

Text— John 12:23-36

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

The events recorded in our Scripture selection occurred during the week of the Passover feast, just days before Jesus' bitter sufferings and death on the cross of Calvary. Immediately preceding our text, we read, "And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus." (John 12:20-22) Hence, there were some Gentile people who had evidently heard about Jesus, and consequently desired to see Him.

Thus, we are reminded that Jesus Christ is the Savior of ALL people, both Jews and Gentiles. It's as we read in 1 John 2:1-2, "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Yes, my friends, Jesus Christ is the Savior of the whole world.

Our Scripture selection supplies us with interesting information about our Savior as we behold:

"JESUS' AMAZING BRAVERY"

With that as our theme may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) How Jesus showed amazing bravery
- 2) Why Jesus showed amazing bravery

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Verse 23, ----- (John 12:23)

Philip and Andrew informed Jesus that there were certain Greeks who desired to see Him; *And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*

Jesus' response indicates He was fully conscious of the fact that He, the Son of man, would soon complete His mission of mercy – the redemption of the world – and subsequently enter His glory when He would rise from the dead with a glorified body and forty days later visibly ascend into heaven.

Verse 24, ----- (John 12:24)

Think about Jesus' words. A corn of wheat, a wheat seed that is buried in the earth, is alone. And yet, from that dead seed springs new life as a plant comes forth which bears much grain. Likewise, Jesus Christ knew He needed to die and be buried in order that He might bring forth the fruit of many souls into heaven. Realize that without Jesus Christ and His atoning work being completed, He alone would be the only man fit for heaven since He is true man, sinless man, while all other human beings are by nature sinners headed for hell, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," as Mark 9:44 puts it. Indeed, if we are honest we must all confess as did the psalmist David in Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Then, we must remember Romans 6:23 clearly states: "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Therefore, it's a fact that Jesus Christ died and rose again that we might live eternally, for Jesus is He, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Romans 4:25)

Take it to heart that Jesus Christ is the ONLY WAY to God and heaven! Jesus Christ is the ONLY SAVIOR, for Acts 4:12 declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Thank and praise the Lord Jesus Christ for His amazing bravery as He willingly went forward with His mission of mercy— our redemption.

Verse 25, ----- (John 12:25)

There is temporal life and there is eternal life, and it is vital that we value eternal life far more than

the transitory life we have for a relatively few years in this sinful world, for Psalm 90:10 relates, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." So, Jesus wisely and pointedly says: *He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.* Observe that one cannot love one's life in this world and still inherit eternal life.

Therefore, note the warning in our text: if one loves life in this world, one will lose eternal life. On the other hand, if one hates one's life in this world, one shall keep one's life unto life eternal. Hence, it is a matter of priorities: the things of God **MUST BE FIRST** in our heart and mind. It's as our Lord Jesus Christ says in Matthew 10:37-39, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Thus, Jesus Christ must be our number-one love— not self or family or life in this world with the things of this world.

Consider 1 John 2:15-17, where we read, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Accordingly, we are to love the Lord, not the wicked world and life in it, for we are to hate sin and we are to love our Savior from sin, the Lord Jesus Christ, who has amazingly and bravely provided us with an eternal home in heavenly bliss.

Verse 26, ----- (John 12:26)

Notice that serving Christ means following Christ, and will result in being with Christ in glory, being honored by God the Father in heaven. Realize that

mere lip-service is not really serving Christ, for Jesus says: *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.*

What it means to follow Jesus is apparent from what He says in Luke 9:23-26, where we read, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." Observe the importance of **NOT** being ashamed of JESUS or His WORDS! Thus, following Jesus means standing firm in heart-deep faith in Him, and standing firm in His Holy Word – the pure, preserved Holy Bible – for Jesus says in John 10:27-28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Oh, the reward of grace is great to all who follow Jesus by believing in Him and continuing in His Word which is the means through which God the Father's Holy Spirit preserves and strengthens faith in God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, for Holy Writ plainly states: "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (Romans 10:17; John 3:36) Fellow Christians, let us, with the gracious help of our heavenly Father, endeavor to continue to serve our Savior, Jesus Christ, by following Him, taking up our cross of suffering daily in this life, knowing that we will one day be with Jesus in heavenly bliss forever.

Verse 27, ----- (John 12:27)

Jesus was then soon to suffer like no other human

being has ever suffered, for Jesus would bear the punishment for all the sins of all people. Jesus would not only suffer an agonizing death by crucifixion after being beaten bloody and mocked and spit upon; Jesus would also suffer the pains of hell for all people as He would be forsaken by God the Father while hanging on the accursed tree of the cross. Nevertheless, Jesus showed amazing bravery in the face of what He was about to endure, for He said: *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.*

Take it to heart that Jesus Christ is a real man, albeit the only sinless man, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," reports Hebrews 4:15. Thus, Jesus' soul was troubled, agitated, as He knew what He was shortly to endure. Nevertheless, Jesus refused to call upon His heavenly Father to deliver Him from the time of His suffering, for Jesus was fully aware that He had come to that very point in time for the purpose of suffering and dying for our sins, yea, the sins of the entire world. Jesus truly showed amazing bravery.

Verses 28 & 29, -----. (John 12:28-29)

Jesus uttered a very short prayer to His Father in heaven when He said: *Father, glorify thy name.* Note that Jesus' prayer was that His heavenly Father's name would be glorified; Jesus did not pray, "Father, glorify my name." Jesus always served His heavenly Father in all that He did, for Jesus lived the perfect life that none of us has lived or can live. Jesus could always honestly state, as He did in John 8:29, "he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." Hence, since Jesus was always in full concert with His heavenly Father, His prayer was audibly answered as God the Father spoke from heaven.

Take it to heart that everything Jesus did glorified God the Father's name; and, God the Father

glorified His own name by graciously sending His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to save the world, for at Jesus' baptism the Father spoke from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17) And again, on the mount of transfiguration as Jesus shone in glory while speaking with Moses and Elijah in the presence of Peter, James, and John, "behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matthew 17:5) And, right before Jesus gave Himself into death, He prayed to His heavenly Father saying, as John 17:4 reports, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Thus, God the Father's name was glorified in all the saving work Jesus Christ accomplished.

Interestingly, when God the Father spoke from heaven as recorded in our text, *The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.* Oh, the people were dull in understanding, as they did not pay close attention to what was said.

Verse 30, -----. (John 12:30)

To the people who had heard but did not understand, *Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.* Jesus knew His heavenly Father was always with Him; so, Jesus did not need to hear God the Father speak aloud from the sky. However, the people needed to hear the voice of God the Father so that they might realize that Jesus Christ is "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) Yes, it is vital to know Jesus Christ for who He is and what He came to earth to accomplish, and did accomplish, for John 3:16-18 declares: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because

he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” Realize that no one will have eternal life without believing on Jesus Christ as one’s personal Savior and Lord.

Verses 31-33, -----. (John 12:31-33)

One of Satan’s titles is the “prince of this world” since, as 1 John 5:19 puts it, “the whole world lieth in wickedness.” Yes, the wicked world dances to the devil’s tune and follows him to this very day. However, the devil’s rule was even greater before he was bound by Christ, for in Mark 3:27 Jesus declared: “No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.” Therefore, when Jesus was about to redeem the world with His own holy and precious blood, He said: *Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*

In Revelation 20:2-3 we learn that the uncreated Angel, Jesus Christ, “laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” Thus, our Savior, Jesus Christ, by His redemptive work defeated Satan and locked Him down, restricting his activities, for Hebrews 2:14-15 reports, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

Consider how it was that Jesus defeated the devil, for Jesus said: *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.* Oh, Jesus knew He would be lifted up on the cross of Calvary upon which He would shed His holy and precious blood to pay for all the sins of all people. Hence, Jesus

showed amazing bravery as He went forward with His redemptive work, being fully aware of the extreme agony awaiting Him in death by crucifixion.

Verse 34, -----. (John 12:34)

The people were still dull in understanding, and they were insulting, for no matter how plainly Jesus spoke of His atoning work which was then soon to take place, they refused to believe on Him. Yeah, for *the people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?*

Notice the people failed to mention all the Old Testament prophecies which foretell the sufferings of the Messiah, the Christ. For example, we read in Isaiah 53:3-6, “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Ah, the people – like very many today – did not wish to acknowledge their sins, so they apparently felt they had no need for the Savior and His atoning work. Nevertheless, Jesus showed amazing bravery as He went forward to accomplish His mission of mercy, our redemption.

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As we ponder our text to its conclusion, let us see why Jesus showed amazing bravery.

Verses 35 & 36, -----. (John 12:35-36)

The people were in deep trouble with their repeated failure to grasp the truths Jesus put forth

to them regarding His amazing bravery shown by the atoning work He was then soon to accomplish, for Jesus warned them when He *said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.* And, after Jesus said those words to the stubborn unbelieving people, He *departed, and did hide himself from them.*

Think about it. Jesus is the LIGHT OF THE WORLD, the only Savior from the darkness of sin, the devil, and never-ending death in hell. In John 8:12 Jesus, who cannot lie, plainly states: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Jesus adds in no uncertain terms, in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Therefore, Jesus Christ the Light of the world is the ONLY WAY to God and heaven! Thus, Jesus showed amazing bravery in saving sinners because He does NOT wish to see anyone lost and damned since He loves His heavenly Father who sent Him to redeem us, and He loves us whom He has delivered from damnation.

Realize that only by unbelief does one forfeit the forgiveness of sins and salvation Jesus earned for the entire world, for Mark 16:16 plainly states, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Let us be and remain children of light by daily and sincerely repenting of our sins, clinging to Jesus Christ in heart-deep faith as our personal Savior and Lord, being ever grateful to Jesus for the amazing bravery He showed in His rescuing us from never-ending ruin, for Galatians 3:26 declares, "ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Thanks and praise be to Jesus. Amen.

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