have chosen**. There are many examples of this in the Bible (Deut. 2:30; Josh. 11:20; 1 Sam. 2:25; 1 Kings 22:19-23; Rom. 9:18; 2 Thess. 2:11-12).

(3) God's sovereignty in these matters is actually a cause for hope. If He is not sovereign over evil people, then there isn't much point for our prayers for Him to do something when evil seems to prevail. But if the Lord truly reigns, then we can rejoice (Ps. 97:1).

(4) God's sovereign hardening of people in Isaiah's day so that Isaiah was commissioned to an apparently fruitless ministry (Isa. 6:8-11) was a stage in God's "strange work" (Carson's words, based on Isa. 28:21-22) that brought His ultimate redemptive purposes to pass. Paul argues somewhat similarly in Romans 9:22-33.

**The application is that the unbelief and evil deeds of sinners never frustrate the purposes of our sovereign God, but actually fulfill His purposes** (1 Pet. 2:8). While many details in the Book of Revelation are hard to understand, one clear point is that even the worldwide evil and deception of the antichrist fit into and accomplish God's purpose for the ages. Like those who killed Jesus, the antichrist will only "do whatever [God's] hand and [His] purpose predestined to occur." Then God will judge him and cast him into the lake of fire. To the persecuted church, the Lord commands (Rev. 2:10), "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." ([Why People Don't Believe in Jesus](#))

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**Blinded** (5186) [tuphloo/typhloo](#) from **tuphlos/typhlos** = blind from a root **tuph/typh-** = to burn, smoke, cp **tuphos** = smoke) to envelop with smoke and in the active sense means to make blind, to rob of sight. The passive sense means to go blind, to be blinded, to be unable to see clearly. The figurative sense means to be unable to "see" (understand, comprehend) some truth, especially spiritual truth. Friberg - (1) literally blind, make blind, deprive of the ability to see; (2) metaphorically in the NT; (a) of God's judgment on those who refuse to receive the revelation of himself through Jesus = cause someone not to be able to understand, take away ability to comprehend (Jn 12:40; 2Co 4:4); (b) spiritually and morally, of the consequence of hating one's fellow believer (1Jn 2:11)

**Tuphloo -3v** -Jn. 12:40; 2 Co. 4:4; 1 Jn. 2:11

**Ralph Enlow** on blindness - "Scripture often employs the imagery of blindness to describe the spiritual condition of persons who are either unable or unwilling to perceive divine revelation. The things of God are perceived not by observation and inquiry, but by revelation and illumination (Mt 11:25, 26, 27; 1Co 1:21; 2Pe 1:19, 20, 21-+). It is the Lord who "gives sight to the blind" (Ps146:8-+; Is 42:16). The New Testament reveals that believers are subject to spiritual blindness. Peter deems those who fail increasingly to exhibit diligence in pursuit of spiritual virtue as blind or nearsighted (2Pe 1:9-+). And the exalted Lord of the church views the lukewarm but haughty Laodicean church as wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked (Re 3:17-+). Spiritual blindness, then, refers in some instances to the inability of unbelievers to comprehend spiritual truth, specifically failure to recognize the true identity of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ (Jn 1:1, 14) It is vital, therefore, to conduct all Christian witness in dependence on the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8 2:4 4:8 4:31 6:5 8 10 7:55 9:17 10:38 11:24 13:52) Who works to counteract the cataracts of Satan and to reveal the truth of God (cp Lk 24:45 Ac16:14, 26:18). But spiritual blindness can also afflict believers who fail to perceive their true spiritual condition. To avoid the plague of spiritual blindness and escape the condemnation of leading others into spiritual ruin, believers must be quick to appropriate and obey the Word of God. (Read the entire article - [Blindness - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#))

**Hardened** (4456) [poroo](#) from **poros** = small piece of stone, a kind of marble, and thence used of a callus on fractured bones; see related word [porosis](#)) means to make hard as stone and used figuratively to describe that which has become callous or insensitive to touch. The effect is to cause the person to have difficulty understanding or comprehending. In the New Testament, **poroo** is used only in the spiritual sense referring to the devastating effect sin and unbelief exert on one's **heart** or **mind**. In this passage Paul describes the sons of Israel as possessed of a closed mind, mental obtuseness and intellectual blindness. **Friberg** writes that **poroo** is a medical technical term (Hippocrates) cover with thick skin or callous; of body organs thicken. **Liddell Scott** explains the literal meaning is "to petrify, turn into stone"

**Poroo - 5v** - Mk. 6:52; Mk. 8:17; Jn. 12:40; Ro 11:7; 2 Co. 3:14

**Perceive** (3539) **noeo** from **nous** = mind, the seat of moral reflection) has the basic meaning of direct one's mind to something and thus means more than just take a glance at. It means to perceive with the mind, to apprehend, to ponder (= weigh in one's mind, think especially quietly, soberly and deeply). It means to consider well, to reflect on with insight, or to think over a matter carefully. The idea is to grasp or comprehend something on the basis of careful thought. Noeo means "to perceive with the reflective intelligence." It is distinguished from the mere physical act of seeing. It is the perception of the mind consequent upon seeing. In the New Testament it is never used of mere physical sight.

**Noeo - 14v - consider(1), perceive(1), see(1), think(1), understand(9), understood(1).** Matt. 15:17; Matt. 16:9; Matt. 16:11; Matt. 24:15; Mk. 7:18; Mk. 8:17; Mk. 13:14; Jn. 12:40; Rom. 1:20; Eph. 3:4; Eph. 3:20; 1 Tim. 1:7; 2 Tim. 2:7; Heb. 11:3

**Turn** (return, convert) (4762) **strepho** means to turn, to turn about. The first use is here in Mt 5:39 where a literal turning of the cheek signifies an act of non-retaliation. Jesus made several literal turns (in fact most of the literal uses in the NT describe Jesus turning), some so dramatic we can picture them in our mind (See Mt 9:22, 16:23, Lk 7:9, 44, 9:55, 10:23, 14:25, 22:61, 23:28, Jn 1:38). Jesus used strepho figuratively to refer to conversion (Mt 18:3 = turning of one's heart to Jesus, the antithesis is seen in Acts 7:39!). Strepho describes Judas' return after remorse but his return was too late for conversion (Mt 27:3, cp Jn 12:40). In Acts 7:39 we read of the Hews in the OT after coming out of Egypt "in their hearts **turned back** to Egypt!" Strepho then describes God turning away from His rebellious people (Acts 7:42, cf Isaiah 63:10) Of Mary seeing Jesus after His resurrection (Jn 20:14, 16). Paul and Barnabas when repudiated by the Jews said "we are **turning** to the Gentiles" or taking the Gospel to them. In Rev 11:6 the two witnesses "have power over the waters to turn them into blood." (cf "the staff that was turned into a serpent" in Ex 7:15)

**Strepho - 21v converted(2), returned(1), turn(3), turned(8), turned away(1), turned back(1), turning(5) -** Matt. 5:39; Matt. 7:6; Matt. 9:22; Matt. 16:23; Matt. 18:3; Matt. 27:3; Lk. 7:9; Lk. 7:44; Lk. 9:55; Lk. 10:23; Lk. 14:25; Lk. 22:61; Lk. 23:28; Jn. 1:38; Jn. 12:40; Jn. 20:14; Jn. 20:16; Acts 7:39; Acts 7:42; Acts 13:46; Rev. 11:6

**Heal** (cure) (2390) **iaomai** means to cure, to heal, to restore. **iaomai** is used literally of deliverance from physical diseases and afflictions and so to make whole, restore to bodily health or heal. To cause someone to achieve health after having been sick. In the passive it means to be healed or cured. Figuratively, iaomai speaks of deliverance from sin and its evil consequences and thus to restore (to spiritual good health), make whole, renew (Mt 13:15). In the passive, iaomai figuratively means to be restored, to recover or to be healed as in 1Pe 2:24. **iaomai** refers primarily to physical healing in the NT (although clearly there is overlap because some of these instances involved demonic oppression - Lk 9:42), and much less commonly to spiritual healing or healing (saving) from "moral illnesses" and the consequences of sin. When used in this sense iaomai has much the same meaning as **sozo**, to save, make whole, restore to spiritual health. Here are the uses of **iaomai** used with a spiritual meaning = Mt 13:15, John 12:40, Acts 28:27 - preceding quotes from Isa 6:10, 1Pe 2:24 = quote from Isa 53:5. It is interesting that most of the NT uses in the Gospels refer to physical healing by Jesus (excepting the physical healing that resulted by release from demonic oppression). However in the OT (Lxx) uses **iaomai** refers primarily to spiritual healing by the Messiah (Isa 53:5, Isa 61:1, et al).

**iaomai - 26v - curing(1), heal(4), healed(16), healing(2), heals(1), perform healing(2).** Matt. 8:8; Matt. 8:13; Matt. 13:15; Matt. 15:28; Mk. 5:29; Lk. 5:17; Lk. 6:18; Lk. 6:19; Lk. 7:7; Lk. 8:47; Lk. 9:2; Lk. 9:11; Lk. 9:42; Lk. 14:4; Lk. 17:15; Lk. 22:51; Jn. 4:47; Jn. 5:13; Jn. 12:40; Acts 9:34; Acts 10:38; Acts 28:8; Acts 28:27; Heb. 12:13; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:24

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#### **QUESTION - What is spiritual blindness?**

**ANSWER** - To be spiritually blind is not to see Christ, and not to see Christ is not to see God **Colossians** 1:15-16; 2 Corinthians 4:6). Spiritual blindness is a grievous condition experienced by those who do not believe in God, Jesus Christ, and His Word (Romans 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:12). Those who reject Christ are the lost (John 6:68-69). Being spiritually blind, they are perishing (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Revelation 3:17). They choose not to accept the teachings of Christ and His authority in their lives (Matthew 28:18). They are blind to the manifestations of God as revealed throughout His Word and Jesus Christ (John 1:1; Acts 28:26-27). They are described as those who "do not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Peter spoke of such people as "scorners [who] will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires" (2 Peter 3:3; see also Proverbs 21:24; Jude 1:18). Those who reject Christ and His Word are spiritually blind and cannot understand the truth of the Scriptures. The truth sounds foolish to them (Isaiah 37:23; 1 Corinthians 1:18). The Bible describes those denying God as fools (Psalm 14:1; Matthew 7:26). Because of their blindness and rejection of God and His Word, they are in a perilous, unsaved condition (John 12:48; Hebrews 2:2-4).



The spiritually blind are simply unable to understand God's Word (Matthew 13:13; Deuteronomy 29:4). Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:15-17). Paul echoed this when he told the believers in Rome, "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him" (Romans 8:8-9). Those outside of Christ are not of God because their lives are steeped in the things of the world with all its passions, their eyes blind to the Spirit of God. The Apostle John said, "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" but that person's love "is from the world" (1 John 2:15-16).

The cause of spiritual blindness is made quite clear in the Scriptures: "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" (2 Corinthians 4:4). Paul refers to Satan as the "god of this world." Extraordinarily evil (John 8:44), Satan destroys the flesh (1 Corinthians 5:5), masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14), and is the cause of all temptations (Luke 4:2; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Corinthians 7:5). He revels in scheming against and trapping the unbelievers (2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:26). Satan's goal is to devour the weak who fall prey to temptation, fear, loneliness, worry, depression, and persecution (1 Peter 5:8-9).

Without God and left to ourselves, we easily succumb to the devil's schemes. We can become so mired in the affairs of this world and its moral darkness that, in the end, God turns us over to spiritual blindness and eternal condemnation (John 12:40; Romans 1:24-32).

As believers, we have the Spirit of God reigning in our lives to ward off the debilitating effects of Satan's power and the world's influence (1 John 4:13). John tells us, "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in Him, and he in God" (1 John 4:15). Satan wars within and without us. His weapons are deceitful and crafty schemes to make us doubt and stumble (2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 4:14). Yet God has provided us with powerful weapons to ward off his flaming arrows (Ephesians 6:10-18). As believers we can overcome the evil one and remain in the Light and never become spiritually blind. For, in truth, Jesus has given us His wonderful promise: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

#### Related Resources:

- [What are the causes and solutions for a hardened heart? | GotQuestions.org](http://What%20are%20the%20causes%20and%20solutions%20for%20a%20hardened%20heart%3F%7C%20GotQuestions.org)

#### John 12:41 These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.

BGT John 12:41 τατα ε πεν σα ας τι ε δ εν τ ν δ ξαν α το , κα λ λησεν περ α το .

KJV John 12:41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

NET John 12:41 Isaiah said these things because he saw Christ's glory, and spoke about him.

CSB John 12:41 Isaiah said these things because he saw His glory and spoke about Him.

ESV John 12:41 Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him.

NIV John 12:41 Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him.

NLT John 12:41 Isaiah was referring to Jesus when he said this, because he saw the future and spoke of the Messiah's glory.

NRS John 12:41 Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke about him.

NJB John 12:41 Isaiah said this because he saw his glory, and his words referred to Jesus.

NAB John 12:41 Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke about him.

YLT John 12:41 these things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

MIT John 12:41 Isaiah made these statements because he saw his glory, and he spoke concerning him.

- **Isaiah:** Isa 6:1-5,9,10
- **saw:** Jn 1:14,18 14:9 Ex 33:18-23 2Co 4:6 Heb 1:3
- **spoke:** Jn 5:39 Ac 10:43 1Pe 1:11 Rev 19:10
- [John 12 Resources](http://John%2012%20Resources) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## ISAIAH SAW JESUS ON HIS THRONE

**These things** - What things? Always pause and query the phrase "**these things**." This one is easy. It is always a profitable exercise even when it is easy as it forces you to reread the preceding text. These things Isaiah said refer to Isaiah 6:1-10.

**NET** renders it "Isaiah said these things because he saw Christ's glory, and spoke about him."

**NET NOTE - Because he saw Christ's glory.** It is clear that the author presents Isaiah as having seen the preincarnate glory of Christ, which was the very revelation of the Father (see John 1:18; John 14:9).....The glory which Isaiah saw in Isa 6:3 was the glory of Yahweh (typically rendered as "Lord" in the OT). Here John speaks of the prophet seeing the glory of Christ since in the next clause and spoke about him, "him" can hardly refer to Yahweh, but must refer to Christ. On the basis of statements like 1:14 in the prologue, the author probably put no great distinction between the two. Since the author presents Jesus as fully God (cf. John 1:1), it presents no problem to him to take words originally spoken by Isaiah of Yahweh himself and apply them to Jesus.

**Isaiah said because he saw His glory (doxa), and he spoke of Him** The glory Isaiah saw was the glory of Jesus, the One who he described as Lord (Adonai) (Isa 6:1) and in (Isa 6:3) as Jehovah Sabaoth, the LORD of hosts (cf Josh 5:14-15 "Captain of the host of the LORD") and Isaiah calls Him the "King" in (Isa 6:5 cf Rev 17:14, 19:16) For the skeptics, here is another proof that Jesus is God! See [Jehovah = Jesus](#)

In the Incarnation His glory was manifested for John writes "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and **we saw His glory**, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jn 1:14)

**Believer's Study Bible** - The passage undoubtedly refers to the magnificent vision of Isaiah (cf. Isa. 6), but also to the great Suffering Servant prophecy of Isa. 53 (John 12:38). Again the theme is sounded: the Messiah's glory is revealed in His suffering. Since John declares that Isaiah saw the glory of Jesus, it is certain that this vision was a Christophany, i.e., a preincarnate appearance of the living Lord.

**John Heading** - This therefore demonstrates that whenever the glory of God was manifested in the OT, this was the glory of Christ prior to His incarnation. This glory was manifested when the tabernacle was dedicated (Ex 40:34) and also when the temple was dedicated by Solomon (1 Kings 8:11). No man has seen God at any time, even in OT days, but the Son revealed Him in every manifestation of glory (ED: SEE [Shekinah glory cloud](#)). ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**Spurgeon** - Christ is in the Old Testament in many places where, as yet, even we have never seen him. I doubt not that he lies hidden away in many a Psalm, and many a prophetic utterance that has not yet been fully expounded, or even comprehended by our finite minds. Oh, for eyes to see him where he sits in his ancient state: What a solemn fact this is, though, that God does allow men to be given over to blindness of eyes and hardness of heart! I sometimes fear that it is so with this age. Men will not see; they will not believe; they are desperately set on skepticism. It has become a fashion with them. Like a torrent, it sweeps through the very churches that bear the name of Christ. My fear is God in his wrath may give up our land to this curse, and then where will our hope be?

**John 12:42 Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;**

BGT John 12:42 μως μντοι κα κ τ ν ρχ ντων πολλο π στευσαν ες α τ ν, λλ δι το ς Φαρισα ους ο χ μολ γουν να μ ποσυν γωγοι γ νωνται·

KJV John 12:42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

NET John 12:42 Nevertheless, even among the rulers many believed in him, but because of the Pharisees they would not confess Jesus to be the Christ, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue.

CSB John 12:42 Nevertheless, many did believe in Him even among the rulers, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, so they would not be banned from the synagogue.

ESV John 12:42 Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue;

NIV John 12:42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue;

NLT John 12:42 Many people did believe in him, however, including some of the Jewish leaders. But they wouldn't admit it for fear that the Pharisees would expel them from the synagogue.

NRS John 12:42 Nevertheless many, even of the authorities, believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;

NJB John 12:42 And yet there were many who did believe in him, even among the leading men, but they did not admit it, because of the Pharisees and for fear of being banned from the synagogue:

NAB John 12:42 Nevertheless, many, even among the authorities, believed in him, but because of the Pharisees they did not acknowledge it openly in order not to be expelled from the synagogue.

YLT John 12:42 Still, however, also out of the rulers did many believe in him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing, that they might not be put out of the synagogue,

MIT John 12:42 Nevertheless, many of the leaders actually believed in Jesus, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess allegiance to him lest they would be excommunicated.

- **Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him:** Jn 3:2 Jn 7:48-51 Jn 11:45 Jn 19:38-39
- **not:** Mt 10:32 Lu 12:8 Ro 10:9-10 1Jn 4:2,15
- **for fear:** Jn 7:13 Jn 9:22,34 16:2 Pr 29:25 Isa 51:7 Isa 57:11 66:5 Mt 26:69-75 Lu 6:22 Ac 5:41 1Pe 4:12-16
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 10:32+ "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

Romans 10:9-10+ that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

1 John 4:2; 15+ By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

Mark 8:38+ Jesus declared that "whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

John 7:50-52+ Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) \*said to them, 51 "Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?" 52 They answered him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee."

John 19:38-39 After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. 39 Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight.

### THIS SOUNDS GOOD ON PAPER....BUT...

**Nevertheless many even of the rulers** ([archon](#)) **believed** ([pisteuo](#)) **in Him** - **The rulers** refers to the members of the [Sanhedrin](#) which was the highest legal, legislative, and judicial body among the Jews. This is a difficult verse. Were they truly saved or not. After all [Nicodemus](#) (who was among the **rulers**) and Joseph of Arimathea were genuine, albeit secret believers for fear of the Jews (Jn 19:38-39). On the other hand we have seen John use the same verb **believe** ([pisteuo](#)) in describing non-saving belief in Jn 2:23-25+ and Jn 8:30, 31-59+. While some writers feel this belief was unto salvation, the following description of these men make it very doubtful that they were truly born again.

Recall the question in John 7:48 "No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he?" Here John says **many**."

**but** (term of contrast) **because of the Pharisees** ([pharisaiois](#)) **they were not** (ouch - absolutely not) **confessing** ([homologeō](#)) **Him** -

Because of the Pharisees as explained in the next verse, they would not confess Jesus as the Messiah. **Confessing** in the imperfect tense means again and again, like one would expect genuine believers to do.

Paul is very clear in Romans 10:9-10+ regarding the importance of confession in salvation writing "if you **confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord**, and **believe** in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and **with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation**" If one strictly following that passage, it is difficult to believe that "many" (or "any") of the rulers were genuine believers.

**William MacDonald** - We would like to think that these men were genuine believers in the Lord Jesus, but it is doubtful. Where there is true faith, there will be confession of Christ, sooner or later. When Christ is really accepted as Savior, one does not hesitate to make it known, regardless of the consequences. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**D A Carson** has an interesting question asking that "if many even among the leaders believed in Him, however imperfect their faith, should we not think also of the many ordinary folk who put their faith in Jesus, often with much more candour and much less reserve than their leaders? The leaders themselves (same word as in Jn 3:1) seem at this point to fit the pattern of inadequate, irresolute, even spurious faith that John repeatedly describes in this Gospel (e.g. Jn 2:23–25; 6:60; 8:30ff.). Nicodemus was willing to stand up for Jesus in the Sanhedrin (Jn 7:50–52); he and Joseph of Arimathaea publicly identified themselves with Jesus' cause by providing decent burial for him. Doubtless there were other leaders, less courageous even than this, who maintained some distant attachment to Jesus, who believed in him in some sense, of whose faith the Pharisees knew nothing (Jn 7:48). (BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**For fear that they would be put out of the synagogue** ([aposunagogos](#)) - They feared men more than God! The proverb that relates to them is "The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted. " (Pr 29:25) One writer said fear God and you will have nothing to fear.

**Brian Bell** - Remember how severe this was, putting out of the synagogue meant, separation from public worship & from social interactions.

They were like the parents of the blind man healed in John 9:22 John recording "His parents said this (Jn 9:22+) because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be **put out of the synagogue** ([aposunagogos](#))."

**Spurgeon** - Are there any here who believe in Christ, but who have never confessed him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue, and lose the praise of men? Are you afraid of your family, your father, or your husband; or is there some friend who would be angry with you if you confessed Christ? If so, be no longer such a coward, I pray you, but come out boldly, and confess him who will not be ashamed to confess you before his Father and the holy angels (Lk 12:8+).....And this is a common disease to this day. There are many who know the truth, who, nevertheless, keep very quiet about it. They do not like to be despised; they cannot endure to seem to be separate from their fellowmen; it is not respectable to be decided for Christ, and to come out from among them, so they love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

#### Related Resources:

- [Who was Nicodemus in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### [Whatever the Cost](#)

They would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear. John 12:42

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 12:37–43

The film Paul, Apostle of Christ takes an unflinching look at persecution in the early days of the church. Even the movie's minor characters reveal how dangerous it was to follow Jesus. Consider these roles listed in the credits: Beaten Woman; Beaten Man; Christian Victims 1, 2, and 3.

Identifying with Christ often came at a high cost. And in much of the world, it's still dangerous to follow Jesus. Many in the church today can relate to that kind of persecution. Some of us, however, may feel "persecuted" prematurely—outraged any time our faith is mocked or we suspect we were passed over for a promotion because of our beliefs.

Obviously, there's a colossal difference between sacrificing social status and sacrificing our lives. Realistically, though, self-interest, financial stability, and social acceptance have always been intense human motivators. We see this in the actions of some of Jesus's earliest converts. The apostle John reports that, mere days before Jesus's crucifixion, although most Israelites were still rejecting Him (John 12:37), many "even among the leaders believed" (v. 42). However, "They would not openly acknowledge their faith . . . for

they loved human praise more than praise from God" (vv. 42–43).

Today we still face societal pressures (and worse) to keep our faith in Christ hidden. Whatever the cost, let's stand together as a people who seek God's approval more than human praise. By: Tim Gustafson (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

We might be tempted to judge the early believers who hid their faith, but are we any different? Are there times we choose to be quiet so we can hide our identification with Jesus?

Jesus, I want to be a close friend of Yours.

#### John 12:43 for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

BGT John 12:43 γ πησαν γ ρ τ ν ὁ ξαν τ ν νθρ πων μ λλον περ τ ν ὁ ξαν το θεο .

KJV John 12:43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

NET John 12:43 For they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

CSB John 12:43 For they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

ESV John 12:43 for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

NIV John 12:43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

NLT John 12:43 For they loved human praise more than the praise of God.

NRS John 12:43 for they loved human glory more than the glory that comes from God.

NJB John 12:43 they put human glory before God's glory.

NAB John 12:43 For they preferred human praise to the glory of God.

YLT John 12:43 for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.

MIT John 12:43 For they loved human approval more than honor from God.

- **they:** Jn 5:41,44 Mt 6:2 23:5-7 Lu 16:15 Ps 22:29 1Th 2:6
- **the approval of:** Jn 12:26 8:54 1Sa 2:30 Lu 19:17 Ro 2:7 1Co 4:5 2Co 10:18 1Pe 1:7,8 3:4
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### LOVING MEN'S APPROVAL OVER GOD'S: CAMOUFLAGE OR COUNTERFEIT?

For ([gar](#)) What is John explaining?

**They loved ([agapao](#)) the approval ([doxa](#)) of men rather than the approval ([doxa](#)) of God ([theos](#))** - One is reminded of Jesus' words in John 5:44+ where Jesus asked "How can you believe, when you receive **glory** ([doxa](#)) from one another and you do not seek the **glory** ([doxa](#)) that is from the one and only God?"

**THOUGHT** - Let's all (including the one writing this) be honest in answering this next question. Are you (am I) more interested in pleasing men than in pleasing God? Col 1:9-10+ is a prayer for us to be pleasing, so it is good to pray it frequently for others and ourselves...."so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, **to please Him in all respects**, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." In Jesus' Name. Amen and Amen!

**MacArthur** says the fact that **they loved ([agapao](#)) the approval ([doxa](#)) of men** "gives further evidence that these rulers possessed no more than a superficial religion." Tragically, they loved their self-exalting religion and their prestigious position in the synagogue and the Sanhedrin so much that they refused Christ. Such love for the world showed that they did not love God (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15). (See [John Commentary](#))

So some writes believe these were Camouflaged Christians, but others believe they were Counterfeit Christians.

**D A Carson** concludes that these lovers of men's approval "still knew nothing of the powerful new birth that could make them children of God and enable them to enter the messianic kingdom (Jn 3:3, 5; 1:12, 13; cf. 12:26). Perhaps after the resurrection they

joined other Jewish leaders in becoming true Christians (cf. Acts 6:7+).(BORROW [The Gospel according to John](#))

**Brian Bell** - They loved the praise of men - & so do I, & so do you. But, I don't want to offend anyone! I don't want to be a freak! I don't want to be embarrassed! I don't want to be hated! I love the praise of men; I love what people think of me; I love my glory; I love my reputation; I love myself...more than God. (WOE!) Jesus received praise from the Father audibly (Jn 12:28), we most likely won't. Well, we will later "well done my good & faithful servant". Can we wait, or do we need it now? b) Do you want to hear that from our Father who art in heaven or men on the street?

In his study Bible **MacArthur** says "This is one of the saddest statements about spiritual leadership, for they preferred the praises of men above the praises of God in their refusal to publicly acknowledge Jesus as Messiah and Son of God." (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Spurgeon** - What a shameful thing that was! Yet you will still find that there are many persons who, even though they believe the truth, dare not own it, but must hide in obscurity until the times grow easier. However, Christ's death fetched out many who had been his disciples in secret. Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus could not keep in the background any longer and, doubtless, the thoughts of many other hearts were then revealed....I wonder whether in this throng there are any of this kind, who do believe in Christ, and yet never come out and confess him because they love the praise of men more than the praise of God. If so, I venture to say that they are found among what are called the more respectable people, the men of light and leading, the chief rulers. Among the common people there is very little of this evil. They will generally confess what they believe, and bravely come forward to declare that they belong to Christ. It is the chief rulers, the gentlemen of the Sanhedrim, who, if they believe in Christ in their hearts, do not confess him, lest they should be put out of society, for they love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

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### **Our Desire for Praise**

Many believed in Him, but . . . they did not confess Him, . . . for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. —John 12:42-43

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5

Children enjoy being commended by parents, teachers, and others in authority. I saw this recently on the faces of boys and girls who were being publicly honored for their accomplishments in a youth program.

Even adults like to receive the approval of people they respect. This built-in desire for praise is not wrong. Honest commendation can be very encouraging and can bring out the best in us. And the Bible tells us to look forward to the day when we will receive praise from God (1 Cor. 4:5). The problem, however, is that we often place more value on applause we receive from people in this life than on praise from God in the life to come.

A teenage boy is on drugs today because he wanted to be accepted by a group of his peers he considered "cool." Another young man admitted that he exaggerates about his relationship with girls because he thinks it makes him appear macho to the men with whom he works. Both of these fellows made the same mistake as those first-century believers who "loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:43).

Lord, help us to take the long-range view and want Your praise more than the praise of people. By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

May everything we do  
By word or deed or story  
Be done to please the Lord—  
To Him be all the glory.  
—Roworth

Living for God's approval is better than living for man's applause.

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### **Undercover Christians**

They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. — John 12:43

Today's Scripture: John 12:35-43

According to naturalists, butterflies of the Kallima family are able to pull off a unique disappearing act. Also known as "dead-leaf butterflies," these insects have brilliant colors on the upper sides of their wings, but underneath they bear the lines and markings of a dead leaf and are noticeably drab.

In flight, this butterfly produces a flash of color easily detected by friend and foe alike. But when it lands, the colors disappear and it is transformed into a “dead leaf.” It becomes almost invisible because the vein-like appearance of its wings includes markings that mimic holes and fungus. It even sways in the breeze like a leaf.

Believers in Christ sometimes take on the appearance of the world to avoid detection. That’s what some religious leaders did in John 12. They believed in Jesus but didn’t make it known for fear of losing their position (v.42). We must be consistent, showing our colors for the Lord on all occasions, and not quickly blending into our surroundings when we feel threatened.

Yes, we can avoid ridicule from the world by going undercover, but that shows we love the praise of men more than the praise of God (v.43). Let’s maintain a clear-cut testimony at all times and in all circumstances. By: Mart DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord of my life, henceforth I bear  
The name of Christian everywhere;  
Therefore, O Christ, my spirit claim  
And make me worthy of Your Name.

—Freeman

Work harder at being what you should be than at hiding what you are.

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### **Crowd Pleasers**

They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. — John 12:43

Today's Scripture: John 12:35-43

I once read a newspaper story about an old carnival headliner nicknamed “Cannonball.” In his younger days, he was blasted out of a cannon 1,200 times, pulled a 90-pound weight across a table with his eyelids, and performed many other bizarre stunts. When asked why he did such things, he replied, “Do you know what it’s like to feel the applause of 60,000 people? That’s why I did it over and over.”

In John 12 we learn about some leaders who were also motivated by a desire to please others. In their case, however, they refused to follow Jesus openly because they wanted to be accepted by the Pharisees. Although they had seen the Savior’s miracles and believed in Him, they wouldn’t acknowledge this publicly. “They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (v.43). And I believe we are safe in assuming that many people failed to turn to Jesus because they were also crowd pleasers who feared the disapproval of these “chief” crowd pleasers.

We are all subject to social pressures. If we are true to ourselves and to God, we’ll be able to withstand the strong pull of the crowd. But if we become crowd pleasers, we’ll be in far worse shape than the man who kept climbing back into that cannon! By: Mart DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

If we, to gain the world's applause,  
Refuse to own the Savior's cause,  
What shame will fill us on that day  
When Thou Thy glory shall display!  
—Anon.

Yielding to God's Spirit within prevents conforming to the world without.

**John 12:44 And Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me.**

BGT John 12:44 ἡσο ὃ κρᾶξεν καὶ ἐπεν· πιστεῶν ἐς μὲ οὐ πιστεῖτε ἐς μὲ ἀλλ' ἐς τὸν πέμψαντά με,

KJV John 12:44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

NET John 12:44 But Jesus shouted out, "The one who believes in me does not believe in me, but in the one who sent me,

CSB John 12:44 Then Jesus cried out, "The one who believes in Me believes not in Me, but in Him who sent Me.



ESV John 12:44 And Jesus cried out and said, "Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me.

NIV John 12:44 Then Jesus cried out, "When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me.

NLT John 12:44 Jesus shouted to the crowds, "If you trust me, you are trusting not only me, but also God who sent me.

NRS John 12:44 Then Jesus cried aloud: "Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me.

NJB John 12:44 Jesus declared publicly: Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in the one who sent me,

NAB John 12:44 Jesus cried out and said, "Whoever believes in me believes not only in me but also in the one who sent me,

YLT John 12:44 And Jesus cried and said, 'He who is believing in me, doth not believe in me, but in Him who sent me;

MIT John 12:44 Jesus exclaimed, "The faith of one who believes in me does not terminate on me, but ultimately reaches the one who sent me.

- **cried:** Jn 7:28 11:43 Pr 1:20 8:1 Isa 55:1-3
- **He:** Jn 13:20 Mt 10:40 Mk 9:37 1Pe 1:21
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 7:28+ Then Jesus **cried out** ([krazo](#)) in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.

Matthew 10:40+ "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

Mark 9:37+ "Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me."

Luke 9:48+ and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great."

Luke 10:16+ "The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."

### LAST WORDS: THE CRY OF JESUS' HEART!

Keep the context in mind - In John 12:36 had gone "away and hid Himself." So it seems that the discourse in Jn 12:44-50 was not spoken on this occasion but is John's addition summarizing Jesus' ministry. After this chapter until Jesus' arrest and crucifixion, the gospel of John will only deal with Jesus away from the public and alone with His disciples. So these are Jesus' last words to the public. Last words of any man are usually significant, especially if the one speaking is Jesus!

**Bob Deffinbaugh** - In many ways, verses 44-50 sum up the message of the Gospel of John, and of our Lord. We find nothing new here, but a repetition of what has been said many times before.

**Chrysostom** (*In John* 69.2). "In the first part of the gospel, which here closes, Jesus lives in complete obedience to the Father; in the second part he will die in the same obedience"

**Steven Cole** - Our text represents Jesus' final notice to the Jews who had not believed in Him. We don't know when He spoke these words. There is nothing here that He has not already said. His words serve as a review of some of the key truths that John's Gospel has emphasized to this point. But these are His last words to unbelieving Israel before He was crucified. The next five chapters are spoken privately to His disciples. Since this is Jesus' final notice, we all should pay attention! ([Final Notice](#))

**Vincent** on Jn 12:44-50 - This is not meant to relate a reappearance of Jesus in public. The close of His public ministry is noted at v. 36. It is in continuation of the Evangelist's own remarks, and introduces a summary of Jesus' past teaching to the Jews.

**And Jesus ([Iesous](#)) cried out ([krazo](#))** - This is not a whisper but a loud cry (cf Jn 7:37+). John uses an interesting verb [krazo](#) which was a technical, rabbinic term that referred to the loud summons of a prophet proclaiming something that needs to be heard. If there was ever a Prophet Who needed to be heard, it was the Prophet Jesus! Moses writes "I will raise up a Prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him." (Dt 18:18+).

*Faith in Christ is faith in God,  
he that trusts the Son hath accepted the witness of the Father.*  
-- C H Spurgeon

**And said, "He who believes ([pisteuo](#) in present tense) in Me, does not believe ([pisteuo](#)) in Me but in Him who sent Me** - Jesus presents Himself here as the "Agent" of His Father. To know the Son is to know the Father (cf. 1 John 5:10-12). Believing in the Son equates with believing in the Father. This does not mean by the way that people believe in two different Gods. What we see here is the perfect union of Father and Son (cf Jn 10:30+). The converse belief is not true. In other words (and we've all heard this), someone will say they believe in God, but unfortunately that does not equate with believing in the Son. Stated another way, belief in God without belief in the Son will take your soul to hell! This is one of the greatest lies of Satan who says "Any "god" will do (see [note](#))! Don't worry, your eternal fire insurance policy is covered!" Wrong! Peter was crystal clear declaring "there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12+). Jesus Himself said "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins." (Jn 8:24+)

**POSB** - A man believes on God—truly believes on God—only when he believes on Jesus Christ. Christ is the Mediator, the bridge builder between God and man. If a man wishes to approach God, the only living and true God, he can do so only by believing on Christ first. When a man claims to believe in God apart from Christ, he is believing in a god of imagination, a god of his own making. (Cp. John 14:6; 1 Tim. 2:5.) Note also that when a man believes on Christ, his faith is placed in God, the Sovereign Majesty who sent Christ to save the world. ([The Preacher's outline & sermon Bible](#) - BORROW)

**A T Robertson** - The idea of Jesus here is a frequent one (believing on Jesus whom the Father has sent) as in John 3:17-18; John 5:23-24, 30, 43; John 7:16; John 8:42; John 13:20; John 14:1; Matthew 10:40; Luke 9:48.

**Reformation Study Bible** - The close relationship of Jesus with the Father (cf. Jn 17:21-23) is stressed in three respects: to believe in Christ is to believe in the Father; to see Christ is to see the Father (Jn 12:45); to hear Christ is to hear the Father (Jn 12:50). On the other hand, rejection of Christ and His words is also a rejection of the Father and His words. This rejection results in judgment, although the leading purpose of Christ's incarnation was the salvation of His own and not the condemnation of those who do not believe.

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**Cried** ([2896](#)) [krazo](#) refers to a loud cry or vociferation, and is a strong word expressing deep emotion. **Krazo** is one of those [onomatopoeic](#) words, the very pronunciation of which imitates the hoarse cry of the raven ([listen](#)), and can be an inarticulate and brutish sound or an exclamation of fear or pain. Abbott-Smith says "generally used of inarticulate cries, *to scream, cry out* (Aesch., etc.)" It is used of the cry of an animal, the barking of a dog and two men in a quarrel, trying to bawl each other down (so Aristophanes, *Knights*, 1017) "The prophet in awful earnestness, and as with a scream of anguish, cries over Israel' (Morison)" In Lk 18:39+ the blind beggar cried "to cry clamorously; to scream or shriek." (You can almost hear him shrieking! He is motivated because he is blind and thinks this Man might help him see!)

- See page 408 for 3 page discussion of [krazo](#) [New International Dictionary Of New Testament Theology](#)

**Krazo - 53v** - Matt. 8:29; Matt. 9:27; Matt. 14:26; Matt. 14:30; Matt. 15:22; Matt. 15:23; Matt. 20:30; Matt. 20:31; Matt. 21:9; Matt. 21:15; Matt. 27:23; Matt. 27:50; Mk. 3:11; Mk. 5:5; Mk. 5:7; Mk. 9:24; Mk. 9:26; Mk. 10:47; Mk. 10:48; Mk. 11:9; Mk. 15:13; Mk. 15:14; Lk. 9:39; Lk. 19:40; Jn. 1:15; Jn. 7:28; Jn. 7:37; Jn. 12:44; Acts 7:57; Acts 7:60; Acts 14:14; Acts 16:17; Acts 19:28; Acts 19:32; Acts 19:34; Acts 21:28; Acts 21:36; Acts 23:6; Acts 24:21; Rom. 8:15; Rom. 9:27; Gal. 4:6; Jas. 5:4; Rev. 6:10; Rev. 7:2; Rev. 7:10; Rev. 10:3; Rev. 12:2; Rev. 14:15; Rev. 18:2; Rev. 18:18; Rev. 18:19; Rev. 19:17

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**ILLUSTRATION** - A wife opening the mail said to her husband, "The bank says that this is our last notice. Isn't it wonderful that they're not going to bother us anymore?" (Michael Streff, *Reader's Digest* [5/92]) It's never wise to ignore final notices! That's true of bill collectors, but it's especially true if you ignore God's final notice. You may think that it's wonderful that God won't bother you anymore. But as Paul warned the Athenians (Acts 17:31), "[God] has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." So when God sends a final notice, it's best to pay attention! ([Final Notice](#))

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**Bruce Goettsche** - In the children's fantasy Alice in Wonderland, Alice came to a junction in the road that led in different directions and asked the Cheshire Cat for advice.

"Cheshire-Puss -- would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where," said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

The Cat is right . . . it doesn't matter which way we go if we don't care where we end up . . .but most of us DO care where we end up. The decisions we make DO matter. We all come to forks in the road of our lives and make decisions that will impact the future . . .Imagine a fork in a road. You cannot go straight, you must make a choice.

**John 12:45 "He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.**

BGT John 12:45 κα θεωρ ν μ θεωρε τ ν π μψαντ με.

KJV John 12:45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

NET John 12:45 and the one who sees me sees the one who sent me.

CSB John 12:45 And the one who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.

ESV John 12:45 And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.

NIV John 12:45 When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me.

NLT John 12:45 For when you see me, you are seeing the one who sent me.

NRS John 12:45 And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.

NJB John 12:45 and whoever sees me, sees the one who sent me.

NAB John 12:45 and whoever sees me sees the one who sent me.

YLT John 12:45 and he who is beholding me, doth behold Him who sent me;

MIT John 12:45 Correspondingly, one who inspects me sees the one who commissioned me.

- Jn 12:41 Jn 14:9-10 Jn 15:24 2Co 4:6 Col 1:15 Heb 1:3 1Jn 5:20
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

John 15:24 "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well.

John 1:14+ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Colossians 1:15+ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Hebrews 1:3+ And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

### JESUS IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE FATHER MAKES KNOWN THE FATHER

**He who sees (theoreo) Me sees (theoreo) the One who sent Me** - Both verbs **sees (theoreo)** are in the present tense which describes constantly, intently looking. To see Jesus is to see God. To look upon the Son is to look upon the Father. Relationship with Jesus results in relationship with the Father. The writer of Hebrews states that Jesus "is the **radiance of His glory** and the **exact representation of His nature.**" (Heb 1:3+) Paul writes that Jesus "is the **image of the invisible God.**" (Col 1:15+). Earlier John had

written "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God Who is in the bosom of the Father, He (JESUS) has **explained** ([exegeomai](#) = given a detailed report = God's self-revelation through Christ of) Him." (John 1:18+) Later responding to Philip's request to Jesus to show them the Father, Jesus asks him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10 "Do you not believe that **I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me**? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works." (Jn 14:9-10)

**Spurgeon** - Wonderful expression. Perhaps, we never fully realize it. Christ is seeable. God is not, but when we see the Christ, we do virtually see all of God that we may desire to see: the Invisible hath made himself visible in Christ — in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Clearly Jesus is affirming the earlier teaching when He declared that He and His Father are one (Jn 10:30+) " In John 10:38, He said that they should "know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." In John 8:19, Jesus said "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also." All of these statements speak of the essential unity of the Father and the Son.

Notice the phrase **the One Who sent Me** refers to the Father, and this statement alone is a clear refutation of the heretical teaching known as [modalism](#), one modern form of which is known as "[Oneness Pentecostalism](#)". In oneness theology, which is anti-Trinitarian, there are no distinctions among the Persons of the Godhead. Jesus is God, but He is also the Father and the Spirit. In a slight deviation from ancient modalism, Oneness Pentecostals teach that God is able to manifest Himself in all three "modes" simultaneously, such as at Jesus' baptism in Luke 3:22." Of course they have to propose simultaneous "modes" in an attempt to explain phrases like **the One Who sent Me**. How could Jesus send Himself? [Oneness Pentecostalism](#) is a potentially dangerous teaching (which [NAMB considers a cult](#)) and those who hold to these teachings for their eternal salvation need to compare their teachings with the Bible. Paul warned "if one comes and preaches **another Jesus** whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully." (2Co 11:4) And "if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed." (Gal 1:8) Jesus Himself warned "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'" (Mt 7:22-23) Here are some other resources (besides those from Gotquestions.org below) - [Oneness Pentecostalism - Apologetics; Is Oneness Pentecostalism biblical?](#); [Wikipedia](#) says Oneness Pentecostalism holds a different belief on soteriology (how one is saved)! For an excellent discussion of the Trinity see [Dr Wayne Grudem's chapter on the Trinity in Systematic Theology \(online free\) - go to page 184.](#)

**Steven Cole** - You cannot deny Jesus' deity and at the same time believe in the one true God. And to deny Jesus' distinction from the Father (as in modalism) is to deny the one true God. To believe in Jesus as God is to believe in the Father who sent Him, which is the only faith that results in eternal life (John 17:3): "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." ([Final Notice](#))

**Brian Bell** - **Sees** - i.e. Careful observation ([theoreo](#)) leading to spiritual insight.

**POSB** - When a person looks at Christ, they see the very nature of God—the very acts and words of God Himself. Christ is the revelation of God who came to earth to reveal God.

**Soren Kierkegaard** says, "the true believer is the one who is willing to bet their lives on the God in Jesus."

**J C Ryle** - He meant, "He that sees Me sees not only Me, but through Me and by Me he sees Him that sent Me, for we cannot be divided."

**Vincent** points out that **sees** ([theoreo](#)) "is purposely chosen to mark an *intent, continuous* contemplation of Christ, issuing in ever larger knowledge of the Father."

You cannot separate faith in God the Father from faith in Jesus Christ. The [Athanasian Creed](#) opening:

"Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith. Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; Neither confounding the Persons; nor dividing the Essence. For there is one Person of the Father; another of the Son; and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal."

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#### QUESTION - [What did Jesus mean when He said, "I and the Father are one" \(John 10:30\)?](#)

**ANSWER** - In John 10 Jesus presents Himself as the Good Shepherd and, in a debate with the Jewish leaders, makes the claim, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). It was a bold statement—one His audience found quite audacious—and it reveals much about who Jesus is.

Five key observations can be made concerning this passage.

First, Jesus claimed to be one with God in the sense of being equal to Him. Jesus did not claim to be merely a messenger or prophet of God, but of equal power with God.

Second, His audience understood that Jesus was claiming equality with God the Father. In verse 31, "The Jews picked up stones again to stone him." Why? Blasphemy was a crime punishable by death according to the Jewish Law. When Jesus asked why they were planning to kill Him, they answered, "For blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God" (John 10:33). If Jesus had been lying or deceived, His statement *would* have been blasphemous. In fact, the only way His words were *not* blasphemy is if Jesus was telling the truth about His equality with God.

Third, Jesus referred to Himself as God's Son and to God as His Father (John 10:36–37). He used Psalm 82:6 to show that the Messiah has the right to claim the title "Son of God."

Fourth, Jesus claimed that that Father sent Him: "the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world" (John 10:36). In this statement, Jesus claimed preexistence in the Father's presence. No biblical prophet had ever made such a claim before; yet Jesus claimed to exist before Abraham (John 8:58).

Fifth, Jesus only stated that the Jews did not believe Him; He never said they misunderstood His claim to be God. John 10:38 notes, "Even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." Jesus was not correcting a misunderstanding. They understood what He said perfectly. He was correcting their willful rejection of Him.

Colossians 1:16–17 affirms Jesus' same teaching: "In him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." John 1:1 explicitly notes that Jesus was both *with* God in the beginning and *was* God.

In summary, Jesus claimed to be one with the Father as part of a larger argument to note that He had existed from eternity past, lived in perfect oneness with the Father, held the same power as God, and was sent by God the Father's authority. Unfortunately, He was rejected as divine by the Jewish leaders. Jesus' claim to have equal power as the Father was not blasphemy. It was the plain truth.[GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### QUESTION - [What is nontrinitarianism?](#)

**ANSWER** - Nontrinitarianism is a theological view of God that rejects the doctrine of the [Trinity](#). Any group that denies that God exists in three eternal, co-equal Persons sharing one nature in perfect unity is nontrinitarian. Within Christianity, broadly defined, are nontrinitarian groups that believe that God the Father is God but that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are not fully equal to Him.

There are several false ideas related to nontrinitarianism. There is [adoptionism](#), which says that Jesus was "adopted" as the Son of God at some point during His earthly life—at His baptism, resurrection, or ascension, for example. There is also [modalism](#), which asserts that God is an indivisible being who manifests Himself as one of three Persons at various times. Also, there is subordinationism, which says the Son and Holy Spirit are subordinate to the Father in nature and being. Nontrinitarian groups claiming the name of Christ include the [Jehovah's Witnesses](#), [Mormons](#), [Swedenborgians](#), [Christadelphians](#), members of the [United Church of God](#), and [Oneness Pentecostals](#).

Nontrinitarianism is problematic because it is unbiblical and, at least in some forms, it makes Jesus Christ less than God. The deity of Christ is clearly supported by Scripture. Jesus said to the religious Jews, "I and the Father are one" ([John 10:30](#)). The Jews rightly took this to mean that Jesus was claiming equality with the Father. They replied, "You, a mere man, claim to be God!" (John 10:33). Then they tried to stone Him, which was the proper response to blasphemy, according to the law (Leviticus 24:16).

A nontrinitarian who believes that Jesus is not equal to the Father will have trouble explaining why the Jews were unjustified in their response. If you are not equal to God, it would be blasphemy to say you were. As God said, through the prophet Isaiah, He is the only God, and there is none like Him:

"I am God, and there is no other;

I am God, and there is none like me” (Isaiah 46:9).

In fact, if Jesus were not fully God, His statement to the Jews would have put Him on par with Lucifer, who in rebellion attempted to ascend to God’s throne (Isaiah 14:14).

The Holy Spirit is also God and yet distinct from the other Persons of the Godhead, according to the Bible. We see this in the story of Ananias and Sapphira, who “lied to God” (Acts 5:4). Peter also said that Ananias “lied to the Holy Spirit” (Acts 5:3). This was the same lie, from the lips of one man to one God. Lying to the Holy Spirit is thus equated with lying to the Father. The Bible also tells us that the Holy Spirit has distinct emotions, a distinct will, and a special purpose (Ephesians 4:30, 1 Corinthians 12:4–7; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:25–26; 15:26–27; 16:7–15).

Why do nontrinitarian doctrines exist? What is the motivation to reject the Trinity? Part of the answer may be that the idea of the Trinity is so hard to grasp. How can the One God be also three distinct Persons? It makes no sense to our finite minds. But that is not a reason to discount it. There are many difficult doctrines that Christians struggle with, and many things in the Bible that seem impossible or are hard to understand. If we could fully understand everything God is and does, we would have a comfortable feeling of control. But, if anything, God’s mysterious and profound nature is an argument for the Bible being true. If there is a God who has the power to create us and the world around us, wouldn’t it make sense for Him to be beyond our understanding (see Isaiah 55:8)?

The clear and consistent teaching of the New Testament is that God exists in three Persons. Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14 are two passages in which the doctrine of the Trinity is found. Jesus taught much about all three Persons of the Trinity in John chapters 14–17. And in His conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus speaks of the work of the Spirit who regenerates (John 3:8), the Son who was crucified (John 3:14–15), and the Father who sent the Son (John 3:16–17).

There is no doubt that the Trinity is difficult for human minds to grasp. We are not tri-personal beings; we are each one person. But God is unlike us. In His Word, He has revealed that He is of one nature and essence while at the same time eternally existing in three Persons. The [Nicene Creed](#) (AD 325) affirms that “we believe in one God the Father Almighty, . . . and in one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . and we believe in the Holy Spirit.”

The fourth-century [Athanasian Creed](#) did an admirable job in attempting to convey the truth of the triune nature of God, saying, in part,

“We worship one God in trinity and the Trinity in unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the divine being. For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Spirit is still another. But the deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, equal in glory, coeternal in majesty. What the Father is, the Son is, and so is the Holy Spirit. Uncreated is the Father; uncreated is the Son; uncreated is the Spirit. The Father is infinite; the Son is infinite; the Holy Spirit is infinite. Eternal is the Father; eternal is the Son; eternal is the Spirit: And yet there are not three eternal beings, but one who is eternal; as there are not three uncreated and unlimited beings, but one who is uncreated and unlimited. Almighty is the Father; almighty is the Son; almighty is the Spirit: And yet there are not three almighty beings, but one who is almighty. Thus the Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Spirit is God: And yet there are not three gods, but one God. Thus the Father is Lord; the Son is Lord; the Holy Spirit is Lord: And yet there are not three lords, but one Lord. . . .” “And in this Trinity, no one is before or after, greater or less than the other; but all three persons are in themselves, coeternal and coequal; and so we must worship the Trinity in unity and the one God in three persons.”

Nontrinitarianism rejects these creeds and biblical teaching about the Trinity. Trinitarians affirm Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:19 concerning baptism “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” and they sing with conviction the words of the Doxology, “Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” [GotQuestions.org](#)

**John 12:46 "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."**

BGT John 12:46 γ φ ς ε ς τ ν κ σ μ ο ν λ λ υ θ α , ν α π ς π ι σ τ ε ω ν ε ς μ ν τ σ κ ο τ μ μ ε ν .

KJV John 12:46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

NET John 12:46 I have come as a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in darkness.

CSB John 12:46 I have come as a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me would not remain in darkness.



ESV John 12:46 I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.

NIV John 12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

NLT John 12:46 I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark.

NRS John 12:46 I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness.

NJB John 12:46 I have come into the world as light, to prevent anyone who believes in me from staying in the dark any more.

NAB John 12:46 I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness.

YLT John 12:46 I a light to the world have come, that every one who is believing in me -- in the darkness may not remain;

MIT John 12:46 I have come into the world as light, that all who believe in me might no longer remain in the dark.

- **I have come:** Jn 12:35,36 Jn 1:4-5 Jn 3:19 Jn 8:12, Jn 9:5,39 Ps 36:9 Isa 40:1 Mal 4:2 Mt 4:16 Lu 1:76-79 2:32 Ac 26:18 1Jn 1:1-3 2:8,9
- **remain:** Isa 42:7,15 Eph 5:14
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 John 2:9 The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now.

1 John 2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

John 1:4-5 (**JESUS THE LIGHT**) In Him was life, and the life was the **Light** of men. 5 The **Light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

John 3:19-21+ (**JESUS THE LIGHT**) "This is the judgment, that the **Light** has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the **Light**, for their deeds were evil. 20 "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the **Light** for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 "But he who practices the truth comes to the **Light**, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

John 8:12+ (**JESUS THE LIGHT**) Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the **Light** of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the **Light** of life."

John 9:5+ (**JESUS THE LIGHT**) "While I am in the world, I am the **Light** of the world."

John 12:35-36+ So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the **Light** is among you. Walk while you have the **Light**, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. 36 "While you have the **Light**, believe in the **Light**, so that you may become sons of **Light**." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.

### INCARNATE LIGHT EXPOSES DARKNESS

**I have come** ([erchomai](#)) as **Light** ([phos](#)) into the world ([kosmos](#)) - Jesus as the Light of the world is repeatedly stressed in this Gospel (see passages above = "JESUS THE LIGHT") **I have come** is perfect tense pointing to the abiding result of His coming (cf use of perfect tense in Jn 5:43; 7:28; 8:42; 16:28; 18:37). Note this declaration points not only to His incarnation, but also to His preexistence.

**So that** ([hina](#)) **everyone who believes** ([pisteuo](#) in present tense) **in Me will not remain** ([meno](#)) **in darkness** ([skotia](#)) - This is as clear an explanation of why Jesus left His Throne in Heaven and became a Man Who would die on a cross. Spiritual and moral **darkness** is the present state of every person born, for we are all born with Adam's sin virus (Ro 5:12+) which results in our

spiritual death (now and eternally). Every person will remain in spiritual and darkness unless they believe in Jesus the Light.

**Spurgeon** - True faith in Christ sheds light on everything concerning which light is desirable. You shall understand things when you have come unto the right standpoint, when you have gotten to believe in Christ. I wonder not that those who doubt concerning him, doubt about everything; if they will not have this light, how shall they see?

**Steven Cole** on those in **darkness** - They do not understand the things that the Spirit of God has revealed in God's Word (1 Cor. 2:14). They are darkened in their understanding and excluded from the life of God (Eph. 4:18). This does not mean that unbelievers lack all wisdom about how to live or that they do not at times hold to some valid truths about God. Due to common grace (so that the world does not self-destruct!), God grants even to unbelievers some wisdom and some light. But any light that they may possess is hopelessly mixed up with spiritual and moral confusion. For example, unbelievers typically believe certain truths that they like, but reject other truths that are offensive to them, even though Scripture clearly teaches both truths. They will believe that God is love, because we all like that truth, but they reject that He is absolutely holy and righteous and that He will judge sinners, because they don't like that....A 2009 Barna survey ([Changes in Worldview Among Christians over the Past 13 Years](#)) showed that only 46% of "born again" Christians believe in absolute moral truth! ([Final Notice](#))

**Swindoll** - Jesus is the personal representation, the literal embodiment, of all truth; therefore, to believe divine truth is not to accept a certain set of facts, but to believe in the person named Jesus

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**C H Spurgeon** - THIS world is dark as midnight; Jesus has come that by faith we may have light, and may no longer sit in the gloom which covers all the rest of mankind.

Whosoever is a very wide term: it means you and me. If we trust in Jesus we shall no more sit in the dark shadow of death, but shall enter into the warm light of a day which shall never end. Why do we not come out into the light at once?

A cloud may sometimes hover over us, but we shall not abide in darkness if we believe in Jesus. He has come to give us broad daylight. Shall he come in vain? If we have faith we have the privilege of sunlight: let us enjoy it. From the night of natural depravity, of ignorance, of doubt, of despair, of sin, of dread, Jesus has come to set us free; and all believers shall know that he no more comes in vain than the sun rises and fails to scatter his heat and light.

Shake off thy depression, dear brother. Abide not in the dark, but abide in the light. In Jesus is thy hope, thy joy, thy heaven. Look to him, to him only, and thou shalt rejoice as the birds rejoice at sunrise, and as the angels rejoice before the throne.

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### **Chris Tiegreen - Light and Truth**

"I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness." John 12:46

"I believe in Christianity as I believe the sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." —C. S. Lewis

IN WORD We live in a dark kingdom (Colossians 1:13) **ED**: BUT BELIEVERS HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO THE KINGDOM OF LIGHT AND CAN LIVE AS SONS OF LIGHT). The Bible is very clear and consistent about that. Our understanding was darkened (Ephesians 4:18); we are surrounded by powers of darkness (Ephesians 6:12); we ourselves have done deeds of darkness (Romans 13:12); our motives are dark (1 Corinthians 4:5); and even when we see God, we see Him very dimly (1 Corinthians 13:12). In fact, Paul goes so far as to say that we were darkness (Ephesians 5:8).

This is insulting to the human ego, to say the least. We think we're fairly well educated and wise. We even have an intellectual era we refer to as the Enlightenment. So when Jesus implies that He has come into the darkness, we might wonder where all this alleged darkness is. Aren't we pretty bright folks?

No, Jesus really is the only light this world has ever seen. We can't find illumination anywhere else. He's the One through whom God once said "Let there be light," and there was light. We're the ones who shrouded this planet in a sinful haze of spiritual blindness. He came back into it with all the radiance of a million suns.

IN DEED Plato told an allegory of people in a cave who saw each other as shadows. They thought they could see clearly enough, because shadows were all they knew. Like Plato's cave dwellers, we think we're well-informed; and when we encounter light, we feel the pain of brightness in our maladapted eyes. We turn back to the darkness we're so comfortable with.

Do not dabble in the wisdom of the world. This world no longer has anything to offer you. Its interpretations of life are but shadows; its knowledge is untouched by the light of truth. Reject it. Do you really want understanding? Open your mind exclusively to Jesus and let Him shine. (See [The One Year At His Feet Devotional](#))

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## Nic At Nite

I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. — John 12:46

Today's Scripture: John 3:1-21

According to the apostle John, Nicodemus “came to Jesus by night” (John 3:2). Was this Pharisee skulking under cover of darkness, embarrassed or ashamed that he, as one of the ruling class, was curious about Jesus?

Some have suggested that it was just cooler at night. Others have said that evening was a better time to ask Jesus questions because it was quieter and there were fewer distractions.

We really don't know the reason Nicodemus went to Jesus at night, but John seemed determined to make a point of that specific fact. Every time he mentioned Nicodemus, he identified him by saying something like: “You know who I'm talking about—the guy who came to Jesus by night” (see 7:50; 19:39).

Nicodemus, no doubt, was quite moral and lived according to Mosaic Law. People probably thought he was a pretty good person. Yet none of that mattered. He was in the dark about who Jesus really was, and he wanted to know the truth. So he was drawn from the darkness into the presence of “the light of the world” (John 8:12).

Jesus calls us “out of darkness” too (1 Peter 2:9) and promises that whoever believes in Him will not stay in the dark (John 12:46). By: Cindy Hess Kasper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Our search for truth is hindered by  
The darkness of the night,  
Until the Bright and Morning Star  
Reveals His brilliant light.  
—Sper

Faith in Christ is not a leap into the dark; it's a step into the Light.

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## Rejected Light

I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. — John 12:46

Today's Scripture: John 12:35-46

In the early hours of December 21, 2010, I witnessed an event that last occurred in 1638—a total lunar eclipse on the winter solstice. Slowly the shadow of the earth slipped across the bright full moon and made it appear a dark red. It was a remarkable and beautiful event. Yet it reminded me that while physical darkness is part of God's created design, spiritual darkness is not.

Scottish pastor Alexander MacLaren said: “Rejected light is the parent of the densest darkness, and the man who, having the light, does not trust it, piles around himself thick clouds of obscurity and gloom.” Jesus described this self-imposed spiritual eclipse of heart and mind when He said, “If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matt. 6:23).

The great invitation of Christmas is to open our hearts to the Savior who came to end our darkness. Jesus said, “While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light. . . . I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness” (John 12:36,46).

The way out of our spiritual night is to walk in the light with Him. By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Come to the Light, 'tis shining for thee,  
Sweetly the Light has dawned upon me;  
Once I was blind, but now I can see—  
The Light of the world is Jesus.  
—Bliss

When we walk in the Light, we won't stumble in the darkness.

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## It's Your Choice

I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. — John 12:46

Today's Scripture: John 12:34-50

We make choices every day. Some people, though, insist that we are biological computers programmed by elements over which we have no control.

The writer of a letter to the editor of a newspaper berated Christians for preaching their moral convictions to others, insisting that people can only “react to genetic and environmental factors.” He said that any preference, whether in “religion, favorite foods, colors, or friends” is not a choice but “just a brute fact.” Then he implored us to “give up the false promises of religion and take up the torch of human reason.” Did you catch that? He concluded by preaching his own convictions and asking readers to do the very thing that he had said people can’t do—make a choice.

It’s true that genetic and environmental factors can make it difficult to make right choices. But God still holds us responsible for the freedom we possess. Those who deny such freedom don’t think anyone has the light of absolute truth.

Jesus said, “I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness” (Jn. 12:46). Choosing Christ will deliver you from the darkness of sin and give your life meaning. It’s your choice. By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Jesus is calling, "Today you must choose!"  
If you delay, you surely will lose;  
Listening now, you can hear the Lord's voice,  
Take His salvation—a beautiful choice!  
—Hess

Those who look for truth are in the dark if they reject the One who is the Light.

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### **Light in the Darkness**

I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. John 12:46

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 12:42-50

During a trip to Peru, I visited one of the many caves found throughout that mountainous country. Our guide told us that this particular cave had already been explored to a depth of 9 miles—and it went even deeper. We saw fascinating bats, nocturnal birds, and interesting rock formations. Before long, however, the darkness of the cave became unnerving—almost suffocating. I was greatly relieved when we returned to the surface and the light of day.

That experience was a stark reminder of how oppressive darkness can be and how much we need light. We live in a world made dark by sin—a world that has turned against its Creator. And we need the Light.

Jesus, who came to restore all of creation—including humanity—to its intended place referred to Himself as that “light” (John 8:12). “I have come as a light into the world,” He said, “that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness” (Jn 12:46).

In Him, we not only have the light of salvation but the only light by which we can find our way—His way—through our world’s spiritual darkness. By: Bill Crowder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

How have you seen God’s light displayed in our broken world? In what ways have you shared His light?

Tell us your answers to these questions at [www.oddb.org](http://www.oddb.org).

When we walk in the Light, we won’t stumble in the darkness.

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**F B Meyer - OBEDIENCE "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness."-**  
- Jn 12:46. (cp Ps 119:130, Jn 1:9, 1:4, 3:19, 20, 21, 8:12, 9:5, 2Ti1:10 Isa 9:2, Mal 4:2)

THE LIGHT of Christ is always distinguishable because it means the deepest impression of what is right, the clearest conviction of the will of God. Everywhere men are asking how they may come to know Christ, and there is but one answer: believe that He loves you, that He died on the Cross to save you, that He is prompting you by His Spirit to follow every perception and longing for a better and holier life.

How different is this teaching from that of the world around! There we are bidden to know before we dare entrust our lives to any leader, whatever be his fair speeches and promises; but Christ bids us obey the first glimmer of light breaking on us, and He undertakes that if we do, we shall not walk in darkness. Disobedience, like scales, veils Christ from us; whilst obedience leads us into His very presence (cp Jn 7:17, 1Sa 15:22, 23). The judgment always becomes just, and the vision clear, when we deny ourselves (Mk 8:34, Lk 9:23 adds "daily"! ) to follow whatsoever things are lovely, true, pure, just, and of good report (Php 4:8-note).

It may be that as you read these lines there is some duty you shirk, some cross you refuse to lift, some act from which you flinch. Though you may not have directly associated it with Christ, yet you cannot doubt that it is His will for you, and that in the doing He will be pleased (2Co 5:9). It is useless to try to know Him until that nearest act of obedience is wrought. Men can never know what the mighty forces of Nature will do for them until they set themselves to obey, in the minutest detail, its laws. And it is so in relation to Christ and the laws of the spiritual realm. That was a true word which the mother of our Lord spoke to the servants at Cana, when she said: "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it!" (Jn 2:5) She had probably learnt that lesson in those long, quiet, blessed years at Nazareth. She knew that there was no such way of understanding Him, as by rendering Him literal obedience, and she passed on the results of her experience to us all.

"Walk while ye have the light," (Jn 12:35) so you will know the Light, and become light in the Lord. (Eph 5:8+)

**PRAYER** My son, forsake thyself, and thou shalt find Me Lord, how often shall I resign myself, and wherein shall I forsake myself? Always, yea, every hour, as well in small things as in great. AMEN.

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#### James Smith - THE HOPE OF THE WORLD JOHN 12:46, 47

1. The Condition of the World. "In darkness."
2. The Character of Christ. "A Light."
3. The Sphere of His Shining. "In the world."
4. The Purpose of His Coming. "To save the world."
5. The Condition of Salvation. "Believeth on Me."

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#### QUESTION - [Has anyone ever seen God?](#)

**ANSWER** - "No one has ever seen God" (John 1:18a). This statement refers to the spiritual nature of God. God is spirit (John 4:24a), and so we are naturally limited in perceiving Him. Physical eyes cannot behold spiritual beings.

The Lord Jesus Christ is a unique case: "No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man" (John 3:13). Since He is both the [Son of Man](#) and the [Son of God](#), Jesus knows both the earthly and heavenly realms. He descended from heaven, where "he was with God in the beginning" (John 1:2). Jesus has seen God; in fact, Jesus is the embodiment of all God is: "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known" (John 1:18; cf. Colossians 2:9).

Because of our physical, moral, and spiritual limitations, God the Father sent His one-and-only Son into the world. Through Jesus Christ, we know God and are redeemed from our sin. If we want to see God, we must look to Jesus. Those who beheld Jesus as He walked this earth were, in a sense, seeing God—not God as a [spirit](#) but God clothed in humanity (John 14:9).

When Moses talked with God at the [burning bush](#), "Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God" (Exodus 3:6). Later, God tells Moses, "You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live" (Exodus 33:20). In other words, truly seeing God as He is, in the fullness of His glory, is more than any mortal can tolerate (cf. Isaiah 6:5). Moses was allowed a glimpse of God's glory, but, for his own protection, most of God's glory was kept hidden from him (Exodus 33:21–23).

What, then, should we do with other passages that describe various people "seeing" God? For example, in Exodus 33, the same chapter in which Moses *cannot* see God, Moses speaks to God "face to face" (verse 11). In this instance, we must understand the phrase *face to face* as a figure of speech indicating Moses and God were in close communion. They were speaking to each other as if they were two human beings holding a conversation.

There are other times when people *seem* to have seen God:

- In Genesis 32:22–32, Jacob wrestles with someone who is later revealed to be God. When the incident was over and Jacob felt the full import of what had just happened, he was overawed: "So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared'" (verse 30). However, Jacob did not see God in all His glory, and he did not see God in spirit form. On a purely physical level, Jacob wrestled a [theophany](#), a manifestation of God in human form.

• In Judges 13:1–23, Samson’s parents have an interaction with the angel of the Lord. They don’t realize they are speaking to the angel of the Lord until the angel performs a sign and ascends to heaven before their eyes. At that point, Samson’s father is terrified: “We are doomed to die!” he said to his wife. “We have seen God!” (verse 22). But, as in Jacob’s case, they had only seen God appearing as an angel. This is another example of a theophany (or Christophany).

• In Isaiah 6:1–13, Isaiah has a vision of “the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne” (verse 1). There are seraphim present, and even they cover their faces in God’s presence (verse 2). Isaiah’s immediate reaction is fear due to his sin: “Woe to me!” he cries. “I am ruined! . . . My eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty” (verse 5). God then atones for Isaiah’s sin and commissions him as a prophet. Of note here is that Isaiah is experiencing a prophetic vision; thus, he is not seeing Yahweh, per se, but a symbol of His presence and majesty. Or this could be another Christophany (see John 12:41).

No one has ever seen God, who is “the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, *whom no one has seen or can see*. To him be honor and might forever. Amen” (1 Timothy 6:15–16, emphasis added). It is only through God’s only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, that we can approach God, know God, and see God. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### Related Resources:

- [If Moses met face to face with God, why, later, was he not allowed to see God’s face? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [Did Moses see God? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**John 12:47 "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world."**

BGT John 12:47 καὶ ὁτις μου κοῖσιν τὰ ῥήματα καὶ μὴ φυλάξῃ, ὁ γὰρ ἄθων· ναὶ κρινώ τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλὰ σωθῶ τὸν κόσμον.

KJV John 12:47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

NET John 12:47 If anyone hears my words and does not obey them, I do not judge him. For I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

CSB John 12:47 If anyone hears My words and doesn't keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.

ESV John 12:47 If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.

NIV John 12:47 "As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it.

NLT John 12:47 I will not judge those who hear me but don't obey me, for I have come to save the world and not to judge it.

NRS John 12:47 I do not judge anyone who hears my words and does not keep them, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

NJB John 12:47 If anyone hears my words and does not keep them faithfully, it is not I who shall judge such a person, since I have come not to judge the world, but to save the world:

NAB John 12:47 And if anyone hears my words and does not observe them, I do not condemn him, for I did not come to condemn the world but to save the world.

YLT John 12:47 and if any one may hear my sayings, and not believe, I -- I do not judge him, for I came not that I might judge the world, but that I might save the world.

MIT John 12:47 "If anyone hears my words and does not conserve them, I will not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to rescue the world.



- **judge:** Jn 12:48 5:45 8:15,16,26
- **for:** Jn 3:17 Mt 18:11 20:28 Lu 9:56 19:10 1Ti 1:15,16 2Pe 3:15 1Jn 4:14
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## HEARD WORDS MUST BE HEEDED WORDS

If - Third class condition indicating potential action.

**Anyone hears ([akouo](#)) My sayings ([rhema](#)) and does not keep ([phulasso](#)) them, I do not judge ([krino](#)) him; for I did not come to judge ([krino](#)) the world ([kosmos](#))** - In the previous passage Jesus spoke of the blessing of belief, but now presents the negative consequences of unbelief (see next verse). **Hears** and **does not keep** is a description of disobedience and this is a description of unbelievers. Faith alone saves but the faith that truly saves is not alone, but is shown to be genuine by one's obedience (cf Ro 1:5+). Continuing obedience (not perfection, direction not obeying out of legalism, but by amazing grace) is evidence of a genuine personal relationship with Jesus.

John 3:36+ says "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who **does not obey** the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." Note he is not saying obedience to the Son saves, but (when compared with many other Scriptures) that obedience demonstrates that one truly believes (cf Jas 2:14-22+).

**Steven Cole on I do not judge** - There is no contradiction between Jesus' statement in John 3:17 that He did not come to judge the world and His statement in John 9:39 that for judgment He came into this world. He means that the primary purpose in His first coming was not to judge the world, but to provide for the world's salvation through His substitutionary death on the cross. But as John 3:18-21 shows, the concept of judgment is implicit in Jesus' coming, because the light divides people into those who come to it and those who hide from it. Christ's second coming will be for judgment, as the Book of Revelation makes clear. ([Final Notice](#))

**Spurgeon** - Under this present dispensation, it is not the time of judgment. The Lord leaves you that are unbelievers to yourselves. He does not come as yet to judge you; there is a second coming, when he will be both judge and witness, and condemner, of those who have rejected him; but at present it is a dispensation of pure mercy. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him." There is a great God above who reckons this to be among the greatest of all human crimes, that they reject his Son. We speak of unbelief very lightly, and there are some who trifle with it as if it had no moral quality at all, but God doth not so.

**Wiersbe** - The word *judge* is repeated four times in the closing words of this message, and a solemn word it is. Jesus did not come to judge; He came to save (John 3:18; 8:15). But if the sinner will not trust the Saviour, the Saviour must become the Judge. The sinner is actually passing judgment on himself, not on the Lord!

**But** (Actually not a contrast, but purpose = [hina](#) - in order) **to save** (sozo) **the world** ([kosmos](#)) - He did not come to judge but to save, but judgment is the other side of salvation.

**NIV Study Bible** - It is not the purpose of the sun's shining to cast shadows, but when the sun shines, shadows are inevitable. (BORROW [NIV Study Bible](#))

In Jn 3:17-18+ Jesus declared "God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

**A T Robertson** - And yet Jesus does judge the world inevitably (John 8:15-16; John 9:39), but his primary purpose is to save the world (John 3:16).

**John 12:48 "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day."**

BGT John 12:48 θετ ν μ κα μ λαμβ νων τ ματ μου χει τ ν κρ νοντα α τ ν· λ γος ν λ λησα κε νος κρινε α τ ν ν τ σχ τ μ ρ .

KJV John 12:48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

NET John 12:48 The one who rejects me and does not accept my words has a judge; the word I have spoken will judge him at the last day.

CSB John 12:48 The one who rejects Me and doesn't accept My sayings has this as his judge: The word I have spoken will judge him on the last day.

ESV John 12:48 The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.

NIV John 12:48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.

NLT John 12:48 But all who reject me and my message will be judged on the day of judgment by the truth I have spoken.

NRS John 12:48 The one who rejects me and does not receive my word has a judge; on the last day the word that I have spoken will serve as judge,

NJB John 12:48 anyone who rejects me and refuses my words has his judge already: the word itself that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day.

NAB John 12:48 Whoever rejects me and does not accept my words has something to judge him: the word that I spoke, it will condemn him on the last day,

YLT John 12:48 'He who is rejecting me, and not receiving my sayings, hath one who is judging him, the word that I spake, that will judge him in the last day,

MIT John 12:48 One who sets me aside and does not receive my words has the following criterion for judging him—the message I spoke. That message will judge him on the last day

- **rejects:** De 18:19 1Sa 8:7 10:19 Isa 53:3 Mt 21:42 Mk 8:31 12:10 Lu 7:30 9:22,26 10:16 17:25 20:17 Ac 3:23 Heb 2:3 10:29-31 Heb 12:25
- **the word:** Jn 3:17-20 Mk 16:16 2Co 2:15,16 4:3 2Th 1:8
- **judge:** Jn 11:24 Mt 25:31 Ro 2:16 Heb 9:27,28
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 9:22+ (Mk 8:31) "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be **rejected** by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day."

Luke 10:16+ "The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who **rejects** you **rejects** Me; and he who **rejects** Me **rejects** the One who sent Me."

Luke 17:25+ "But first He must suffer many things and be **rejected** by this generation."

Luke 20:17+ (Mt 21:42, Mk 12:10) But Jesus looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS **REJECTED**, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone'?"

### RESULT OF REJECTION OF THE WORDS OF JESUS

**He who rejects ([atheteo](#)) Me** - See passages above that describe rejection of Jesus. **Rejects ([atheteo](#))** is not a single rejection (we all probably did that before we were saved) but is in present tense indicating one continually rejects Jesus, or renders him "null and void", so to speak (another sense of [atheteo](#)). Note that there is no category called "middle ground." There is "Switzerland" (neutral in war) with Jesus! To not believe (passive) is equivalent to rejecting Jesus (active and defiant). The pay day on the last day is the same - condemnation forever in the Lake of Fire.

**And does not receive ([lambano](#)) My sayings ([rhema](#))** - See **sayings** in John 10:21+. To reject His sayings, to reject His word, is tantamount to rejecting Jesus, because He is the Word (Jn 1:1).

**Has one who judges ([krino](#) in present tense) him** - The one who rejects Jesus' saying will bring judgment upon himself.

**Spurgeon** - Look, ye, to that, the gospel which you refuse will judge you at the last day. We know that the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the world, saith Paul, "according to my gospel," and he that sins against the gospel of love will certainly involve himself in the most solemn condemnation. He perishes that sins against the law, he dieth without mercy at the mouth of one or two witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy that sins against love, and rejects the Saviour?

**The word ([logos](#)) I spoke ([laleo](#)) is what will judge ([krino](#)) him at the last ([eschatos](#)) day** - In other words, His (Jesus') words that one refuses to receive, accept and obey will condemn the one who rejects. Or stated another way, as stated above, their rejection brings judgment on themselves. "The sinner is actually passing judgment on himself, not on the Lord! " (Wiersbe) Note **the last day** is distinct from the prophetic phrase the last days.

**THOUGHT-** Let us not skim over that phrase "**the last day.**" An end to the world as we know it is coming and it could be very soon. Dear skeptical unbeliever, are you ready to meet your Maker? Dear believer, have you redeemed the time of your life, the one opportunity to impact eternity? Have you been a faithful steward of your spiritual gift(s) and talents? Will you hear well done my good and faithful servant? Will you receive eternal rewards from the Judge (2Co 5:10<sup>+</sup>)? Are you living as if "the last day" is a day you can put off? Some of the most poignant words related to this topic are from **Adoniram Judson** who once wrote

*"A life once spent is irrevocable. It will remain to be contemplated through eternity... If it has been a useless life, it can never be improved. Such will stand forever and ever. The same may be said of each day. When it is once past, it is gone forever. All the marks which we put upon it, it will exhibit forever... Each day will not only be a witness of our conduct, but will affect our everlasting destiny (Note: Not in loss of salvation but of rewards - cp 1Co 3:11-15<sup>+</sup>, Jn 15:5, 2Co 5:10<sup>+</sup>, cp 1Ti 4:7, 8<sup>+</sup>). No day will lose its share of influence in determining where shall be our seat in heaven. How shall we then wish to see each day marked with usefulness! It will then be too late to mend its appearance. It is too late to mend the days that are past. The future is in our power. Let us, then, each morning, resolve to send the day into eternity in such a garb as we shall wish it to wear forever. And at night let us reflect that one more day is irrevocably gone, indelibly marked."*  
(See page 33-34 of [A memoir of the life and labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson](#))

In John 5:45 Jesus made a similar pronouncement declaring "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope."

**My word(s) - This phrase is spoken by Jesus 19x - look over some of them for it will help you understand why men will be judged by His words** - Matt. 24:35; Mk. 8:38; Mk. 13:31; Lk. 6:47; Lk. 9:26; Lk. 21:33; Lk. 24:44; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:47; Jn. 8:31; Jn. 8:37; Jn. 8:43; Jn. 8:51; Jn. 8:52; Jn. 14:23; Jn. 14:24; Jn. 15:7; Jn. 15:20; Rev. 3:8

**Brian Bell** - Paper trail - I'm pretty forgetful. What has saved me a number of times is keeping emails conversations (i.e. a paper trail). 1. What are the significance of Jesus words? They will be the sole criterion at the day of judgment. Every one of His sentences, each of His words, were purely & simply the reflection of the Fathers mind! (Jn 12:44-50) The seriousness of rejecting Jesus is the subject here. 1. Why is it so serious to reject Jesus? To reject Jesus is to reject the Father. 2. To accept Jesus is to accept the Father, which leads to life everlasting.

**Warren Wiersbe** has a fascinating comment - It is an awesome thought that the unbeliever will face at the judgment every bit of Scripture he has ever read or heard. The very Word that he rejects becomes his judge! Why? Because the written Word points to the Living Word, Jesus Christ (John 1:14). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Ray Stedman** - Sometimes people ask, "What about those who have never heard?" But that is not the real issue. God does not condemn us for what we have not heard, but for ignoring what we have heard. The final judge is the word we have heard, the sayings of Jesus we already know. This means that those who are condemned on that day are self-condemned. They stand silent before the throne, rendered speechless by their guilty knowledge of truth they have not obeyed.

**A T Robertson** on **what** (that) **will judge him** - "That" very word of Christ which one rejects will confront him and accuse him to the Father "at the last day. There is no escaping it. And yet Jesus himself will bear witness for or against the one whose conduct has already revealed his attitude towards the message of God (Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8-9).

**Henry Morris** - The vital and eternal importance of the written Word of God (which is, to all intents and purposes, the Word spoken by Christ) is thus indicated by the Lord Jesus. The response of men to the Word will be the basis on which they are judged (John 5:24; Revelation 20:12). ()

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**Rejects** (set aside, nullify)([114](#)) **atheteo** from **áthetos** = not placed from **a** = without + **thetós** = placed) means to do away with what has been laid down, to set aside and thus to regard as nothing, to declare invalid, to not recognize, to annul (make ineffective, inoperative or nonexistent), to spurn or to despise. In the papyri **atheteo** was used of loans which were repaid and cancelled and for the rejection of certain officials who were described as inefficient and incapable of doing their duty. **Atheteo** was also used of grain

rejected by the inspector as unfit for food. In Classic Greek **atheteo** is used to describe setting aside of a treaty or promise.

**Thayer** writes that **atheteo** means...to act toward anything as though it were annulled; hence, to deprive a law of force by opinions or acts opposed to it, to transgress... to thwart the efficacy of anything, nullify, make void, frustrate...to render prudent plans of no effect ([1Cor 1:19](#))...to reject, refuse, slight (eg, "the grace of God" [Gal 2:21](#))

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**ILLUSTRATION** - A man received a "Second Notice" from the IRS that his tax payment was overdue and that unless it was immediately forthcoming, he would face legal action. He hurried to the IRS office with his payment in hand and said, "I would have paid sooner, but I never received your First Notice." The clerk replied, "We ran out of 'First Notices.' Besides, we discovered that the 'Second Notices' are much more effective." (Source unknown) Jesus' words here are God's Final Notice. It's a call to believe in Him for salvation before that coming last day. Don't ignore the notice! ([Steven Cole](#))

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## A W Tozer - THE BREATH OF GOD

The word that I have spoken...shall judge him in the last day. John 12:48

Two of the great realities in our midst are surely the promised presence of God and the testimony of His eternal Word!

By the "Word of God" I do not refer only to the book you hold in your hand—paper and letters, pages and ink—sewed together with silk thread. By the Word of God, I do mean the expression of the mind of God: the mighty, world-filling breath of God!

Most of the things men and women talk about cannot be counted among the great realities of life. In October, people talk a great deal about the World Series as a great reality, but by December they have forgotten who pitched and who struck out.

People spend their entire lives in the pursuit of those things that can only perish and fade away. But when it is all over, they are still going to be faced with the reality of the eternal Word of God, the revelation of Truth which God has given us!

Think of the changes that would come if humans would suddenly stop and hear the Word of God! (BORROW [Mornings with Tozer](#))

**John 12:49 "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak."**

BGT John 12:49 τι γὰρ ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ οὐκ ἔλεξα, ἀλλὰ πῶς με πατὴρ αὐτῶν μοι ἐτοίμησεν εἰπὼν καὶ τὸ λαλῆσαι.

KJV John 12:49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

NET John 12:49 For I have not spoken from my own authority, but the Father himself who sent me has commanded me what I should say and what I should speak.

CSB John 12:49 For I have not spoken on My own, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a command as to what I should say and what I should speak.

ESV John 12:49 For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment-- what to say and what to speak.

NIV John 12:49 For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.

NLT John 12:49 I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it.

NRS John 12:49 for I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak.

NJB John 12:49 For I have not spoken of my own accord; but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and what to speak,

NAB John 12:49 because I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and speak.

YLT John 12:49 because I spake not from myself, but the Father who sent me, He did give me a command,

what I may say, and what I may speak,

MIT John 12:49 because I did not say anything on my own. On the contrary, the father himself, who sent me, commanded me as to what I would declare and what I should speak.

- Jn 3:11,32 5:30 6:38-40 8:26,42 14:10 15:15 17:8 De 18:18 Rev 1:1
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE SON SPEAKS WHAT THE FATHER COMMANDS

**For I did not speak ([laleo](#)) on My own initiative, but the Father ([pater](#)) Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment ([entole](#)) as to what to say and what to speak ([laleo](#))** - Jesus is saying that what He taught was not things He Himself made up. Instead, He came as an obedient Servant to speak what His Father had commanded Him to **say** and to **speak**.

**Spurgeon** - God at the back of Christ. Omnipotence supporting love. The expostulations of Christ, not left to our will to do as we like with them, but solemnly sanctioned by the royalties of God, so that to refute them is treason against the majesty of heaven.

**William MacDonald** explains the distinction between **say** and **speak** - There is a difference between the two. The expression "**what I should say**" refers to the substance of the message; "**what I should speak**" means the very words which the Lord should use in teaching the truth of God. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#)),

**Spurgeon** applies this text - Christ did not pride himself upon being a great original thinker. He took his word from his Father's mouth; and the preacher of the gospel is to be no inventor of new thoughts. The "thoughtful" man of whom we hear so much is just a man who is rebellious against God. The Lord's true servant is to repeat God's thoughts, not his own, to borrow from the Scriptures, to borrow from the teaching of the Holy Ghost, even as the Lord Jesus Christ did.

**Swindoll** - Everything Jesus does is necessarily the will of the Father because they are of the same essence (BORROW [Insights on John](#))

**Holman Study Bible** - **Sent Me** presupposes the Jewish idea of representation, according to which a messenger's identity is indistinct from that of the one who sent him

**John 12:50 "I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."**

BGT John 12:50 καὶ ὁ ὅτι ἐπεὶ ἔλεγε αὐτῷ, ὅτι ὁ υἱός ἐστιν, ὁ υἱὸς λέγει, καθὼς ἐρεῖ μοι πᾶς ῥ, ὁ πᾶς λέγει.

KJV John 12:50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

NET John 12:50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. Thus the things I say, I say just as the Father has told me."

CSB John 12:50 I know that His command is eternal life. So the things that I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

ESV John 12:50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me."

NIV John 12:50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

NLT John 12:50 And I know his commands lead to eternal life; so I say whatever the Father tells me to say."

NRS John 12:50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me."

NJB John 12:50 and I know that his commands mean eternal life. And therefore what the Father has told me is what I speak.

NAB John 12:50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. So what I say, I say as the Father told me."

YLT John 12:50 and I have known that His command is life age-during; what, therefore, I speak, according as the Father hath said to me, so I speak.'

MIT John 12:50 I know his command is infused with eternal life. Therefore, I make these statements; I present them in conformity with what my father has spoken to me."

- **His:** Jn 6:63,68 Jn 17:3 Jn 20:31 1Ti 1:16 1Jn 2:25 3:23,24 5:11-13,20
- [John 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FATHER'S COMMANDMENT IS ETERNAL LIFE

I know ([eido](#)) that His commandment ([entole](#)) is eternal ([aionios](#)) life ([zoe](#)); therefore the things I speak ([laleo](#)), I speak ([laleo](#)) just as the Father ([pater](#)) has told Me - I know ([eido](#)) means to know beyond a shadow of a doubt. The Father's **commandment** leads to eternal life or as the MIT (MacDonald Idiomatic Translation) version says "I know his command is infused with eternal life." As Jesus declared earlier "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." (Jn 6:63+) and Peter affirmed "You have the words of eternal life." (Jn 6:68+).

**Spurgeon** - The eternal authority of God is at the back of the testimony of Christ. Oh! that men would not be so unwise as to reject it Now in our reading at the 41st verse we met with these words: "These things, said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him." Now let us read the passage which gives us an account of Isaiah's seeing the glory of Christ.

John writes "This is His **commandment**, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us." (1 John 3:23+)

**Spurgeon** applies this text - If the great Head of the Church was thus only a messenger, the deliverer of a message from the Father, should not we, who at our best are such poor ministers of Christ, take heed to it that we also can say, "Even as the Father said unto me, so I speak"? God grant it! Amen.

**Steven Cole** - Jesus is asserting that He was not an original religious genius who dreamed up His own message. Rather, He was the faithful messenger of the Father who sent Him. Note, also that Jesus emphasizes twice that the Father gave Him a *commandment* as to what to say and speak and that this *commandment* is eternal life. This underscores that God is the ultimate and final authority. He doesn't give divine suggestions or helpful hints for happy living. So in one sense, while Jesus is giving a passionate appeal for His enemies to believe, in another sense He is giving them God's commandment to believe. And this commandment focuses on the most important matter of all, namely, eternal life: Believe in Jesus because He is one with the Father; He is the light; His words will judge all that reject them; and He gives us the Father's commandment that is eternal life. ([Final Notice](#))

[W Hall Harris](#) writes "Note that Jesus does not say here that **keeping** the Father's commandment leads to eternal life, but that the commandment itself **is** eternal life. This is the commandment concerning what he is to say (verse 49) that the Father has given to Jesus. The words and works of Jesus that result from the commandment the Father has given him are the source of eternal life in the world.

**A T Roberson** - In John 6:68 Peter says to Jesus, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Jesus had just said (John 6:63) that his words were spirit and life. The secret lies in the source, "as the Father hath said to me"

**Eternal life - 41x/41v in New Testament** - Matt. 19:16; Matt. 19:29; Matt. 25:46; Mk. 10:17; Mk. 10:30; Lk. 10:25; Lk. 18:18; Lk. 18:30; Jn. 3:15; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:36; Jn. 4:14; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:39; Jn. 6:27; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:47; Jn. 6:54; Jn. 6:68; Jn. 10:28; Jn. 12:50; Jn. 17:2; Jn. 17:3; Acts 13:46; Acts 13:48; Rom. 2:7; Rom. 5:21; Rom. 6:22; Rom. 6:23; Gal. 6:8; 1 Tim. 1:16; 1 Tim. 6:12; Tit. 1:2; Tit. 3:7; 1 Jn. 1:2; 1 Jn. 2:25; 1 Jn. 3:15; 1 Jn. 5:11; 1 Jn. 5:13; 1 Jn. 5:20; Jude 1:21

"How will my heart endure  
The terrors of that day"  
When earth and Heav'n before His face  
Astonished shrink away?

But ere that trumpet shakes  
The mansions of the dead,  
Hark from the Gospel's cheering sound  
What joyful tidings spread:



Ye sinners, seek His grace  
Whose wrath ye cannot bear;  
Fly to the shelter of His cross  
And find salvation there.”  
——Philipp Doddridge

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#### QUESTION - [What is eternal life?](#)

**ANSWER** - When the Bible speaks of eternal life, it refers to a gift of God that comes only “through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). This gift is in contrast to the “death” that is the natural result of sin.

The gift of eternal life comes to those who believe in Jesus Christ, who is Himself “the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). The fact that this life is “eternal” indicates that it is *perpetual* life—it goes on and on and on, with no end.

It is a mistake, however, to view eternal life as simply an unending progression of years. A common New Testament word for “eternal” is *aiónios*, which carries the idea of *quality* as well as *quantity*. In fact, eternal life is not really associated with “years” at all, as it is independent of time. Eternal life can function outside of and beyond time, as well as within time.

For this reason, eternal life can be thought of as something that Christians experience *now*. Believers don’t have to “wait” for eternal life, because it’s not something that starts when they die. Rather, eternal life begins the moment a person exercises faith in Christ. It is our current possession. John 3:36 says, “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.” Note that the believer “has” (present tense) this life (the verb is present tense in the Greek, too). We find similar present-tense constructions in John 5:24 and John 6:47. The focus of eternal life is not on our future, but on our current standing in Christ.

The Bible inextricably links eternal life with the Person of Jesus Christ. John 17:3 is an important passage in this regard, as Jesus prays, “Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” Here, Jesus equates “eternal life” with a knowledge of God and of the Son. There is no knowledge of God without the Son, for it is through the Son that the Father reveals Himself to the elect (John 17:6; 14:9).

This life-giving knowledge of the Father and the Son is a true, personal knowledge, not just an academic awareness. There will be some on Judgment Day who had claimed to be followers of Christ but never really had a relationship with Him. To those false professors, Jesus will say, “I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!” (Matthew 7:23). The apostle Paul made it his goal to *know* the Lord, and he linked that knowledge to resurrection from the dead: “I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead” (Philippians 3:10–11).

In the [New Jerusalem](#), the apostle John sees a river flowing from “the throne of God and of the Lamb,” and “on each side of the river stood the [tree of life](#). . . . And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:1–2). In Eden, we rebelled against God and were banished from the tree of life (Genesis 3:24). In the end, God graciously restores our access to the tree of life. This access is provided through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

Right now, every sinner is invited to know Christ and to receive eternal life: “Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life” (Revelation 22:17).

**How can you [know that you have eternal life](#)?** First of all, confess your sin before our holy God. Then accept God’s provision of a Savior on your behalf. “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for your sins, and He rose again the third day. Believe this good news; trust the Lord Jesus as your Savior, and you will be saved (Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9–10).

John puts it so simply: “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:11–12). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### [The Slowness Of Wisdom](#)

Whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak. — John 12:50

Today’s Scripture: John 8:1-11

When the Pharisees came to Jesus with the woman caught in adultery and asked Him what should be done with her, He knelt for a moment and scribbled in the sand (John 8:6-11). We have no idea what He wrote. But when they continued asking Him, Jesus responded in one short sentence: “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first” (v.7). His few words

accomplished much in confronting the Pharisees with their own sin, for they walked away one by one. Even today those words resound around the world.

Jesus had such a closeness to and dependence on His Father that He said of Himself, "Whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak" (12:50). Oh, that we had such a relationship with our Father that we knew how to respond with His wisdom!

Perhaps it begins with obeying James' challenge to be "swift to hear, slow to speak" (1:19). This is not the slowness of ignorance, emptiness, timidity, guilt, or shame. But the slowness of wisdom born of dwelling quietly on the Lord and His thoughts.

We're often told to stop and think before we speak. But I think we should take it much further and live a life where we're always listening for God's wisdom. By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, grant that we may hear You speak;  
For truth within our hearts we seek;  
For unto Christ we would be true  
And know what He Himself would do.  
—D. De Haan

Listen to God before you speak for God.