

**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.

**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.

**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.

Six days before the Passover Jesus returned to Bethany to visit Lazarus (whom He had brought back to life from the dead), Mary and Martha. They prepared a dinner in His honor. (Matthew 26:6 and Mark 14:3 tell us that this dinner was held at the home of Simon the leper.) Martha served. Mary took a jar of expensive perfume and poured it on Jesus' feet and then wiped them dry with her hair. (Her hair must have been long, thick and beautiful.....maybe in heaven.) The fragrance filled the whole house. (Note: Martha is still busy doing and serving; Mary is still in worship at the feet of the Savior. Cf Luke 10)

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

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

**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.

Judas Iscariot, the treasurer for the disciples, complained about the waste of money; the perfume was worth a year's wages. He argued that it should have been sold and the money given to the poor. (Matthew 26:8 indicates that other disciples agreed with Judas' thoughts.) He didn't really care about the poor; he was a thief and stole from the treasury. Though he appeared to be a faithful disciple, he was not. His testimony was false. He professed a faith he did not possess.

This reminds me of a lot of the so-called messengers of the gospel on TV nowadays. They cry out for people to send them their hard earned money on behalf of the Lord's work, when their real reason is that they want to maintain their luxurious lifestyles and keep themselves in the spotlight.

Pastor Bob – "What is your motivation for hanging around Jesus (church)?"

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

**John 12:8** For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

Jesus rebuked Judas and told him to leave her alone. The perfume was intended for His burial. He pointed out that the poor would continue to be a part of their society, but He would not always be with them.

That sounds arrogant and unloving. Since we always take scripture as a whole, we know that is not the case. He is trying to prepare them for His death and the

fact that they will be left with their faith to carry on. God will provide for all, rich and poor, who depend on Him. Anything He withholds from us or allows to impact us is for our good when our desire is to serve Him.

**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.**

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

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

A large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came to see Him and Lazarus, the man He had raised from the dead. Then the chief priests planned to kill Lazarus too, since he was a big reason that many of the people believed in Jesus. Eliminate the proof of the miracle of Jesus' power over death, and that eliminates the threat to their positions of power. It's also interesting to me how many times the fact that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead is repeated. This was a well-known truth at that time. It was not disputed. Only the Son of God could perform that miracle.

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

**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.**

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

**John 12:15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.**

**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.**

The next day the great crowd that had come to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast heard that Jesus was on His way to the city. They grabbed palm branches and headed out to meet Him. They were shouting "Hosanna!" "Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." Jesus entered the city riding on a young donkey in fulfillment of prophecy.

*Zechariah 9:9 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."*

The disciples didn't realize this until after the resurrection. We always have better hindsight than foresight.

"Sion" is the Greek word for the Hebrew word "Zion," the temple mount.

**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.**

**John 12:18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.**

**John 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.**

Those who had seen the miracle of Lazarus kept telling their story, and many more came out to meet this Jesus who could do such a miracle. To the Pharisees it appeared that the whole world had gone after Him. No one was listening to their warnings that He was demon-possessed and a blasphemer.

This makes me think of how it must be going to be during the Tribulation when the antichrist comes on the scene. We are told that he will be able to perform miracles that would deceive the very elect if that were possible. We are so in awe of that which seems to accomplish the impossible. It is a shame that the people were only drawn to Jesus because of the miracles He performed, yet were unwilling to accept Him as the Messiah, the Son of God.

**John 12:20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:**

**John 12:21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.**

**John 12:22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.**

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Feast came to Philip and asked to see Jesus. Philip went to tell Andrew and together they told Jesus. Another thing jumps out at me, they knew who to go to; they knew who the disciples were. They were able to go directly to Philip. Obvious application—Would someone be able to identify me as a follower of Jesus? It is also interesting to me that Philip went to Andrew before going to Jesus. I'm not sure why. It would seem that there were those among the disciples recognized for their leadership and wisdom and others who needed more affirmation and direction—just as in the church today.

This time through I decided to look up the word “see” in verse 21; its meaning included the words “to know, consider, understand.” This helps me to understand Jesus’ answer in the following verses. He is explaining to these seekers who He is and giving them insight into His character and purpose.

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

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

Then Jesus proceeds to “answer” them. Obviously, He is responding to the request of the Greek visitors. I think His first words indicate that it is time to fulfill that for which He came. “The hour is come.” That specific place in time appointed by the Father is here. (Which obviously makes me think about the next specific place in time that will take us home to be with Him.)

I think it is a deliberate choice of phrasing that Jesus uses to describe Himself as the “Son of man.” He is emphasizing that He is fully man who will be revealed to be fully God after His resurrection.

As He goes to explain further, He again emphasizes that this is a truth you can depend on (“verily, verily”). A single kernel of wheat has to fall to the ground and die before it can produce many kernels. Jesus is the single kernel that died and resurrected into new life to produce many kernels, people of faith.

Then He explains that the man who loves his life in this world and puts all his energy into getting all he can in this life will end up losing it. But the man who “hates” (loves less) his life in this world will live eternally. He is telling them that those who obey Him and serve Him are those who will live eternally in His presence. The way you invest of your energy, time and money shows where your love is focused.

Jesus calls for His servants to follow Him. In following Jesus we are always in His presence. In following Jesus we will never find ourselves somewhere we shouldn’t be—out of His will. Following Jesus means that we are walking in His footsteps, confident in our direction and destination.

Jesus emphasizes that God, His Father, will honor (treat as valuable) those who serve His Son.

“if it die...much fruit” – This takes my thoughts to the founding of the church, a mainly Gentile body of believers, as represented by these Greeks who were seeking Jesus. I am sure that is where Jesus’ thoughts were as He responded to the disciples.

**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.

**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.

**John 12:29** The people therefore, that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

Reminder—This is still part of Jesus answer to the Greeks who came seeking to “see” Him.

Now we get another glimpse of Jesus’ humanity. His heart is troubled. He is dreading the ordeal He is about to endure. So He starts to reason—What am I supposed to say? “Father save me from this hour.” Then He answers His own

question—but this is the reason I came to earth. Then He prays for the Father’s name to be glorified. (How many times have I talked to myself before the Lord when I was worried or hurt or mad, and the Lord has given me the answer through the process!)

Instead of focusing on the trial to come, the Son focuses on bringing glory to the Father. He sets the example that we are to follow of the principle established in Isaiah 26:3: *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

Then a voice from heaven, which sounded like thunder to the people who were there, said, “I have both (**kai**; a prim. conjunc.; and, even, also: ) glorified it, and will glorify it again.” Some of the people thought they had heard thunder, and others thought an angel had spoken to Him. I think that the voice was an affirmation that His name had been glorified through Jesus’ life and that it would be glorified again when Jesus’ work was finished—His death and resurrection.

Thunder is often associated with the voice of God.

*Job 40:9 “Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?”*

*Psalms 77:18 “The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.”*

*Psalms 104:7 “At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.”*

**John 12:30** Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

**John 12:31** Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

**John 12:32** And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

**John 12:33** This he said, signifying what death he should die.

Jesus told them that the voice had been for their benefit as another affirmation of who He was. He told them that the time had come for judgment of this world and for the prince of the world to be driven out. Basically He is saying that His death will serve as the judgment for sin. He is paying the penalty for all who will accept Him.

I’m a bit thrown by the phrasing that now the prince of this world is cast out. I think the truth is that the death and resurrection of Jesus effectively assured Satan’s defeat. Paul declared this truth clearly in his letter to the Colossians.

*Colossians 2:14–15 “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”*

Satan is still at work and in power now, but his time is limited. It is also important to note that those who trust Jesus now have the power to defeat him at will if only they will appropriate that power.

*Ephesians 6:13–16 “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”*

Then He referred to His death when He said, “if I be lifted up from the earth.” He was talking about being lifted up on the cross. That act of love and obedience would draw all men unto Him. Jesus is constantly wooing ALL men to follow Him in faith through the ministry of the Holy Spirit—in fact, the Greek for “draw” indicates “to drag.” He is aggressively presenting Himself to mankind through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and doing everything short of coercing them to follow Him. This makes me think of the verses earlier in John 6:43-51. “They will ALL be taught by God.” His death was for ALL.

**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?

The crowd did not understand Him. According to their interpretation of the law, the Christ, the Messiah, was coming to stay. They expected Him to assume the throne as King. He was claiming to be the Christ, so they wanted to know who “The Son of Man” was and what it meant for Him to be lifted up?

**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.

**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.

Sometimes Jesus gives a straight, simple answer. Other times His answer is more elusive. I know He is trying to teach them truth to draw from in the future, but speaking from the human point of view, I would rather my answers come more directly. Sometimes, however, as I look back over life, I realize that I would not have grown through an experience if the answer had been direct and immediate. Learning to walk by faith is a process. Like any loving parent, the Father wants us to learn from our mistakes. Our nature is such that without those mistakes and His gentle correction, we would never grow.

Back to verse 35—Jesus tells them that they are going to have the light with them just a little while longer. (Remember, He had already told them that He was the light of the world.) “Walk while ye have the light” – I think He is telling them to learn what they can while He is with them. Walking shows forward progress. “Lest darkness come upon you” – They would not have the benefit of His person to

question and come to for help. *“He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.”* I think He is telling them that if they believe in Him and practice what He has taught them they will have direction. Those who reject Him will have no direction. Those who follow Him and His direction will be able to spread that light to others who will come to know Him because of their witness. Then Jesus left and hid from them. It was time for them to meditate on what He had taught them and time for Him to prepare for His act of obedience.

**John 12:37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:**

**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?**

**John 12:39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 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.**

In spite of all Jesus' miracles, the Jews refused to believe in Him. This too was in fulfillment of prophecy as foretold by Isaiah (Isaiah 53). The danger of hardening one's heart is that there can come a point where the Lord says, "OK, if that is the way you want it, you've got it." He hardened their hearts just as He had hardened Pharaoh's. It was their choice, and He used that choice to bring glory to Himself. (This time through causing the death of His Son.)

**John 12:41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.**

This verse says that Isaiah said this because He saw Jesus' glory when he was blessed with a vision (Isaiah 6).

**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:**

**John 12:43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.**

Even so, many among the Jewish leaders believed Jesus. They would not openly acknowledge their belief for fear of being thrown out of the synagogue by the other Pharisees. Even though they believed, their desire was to have the praise of their fellow man more than praise from God. No more is said to determine their true position. It sounds like they believed with their head, but not with their heart. It is the faith from the heart that motivates one to action. Faith from the heart results in salvation.

*Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."*

**John 12:44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.**

**John 12:45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.**

Verse 44 indicates that Jesus shouted out His next statement. He must have wanted to ensure that it was heard clearly. He explained that anyone who believed in Him, believed in the One who sent Him (God the Father). When anyone looks at Jesus, they are seeing the Father. Remember, He had said earlier, *"I and the Father are one."*

I got to wondering how many times John had recorded the fact that Jesus equated Himself to the Father—5:17-47, 7:28-29, 8:18-19, 8:26-29, 41-42, 54-55, 58, 9:35-37, 10:29-30, 36-38, 11:4 (from a quick review).

**John 12:46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.**

Jesus told them He had come into the world as a light (the revealer of truth and love) and that no one who believed Him would stay in darkness (unaware of their need, without direction, and lacking hope without Him).

**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.**

Those who hear the words of the Lord and choose to ignore them are not judged by Him (they are already condemned—3:18). His purpose for coming into the world was to provide salvation (an escape from their just condemnation, a sacrifice that would pay the penalty for their sin). Jesus' purpose in coming was to save the "world"—the earth and its inhabitants, not just some but all.

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

Those who reject Jesus will be judged by the very words they rejected because His words were spoken in obedience to the direct command of the Father.

There will be no argument at the judgment since Christ is the Word of God in flesh and will be witness to each person's response to that message which was delivered with great sacrifice on His part.