

Series: John

Title: The Seed and His Fruit

Text: John 12: 20-26

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Place: SGBC, NN

John 12: 20: And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: 21: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

Some Greeks—Gentiles—came to Philip and said, “*Sir, we would see Jesus.*” Many have put these words in their pulpit to remind the preacher that the Lord’s people would hear Christ and him crucified preached. I have preached in pulpits that had this in the pulpit so only the preacher could see it. It is a good reminder.

The only way to see the Lord Jesus is by the grace of God. We see him only by God giving us a new heart and faith to behold him in spirit and in truth. When the gospel is preached we see Christ by faith only by the Spirit of our Lord exalting Christ in our hearts.

John 12: 22: Philip cometh and telleth Andrew:...

Why did Philip go to Andrew? Remember, this was a dangerous time. The chief priests wanted to kill Christ (John 11: 53-54, 57). They even wanted to kill Lazarus because Christ raised him from the dead causing many to believe on Christ (John 12: 10-11). The apostles did not want Christ to be crucified. They did not understand when Christ taught them that he *must* suffer the cross. And *they* did not want to suffer and be killed for identifying with Christ. No man wants to suffer.

They thought Christ came to establish an earthly kingdom like in David’s day. Christ had just rode into Jerusalem and all these people are praising Christ as King. The apostles wanted this to go on. But if they bring these Gentiles to Christ then the Jews might turn on him and them. They did not understand that our Lord Jesus must suffer the cross. They did not understand that it is only *by his death*, that Christ established his *spiritual kingdom*.

John 12: 22:...and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

This what is always best, go straight to the Lord. No matter the difficulty we face, the best thing is to always go to Christ at our Savior’s throne of grace. Now, let’s hear what Christ answered.

John 12: 23: And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. 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. 25: He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 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. 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. 28: Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again. 29: The people therefore, that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. 30: Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. 31: Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. 32: And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. 33: This he said, signifying what death he should die.

Proposition: The Lord Jesus is the Seed who laid down his life and therefore brings forth much fruit.

The Lord Jesus is the Seed from whom all fruit comes—that is all God’s children are born as the result of Christ’s death. The Lord Jesus is the Seed who laid down his life by coming to the earth to become the GodMan. He laid down his life by bearing the sin of his people. Christ laid down his life by suffering at the hands of men. He laid down his life by enduring the wrath of God for his people and suffering death for his people. The Lord did so because he believed the Father and committed all to him. The Lord Jesus did so to manifest the righteousness of God—God could only be Just and Justify his people by the holy Lord Jesus bearing our sin and curse to make us righteous. Doing so, he both glorified the Father and

saved his people from our sins. Therefore, the Father highly honored him, raising him to his right hand, giving him a name above every name, giving him all power as the glorified GodMan, Mediator.

By his grace, the Lord Jesus bears much fruit. His seed are born of Christ the Seed. He is our Life who gives us life. He makes his child willingly lay down our lives and follow him. He gives us faith to believe on him. By his power and grace he makes his child willing to suffer for his sake. Using his church to preach Christ crucified, Christ bears more fruit, more children of God.

Christ is the Seed who laid down his life from whom all fruit—every child of God—is produced. If we would believe on Christ and be used of Christ then we must lay down our lives. He people shall.

Let's look at these statements our Savior made on this occasion.

CHRIST'S DEATH HIS GLORY

John 12: 23: And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

The Lord declares that it was by his death that he is glorified. Throughout the scripture we find that his hour had not yet come. Now, he says, "*the hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*" This is the hour for which the world was made. This was the hour God the Father purposed from eternity. This is the hour the old testament scriptures point to. This is the hour for which God the Son took the nature of his elect. This is the hour that the Son of man should be glorified by God the Father.

God the Father glorified our Substitute because his Son voluntarily, willingly, laid down his life for his Father and for his people. He willingly became a holy Man, the last Adam. He willingly bore the sin of his brethren. He willingly settled judgment for his people at the hands of God's justice. He declared the righteousness of his Father and justified and saved his people from our sins by his blood.

If we would see the glory of the Lord Jesus then we have to see him high and lifted up on the cross as the Substitute laying down his life in place of his sinful people. If we would see the glory of the Lord Jesus we have to see him lifted up on the cross manifesting the righteousness of God. In order to behold his glory, he makes us see who he is, why he died and what he accomplished thereby.

John 17: 1: These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3: And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. 4: I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5: And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

FRUIT BY DEATH

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.

The Lord Jesus declares that it is by his death that he brings forth much fruit. He uses wheat seed to illustrate it. Our Lord created seed to glorify him and what he accomplished for his people. This is not our Lord looking around and finding something that illustrates him. No, he created seed to glorify him.

Colossians 1:16: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The illustration is simple. In a single corn of wheat there is much fruit. But in order for that fruit to be produced the seed must be placed in the earth and die. If it does not die, it abides alone. But if it falls into the ground and dies then it brings forth much fruit.

Christ is the Seed. God spoke of Christ to Abraham as the Seed. It is because Christ was coming through Abraham. God revealed to Abraham the everlasting covenant which God the Father and his Son entered into before the world was made.

Genesis 22: 18: And in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed...

Galatians 3: 16: Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.

It is not my desire to get into a dispute with anyone over Bible translations. But some translations have translated the gospel right out of the Bible. Some translations have changed the word "seed" in Genesis 22: 18 to "offspring." That is wrong. I prefer the king James translation because at least the translators show us which words they added by putting them in italics. If you have a translation that reads "offspring" or any other word except "seed" then get one that does.

In Christ, the Seed there was much fruit. God put all his elect in Christ the Seed before the world began. Due to God's everlasting covenant promise fulfilled between the triune God, the elect of God are called "the children of promise." It is of God we are in Christ and blessed with all spiritual blessings.

1 Corinthians 1: 30: Of God are ye in Christ Jesus

Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Christ is the Seed. But like a corn of wheat, Christ had to come into the earth and die in order to bring forth much fruit. He declares the necessity of laying down his life that he might bring forth his children, his fruit. He had to make us righteous by his obedience unto death. The Lord had to put away our sin by his blood. For holy God to receive us, Christ had to perfect us forever by his sacrifice on the cross. In order for God's law to be honored and God be just and Justifier of his people, the Son of God had to become a Man, bear our sin and curse and make us the righteousness of God in him.

Hebrews 10: 9: Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God...10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once...14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Ephesians 1: 7: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace

So each of his children who he successfully redeemed shall be born of him. We are his fruit born of Christ. The new birth is by the incorruptible Seed, the living Word, through the preaching of the gospel. Thereby we are Christ's fruit.

1 Peter 1: 23: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. 24: For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: 25: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

James 1: 18: Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

LOSE LIFE OR KEEP LIFE

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.

If we love our life, we shall lose it. If we love our life—our sin, our false ways, our vain religion—we shall lose it. If we love our life so that we do not want to offend those around us who believe a lie and hate the gospel so that we go on refusing to believe on Christ then we shall lose our life.

The Gentiles may have been wanting a private meeting with the Lord to save them from being rejected from the Pharisees. Philipp and Andrew certainly did not want Christ to lose his life nor did they want to lose theirs. But Christ is the Life. If we love our life—our sin, our self-righteous works, the pleasures of this world, trying to save ourselves from rejection of men—then we shall lose all when we die and perish forever.

If we hate our life we shall keep it unto life eternal. Hating our life is hating our sin and self-righteousness. It is putting everything in this world below Christ and putting nothing above Christ—no person and no thing. Hating our life is forsaking all for Christ. Here is a good acronym that is the essence of faith.

F—forsaking

A—all

I

T—take

H—Him

Remember, we are slow to learn like Philipp and Andrew and the other disciples. But the Lord is able to teach us and grow us and keep us. His refining fire is to wean us from this world. Hating our life and believing on Christ, we shall keep it unto life eternal.

John 12: 26: If any man serve me, let him follow me;

Where was Christ going? He was going to the cross. He willingly laid down his life for his Father and his people. He is teaching us if we would serve him then we must lay down our life for his sake and for our brethren's sake.

He was going to the cross to willingly bear the sin of his people, to put away our sin, to give us free forgiveness by his precious blood. He teaches us to bear one another's burden for his sake. The Spirit of Christ makes his people willing to forgive one another even as God for Christ's sake as forgiven you.

There will be brethren like Philipp and Andrew who, at times, do not want to deny themselves. There will be brethren like Peter who denied he knew Christ and tried to leave the faith. The apostles tried to tell Christ how he ought to do things. But Christ suffered long with them and was merciful and continued teaching them. This Christ will make his people willing to do. We may, at first, act contrary to grace. But the Spirit of the Lord will humble us and remind us of God's grace to us for Christ's sake.

The Lord Jesus was going to the cross to willingly satisfy justice for his people. We cannot satisfy justice for one another. But we can remind one another of Christ who did. We can receive one another as brethren justified by the blood of Christ. We can declare the gospel, restore to Christ, trusting Christ to work in the hearts of his people. We can only do these things by the Spirit of our Lord making us behold how God our Father has done this for us for the sake of Christ our Righteousness alone. When the Lord brings us to trust Christ to deal with his people so that we restore brethren to Christ by the gospel and forgiveness, it honors Christ as King and Savior and Head and High Priest of his church.

The Lord Jesus was submitting to the will of his Father. He is teaching us to submit to his will. The Lord is teaching us to not insist on our will being done. He is teaching us to trust ourselves and our brethren to his will. The Lord is teaching us to put away our sin, our pride, our own understanding. By his Spirit he makes us mortify our flesh so that we surrender our will to his will by loving one another as he loved us, even when brethren are not loveable.

He was giving everything the Father had given him to honor the Father and save his people, though it meant sacrifice and suffering even unto death. He says, "*If any man serve me, let him follow me.*"

John 12: 26...and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

Where is Christ now? How did the Father honor him? The Father raised him to his right hand, glorified forever. And his people are with him right now. In the end Christ shall honor his people with life eternal.

But while in this life all these things Christ is teaching us means will mean we shall suffer. But shall we resist suffering when opposed by this unbelieving world? Watch him.

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. 28: Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. 29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. 30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

His serving involved great soul trouble—*"Now is my soul troubled."* But he willingly suffered it. *"And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name."*

He said the Father will honor those who suffer for Christ's sake. And immediately, came there a voice from heaven, verifying his word. God said, *"I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."* He said, *"This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes."* The Father honored him showing Christ word is true. Whoever follows Christ, he said the Father shall honor and where I am there shall he be also.

Illustration: The Art Auction

Amen!