

## How the Son of Man is Glorified.

Text: John 12:20-26

1) In Himself

Suggested Hymns:

2) In us

336, 437, 61, 347, 206

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is John 12:20-26, <sup>20</sup> *Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast.* <sup>21</sup> *Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."*

<sup>22</sup> *Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.* <sup>23</sup> *But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.* <sup>24</sup> *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.*

<sup>25</sup> *"He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.* <sup>26</sup> *"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. (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

We read in Luke 18:31-33, <sup>31</sup> *Then [Jesus] took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished.* <sup>32</sup> *"For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon.* <sup>33</sup> *"They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."*

In spirit we are going with our Saviour to Jerusalem, to Calvary, and to the tomb in Joseph's garden. When Jesus spoke of His death, the Lord also predicted

His victory over death, and so we may, in the midst of the Lenten season, not merely see His deep humiliation, but also His ultimate victory over all our foes.

Death and resurrection meant infinitely much to Jesus. The Son of Man is thereby glorified, as He Himself indicates in our text. It means infinitely more to us; for if we are ever to hope for deliverance from sin, for divine sonship, for the good will of God, and for an eternal abode in the Father's house, Jesus must die and rise again.

If people are ever to be won for Him by the Gospel, if ever they are to walk as children of God, if they are to follow their Master through suffering to glory, Jesus' death and resurrection are an absolute necessity. This is brought out in our text. Hence, let us consider *How the Son of Man is Glorified*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

### **1. How The Son Of Man Is Glorified In Himself**

***“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”*** No more blessed request has ever been made. Who were the men that spoke this? They were Greeks who had come to Jerusalem to worship. In other words, they were Gentiles, non-Jews. The gentile people come in fulfilment of the messianic promise of a light for the nations as we read in Isaiah 60:3, <sup>3</sup> ***The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.***

It was not idle curiosity that prompted their request. There was abundant opportunity for them to see Jesus, for He moved about freely in Jerusalem and in the Temple. Only two days before, Jesus had entered the city in triumph. Theirs was a desire for grace and salvation; they wanted to meet Jesus personally.

Philip hesitates at first and then consults with Andrew, who finally presents the request to the Lord. Christ's action in the matter is not recorded; very likely He did not let them ask in vain. But He spoke weighty words, impressing on the disciples an all-important truth.

Strange words they were, as it seems to us at first reading, that Jesus spoke in answer to the request of these Greeks to see Him, ***“The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.”*** <sup>24</sup> ***“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a***

*grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.*

***“The hour has come.”*** Which hour? ***“That the Son of Man should be glorified.”***

Until now, we have become accustomed to hearing that Jesus’ hour had not yet come.<sup>1</sup> But now it had. Jesus, the essence of humanity, had come to Jerusalem to die for lost humanity and rise again in glory. Jesus came to sacrifice Himself for the salvation of the Greeks as well as the Jews. His answer to the Greeks was *“I have eternal life for you. Follow me.”*

***“The hour has come.”*** The time has come. A momentous day is approaching, when Jesus, according to His human nature, is to be glorified. This was nothing less than the time when His great work of redemption was to be accomplished, the purpose of His coming into the world to be achieved.

When He wrestled with the forces of darkness in the Garden, when He reached the depth of humiliation in His Passion, especially also on the cross, His love for condemned sinners was glorified as never before. But Jesus did not remain in death.

Because Jesus humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, ***“God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”***<sup>2</sup> Jesus, the lowly Nazarene, is now the exalted Lord of the universe and King of His Church.

The words of Jesus are not only solemn and impressive, but they are suggested by what was happening in front of the very eyes of the Saviour. Gentiles were in the court of the Temple, asking for admission. The Lord is already seeing the first-fruits of a rich harvest.

At the beginning of His life wise men, Gentiles came from the East to worship Him. And now again, at the close of His ministry, we see Gentiles coming to the feast to worship. They wish to see Jesus. Was this not prophetic? Did it not indicate the marvellous fruit of His sacrificial love?

What Jesus came to do He likened to a seed of grain. That seed remains nothing but a lonely seed unless it is planted. But when the seed is buried in the ground and dies there, a plant grows from it and bears fruit.

And so Jesus proceeds to speak of the grain of wheat that must fall into the ground and die if it is to bring forth fruit. Even so it is with Jesus, <sup>24</sup> ***“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”***

Jesus would not bear the fruit of His mission from God unless He first died. All His miraculous signs had no eternal benefit without the miracle of the cross and the empty tomb. The Son of Man had to die for a spiritual harvest to come, the harvest of souls for eternity.

Without His Passion and death He would live alone, without fruit, without children of God, and without the Christian Church. Jesus had to suffer, die, and rise again if the Gospel was to be proclaimed, if people are to be brought to faith and eternal glory.

As a precious grain of wheat Jesus was planted, as it were; He came forth out of the grave in a glorified state, bearing rich fruit. *“For according to the Scriptures this was to be the work of the exalted, glorified Christ to bring together the scattered children of God out of the heathen world.”*<sup>3</sup>

Human estimates must fail in calculating the exact number of the communion of saints, the host of people that have already through faith entered glory, the great numbers of people confessing Christ today, and the untold millions that shall be converted until the end of time.

They are all the fruit of the precious seed of wheat, the Lord Jesus, and of His sacrifice. The history of the Church eloquently portrays the truth of this prophetic statement of the Lord, and does it not justify us in singing, *“All hail the power of Jesus’ name”*?<sup>4</sup>

What an incentive to us all to work while it is day in spreading the Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ that others might be led to see Jesus and ***“the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.”***<sup>5</sup>

## 2. How The Son Of Man Is Glorified

### In Us

Not merely in Himself, but the Son of Man is also glorified in His Christians. He is glorified in us if we follow Him as His servants.

Our text says, <sup>26</sup> ***“If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me.”*** His servants of course accept Jesus as their Redeemer and Saviour; they have heard the sweet message of that hour when the Son of Man through suffering, death, and resurrection was glorified.

They have seen their own helplessness against sin, Satan, and damnation. They have learned to put their whole trust in Jesus, and so they have forgiveness and peace. With a grateful heart they now seek to follow Jesus.

Are they not His servants, His attendants, who are near Him? In no better way can they show Him service than by following in His footsteps, and by walking as He walked. His was a glorious life of self-denial, of humble service, and of devoted application to a given task. Jesus says in John 4:34, ***“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.”***<sup>26</sup>

To what extent are you a true servant of the Lord? Are you a follower of Jesus worthy of the name? With God’s help, with the help of His Word and Holy Spirit, you can become a better disciple. Then Jesus will be better glorified also in you.

Jesus is furthermore glorified in us if we deny ourselves. Our text says <sup>25</sup> ***“He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”*** That is a strange paradox.

When Jesus warns against loving our lives, He means putting this earthly life first. It is a warning against self-centredness. Those who put all their affection on this life and what they can get out of it, will one day die and lose it all.

The person who has an excessive love of life, to whom his earthly existence is the chief consideration, serves self and his sinful desires, is not willing to make sacrifices for Jesus, shall lose his life, his real life, his immortal soul. We read in Matthew 16:26, <sup>26</sup> ***“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”***

Not so the true follower of Jesus. He rather hates his life in this world, is ready to give up pleasures, treasures, friends, and even physical life, if the welfare of his soul demands it. He follows St. Paul, as we read in Philippians 3:7-8, <sup>7</sup> *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.* <sup>8</sup> *Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.*

When Jesus speaks of hating our lives in this world, He means putting Him and the life He gives first. When we believe in Jesus we have eternal life in Him, and then worldly living loses its attraction. Everything worldly carries sin's taint and becomes hateful. Only in Jesus does the good life, eternal life, become ours. It would be better to lose this earthly life than to lose Jesus. We guard our spiritual lives when we follow Jesus.

Such people are suffering no real loss; for while they hate their life, they profit immeasurably. They shall keep their life unto eternal life, and their soul shall be preserved. They endure unto the end. Is this your situation? Are you such a servant of the Lord?

Or does your heart frequently cling to those things that are vain, passing, worthless, so that because of them you overlook the things of lasting value, for a season at least? True, self-denial is painful, requires effort, sacrifice, humility, putting others first and yourself last, and may even involve losses. But like Master, like servant. Through cross to crown. In the patient follower of Jesus the Lord is glorified.

Our faith in Jesus, however, carries a price. We are His servants. We must follow where He leads. We face sacrifices. We risk the scorn of many people around us. But we do so with the promise of the heavenly Father's honour and with praise and thanksgiving for His Son.

Yes, there is profit in our loss for Jesus says in our text, *where I am, there My servant will be also.* Where is Jesus? Is He in lowliness and suffering? Indeed not. The risen Lord points heavenward when speaking to Mary Magdalene.<sup>7</sup>

Yes, *He lives all-glorious in the sky, He lives exalted there on high.*<sup>8</sup> And there we shall be also. We are called upon to carry the burden of the cross.

Many and severe are the trials of faith, and the hardships of life. But be of good cheer. You do not need to bear the cross alone. God is faithful.

You may spend years of toil and heartache and suffering here. But Jesus is with you. Submitting to His will, you shall reveal His power in you and cause God to glorify Him, your wonderful Saviour.

And finally the cross will be completely removed, and you will be in that blest place. Yes, then we shall be honoured by Him, and throughout all eternity we shall be living witnesses to the truth of Christ's words in our text, and He, the Son of Man, will be glorified in us.

Let us close with the words of the hymnist,<sup>9</sup>

O guide and lead me, Lord,  
While here below I wander  
Grant that I follow Thee,  
My Guide, and my Commander.  
For if I lead myself,  
I soon am led astray,  
But if Thou leadest me,  
I walk the narrow way. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> John 7:30; 8:20

<sup>2</sup> Philippians 2:9-11

<sup>3</sup> George Stoeckhardt

<sup>4</sup> Hymn 166

<sup>5</sup> Habakkuk 2:14

<sup>6</sup> Also John 5:30

<sup>7</sup> John 20:17

<sup>8</sup> Hymn 103

<sup>9</sup> ALHB 391 v7