

# THAT YOU MAY HAVE LIFE

## (A Study of the Gospel of John)

### The Purpose of the Cross

TEXT: John 12:27-36

INTRODUCTION: If God had sent a painting to mankind rather than a Book to declare His Word and His Will, it would have been a painting of the cross.

But God in His wisdom did send a Book, or to be more precise, 66 books that comprise the whole of what may accurately be called Holy Scripture, the very Word of God. His Book is far

- more complete than any painting ever could be
- more precise in its descriptions
- more exact in its declarations

If you asked, “And **What is the theme of God’s Book?**” and allowed only a single word for the answer, students and scholars across the ages would answer with one accord, **“Jesus.”**

But if you allowed those who know and love this Bible two words to summarize the heart of the message of this perfect Word from God, they would say, **“The cross!”**

So, if you join together those singular majestic themes, you discover what is the focal point of all that God has caused to be written on the sacred pages – **“The cross of Jesus Christ”**

- Before light shown out of nothingness, God had already determined the cross.
- Before flowers bloomed and birds flew and fish swam, Jesus was the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world.
- When Adam and Eve first disobeyed their Creator, God’s words to them foreshadowed the cross.
- When sin exposed their nakedness, giving rise to shame and guilt, God covered them by shedding blood to give them clothing of animal skin.
- God gave His people a system of sacrifices to be made to the Lord to teach them that without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sin so that they would learn the necessity of the cross.

- The Lord gave His people a feast to commemorate their deliverance from bondage. The central component of the Passover Feast was the lamb, one without blemish, that would be slain and its blood put upon the lintel and doorposts of the home, offering another advanced picture of the cross.
- The psalmists who guided the worship of Israel wrote in their songs about the cross although this manner of execution was unknown to the Israelites at the time. In Psalm 22, Israel's greatest king and poet wrote

**Psalm 22:1–16**

1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? ...  
16 ... They pierced My hands and My feet;

- The prophets were equally clear that the promised Messiah who would bring salvation would have to die upon the cross.
  - Zechariah foretold the thirty pieces of silver paid the betraying disciple.
  - Isaiah declared 800 years before Jesus was born.

**Isaiah 53**

3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. ...

5 ... He was wounded for our transgressions, *He was bruised for our iniquities; ...*

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way;

And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth;

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,

So He opened not His mouth.

8 ... For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

9 And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, ...

11 He shall see the labor of His soul, *and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many,*

For He shall bear their iniquities.

So, do you not know that when we come in our study of the Gospel of John to chapter 12, verse 27, that the mind of Jesus Himself is preoccupied with the cross. After all, He has just an hour before ridden through Jerusalem, offering Himself as Messiah, fulfilling the prophecy given to Daniel. And that prophecy declares that at the end of the week “Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself.”

The cross is at the forefront of Jesus’ mind as He says,

**John 12:27–36**

27 “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. 28 Father, glorify Your name.”

Then a voice came from heaven, *saying*, “I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again.”

29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard *it* said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

30 Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.” 33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

34 The people answered Him, “We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?”

35 Then Jesus said to them, “A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. 36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

As Jesus thought about the cross that day, I want to ask you to think with me today about the purpose of the cross. And first we ought to look at

## I. JESUS’ STRUGGLE WITH THE FATHER’S PURPOSE.

We don’t expect Jesus to say, “My soul is troubled ...” We might be even more surprised if we knew the full force of that word means “in anguish.”

The Scripture tells us that Jesus was without sin, but it also tells us that He was tempted in every way we are. Now I can’t speak for you, but when I am tempted

- to disobey God,
- to ignore His commands
- to disregard His instructions
- to walk outside of His ways

My soul struggles, I am in inner anguish with the battle. When, as Paul says, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, the winner is determined on the wrestling mat of the soul!

The soul is the mind, the emotions, and the will; the place where we think, feel, and decide.

- A. Jesus' soul was in anguish as He considered the purpose for which the Father had sent Him into the world: to pay the price for sin upon the cross!

But Jesus was fully God; what could bother Him?

Jesus also was fully man, and I will tell you what could bother Him.

- **The physical pain to be endured.** Showing The Passion of the Christ repeatedly in Brazil was almost more than I could endure.
- **The shame of bearing the sin of the world.** Can you imagine how you would feel if you stood just before this congregation and all your sin was exposed to everyone? Jesus had no sin of His own, but He bore our sins. He became sin for us.
- **The agony of separation from the Father.** The greatest anguish of them all.

**B. Jesus struggled with the Father's purpose for His life,  
but He allowed the Father's will to win!**

John 12:27-28 27 "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. 28 Father, glorify Your name."

- C. Whatever way you are struggling with what God wants in your life today, let the will of the Father win in you!

- **Let the spirit win over the flesh.**
- **Allow self denial have victory over selfishness.**
- **Let God's way be your way.**
  - **In your private life**
  - **In your marriage**
  - **In your work**
  - **In your home**
  - **In your social life**

Right now, you don't have to bow your head or close your eyes, but just say a prayer from your soul right now, **Father, glorify Your name.**

We also should see from this passage

## **II. WHY IS THE FATHER GLORIFIED BY THE CROSS?**

Jesus mentions three ways. First He says

**John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world;.**

**A. Because the cross was where God's absolute righteousness could meet His overflowing mercy.**

1. **The wages of sin is death. – Righteousness**
2. **On the cross, Jesus died for our sin.**
3. **Those who trust in Jesus have all their sin forgiven. – Mercy**

**God does not grant a waiver of His righteousness for you.**

- **Either your sin was judged at the cross**

**OR**

- **Your sin will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment**

Jesus also said,

**John 12:31 ... now the ruler of this world will be cast out..**

**B. The cross would set free people enslaved to sin by the devil.**

**Satan has been cast out multiple times in the history of the world.**

- **When he rebelled he was cast out of heaven as his residence.**
- **During the tribulation he will be cast out of even entering heaven.**
- **At the end of the tribulation he will be cast out of the heavens and imprisoned in the bottomless pit.**
- **At the end of the Millennium, he will be cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity.**
- **At the cross, Satan was cast out as the Slave Holder, the Master, who controlled those enslaved to sin.**

**After we trust in Christ as our Lord and Savior, we are no longer slaves to sin.**

We may still stumble occasionally into sin, but we are not controlled by it. We have the power to escape temptation.

We can say “Yes” to God because we have been set free.

Third, Jesus said,

**John 12:32-33 32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.”  
33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.**

**C. By the cross, Jesus draws men and women everywhere to trust in Him and be saved.**

1. Nothing shows the magnitude of God’s love like the cross.
2. Nothing demonstrates the length to which God will go to redeem a guilty sinner like the cross.
3. Nothing shows the breadth of God’s mercy, grace, forgiveness, and transforming power like the cross.

Friend, listen. Do you think it’s too late for you? You’ve sinned too many times, you’ve sinned in too great a way for you to be saved, forgiven, and changed.

Now listen, it is possible to wait too long. But, if you have any desire at all to turn today in repentance and trust in Jesus as your Lord and master, it is not too late. Jesus is still drawing you. The Father through the Spirit is still calling you. If it were too late, you would have no desire.

You can be saved today. I don’t know if He will still be calling you next week, but He is drawing you to Himself today.

And that leads to the third thing we should draw from this passage.

**III. WHAT IS OUR PART IN THE FATHER’S PURPOSE?**

**John 12:36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”**

**A. Believe – Trust**

**Rom. 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**

**B. Help others believe**

- **Family**
- **Friends**
- **Neighbors**
- **Folks at work**
- **Fellow Students**

John 12:35 ...Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you;

CONCLUSION: While there is opportunity,

- Believe.
- Help others believe.
- Decide for the Father's purpose and way in your life.