

We Would See Jesus

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[0 : 00] We're going to turn back to John chapter 12. And we're going to consider some thoughts from verses 20 through to 26.

Jesus' public ministry was now coming to a close. And this would be the last time that he would go up to Jerusalem. John recalls for a seer that he rode on a donkey.

And that the crowds took palm branches. And started to line the streets shouting out, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel.

Now we know that that had been prophesied concerning the Messiah. And we know that at this particular time, that multitudes had gathered from all over Israel to celebrate the Passover.

But it's questionable whether they understood what they were really celebrating.

[1 : 15] Because they didn't make the connection between the Passover and the Messiah. They didn't make the connection as he rode into Jerusalem, what was going to take place and the relevance of that concerning the Passover.

They didn't come to understand that the one who was riding on the donkey, that they were celebrating as he rode into Jerusalem, was actually the Passover lamb.

Now John tells us that certain Greeks had come to worship at the feast. Now these Greeks had heard about the fame of Jesus, and they wanted to see this Jesus.

And it's quite clear from the response that Jesus gives to them, that they didn't understand who Jesus was. They didn't understand how God needs to be worshipped.

They didn't understand the kind of Messiah that they themselves really needed. They didn't know quite what to expect from the Messiah that had been promised to them.

[2 : 54] And we wondered what it was about Jesus that these Greeks wanted to see. Why did they want to meet with Jesus?

Was it because of his celebrity status? Because by this time amongst the common people, he was a celebrity.

And was it because he was a celebrity that they wanted to meet with him? What kind of Messiah had they been expecting?

What kind of Savior was going to be able to secure for them the life that needed to be secured if they were going to live eternally?

And the reason that I'm raising these questions is that we ask ourselves, what are we expecting as we gather here this afternoon?

[4 : 03] What are we looking for as we come to worship God? How do we expect to worship God? What kind of worship do we believe is going to be acceptable to God?

Because unless we worship him in the way that he requires to be worshipped, then we won't experience God's blessing as we gather here this afternoon?

What kind of Savior are we looking for? We're looking to meet with Jesus. But what are we really after? Have we thought what has brought us to this place?

Have we thought of the kind of Savior that we need? Have we thought about why we want to have an encounter with Jesus?

Is it because he has a certain celebrity status amongst the people that we associate with? And because we want to be in favour with him?

[5 : 22] Is the Jesus that we're looking for the Jesus that we need? And that's the question, hopefully, that we will seek to answer.

Because sometimes the Jesus that we're looking for is not the Jesus that we really need. And that's what Jesus made clear to these Greeks and to the disciples and others who heard his response.

Do you really understand what you're seeking? And the first thing that we want to consider is that the life that we need comes through death.

He was and he uses the grain of wheat sown in the ground as an illustration to bring before his hearers the great principle that life comes through death.

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.

[6 : 45] Now, Jesus is, of course, first and foremost referring to his own death. But then he goes on to apply the principle to his followers and to his worshippers.

The seed is sown in weakness and it's waste in power. That's how Paul describes it in Corinthians. He has taken to himself human weakness.

He took upon himself own nature. and the reason that he took upon himself own nature was so that he might die in own nature.

He didn't go into this world to live, he came into this world to die. Where very often when we think of bringing children into the world, we plan to give them life and we plan for the kind of lives that we would want them to enjoy.

We would never dream of bringing children into this world to die. yet inevitably every child that we bring into this world will die.

[8 : 19] But Jesus knew that that was the purpose that he had to come into this world. That was the purpose that he had to take to himself the weakness of our human nature so that he might die in our nature and bring forth the power of the resurrection which will give us the victory over death.

And the simple truth there is that if he didn't die, we would have no hope for life. Not in this world or in the world that is to come.

This death is what produces life. He knew that. And he knew that that's the truth that ought to be brought to bear upon those that celebrated the Passover.

But he was well aware that the truth that was meant to be brought before them wasn't being understood. They weren't making the connection.

They were failing to understand the kind of saviour that they needed. Because it's only as he was prepared to die, which was illustrated and brought before them in the Passover, that they would never have life.

[10 : 00] He knew that they didn't fully grasp the significance of their celebrations.

He was the Passover lamb. He was the substitute that was going to bear the sins of his people. He was the only sacrifice that was ever going to give God satisfaction. This was the only way that God could give life to his people.

He knew that his son would die in the Passover. He knew that his son would die in their place. And he knew that he said he would go to Jerusalem, that he was on the way to the cross.

He knew that although all of these people were celebrating, that very few of them, the many, understood what it was that they were celebrating.

[11 : 07] And when the Greeks came to have an audience with him, he wanted to bring this to bear from them.

He wanted to clarify their minds so that they would be left in no doubt as to the reason that he had come into this world.

He wanted them to be in no doubt as to the kind of saviour that they needed. But the saviour that they needed must be a suffering saviour.

And we could ask ourselves, what kind of saviour are we seeking as we gather here this afternoon, and is that the kind of saviour that we need?

The saviour that we have come to embrace. Is it the saviour of the scripture? Is it the saviour of truth?

[12 : 23] Is it the saviour that is able to bring life into our souls? Or are we here because it's the done thing?

It's part of our culture. It's our tradition. It's what our parents do, and we want to be in the in-crowd of the circle of friends that we have.

Or are we here because we want to meet with Jesus?

Because we've come to realise the deep down need that we have for this Jesus. And what Jesus has accomplished on our behalf so that we might have life in our souls.

Because these means have been appointed to bring life to our souls. They are a means of receiving grace.

[13 : 31] The grace that our souls are so desperately hungry and thirsty for. Whether we fully realise it or not.

The grace that everybody out there is in desperate need of, and are just as surely hungering for. But they seek to satisfy it with other things.

Do we fully realise the need we have of coming into our relationship with this Jesus?

As our suffering servant. And do we fully realise that it's only as we are in prison, as he is in truth that we are going to have life in our souls.

He then goes on to apply the principle of his own death to his followers.

[14 : 36] Those who are truly his followers must apply this principle to themselves. And he goes on to say, He who loves his life will use it.

And he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. He who loves his life. Now he's making clear here that he hasn't come into this world to give us prosperity.

He hasn't come into this world to give us health. He hasn't come into this world to make us happy with the things of this world.

And if we make the things of this world our life our priority, then we're going to lose out on everything.

Not just on the life of this world, but on the life that he offers us for eternity. We're going to lose out on the spiritual life that he has come to make possible through his own death.

[15 : 48] Paul writing to the Colossians says to them, If then you are raised with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ is sitting at the light of the earth.

Say to minds of the things above and not of the things of the earth. For you died and your life is sitting with Christ in God.

The truth is that we're going to lose everything that we associate with this life.

At some point or other we're going to lose everything that we have in this life. We're going to lose our youth.

We're going to lose our health. We're going to lose our loved ones. We're going to lose all of our material possessions.

[16 : 49] It's all just a matter of time. And Jesus is telling us, Don't focus on the things that you cannot hear.

Don't focus your attention on temporal things. Focus your attention on the things that are going to be beneficial for your soul.

And that's the question we must ask ourselves when we're seeking this Jesus. Has Jesus become a priority in our lives?

Has Jesus become our all? Can we say of Jesus, He is altogether lovely? He is everything that I'm living for.

Can we say with Paul, for me to live is Christ and to die is gain? Because that's the application of the principle that Jesus is applying to those that are seeking Him.

[17 : 56] When they come up to celebrate at this Passover feast. He brings before them the kind of Saviour that they ought to be seeking.

One that was prepared to die to give them life. And He applies the principle to His followers. That this is what is required if we're truly seeking to be saved from the power of sin in our lives.

If we truly realize the preciousness of life that is in offer to us in the Gospel.

Because if we allow the things of this life, our possessions, our health, our relationships and even our religion, to become more important than Jesus.

Then we will have forfeited our salvation and eternal life. It's not enough to become religious.

[19 : 15] And there's a danger in becoming religious. That our religion takes priority over Jesus Himself.

And that we will refuse to let go of our traditions and our customs in order for us to be true followers of Jesus.

And that we make these things more important than the one that gives life to our souls. And we always have to be aware of these dangers.

So that they don't come between us and this relationship that Jesus is willing to establish with His followers.

All the people that have gathered here were religious people. All the people that have gathered for this great festival this Passover.

[20 : 21] And some of them who had heard of the miracles that Jesus had been performing were anxious and were curious concerning who this new celebrity was.

And they wanted to be in this new crowd if it was to become the new in-crowd. But there's always the danger that we allow these things to become more important than Jesus Himself.

These Greeks and many who had come to celebrate their religious festival were caught up in the buzz.

Caught up in the atmosphere of the time. But they didn't understand how God required to be worshipped.

And they didn't understand the kind of Saviour that they reanimated. And they didn't understand the possible cost of following this Saviour.

[21 : 40] So that they would have life in their souls. And that brings us to our next point which is the evidence of our salvation is said was to come.

Which we have in verse 26. If anyone serves me, let him follow me. And where I am there, my servant will be also.

If anyone serves me, whom my father will own. Why? Because these are the kind of worshippers that my father is looking for.

We can only share in the resurrection life of Jesus. By being prepared to take up the cross and follow him.

Dying to self. And coming alive in our relationship with Jesus. And if we come alive in our relationship with Jesus.

[22 : 52] The result of that is that we will live a life of sadness to Jesus. To serve the Lord, we must know where he is.

You can't serve anybody unless you know where the person is. And what he requires of you. The same is true of Jesus.

The same is true of Jesus. Before we can serve him. Before we can follow him. Before we can follow him. Before we can be obedient to what he requires of his followers.

We must know where he is. We must know where he is. And in order to be where he is. We must know where what his will is.

Because that's always where he is to be found. Doing his own will. Doing, in Jesus' case, the Father's will. Because that's where God is always to be found.

[24 : 03] In accordance with his own will. That's where Jesus brings his followers. To be obedient to the Father's will.

If we're truly seeking Jesus. This will be our desire. That we might follow him. So that we might glorify God.

The way that we glorify God. Is by becoming obedient to God's will. Having the desire of the prayer that he taught his disciples.

Thy will be done on earth. As it is in heaven. It's not when we get to heaven. That this is to be done. This is to be done now. Because if it's not done now.

It will never be done. It will never be done. When we enter into the other side. If we haven't got a delight. In doing his will on earth. We will not have a delight.

[25 : 00] Even if we got to heaven. It would be hell for us. To get to heaven. With our natures unchanged. Our natures need to be changed.

Our desires must be one. And we need to have a desire to do his will. And when we find that our own will is contrary to his will.

Then we need to pray over it. So that we will crucify the desires of the flesh. And be made willing by the power of his spirit.

So that his will will be done. So that we will be prepared for the place that he's preparing for his people. Jesus has made it possible for us to be in communion with God.

In other words, to know what God is communicating to us. God is communicating his own mind.

[26 : 15] His own will to his people. His own people are drawn to his mind. They are drawn to the truth. Because this is where we find the will of God.

And if we are seeking life for our souls. If we are truly seeking the Saviour who is able to give us this communion. Then we will have a delight in the means of grace.

Not because it makes us popular with our fellow human beings. Not because it's the done thing in our community. Not because it's the practice of Christians who are professing faith to attend these means of grace.

It will become our delight. It will be our desire. We will be drawn without being coaxed to come. Without being pressurised to come.

It will be our desire to come. Nothing can keep us away from it. Because we've applied the principle that needs to be applied to all who will follow and seek after Jesus.

[27 : 29] So that he might become their Saviour. That we crucify the desires of the flesh. There are other things that we could be doing on a Saturday afternoon.

Things that are demanding our attention. But we've got to crucify these desires. Because this is where the desire of the true follower of Jesus Christ is.

To be where he is. To know what he knows. That we might have the mind of Christ. And make ourselves of no reputation.

And become his servants. As he became our servant. And this is what's going to achieve what our souls are yearning for.

Communion with God. Isn't that what these services are coming? Communion services.

[28 : 34] That we might abide in him. As we were considering yesterday morning. So that we might bear the fruit of salvation.

Because unless we're bearing the fruit. We have no evidence. That we have been saved. If we are in communion with God.

If we're abiding in him. We're abiding in the love of God. And Jesus tells us in chapter 15.

That it was by being obedient to his father's commandments. That he abated his love. And that's what he taught throughout his ministry.

That the works that he did. He did not do of his own accord. He was merely doing the works of the father. And he was doing the works of the father.

[29 : 45] And empowered to do the works of the father. Because he was walking in the will of the father. He was abiding in him by keeping his commandments.

And he was obedient even unto death. And he was prepared to crucify the flesh.

And he has given us the example of the principle. That we must apply to ourselves. That we must crucify the spiritual flesh.

We must be prepared to make sacrifices. We must be prepared to take up our cross. If we will be his disciples.

And if we share in the master's service. If anyone serves me.

[30 : 52] My father would honor. It wasn't easy for him. As we heard last evening. It wasn't easy for him.

To become a man of sorrows. And acquainted with grief. It wasn't easy for him. To crucify his flesh. Because it was a painful and a shameful death.

It wasn't easy for him to drink the cup. That the father had put into his hand. But nevertheless. His will would be done.

He would drink the last dregs. If there was no other way. He was prepared. He was prepared. To sacrifice everything. In order to be obedient to the father.

And because he was obedient to the father. The father has given him a name. Which is above every other name. The father has highly exalted him.

[31 : 52] And given him the glory. Which was his. Before the world was. He is in our nature. In our nature. Occupying the throne of glory.

And the only reason. That he is doing it in our nature. Was because he was prepared to make the sacrifice.

In order to save our religion. To save. Sin for men and women. Boys and girls.

Such as we are. It wasn't easy for him. He prayed the father to save him from this ill. It wasn't easy for him. He prayed the father to save him from this ill.

But he was willing to do the father's will.

[32 : 53] So that he might truly become the savior of his people. He wasn't the perfect high priest. He wasn't the perfect high priest. Prior to his coming. He became the perfect high priest.

He became the perfect high priest. As a result of presenting the perfect sacrifice. And as a result of understanding everything that we are going through. He can sympathize with all of our trials and

temptations. Because our God. He was willing to do the perfect high priest. And as a result of understanding everything that we are going through.

He can sympathize with all of our trials and temptations.

because wherever we are, he's been there first. And if we're going to find this Saviour and worship God through this Saviour, we need to find where he is.

And he is always to be found in the Father's will. And if that's the case, we need to be found in the Father's will, seeking to do what he did to glorify the Father.

[34 : 13] Because that was his intention when he created us, that we would be created in order to glorify him and to enjoy him forever.

This purpose for coming was to give honour to the Father.

Father, Savi, from this hour, but for this purpose I came to this hour. This was the reason that I came. And he was looking beyond the suffering to what took priority in his life.

And what took priority in his life was his Father's glory. And what must take priority in our lives is not our friends or our families.

These things may be important to us, but there should be something of far greater importance to us. We should be seeking the Father's glory.

[35 : 29] And the only way that we will ever be able to glorify our Father in Heaven is to be united and to be in communion with him through our Saviour, because this is the kind of Saviour that we need.

Because if we receive this kind of Saviour, he guarantees that we will have life in our souls. And the life that he brings into our souls is a revelation of who God is.

Because that's life eternal. To know the living and the true God. And Jesus comes to me, I said to you, this is what we should be designing as we gather together in these means of grace.

That we will be successful in glorifying the Father. That we will be successful in our worship of truly worshipping him in spirit and in truth.

This is where the spirit leads us. This is the truth that reveals to us the true God. This is the only way that we can come to glorify us through God.

[36 : 49] This is what should be our primary aim as we gather together in these means of grace. Because this is the only thing that will give life to our souls.

It won't be our traditions. It won't be our religion and our culture. It won't be our parents or our friends. It will be Jesus and Jesus only.

He will become all together lovely. And we will have eyes for no one. And when we come, we will come with the attitude we would see Jesus.

Not the minister. Not the elders. Not our Christian friends or our families. But we would see Jesus. the Jesus that our soul so desperately needs.

So that we might have life in our souls. And that we might come to appreciate what it is to come together to worship him and the purpose of our worship.

[37 : 58] so that we might glorify his name. And the only way that we can do that is by being prepared to recognize that we can't hold on to the things of this world.

The wealth of this world. The health that we might enjoy in this world. The fitness that we may enjoy at this present time but which will not last.

The relationships that we enjoy but must be severed by death. But nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And that's what we should be striving for. That we ensure that we will have life in our souls. Not just for time but for all of eternity.

And may God grant that he would lead us to that point. That we would be prepared to recognize that we can't do anything to save ourselves.

[39 : 13] But that Jesus has everything that our souls need. And if we're coming to the Lord's table it's not because we think that we deserve to be at the Lord's table.

It's in web of mission that we are unworthy of the least of his matters as a result of the way that we've treated him.

And put other things first in our lives for so long. Let us stop doing that. Let us crucify the flesh and let us come as we are recognizing that we're sinners in desperate need of a saviour.

and let us come and partake of the provisions that he has laid on the gospel table to meet every need that will ever arise in our spiritual experience.

And so that we might fulfill the purpose of our creation and re-creation to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

[40 : 28] Let us pray.