

The Glory of God in the Cross

Sermon Delivered on March 25th, 2018

AM Service

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Text:

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. 22: Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. 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.

Introduction

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.

Our Lord spoke these words the week before His agonizing crucifixion. Of all the forms of execution that men have ever invented, crucifixion has been **most dreaded and the most demeaning execution**. Death on a cross is reserved for the worst of criminals. Death on a cross is **designed to bring the greatest shame, humiliation and disgrace to its victim**. Our Lord Jesus took the shame and humiliation when He was crucified on the cross. As the song says, it's an "**emblem of suffering and shame.**"

But listen to what our Lord said as speaks about His coming death on the cross,

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.

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.

Our Lord is speaking here about the coming hour of His death. We need to understand that **He was not forced against His will**. His life was not taken from Him.

John 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18: **No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.** I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

It is of His own will that He lays down His life.

As Christ approached the dark shadow of the cross His soul was troubled but **in the midst of His troubled soul He still prayed ...**

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.

Here our Lord speaks about the death on the cross **not in terms of suffering but in terms of triumph and glory.** The glory of God is uppermost in the mind of Christ. He came to die on the cross for sinners and in His death the Father will be glorified.

John 13:31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and **God is glorified in him.** 32: If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

Here our Lord tells His disciples that **the highest aim of the cross is the glory of God.** The cross in His mind will bring the greatest glory to the Father and for this reason

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:**

What was uppermost in the mind and the soul of the Saviour was that in **His death on the cross would bring supreme glory to the Father.** For this reason He is willing to endure the cross. How could He not endure the cross and its suffering and shame when it is the cross that brings the highest glory to the Father?

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

He endured being nailed to the cross and ignored the shame and disgrace it brought, because **He saw the cross** in a different light. **Our Lord understood the cross** in a different light. **Jesus Christ as He looks at the cross looks at it as instrument by which God would be glorified.** The cross of Jesus Christ with all its shame, with all its pain and agony is a **glorious cross.** The cross of Jesus Christ brought the **greatest glory to God.** That is the highest aim of the cross of Christ; it is to bring the **highest praise and glory to God.**

How does cross of Christ glorify the Father?

When I speak of the cross I do not mean the literal wooden cross but what it signifies. The cross of Christ signifies the **suffering**, the **shame**, the **humiliation**, the **death** of our Saviour. But **Jesus Christ turned that cross** which is an emblem of suffering and shame **into an instrument to glorify God.** It is true that creation displays the glory of God.

Psalms 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

But it is in the cross of Jesus Christ where the glory of God is fully and powerfully displayed.

[John 1:14](#) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

What does the cross of Christ display?

What does the cross of Christ demonstrate? **The cross of Christ reveals to us God in His full glory.** All of His attributes are intensified and vividly seen in the cross. In the death of Christ on the cross we see the **holiness** of God, the **justice** of God, the **wrath** of God, the **wisdom** of God, the **long-suffering** of God, the **faithfulness** of God, the **grace** of God, the **mercy** of God, the **goodness** of God, the **forgiveness** of God, the **righteousness** of God, the **power** of God, and the **sovereignty** of God. Oh, how the cross displays powerfully and clearly the various attributes of God.

But today I just want to take just two attributes, two character qualities of God that are clearly seen in the cross. And as we commemorate the passion of Christ this week, may God use this message to help us to have a **greater appreciation** of Christ and His death on the cross, and have a **greater devotion** to Christ.

1. The Infinite Holiness of God

One attribute of God that is clearly seen in the cross of Jesus Christ is the holiness of God. Just listen to one of the seven last sayings of Jesus Christ while nailed to the cross.

[Matthew 27:46](#) And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

When God looked down and saw His Son bearing the sins of the world, in that dark and awful moment, the Father turned away. Yes, He turned away from His only begotten Son and whom He said in His baptism and in the mount of transfiguration ...

[“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”](#)

He turned away not because of lack of love. He loved His Son. He turned away not because He was angry at His Son. He turned away because **He was angry at all the sin of the world that sent His Son to the cross.**

[Habakkuk 1:12](#) Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. 13: **Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity:** wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

God's eyes are too pure to look on evil. **He cannot stand the sight of sin.** God's holiness demands that He turns away from sin. God will have no part of it. His eyes are **too pure to approve the evil in the world.**

The people in the crowd, which were many because it was the Passover time, **were very familiar with the words**. These were not strange words to them. These words were taken from the Psalm which the Hebrew people are familiar with.

Psalm 22:1 My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? 2: O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.

Here is a question which none of those around the cross, **though familiar with the Scripture, could have answered**. It was a question which, at the time, none of the apostles and disciples could not have answered. But the Lord Jesus had answered His own question ...

Psalm 22:3 **But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.**

When you and I ponder these words of our Lord when He was nailed on the cross, **we must remember the infinite holiness of God**. The reason why the Father turned away from His Son is because of His **absolute holiness and inflexible justice**.

2. The Incomprehensible Love of Christ

The next thing we must remember as we remember the death of Christ on the cross is the amazing love of God in Christ for sinners.

John 15:13 **Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.**

Here we see the supreme evidence of Christ's love for us. He laid down His life for us. We must understand that **the "laying down " of His life means much more than physical death**, even though that also brought indescribable and incredible pain and shame to our Lord. But it meant that He had to take our place and be **"made sin"** for us, **"made a curse"** for us, and **"the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all"**.

He experienced being **forsaken** and being **abandoned**. He suffered the **loss of all comfort and consolation** because of the greatness of His love.

Here was love matchless and unmeasured. In Gethsemane He prayed ...

Matthew 26:38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39: And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Matthew 26:42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

But **because of His love, He drank that awful cup of judgment**, the cup of being forsaken, the cup being abandoned, the cup of woe and wrath. There was **no one in the universe who could drink it, He drank it and drank it all** and He did **all alone**. And He did all because of His great love wherewith He loved us. Blessed be His name!

*Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?*

How great is the love of God! Oh, how our hearts should overflow with love and say with the apostle John;

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

The whole heart of Christ is toward His people. He “loved us and gave Himself for us.” His love which beyond knowledge and understanding. What a precious Saviour we have! He loves us without measure, without change, without beginning, and without end, even as the Father loves Him!

Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

May God the Holy Ghost shed abroad the love of God in our hearts

Romans 5:5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Closing Thoughts

And so as we commemorate the passion of Christ this week we must understand that God is supremely glorified in the death of His Son Jesus Christ and we see God for Who He is, we see the Father in the fullest expression of His person as we behold His Son dying upon a cross for our sins.

The holiness of God demands that sinners must be punished. We have a great dilemma on the account of **what man is** and **what he had done** and **who God is** and **what He must do**. Man is sinful. Man has offended God. Man deserves to be punished because of his sins. God is holy, righteous and just.

Exodus 34:6 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7: Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that **will by no means clear the guilty**; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

God is so holy that He will not leave the guilty unpunished. The cross reveals that **God takes our sins seriously**.

But God is loving, merciful and gracious. God, because He is holy and righteous, must punish us because of our sins. But because He is merciful He wants to forgive and let us go. But if He does that, He would violate His justice.

It is at the cross where **justice and mercy met together**.

Psalm 89:14 Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

Psalm 85:9 Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. 10: Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

At the cross God was displaying His glory but He was also being genuinely compassionate toward sinners.

Practical implications

1. The cross of Christ should stir us up to confess and forsake our sins

May we never take sin lightly. May we never minimize the seriousness of human sin. **It cost Christ everything to redeem us.** Let us never make light of what cost Him so dearly. Let us hate sin and appreciate our Saviour. But you and I will never appreciate the great sacrifice of our Saviour unless we see **the holiness of God** and **grievousness of human sin.**

Till sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet. The more bitterness we taste in sin, the more sweetness we shall taste in Christ. - Thomas Watson

2. The cross of Christ should cause us to love Christ

Isn't the love of Christ a compelling reason **to love Christ.** Isn't the Christ upon a cross a compelling reason **to love what Christ love.** Isn't the Christ upon a cross a compelling reason **to love Him not only in word but in action and deed.**

Oh, love Him! Love Him with all your heart. He deserves your love.

*Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

You and I are not called to suffer like Jesus for no one will and no one is qualified but Jesus but we can all pray, **"Father, glorify thy name."** Whether in suffering or in comfort may you and I glorify God.

AMEN!