

Jesus Predicts the Impact of the Cross

John 12:20-36

We covered the triumphal entry of Jesus back in the Spring on Palm Sunday, so today we examine the prediction that Jesus makes concerning the cross. The cross though an instrument of execution, is this center of our hope as Christians. It's impact gives us the reason for our being!

I. The Invitation of the Cross (John 12:23-26)

a. Jesus invites us to die to self in order to live forever. (vv.24-25) I love the illustration here that Jesus makes concerning a grain of wheat. Today is the first day of fall and naturally we think of the harvest during this time period. All the beauty and richness of the harvest results from the fact that a grain seed had to die. If it had not died it would never have germinated or produced the glory of the harvest. John is recording Jesus, those who are absorbed in self-centeredness, must surrender to Christ as Savior! We must die to our selfishness, repent from our sins, and run to the Savior! Jesus stated this in Matthew 10:39 "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." Jim Elliot, missionary to an unreached tribe in South America made this quote before the tribe killed him. "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." We can't keep our own life and expect to live forever. Many of you may know the rest of the story from the movie "End of the Spear" in which Elezabeth Elliot continues to minister to the tribe that killed her husband and many become Christians as a result.

b. Jesus invites us to serve in order to follow Him. (v.26) John MacArthur said, "true salvation is not only affection but also direction." The result of serving Christ offers the greatest reward, being with Christ!

II. The Impending Death on the Cross (John 12:27-33) In verse 27, Jesus was showing His humanity in this moment in which He knows that certain death is ahead. This is very similar to Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane before his arrest. ***"And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."*** Matthew 26:39. We have all run from the will of God at times in our lives, thankfully Jesus is more faithful than I will ever be! He is so very good to us. He was born to die for our sins. Jesus is fulfilling Old Testament prophecy, especially Isaiah 53 in which it was the will of God the Father to sacrifice God the Son for our salvation. Glory comes from gratitude not guilt. I like what John Piper said, "He is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him."

III. A False Interpretation of the Cross (John 12:34) Those who wrestled with His upcoming death or even after His death held to a doctrine that the Messiah would not die; that he would reign as a prince forever over the people. This opinion was founded on such

passages of Scripture as Ps 110:4, “Thou art a priest forever;” Dan 2:44; Dan 8:13-14. In the interpretation of these passages, they had overlooked such passages as Isa 53:1-12. They didn’t understand the fact that he would reign as a result of the resurrection.

IV. The Intention of the Cross (John 12:35-36) The intention of the cross is to believe in Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who is the light of the world. Recall what Jesus said recorded in John 8:12 ***“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*** And what Paul notes in Ephesians 5:8 ***“for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.”***

a. To gain assurance (v.35) This verse gives us assurance. Assurance to know clearly the direction we must go (the light). Jesus gives us clarity! “He is the way, the truth, and the life...”

b. To gain adoption (v.36) Here is a great reminder that Jesus adopts us through the work of the cross. John 1:12-13 ***“But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”***

The cross is the reason for our hope!