

67John 12: 27-33; “And If I Be Lifted Up”, Sermon # 66 in the series –“That All May Honor the Son”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 5th, 2021, in the Morning Worship Service.

In His statements here, our Lord is speaking to all who would listen, about His upcoming death upon the cross. He was declaring to them what He would accomplish when He was lifted up on the cross. When He was lifted up, 3 things would come to pass. 1st of all – The Father’s name would be glorified through His sufferings and death. 2nd – The ruler of this world would be cast out. And 3rd – He would draw all peoples to Himself. I want to explore the meaning and implications of each of these statements so that you will better understand the greatness of what Christ has done for you, if you will believe in Him.

1st of all – When Christ was lifted up, the Father’s name would be glorified by His sufferings and death.

Verses 27-30 –“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.” “Father glorify Your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.’” “Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered.” “Others said, ‘an angel has spoken to Him.’” “Jesus answered and said, ‘This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.’” How public our Lord was in regard to His inmost thoughts at this time. He said plainly before His disciples, and others standing by, that His spirit was troubled. And so He prayed this short prayer in verse 28 – Father, glorify Your name.

In response to His prayer, John tells us, a voice came from heaven saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. The people who stood by were shocked. They said that it had thundered. And others said that an angel had spoken to Him. But actually it was God the Father bringing encouragement to His only-begotten Son to continue persevering in righteousness, and He would see to it that the Lord Jesus would fulfill His mission. The Father said – I have both glorified my name in You and through You, My Son, in all of your life thus far. And I will glorify it again when you go to the cross. He is saying, as He once said before, at Jesus’ baptism – You are my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. God’s name was glorified in the highest sense in the Person of His Son, and the work of redemption which He came to do.

The reason that Jesus said that this voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake, was because everyone who was believing in Jesus, there at that time, needed to know why Jesus had come to this hour, to this place where He was troubled. The Father had sent the Son into the world to be the Savior of the world. His perfect obedience to the Father’s preceptive will in the law, and His perfect submission to the way that the Father was leading Him, to the place where He would lay down His life as a sacrifice for our sins, all this glorified the Father’s holy name. Jesus was coming to this place where He would have to go to the cross. The Lord Jesus had come to this hour so that the Father’s name would be glorified.

The Father’s name would be glorified through the Son’s sufferings. The Father’s name had already been glorified in the Covenant of Redemption in eternity past when in the Counsel concerning Redemption, where the Eternal Son agreed to the Father’s plan and purpose; to become Incarnate, to become His personified love to lost sinners, and to fulfill the purpose of the Father. That purpose was to demonstrate His mercy and love to sinners, in Christ’s dying on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. In reference to His Divine Person and His eternal Purpose, together with the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Father was glorified when the Son fulfilled these eternal purposes in His life and actions.

It glorified the Father; that is it pleased the Father, and it fulfilled His purpose, to choose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him. It glorified the Father; that is, it pleased the Father, and it fulfilled His purpose, to assign

to Christ alone this great work of redemption. The Divine Son willingly undertook that work. In Psalm 2, verse 7 He said – “I will declare the decree: the Lord has said to Me, You art My Son, today I have begotten You.” “Ask of Me and I shall give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.” So the Son would take upon Himself a true human nature, and a body. God the Spirit would prepare this body for Him in Mary’s Womb. And thus, it would glorify God, it would bring glory and praise to His name, to display all of His perfections in Christ the perfect God-Man. Christ Jesus would be the image of the Invisible God and the Exact Representation of His nature.

God’s name would be glorified in and through and by Christ’s perfect obedience to His Law to fulfill it completely. He would take the place of mankind sinners, and He would do what none of them were able to do because of their fallen nature and the bondage of sin. Every commandment He would keep to the glory of God, and out of love to Him, and to His fellow men. Isaiah 42: 21 – “The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness sake; He will exalt the law and make it honorable.” God’s name would be glorified in and through His Son when He undertook the awful work of bearing our sins in His suffering for us. It was this work that began at that very hour. When Christ saw the Greeks coming to Him to ask Him about the way of salvation, He knew that the time to suffer had come.

His soul was troubled. “Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father save Me from this hour?” “But for this reason I have come to this hour.” “What should I say” could be translated – What must I say? He was at no loss as to what He should say. We know from what He said in the Garden of Gethsemane, that in His mind He was troubled with the thought of drinking the cup that His Father was giving Him; the cup of bearing the sorrows and sins of all God’s elect people. As a Man he was troubled concerning what it would mean to be under His Father’s wrath, when He had always before been loved. The Father had always been well-pleased with Him. His soul would be oppressed and afflicted, He knew, as He would be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and He would not open His mouth to speak, because He knew that He must assume the place and bear the guilt and the shame which we deserve.

His righteous determination to do His Father’s will at every point led Him to this simple and immediate prayer: Father, glorify Your name. Let Your will be done. I will go to the cross and bear all that You lay upon Me for the sake of all the sinners that You shall save. We need to understand that was hard for Him, as a Man, to think of His Father who had always loved Him, being pleased to bruise Him, for our sakes; to put Him to grief, and to make His soul an offering for our sins. We often think of Christ’s bodily sufferings at the hands of wicked men as being the greatest part of His sufferings for our sakes.

We little realize what He felt in His soul and what He must have thought in His mind, when His Father had to forsake Him for a time, and treat Him as a transgressor, a criminal, and an unjust man, even though He was perfectly righteous. The Lord Jesus, however, was very willing to complete the work of redemption that He came to do. He was willing to pour out His soul unto death, so that the Father’s name would be glorified. Christ’s willingness to become our surety and bear the punishment of our sins at the cross, glorified God in every way. It was not the defeat of God’s purpose. It was the fulfillment of it.

2nd – When Christ was lifted up, the ruler of this World would be cast out.

Verse 31 – “Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.” We must begin here by asking what Jesus meant when He said, that at that particular time, was the judgment of the world? I believe that we need to take “the judgment of world” as referring to Christ by His going to the cross, beginning to bring all the world under His feet, under His dominion, and under His righteous rule. The judgment of the world will take place someday in the future, when Christ returns. But it will be the culmination of the judgment which His going to cross began. Christ’s sufferings and His death, and then His resurrection from the dead, and

His ascension to heaven, would secure and establish His reign over all the world. Christ is presently reigning, but His reign is progressively established over the course of this age; in every generation, over all men and nations. When Christ died, this world was judged as coming to a crisis point. It was judged as desperately needing the salvation that He would work out at the cross. It was judged as a perishing world to which He would bring new life.

Christ in His first coming did not come to judge the world but He came in order that the world through Him might be saved. And yet when He went to the cross, the world was being judged by God in relation to the greatness of Christ's Person and the greatness of the gift of His life for all the sinners who would believe in Him. Christ and the world were placed upon the scales together, and the world would be found wanting. But the value of Christ's death would in the balances outweigh all the wickedness of the world. God's justice would be satisfied for any sinner believing in Him. Any person's rejection of Him would leave them under His righteous wrath. All sinners were unworthy of God's gift of Christ. They were unworthy of His death which would purchase the salvation of many.

The world was not worthy of all that God has done for it through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. By nature they are hostile to God and they are alienated from Him because of their sin. But the judgment of the world was that Christ through His death became the Savior of the world, and the rightful ruler over all the world. He overcame the world and sin by His righteous life, and He laid down His life so that the world might be saved through Him. The gospel of Christ, what He did at the cross, is the basis of God's on-going judgment of all the men who have ever lived. The person who believes in Jesus will not be judged, but he who has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God is condemned already, because he has not believed in Him.

And this is the judgment, that light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. This world has been, and it currently is being, judged by God on the basis of all of what Christ has done for sinners. Those who believe in Jesus are freed from their bondage to elements of this world, as it says in the book of Galatians chapter 4, verse 3 – "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world." "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."

So, before Christ came, all men were under the elements of the world, and they were children in their understanding. They were in bondage to the laws of nature, if Gentiles, and under the bondage of the law of God, if they did not have faith. Galatians chapter 3, verse 23 says – "But before faith came we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward would be revealed." "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ." In other words, the judgment that Christ came to bring by means of His going to cross, was to break this bondage to worldly ways of striving to find God, and to please God, apart from faith in Christ. In Christ's death we are not only set free from sin and the law, but the barrier between the Jews and Gentiles has been broken down. Now, we are one in Christ. Because of Christ's judging the world at the cross, God will have a people from every tribe, tongue, people and nation.

Hot on the heels of this statement by Jesus concerning the world being judged, is the next one; because the two are linked together. "Now the ruler of this world will be cast out." The ruler of this world whom Jesus is speaking about is Satan. You might say to me – Well I thought that God was the ruler of this world. And you would be right. God created this world and all things in it. And He is a great King over all the earth. But there is a particular sense in which the Devil, Satan, was the ruler of this world before Christ came and died at the cross and

cast him out. Satan was the ruler of this world in the sense that he through the fall of man brought this whole world into His kingdom of darkness.

If you will turn over with me to Hebrews chapter 2, verses 14-16. "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." "For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham." So, you can see what Christ came to do through His death on the cross. He came in His Incarnation and shared in our flesh and blood. Then through His death He destroyed the devil who had the power of death, and He thereby released all those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

How did the devil have the power of death? Through his tempting Eve to sin in the beginning; through his convincing her to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; her giving some to her husband and him eating. And thus sin and death were brought into the world through him. And he now rules over a kingdom of darkness, a kingdom in which all men reside by nature. Ephesians chapter 2, verse 1 says that God on the basis of Christ's death and resurrection God made us alive, we who were dead in our trespasses and sins, we who once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air (that is, Satan), the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. We were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

What Christ did at the cross was to destroy Satan's power and ability to deceive and hold captive those persons who once believed the devil's lies. He cast Satan out, in his ability to deceive those who have been given grace. He has been cast out of his possession, out of the bounds of Christ's kingdom. (Joseph Benson) His being cast out of the world is accomplished by the gradual conversion of sinners in every generation, throughout this Church age, until the end of the world. Christ has obtained possession of the governance of the world. Now, from the right hand of the Father, He rules in righteousness over all men and nations. Although Satan is cast out of this world of elect people whom the Father chooses to save, he still is actively at work in trying to deceive men and nations.

According to the will and purpose of God, in relation to the preaching the gospel of Christ, and the Spirit's striving with those who hear it, Christ's kingdom advances in the hearts of men. And it continues to conquer among the nations of the world. Satan who once was ruler of this world in the way that he kept men in the darkness of sin and ignorance, is no longer able to do that. Christ is the Light of the World. And this true Light which is already shining, will shine brighter and brighter until the full day; the Day of Christ's return, when Satan shall be completely cast out of this world, and thrown into the lake of fire for his eternal punishment. We need to be in prayer for Satan to be bound in his ability to deceive the nations any longer.

3rd – When Christ is lifted up, He will draw all peoples to Himself.

In verse 32, the word peoples, or men, is not in the original Greek. And so, the verse will read – "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all to myself." How exactly is this verse fulfilled then, in relation to the preaching of the gospel? Well, first of all, it is fulfilled as a principle of truth based on the nature of Christ's death. Christ took the place of sinners at the cross, and He did so out of His love to God, and He and the Father's love to all mankind. Titus chapter 3, verse 4 – "But when the kindness and the love of God toward man (or toward all mankind) appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us...." Christ draws all to Himself by the very nature of His sacrifice; He being the Lord of Glory and perfect as a Man in His nature, voluntarily went to the cross and died there for sinners.

This sacrifice, His dying at the cross acts as a giant magnet, having a force, a pulling ability of its own, which draws sinners to look at it. A Man who has suffered for them. A Man who has died so that they might spiritually live and have eternal life. When the gospel is preached by God's people, His great love for mankind sinners keeps coming up, over and over. And there is this actual drawing then that takes place in the minds of those who hear it, when God is Himself working in their hearts. No one can come to Christ unless the Father draws them. But there is, Jesus is telling us here, a drawing power in the gospel itself, by the very nature of Christ's love for sinners.

When Jesus said – “If I be lifted up, I will draw all to Myself, we ought to think back at what He said in John chapter 3, verse 14 – “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” The reference is to Numbers chapter 21, verses 4-9. “Then the children of Israel journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way.” “And the people spoke against God and against Moses: Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?” “For there is no food and no water; and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” “So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people; and many of the people of Israel died.”

“Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, ‘We have sinned, for we have spoken and the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us.’” “So Moses prayed for the people.” “Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.’” “So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.” This bronze serpent on a pole is an Old Testament representative type of Christ Himself; the Son of Man hanging on the cross. Anyone who realizes that they have sinned against God and men, who looks to Him by faith, shall live. They shall receive eternal life for a look at the Savior. They are drawn to this if they see their need of Him. May it be that each of us sees the greatness of Christ's sacrifice, when He was lifted up.