



Welcome to Grace Communion International

March 21 , 2021

FIFTH WEEK OF EASTER PREPARATION

SERMON

FOR US, JESUS BECAME WHAT HE HATES

John 12:20-36



SCRIPTURE READING

John 12:20-36 (ESV)





“20 ¶ Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks.

21 So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.

22” Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.”

John 12:20-36 (ESV)



“23 And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

25 Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”

John 12:20-36 (ESV)





“26 If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

27 ¶ “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.

John 12:20-36 (ESV)



“28 Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: **“I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”**

29 The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, **“An angel has spoken to him.”**

30 Jesus answered, **“This voice has come for your sake, not mine.”**

John 12:20-36 (ESV)





“31 Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

33 He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.”

John 12:20-36 (ESV)





“34 So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?”

35 So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.

John 12:20-36 (ESV)



“While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”
When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.”

John 12:20-36 (ESV)



THESE ARE INSPIRED WORDS OF JESUS BEFORE HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS.

THANK YOU JESUS FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO DIE FOR US THAT IN YOU, DEATH HAS BEEN OVERCOME FOR US!

AMEN



Six days before the Passover, Martha, Lazarus and Mary invited Jesus and the apostles to have a meal with him. During the meal, Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with a pound of expensive ointment made from pure genuine nard. In those days, a labourer was paid one denarius per day. The cost of the nard was worth 300 denarii. It was, needless to say, very expensive perfume. It could be compared to **“Baccarat Les Larmes Sacred de Thebes** which sells for \$6800 an ounce or **the Clive Christian No. 1 Imperial Majesty Perfume** which sells \$12,722 per ounce. ([13 Most Expensive Perfumes in the World \[Update 2021\] \[listcracker.com\]](#)). In other words, Mary went all out to honour Jesus to the horror of Judas Iscariot. Jesus told Judas, ‘Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial’. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”

We then read about the plot to kill Lazarus who had been physically resurrected by Jesus. The chief priests wanted to get rid of the evidence because many of the Jews were believing in Jesus.

We also read about his triumphal entry in Jerusalem where the crowds hailed him as the one who came in the name of the Lord, even the king of Israel.

Today, we will focus on verses 20-36 where Jesus predicts his death to Andrew and Philip. Some Greeks who had come to worship at the feast of the Jews wish to see Jesus. Andrew and Philip brought the Greeks' message to him. We will focus especially on Jesus said about his impending death.



- “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” (Joh 12:24 ESV)



In this verse, Jesus is talking about his own death. After he said that he was life and that he was the light, how could it be that he would die and disappear in the earth for the better part of three days and three nights?

When we begin to understand, as God open our eyes, to the depth that Jesus went to rescue us from sin and death, our desire will not be to lead a life of sin to please ourselves but rather we will want to live a life to please him in thankfulness and appreciation for what he has done for us.

We are not talking about anybody who is going to die. We are talking about God who has descended from heaven to earth. We are talking about God who was made man to reverse the curse of Adam and Eve.

The passage of Scripture we have just read clearly states that Jesus came to the earth “for this hour” to die for us.

He was life decided voluntarily to embrace death. He who is light decided that he is light would be his in a rock sepulchre.

For us, he accepted to experience our full estrangement from God. He voluntarily accepted to carry on and in himself the full weight of the sin of the world.

Jesus took the route of the ultimate servant by accepting to die in our place. Jesus did not die for one, he died for all. His willingness to die does not save us from physical death but saves us from eternal death, from nonexistence. Maybe you heard the story of Maximilian Kolbe, prisoner number 16,670. The following is how the Christian history Institute describes what happened.

OFFERING HIMSELF FOR A STRANGER

(FROM <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine>)

AFTER AN EXHAUSTING DAY of forced labor in July of 1941, the prisoners at the Auschwitz concentration camp lined up for evening roll call, only to discover that a prisoner was missing. Immediately, guards and dogs began the hunt for the escaped inmate, a man from Block 14.

The remaining prisoners, already gaunt from living on a mere 300 to 500 calories a day, were forced to stand at attention for three hours while the search continued. But the real torture was wondering which prisoners from the escapee's cell block would pay—as had been the case with the last two prison breaks—by being sentenced to a slow, agonizing death by starvation.

That evening the prisoners were sent to their bunks, but the next morning Nazi SS captain Karl Fritsch announced that the escaped prisoner had not been found. While everyone else was marched off to the fields for another day of work, the men of Block 14 were forced once again to stand at attention for hours.

Finally, Fritsch scrutinized each prisoner and, one by one, removed from the ranks 10 condemned men. One, Franciszek Gajowniczek, a Jewish sergeant in the Polish army, sobbed uncontrollably, wailing, "My poor wife! My poor children!"

It was then that prisoner #16,670 stepped out of line and walked toward Fritsch—a brave move, given the machine guns aimed at him. When Fritsch demanded what "this Polish pig" wanted, the man removed his hat and quietly said, "I would like to die in place of one of these men."

That prisoner was Maximilian Kolbe, a 47-year-old Franciscan priest who convinced the Nazi commander that an old, frail priest would be a better choice than the young, distraught husband and father.

As brave as what this man did, he died in the place of one man. He saved his physical life but did not save him from eternal death. Only Jesus, the son of God, the Son of Man was able to do this.

What we read in the passage of Scripture today is Jesus' willingness to go all the way for us not just to save the one but to save the many who would put their trust

in him after the revelation of his heroic act for all of us.

From the Nazis, that priest took the place of another. He saved a guiltless man. The man he replaced in the starvation cell had done nothing wrong. He was among 10 men punished for another who had tried to escape.

What Jesus did was very different. He died for the guilty. The bible is clear that we have all sinned. **“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” (Ro 3:23 ESV)**

Since we all sinned, it makes us all sinners doomed to eternal death. However, there is good news. Jesus changed all of that for us as we place our trust and faith in him.

“but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Ro 5:8 ESV)

“4 For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you.

5 The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers.” (Ps 5:4-5 ESV)

“6 ¶ Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness;

7 you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;” (Ps 45:6-7 ESV)

“16 There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him:

17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil,

19 a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.” (Pr 6:16-19 ESV)

God Hates Sin



Psalm 5:4-5—it is clear that God does not delight in wickedness. In fact, absolutely no evil resides in God. God is absolutely pure and completely sinless.

This verse describes who God is and describes who Jesus is. We know that without God’s merciful intervention sinners would have no place before God.

Sinners have to come to a point where they turn to God to receive his mercy.

Psalm 45:6-7 the Old Testament is pointing to Jesus Christ, the fulfilment of every hope and every promise found in the Old Testament. Jesus hates wickedness as we read in verse 7.

This verse points to the fact that God the Father was to glorify Jesus above everyone else.

Why does God hate wickedness? What is the wickedness that God hates?

God hates wickedness because it goes completely against his plan and purpose for

human beings. Human beings were created in the image of God to be in relationship with him for all eternity through his Son.

Sin, as we know, came into the world through the first man Adam who accepted to believe the lie of the devil that he could become like God on his own without a relationship with him.

Consequently, ever since, the world has been in turmoil.

There are numerous examples in the word of God that he hates any kind of idolatry. This was one of the grievous sins of Israel as they turned to false gods. As stated, their departure from God brought about violence which is hard to imagine. For example, they sacrificed even their own children to their idols.

“36 ¶ The LORD said to me: ‘Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Declare to them their abominations. 37 For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. With their idols they have committed adultery, and they have even offered up to them for food the children whom they had borne to me. 38 Moreover, this they have done to me: they have defiled my sanctuary on the same day and profaned my Sabbaths. 39 For when they had slaughtered their children in sacrifice to their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it. And behold, this is what they did in my house.’ (Eze 23:36-39 ESV)

God abhors sins of all kinds because it is not a reflection of his character. It also hurts human relationships very deeply. They often leave unforgettable and enduring scars. Every sin does the same.

The devil is described by Jesus as a murderer and a liar from the beginning. He is out to deceive people with all kinds of lies.

Proverbs 6:16-19 God continues to hate sins to this day. Sin never shows his love for us. He has not changed. He describes these sins as abominations. They include arrogance, lying, murderous attitudes and behaviours, those that plan evil and are encouraged to carry out those plans, false witnesses and those who cause division among the brothers.

In Malachi, we read that he hates divorces. We just need to look around to see the damage caused by separation and divorce both for the children, the adults, the extended families, friends, etc....

Nothing good comes out of sin. Sin kills life, the quality of the present physical life as well as the potential of eternal life, a life beyond the grave.

It's an amazing thing that God did as we see in the next slide.

Jesus became what He hates for us.

• “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”
(2Co 5:21 ESV)



Jesus entered the hell of God-forsakenness. Jesus always desired to be in communion with God the Father. For those long hours on the cross, he did not feel his presence.

When we think about it, God orchestrated everything. Jesus died on the Passover. In Exodus, in the Exodus from slavery from Egypt, the blood of the Lamb was splattered on doors. This was a sign that the death angel would spare all the firstborn of God’s people residing in those households.

God orchestrated everything so that the Roman soldiers and the Jews would kill Jesus at exactly the same time the lambs were killed every Passover. Jesus offered himself as the Lamb of God for all of us.

After the Passover meal, Jesus went out to pray. The Gospels tell us that he was greatly distressed to a point where his sweat became like blood. His sorrow was so profound that it was even to death, as we read in Mark 14.

Jesus knew exactly what was coming. As John XII tells us, he came for the purpose of this hour. It happened exactly at the right time to fulfil all the Old Testament prophecies

pointing to Jesus.

He became sin. Everything God hates he became for us in our place. He took all the sins of the world as his own although he was sinless.

If you remember the story of the priest and the concentration camp, he died for a man who was not guilty of breaking the Nazis' law.

Jesus' death was different. Jesus died for all of us because we were guilty of breaking the law of God which brings forth death.

When Judas came to betray him, he faced the Roman soldiers and the religious leaders head on. He gave himself to them for to fulfill God plan to liberate us from the power of sin. Jesus did this out of his own will as we read in John 10.

Jesus experienced all the horrors of sin and felt the complete absence of God the Father because he became sin, he became darkness for us. All the forces of evil against him extinguished his light, or so it seemed.

Even as he felt forsaken by God as he carried our "no" to God, our rebel shout of "I will do it my way", he did the very opposite of what we all did. He stayed obedient even if at the time, His Father felt so far away.

He was and is our Passover. Through the shedding of his blood, because He was sinless, he paid the price of sin for all of us.

The Father and the Holy Spirit never abandoned Jesus but that is how it felt. We simply cannot imagine the Father's grief and sorrow as he saw his beloved Son hanging on that cross, suffering, gasping for every breath in excruciating pain. Because of the eternal plan of the Triune God, the man Jesus was left to die a cruel, criminal death. For Jesus, it was excruciating when he cried, "**Father, why have you forsaken me?**" The answer he received at that time was heavenly silence. Communication between God the Father and the Son of Man was cut off because of the sin he carried. To everyone around, it seemed that God was absent.

How could it be that the one who called Himself the Son of God would die on a forsaken stake of torture?

Yet Jesus was never alone. The Father and the Holy Spirit were always present.



Massaccio's fresco in Santa Maria church Novella in Florence Italy (public domain)

Therefore, the heavenly Father and his Son, Jesus, were together in the passion and together on the cross. More than to the wooden arms of the cross, Jesus was nailed to his Father's arms or, as it were, to his will. Just as it is in eternity it is from the unutterable and joyful embrace between the Father and the Son that the Holy Spirit proceeds – the gift of their mutual love – so now and for all time, it is from the painful embrace of the Father and the Son on the cross that the Holy Spirit flows – the gift of both of them for us. (From RAISING ADAM, Why Jesus Descended into Hell Gerrit Dawson, p. 71-72)



As Jesus embraced and suffered the fury of sin, Jesus was welded to the Father's will. The triune God was present as Jesus the Son of Man, the son of God died on that cross for all of us

This shows the profound love God has for humanity as we see in the quotation above.

Knowing to what extent Jesus went through to save us from the horror and slavery of sin, why would anyone of us want to go back there?

The love of Jesus attracts us to let him live in us as we submit and commit to his will in repentance and dependence. Repentance always means turning away “from something” and turning “toward something”. Repentance means turning from doing our will to doing His will.

When we understand what Jesus did for us, in faith, we can better understand the words of Jesus who said, **“25 Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If**

anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.” (Joh 12:25-26 ESV)

Let us pray in humble adoration.